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THE DISOWNED.

VOL. II.

LONDON :
SHACKELL AND BAYLIS, JOHNSON'S-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

THE DISOWNED.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "PELHAM."

" Corb.— I disclaim in him !

Avoc. 1st.—But for what cause ?"

Volpone, Act 4, Scenc 5.

SECOND EDITION.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON :

HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1829.

CHAMBERLAIN'S

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THE DISOWNED.

CHAPTER I.

“ We expose our life to a quotidian ague of frigid impertinences, which would make a wise man tremble to think of.”

COWLEY.

WE must suppose a lapse of four years from the date of those events which concluded the last chapter; and, to recompense our reader, who, we know, has a little penchant for “ High Life,” (oh, that our pen should ever write so odious a phrase!) even in the last century, for having hitherto shewn him human beings in a state of society not wholly artificial, we beg

him to picture to himself a large room, brilliantly illuminated, and crowded "with the magnates of the land." Here (some in saltatory motion, some in sedentary rest) are dispersed various groups of young ladies and attendant swains, talking upon the subject of Lord Rochester's celebrated poem, viz.: "*Nothing!*"—and, lounging around the doors, meditating, probably, upon the same subject, stand those unhappy victims of dancing daughters, denominated "Papas." To them, unless our grandfathers differed widely from ourselves, a ball is not that *comble de bonheur* which our young lady readers may suppose it to be.

For our parts, to come to the present day, we, who are quiet, melancholy, speculative persons in such scenes, love to sit in an obscure corner, and mark the bright gleam of sunshine which flashes over the faces of these paternal sufferers, when the subject of "the next Ascot," or "T——'s motion," or "my country farm," is suddenly started. How instantaneously their fancy transports them from the dull duties of their present situation; how gloatingly the middle-aged gentlemen dwell upon the merits of "Matilda," or the perfection of the Game Laws, or the singular improvement in turnips!

But we return to our ball-room. The music has ceased—the dancers have broken up, and there is a general but gentle sweep towards the realm of refreshment. Amongst the crowd—having just entered—singularly aristocratic in his mien, though, perhaps, rather too unpretendingly and carelessly dressed—general attention settled upon a young and very handsome man. Reader, do you observe with what a grace he glides through the throng; how well he returns the bow and smile which on either side assail him; with what courtly, yet seemingly unaffected address he utters to that lady (the Duchess of ——) the greeting of the night; how joyously he shakes hands with yon gentleman, a winner at the last Newmarket; how dexterously he mingles pride and respect in his salutation of that be-ordered foreigner, the ambassador of ——? Do you like him, Reader? We hope so, for he is Clarence Linden!

“How do you do, Mr. Linden?” said a tall and (though somewhat *passée*) very handsome woman, blazing with diamonds; “are you just come?”

And here, by the way, we cannot resist pausing to observe, that a friend of ours, meditating a novel, submitted a part of the MS. to a

friendly publisher. "Sir," said the bookseller, "your book is very clever, but it wants dialogue."

"Dialogue?" cried our friend—"you mistake—it's all dialogue."

"Ay, Sir, but not what *we* call dialogue; we want a little conversation in fashionable life—a little elegant chit-chat or so; and as you must have seen so much of the *beau monde*, you could do it to the life: we must have something light, and witty, and entertaining."

"Light, witty, and entertaining!" said our poor friend; "and how the deuce then is it to be like conversation in fashionable life? When the very best conversation one can get is so insufferably dull, how do you think people will be amused by reading a copy of the very worst?"

"They *are* amused, Sir," said the publisher, "and works of this kind *sell!*"

"I am convinced," said our friend; for he was a man of a placid temper: he took the hint, and his book did sell!

Now this anecdote rushed into our mind after the penning of the little address of the lady in diamonds—"How do you do, Mr. Linden? Are you just come?" and it received an additional weight

from our utter inability to put into the mouth of Mr. Linden, though, we assure you, our desire of representing him in the most brilliant colours made us take incredible pains with his reply—any more happy and eloquent answer than—
“ Only this instant !”

However, as this is in the true spirit of elegant dialogue, we trust our readers find it much more light, witty, and entertaining than, to speak candidly, we do.

While Clarence was engaged in talking with this lady, a very pretty, lively, animated girl, with laughing blue eyes, which, joined to the dazzling fairness of her complexion, gave a Hebe youth to her features and expression, was led up to the said lady by a tall young man, and consigned, with the ceremonious bow of the *vieille cour*, to her protection.

“ Ah, Mr. Linden,” cried the young lady, “ I am very glad to see you—such a beautiful ball!—Every body here that I most like. Have you had any refreshments, mamma? But I need not ask, for I am sure you have not; do come, Mr. Linden will be our cavalier.”

“ Well, Flora, as you please,” said the elder lady, with a proud and fond look at her beauti-

ful daughter ; and Clarence's arm was by both accepted.

No sooner were they seated at one of the tables, than they were accosted by an old acquaintance, Lord St. George, whom our reader may remember as a silent, thin nobleman, at a supper at Mr. Talbot's.

“ London,” said his lordship to her of the diamonds, “ has not seemed like the same place, since Lady Westborough arrived : your presence brings out all the other luminaries ; and therefore a young acquaintance of mine—God bless me, there he is, seated by Lady Flora,—very justly called you the evening star.”

“ Was that Mr. Linden's pretty saying ?” said Lady Westborough, smiling.

“ It was,” answered Lord St. George ; “ and, by the by, he is a very sensible, pleasant person, and greatly improved since he left England last.”

“ What !” said Lady Westborough, in a low tone (for Clarence, though in earnest conversation with Lady Flora, was within hearing), and making room for Lord St. George beside her, “ What ! did *you* know him before he went to ——— ? You can probably tell me, then, who—

that is to say—what family he is exactly of—the Lindens of Devonshire, or—or—”

“Why, really,” said Lord St. George, a little confused, for no man likes to be acquainted with persons whose pedigree he cannot explain, “I don’t know what may be his family: I met him at Talbot’s four or five years ago; he was then a mere boy, but he struck me as being very clever, and Talbot since told me that he was a nephew of his own.”

“Talbot,” said Lady Westborough, musingly, “what Talbot?”

“Oh! *the* Talbot—the *ci-devant jeune homme*.”

“What! that charming, clever, animated old gentleman, who used to dress so oddly, and had been so celebrated a *beau garçon* in his day?”

“Exactly so,” said Lord St. George, taking snuff; and delighted to find he had set his young acquaintance on so honourable a footing.

“I did not know he was still alive,” said Lady Westborough; and then turning her eyes towards Clarence and her daughter, she added, carelessly, “Mr. Talbot is very rich, is he not?”

“Rich as Cræsus,” replied Lord St. George, with a sigh.

“And Mr. Linden is his heir, I suppose?”

“In all probability,” answered Lord St. George; “though I believe *I* have some distant relationship to Talbot. However, I could not make him fully understand it the other day, though I took particular pains to explain it.”

While this conversation was going on between the Marchioness of Westborough and Lord St. George, a dialogue equally interesting to the parties concerned, and we hope equally light, witty, and entertaining to our readers in general, was sustained between Clarence and Lady Flora.

“How long shall you stay in England?” asked the latter, looking down.

“I have not yet been able to decide,” replied Clarence; “for it rests with the ministers, not me. Directly Lord Aspeden obtains another appointment, I am promised the office of Secretary of Legation; but till then, I am—

“ ‘A captive in Augusta’s towers,
To Beauty and her train.’ ”

“Oh!” cried Lady Flora, laughing, “you mean Mrs. Desborough, and her train: see where they sweep! pray go and render your homage.”

“It *is* rendered,” said Linden, in a low

voice, "without so long a pilgrimage, but perhaps despised."

Lady Flora's laugh was hushed; the deepest blushes suffused her cheeks, and the whole character of that face, before so playful and joyous, seemed changed as by a spell, into a grave, subdued, and even timid look.

Linden resumed, and his voice scarcely rose above a *whisper*.—A whisper! O delicate and fairy sound! music that speaketh to the heart, as if loth to break the spell that binds it while it listens! Sigh breathed into words, and freighting love in tones languid, like homeward bees, by the very sweets with which they are charged! Was it not through such utterance, and in such a scene, that *thou*, whom Death has shrouded with a veil of dark and unwelcome thoughts, didst first yield thee to a love circled by smiles and gladness, yet nurturing itself only upon tears! Thou, for whom I have dipped into Lethe, the pen which once wrote thought in characters of fire, and wooed for these idle pages, the light themes which my heart disowneth, that I might keep for ever inviolate to thy remembrance, that fountain of passionate romance, which I once dedicated to thee as to its Spirit! Oh!—why—why, when my theme

wanders to Love, does my heart fly to thy distant grave, even as a bird fieth unto its nest? Dead—buried—forgotten by all else—vanished, yea, to the last trace, from the visible creation, why dost thou come to me, to torture and to haunt? I loved thee not, as I have loved since; not as at this moment, with a hoard of all grateful, and fond, and passionate thought, I love one more beautiful, and not less true than thou wert! Have I not girded myself with changes—changes which make me start at the hush of night, and ask if I myself am the same?—and thou!—O world—life—death—mysterious womb of the eternal past—ye have a secret, and a curse—and a spell, which makes my blood creep and freeze at this hour; but neither heaven, nor earth, nor that which is beneath the earth, have a charm to exorcise the ghosts which ye can raise!

“Do you remember,” said Clarence, “that evening at —— when we last parted? and the boldness which at that time *you* were gentle enough to forgive?”

Lady Flora replied not.

“And do you remember,” continued Clarence, “that I told you, that it was not as an unknown and obscure adventurer that I would

claim the hand which, *as* an adventurer, I had won?"

Lady Flora raised her eyes for one moment, and encountering the ardent gaze of Clarence, as instantly dropped them.

"The time is not *yet* come," said Linden, "for the fulfilment of this promise; but may I—dare I hope, that when it does I shall not be——"

"Flora, my love," said Lady Westborough, "let me introduce to you Lord Borodaile."

Lady Flora turned—the spell was broken; and the lovers were instantly transformed into ordinary mortals. But, as Flora, after returning Lord Borodaile's address, glanced her eye towards Clarence, she was struck with the sudden and singular change of his countenance; the flush of youth and passion was fled; his complexion was deadly pale, and his eyes were fixed with a searching and unaccountable meaning, upon the face of the young nobleman, who was alternately addressing with a quiet and somewhat haughty fluency, the beautiful mother, and the more lovely, though less commanding daughter. Directly Linden perceived that he was observed, he rose, turned away, and was soon lost among the crowd.

Lord Borodaile, the son and heir of the powerful Earl of Ulswater, was about the age of thirty, small, slight, and rather handsome than otherwise; his complexion was dark and sallow; and a very aquiline nose, gave a stern, and somewhat severe air to a countenance naturally grave and harsh in its expression. He had been for several years abroad, in various parts of the continent, and (no other field for an adventurous and fierce spirit presenting itself) had served with the gallant Earl of Effingham, in the war between the Turks and Russians, as a volunteer in the armies of the latter. In this service he had been highly distinguished for courage and conduct; and on his return to England about a twelvemonth since, had obtained the command of a cavalry regiment. Passionately fond of his profession, he entered into its minutest duties with a zeal, not exceeded by the youngest and poorest subaltern in the army.

His manners were very cold, haughty, collected, and self-possessed, and his conversation that of a man who has cultivated his intellect, rather in the world than the closet. We mean, that perfectly ignorant of things, he was driven to converse solely upon persons, and having

imbibed no other philosophy than that which worldly deceits and disappointments bestow, his remarks, though shrewd, were bitterly sarcastic, and partook of all the ill nature for which a very scanty *connaissance du monde* gives a sour and malevolent mind so ready an excuse.

“How very disagreeable Lord Borodaile is,” said Lady Flora, when the object of the remark turned away, and rejoined some idlers of his corps.

“Disagreeable!” said Lady Westborough. “I think him charming; he is so sensible. How true his remarks on the world are!”

Thus is it always: the young judge harshly of those who undecieve or revolt their enthusiasm; and the more advanced in years, who have not learned, by a diviner wisdom, to look upon the human follies and errors by which they have suffered, with a pitying and lenient eye, consider every maxim of severity on those frailties, as the mark of a superior knowledge, and praise that as a profundity of thought, which in reality is but an infirmity of temper.

Clarence is now engaged in a *minuet de la cour*, with the beautiful Countess of ———, the best dancer of the day in England. Lady Flora is flirting with half a dozen ‘*elegants*’ the

more violently, in proportion as she observes the animation with which Clarence converses, and the grace with which his partner moves: and having thus left our two principal personages occupied and engaged, let us turn for a moment to a room which we have not entered.

This is a forlorn, deserted chamber, destined to cards, which are never played in this temple of Terpsichore. At the far end of this room, opposite to the fire-place, are seated four men, engaged in earnest conversation.

The tallest of these was Lord Quintown, a nobleman, remarkable at that day, for his personal advantages, his good fortune with the *beau sexe*, his attempts at parliamentary eloquence in which he was lamentably unsuccessful, and his adherence to Lord North. Next to him, sat Mr. St. George, the younger brother of Lord St. George, a gentleman to whom power and place seemed married without hope of divorce, for, whatever had been the changes of ministry, for the last twelve years, he, secure in a lucrative, though subordinate situation, had "smiled at the whirlwind, and defied the storm;" and while all things shifted and vanished round him, like clouds and vapours, had remained fixed and stationary as a star. "Solid St. George," was

his appellative by his friends, and his enemies did not grudge him the title. The third, was the minister for ———; and the fourth, was Clarence's friend, Lord Aspeden. Now this nobleman, blest with a benevolent, smooth, calm countenance, valued himself especially upon his diplomatic elegance in turning a compliment.

Having a great taste for literature as well as diplomacy, this respected and respectable peer also possessed a curious felicity of applying quotation; and nothing rejoiced him so much, as when, in the same phrase, he was enabled to set the two jewels of his courtliness of flattery and his profundity of erudition. Unhappily enough his compliments were seldom as well taken as they were meant; and whether from the ingratitude of the persons complimented, or the ill fortune of the noble adulator, seemed sometimes to produce indignation in place of delight. It has been said, that his civilities had cost Lord Aspeden four duels and one beating; but these reports were probably the malicious invention of those who had never tasted the delicacies of his flattery.

Now these four persons being all members of the Privy Council, and of his Majesty's Government, and being thus engaged in close and ear-

nest conference, were, you will suppose, employed in discussing the gravities and secrets of state—no such thing: that whisper from Lord Quintown, the handsome nobleman, to Mr. St. George, is no hoarded and valuable information which would rejoice the heart of the editor of an opposition paper, no *grave sususurram*, “perplexing monarchs with the dread of change;” it is only a recent piece of scandal, touching the virtue of a *dame de la cour*, which (albeit the sage listener seems to pay so devout an attention to the news) is far more interesting to the gallant and handsome informant than to his brother statesman; and that emphatic and vehement tone with which Lord Aspeden is assuring the minister for —— of some fact, is merely an angry denunciation of the chicanery practised at the last Newmarket.

“By the by, Aspeden,” said Lord Quintown, “who is that good-looking fellow always flirting with Lady Flora Ardenne—an *attaché* of yours, is he not?”

“Oh, Linden, I suppose you mean? a very sensible, clever young fellow, who has a great genius for business, and plays the flute admirably. I must have him for my secretary, my dear lord, mind that.”

“With such a recommendation, Lord Aspenden,” said the minister, with a bow, “the state would be a great loser, did it not elect your *attaché*, who plays so admirably on the flute, to the office of your secretary.”

“Ah! your lordship always does pay such beautiful compliments. What lines were those somebody applied to you—

“ ‘Here lies the minion of the king,
Whose word no man relied on ;
Who sometimes said a foolish thing,
But never did ——’

—How does it go on, St. George?”

“Let us join the dancers,” said the minister.

“Ah! they are very pretty lines, ‘Minion of a king,’—‘Sometimes said a foolish thing,’—But never’—I wish I could recollect the rest.”

“I shall go and talk with Count L——,” quoth Mr. St. George.

“And I shall make my court to his beautiful wife,” said the minister, sauntering into the ball-room, to which his fine person and graceful manner were much better adapted, than was his genius to the cabinet, or his eloquence to the senate. So essentially different are the talents requisite for the man who is to shine in the

world, from those which are calculated for shining in the saloon, that history scarcely furnishes us with six examples of men who have united both.

The morning had long dawned, and Clarence, for whose ambitious mind pleasure was more fatiguing than business, lingered near the door, to catch one last look of Lady Flora before he retired. He saw her leaning on the arm of Lord Borodaile, and hastening to join the dancers, with her usual light step and laughing air; for Clarence's short conference with her had, in spite of his subsequent flirtations, rendered her happier than she had ever felt before. Again a change passed over Clarence's countenance—a change which we find it difficult to express without borrowing from those celebrated German novelists, who could portray in such exact colours “a look of mingled joy, sorrow, hope, passion, rapture, and despair,” for the look was not that of jealousy alone, although it certainly partook of its nature, but a little also of interest, and a little of sorrow; and when he turned away, and slowly descended the stairs, his eyes were full of tears, and his thoughts far—far away—whither?

CHAPTER II.

“Quæ fert adolescentia
Ea ne me celet consuefeci filium.”

TERENT.

THE next morning Clarence was lounging over his breakfast, and glancing listlessly now at the pages of the newspapers, now at the various engagements for the week, which lay confusedly upon his table, when he received a note from Talbot, requesting to see him *àû plûtot*.

“Had it not been for that man,” said Clarence to himself, “what should I have been now? When my own kin cast me off, when I stood alone and friendless in the wide world, it was a stranger’s hand which raised and guided me. But (and here the natural and somewhat excusable pride of Clarence broke out) but, at

least, I have not disgraced his friendship. I have already ascended the roughest, because the lowest, steps, on the hill where Fortune builds her temple. I have already won for the name I have chosen, some 'golden opinions,' to gild its obscurity. One year more may confirm my destiny, and ripen hope into success: then—then, I may perhaps throw off a disguise, that while it befriended has not degraded me, and avow myself to her! Yet, if I did, it is but an exchange of names; my own is neither prefaced by titles, nor hallowed by wealth. No: better that I should continue to advance that name, which I require no ancestors to ennoble, and which none have authority to question, than recur to one which I have been deemed unworthy to bear. Well, well, these are bitter and as yet vain thoughts; let me turn to others. How beautiful Flora looked last night! were I as high now as I *will be* hereafter, she would reflect honour on my choice; and, he—he—how carelessly we looked at each other. Proud as he is, he *has* something noble in his air: I think I could love him; but enough of this: I must dress, and then to Talbot."

Muttering these wayward fancies, Clarence rose, rung for his valet, completed his toilet,

sent for his horses, and repaired to a village about seven miles from London, where Talbot, having yielded to Clarence's fears and solicitations, and left his former insecure tenement, now resided under the guard and care of an especial and private watchman.

It was a pretty, quiet villa, surrounded by a plantation and pleasure ground of some extent, for a suburban residence, in which the old philosopher (for though, in some respects, still frail and prejudiced, Talbot deserved that name) held his home. The ancient servant, on whom four years had passed lightly and favouringly, opened the door to Clarence, with his usual smile of greeting, and familiar yet respectful salutation, and ushered our hero into a room, furnished with the usual fastidious, and rather feminine luxury, which characterized Talbot's tastes. Sitting with his back *studiously* turned to the light, which was only admitted through curtains of *crimson* velvet, and propped, in a large easy chair, by cushions of the same costly material, Clarence found the wreck of what once was the gallant, gay Lothario of the *mode* and *monde*.

There was not much alteration in his countenance, since *we*, (viz. you, dear Reader, and our-

self—not Clarence,) last saw him ; the lines, it is true, were a little more decided, and the cheeks a little more sunken, but the dark eye beamed with all its wonted vivacity, and the delicate contour of the lip and mouth preserved all its physiognomical characteristics of the inward man. He rose with somewhat more difficulty than he was wont to do, and his limbs had lost much of the symmetrical proportions which age had been long assailing before it could efface ; yet the kind clasp of his hand was as firm and warm, as when it had pressed that of the boyish *attaché* four years since ; and the voice which expressed his salutation, yet breathed its unconquered suavity and distinctness of modulation. After the customary greetings and inquiries were given and returned, the young man drew his chair near to Talbot's, and said—

“ You sent for me, dear Sir ; have you any thing more important than usual to impart to me ? —or—and I hope *this* is the case—have you at last thought of any commission, however trifling, in the execution of which I can be of use ?”

“ Yes, Clarence, I wish your judgment to select me some strawberries, you know that I am a great epicure in fruit—and get me the new

thing Dr. Johnson has just published. There, are you contented? And now, tell me all about your horse, does he step well? Has he the true English head and shoulder? Are his legs fine, yet strong? Is he full of spirit and devoid of vice? the rich wine without the hot adulteration: just sufficient to make you feel life without reminding you of death."

"He is all this, Sir, thanks to you for him."

"Ah!" cried Talbot—

" 'Old as I am, for riding feats unfit,
The shape of horses I remember yet.' "

—And now let us hear how you like Ranelagh? and, above all, how you liked the ball last night?"

And the vivacious old man listened with the profoundest appearance of interest to all the particulars of Clarence's animated detail. His vanity, which made him wish to be loved, had long since taught him the surest method of becoming so; and with him, every visitor, old, young, the man of books, or the disciple of the world, was sure to find the readiest and even eagerest sympathy in every amusement or occupation. But for Clarence, this interest lay deeper than in the surface of courtly breeding.

Gratitude had first bound to him his adopted son, then a tie, which we have not yet explained, and lastly, but not least, the pride of protection. He was vain of the personal and mental attractions of his *protegé*, and eager for the *succes de société* of one whose honours would reflect credit on himself.

But there was one part of Clarence's account of the last night, to which the philosopher paid a still deeper attention, and on which he was more minute in his advice; what this was, we cannot as yet, my dear Reader, permit ourselves to reveal to thee.

The conversation then turned on light and general matters. The scandal, the literature, the politics, the *on dits* of the day: from thence Talbot dropped at last into his office of Mentor.

“I see,” said he, “that you have been obliging enough to follow my advice, and to dress on the side of simplicity. I, who have paid the attention of a life to such trifles, know the vast consequence they are to ambition. Never get a reputation for a small perfection, if you are trying for fame in a loftier area: the world can only judge by generals: it sees that those who pay considerable attention to minutiae, seldom have their minds occupied with great

things. There are, it is true, exceptions; but to exceptions the world does not attend. Upon the whole, it would be wiser even to affect the opposite extreme, and to seem so bent upon business, as to have little time for the occupations of the idle; you will, it is true, be less valued by the Guards, but you can get on very well without their approbation. Lord Chesterfield said once, and many people have said it before him, that “a good face is a letter of recommendation.” So it may be with your landlady, your mistress, or even your servant—for the vulgar, like women, rank physical qualities above all others; but believe me, that a handsome countenance is the greatest enemy a man devoted to the dry and rugged paths of public honours, can possess. Ministers, diplomatists, the men of corn-bills and committees, think very meanly of those whom they hear their wives and daughters praise for perfections they have learnt to despise; and rightly, for handsome men are so well satisfied with the success of person, that they have not in general the same stimulus as the less favoured, to obtain a more distant and deferred reward to their vanity. A very clever friend of mine told me, that the greatest difficulty he had had to sur-

mount on his way to the treasury bench, was a very handsome head of light curling hair, which he could not be persuaded to disguise with powder, or dress in the fashion of the day. Even when he got to the place to which he had been all his life aspiring, and for which he was eminently fitted, the newspapers and satirists made so many witty allusions to this unfortunate gift of Nature, and so many angry denunciations against the effeminate audacity, which dared to be a minister of state, and yet have light curling hair, that he told me, with tears in his eyes, that he should be forced to resign. ‘Pooh!’ said I, ‘wear a wig.’ This alternative, my friend (who, in spite of all it had cost him, was proud of his hair) sorrowfully accepted; and after a sudden volley of jokes at the change, the persecution ceased, and the satirists turned to examine his measures instead of his curls.”

Clarence laughed at this story, which was nevertheless very true, and Talbot continued:

“A celebrated cardinal said, very wisely, that few ever did any thing among men until women were no longer an object to them. That is the reason, by-the-by, why I never succeeded with the former, and why people seldom acquire any

reputation, except for a hat or a horse, till they marry. Look round at the various occupations of life. How few bachelors are eminent in any of them ! So you see, Clarence, you will have my leave to marry Lady Flora as soon as you please."

Clarence coloured, and rose to depart. Talbot followed him to the door, and then said, in a careless way, "By-the-by, I had almost forgotten to tell you, that as you have now many new expences, you will find the yearly sum you have hitherto received doubled. To give you this information is the chief reason why I sent for you this morning. God bless you, my dear boy."

And Talbot shut the door, despite his politesse, in the face and thanks of his adopted son.

I wish somebody would adopt me !

CHAPTER III.

“ There is a great difference between seeking to raise a laugh from every thing, and seeking in every thing what justly may be laughed at.”

LORD SHAFTESBURY.

BEHOLD our hero, now in the full flush and zenith of distinguished dissipation! He had been wise enough to follow Talbot's rules. Very plain in his dress, very unaffected in his manner, he interfered not with the pretensions of his cotemporaries, nor incensed their vanity by blazoning his own. Even those who would have been jealous of his extraordinary personal advantages were disarmed by the little value he appeared to set on their possession. - Courteous, attentive, and animated, the women did not esteem him the less for admiring them rather

than himself; while, by the gravity of his demeanour to men—the eloquent, yet unpretending flow of his conversation, whenever topics of intellectual interest were discussed—the plain and solid sense which he studiously threw into his remarks—and the avidity with which he courted the society of all distinguished for literary or political eminence, he was silently, but surely, establishing himself in esteem as well as popularity, and laying the certain foundation of future honour and success.

Thus, although he had only been four months returned to England, he was already known and courted in every circle, and universally spoken of as among “the most rising young gentlemen” whom fortune and the administration had marked for their own. His history, during the four years in which we have lost sight of him, is briefly told.

He soon won his way into the good graces of Lord Aspeden; became his private secretary, and, occasionally, his confidant. Universally admired for his attraction of form and manner, and, though aiming at reputation, not averse to pleasure, he established that sort of name which a good person and a little *succès auprès des dames* readily obtains; and thus when (a year

before his return to England) Lady Westborough and her beautiful daughter, then only sixteen, came to ——, in the progress of a continental tour, he had become rather a lion, and consequently a fit person to flirt with the marchioness and dance with the daughter. Hence his love to the latter, and the secret but treasured vows to which Clarence had alluded in the ball-room.

Lord Aspeden being recalled, Clarence accompanied him to England; and the ex-minister really liking much one who was so useful to him, had faithfully promised to procure him the office and honour of Secretary of Legation—no bad opening to a diplomatist of twenty-three.

Three *intimate* acquaintances had Clarence Linden. The one was the Honourable Henry Trollop, the second Mr. Callythorpe, and the third Sir Christopher Findlater. We will sketch them to you in an instant. Mr. Trollop was a short, stout gentleman, with a very thoughtful countenance, that is to say, he wore spectacles and took snuff. Mr. Trollop—we delight in pronouncing that soft liquid name—was eminently distinguished by a love of metaphysics—metaphysics were in a great measure the order of the day; but fate had endowed Mr. Trollo-

lop with a singular and felicitous confusion of idea. Reid, Berkeley, Cudworth, Hobbes, all lay jumbled together in most edifying chaos at the bottom of Mr. Trollop's capacious mind; and whenever he opened his mouth, the imprisoned enemies came rushing and scrambling out, overturning and contradicting each other, in a manner quite astounding to the ignorant spectator. Mr. Callythorpe was meagre, thin, sharp, and yellow. Whether from having a great propensity for nailing stray acquaintances, or being particularly heavy company, or from any other cause better known to the wits of the period than to us, he was occasionally termed by his friends the "yellow-hammer." The peculiar characteristics of this gentleman were his sincerity and friendship. These qualities led him into saying things the most disagreeable with the civilest and coolest manner in the world—always prefacing them with, "You know, my dear so and so, *I am your true friend.*" If this proof of amity was now and then productive of altercation, Mr. Callythorpe, who was a great patriot, had another and a nobler plea—"Sir," he would say, putting his hand to his heart—"Sir, I'm an Englishman—I know not what it is to feign." Of a very different stamp was Sir

Christopher Findlater. Little cared he for the subtleties of the human mind, and not much more for the disagreeable duties of "an Englishman." Honest and jolly—red in the cheeks—empty in the head—born to twelve thousand a year—educated in the country, and heir to an earldom, Sir Christopher Findlater piqued himself, notwithstanding his worldly advantages, usually so destructive to the kindlier affections, on having the best heart in the world, and this good heart having a very bad head to regulate and support it, was the perpetual cause of error to the owner and evil to the public.

One evening when Clarence was alone in his rooms, the Honourable Mr. Trollolop entered.

"My dear Linden," said the visitor, "how are you?"

"I am, as I hope you are, very well," answered Clarence.

"The human mind," said Trollolop, taking off his great coat—

"Sir Christopher Findlater, and Mr. Callythorpe, Sir," said the valet.

"Pshaw! What has Sir Christopher Findlater to do with the human mind?" muttered Mr. Trollolop.

Sir Christopher entered with a swagger and a laugh. "Well, old fellow, how do you do? deuced cold this evening."

"Though it *is* an evening in May," observed Clarence; "but then, this cursed climate."

"Climate," interrupted Mr. Callythorpe; "it's no climate at all; I am an Englishman, and I never abuse my country."

"'England, with all thy faults, I love thee still!'"

"Very true," murmured Trollop, who had only heard one part of the sentence; "there is no climate, neither here, nor elsewhere: the climate is in your mind, the chair is in your mind, and the table too, and I dare say you are stupid enough to think the two latter are in the room; the human mind, my dear Findlater—"

"Don't *mind* me, 'Trollop," cried the baronet. "I can't bear your clever heads; give me a good heart—that's worth all the heads in the world, d—n me if it is not! Eh, Linden!"

"Your good heart," cried Trollop, in a passion—(for all your self-called philosophers are a little choleric)—"your good heart is all cant and nonsense—there is no heart at all—we are all mind."

“ I’ll be hanged if I’m all mind,” said the baronet.

“ At least,” quoth Linden, gravely, “ no one ever accused you of it before.”

“ We are all mind,” pursued the reasoner ; “ we are all mind, *un moulin à raisonnement*. Our ideas are derived from two sources, sensation, or memory. That neither our thoughts, nor passions, nor ideas formed by the imagination, exist without the mind, every body will allow ;* therefore, you see the human mind is—in short, there is nothing *in* the world but the human mind.”

“ Nothing could be better demonstrated,” said Clarence.

“ I don’t believe it,” quoth the baronet.

“ But you do believe it, and you must believe it,” cried Trollop ; “ for ‘ the Supreme Being has implanted within us the principle of credulity,’ and therefore you do believe it.”

“ But I don’t,” cried Sir Christopher.

“ You are mistaken,” replied the metaphysician, calmly : “ because I *must* speak truth.”

“ Why must you, pray ?” said the baronet.

“ Because,” answered Trollop, taking snuff,

* Berkeley ; Sect. iii. Principles of Human Knowledge.

“there is a principle of veracity implanted in our nature.”

“I wish I were a metaphysician,” said Clarence, with a sigh.

“I am glad to hear you say so, for you know, my dear Linden,” said Callythorpe, “that I am your true friend, and I must therefore tell you that you are shamefully ignorant: You are not offended?”

“Not at all!” said Clarence, trying to smile.

“And you, my dear Findlater,” (turning to the baronet,) “you know that I wish you well—you know that I never flatter, I’m your real friend, so you must not be angry; but you really are prodigiously silly!”

“Mr. Callythorpe,” exclaimed the baronet, in a rage, [the best hearted people can’t always bear truth,] “what do you mean?”

“You must not be angry, my good Sir—you must not, really. I can’t help telling you of your faults, for I am a true Briton, Sir, a true Briton, and leave lying to slaves and Frenchmen.”

“You are in an error,” said Trollop; “Frenchmen don’t lie, at least not naturally; for in the human mind, as I before said, the Divine Author has implanted a principle of veracity which—”

“My dear Sir,” interrupted Callythorpe, very affectionately, “you remind me of what people say of you.”

“Memory may be reduced to sensation, since it is only a weaker sensation,” quoth Trollop; “but proceed.”

“You know, Trollop,” said Callythorpe, in a singularly endearing intonation of voice, “you know that I never flatter; flattery is unbecoming a true friend—nay, more, it is unbecoming a native of our happy isles, and people do say of you that you know nothing whatsoever, no, not an iota of all that nonsensical, worthless philosophy, of which you are always talking. They say, my dear friend, that your ignorance only equals your conceit, and your puerility your presumption. You’re not offended?”

“By no means,” cried Trollop, foaming at the mouth.

“For my part,” said the good-hearted Sir Christopher, whose wrath had now subsided, rubbing a pair of large, *well-fed-looking* hands—“for my part, I see no good in any of those things; I never read—never—and I don’t see how I’m a bit the worse for it. A good man,

Linden, in my opinion, only wants to do his duty, and that is very easily done."

"Not so easily," thought the shrewd Clarence (but he did not say so); those in humble life who have few duties, require but little knowledge to direct them; but those whose station gives them many and intricate duties to perform, will find that something more than good intentions are requisite to execute them.

"A good man!—and what is good?" cried the metaphysician triumphantly. "Is it implanted within us? Hobbes, according to Reid, who is our last, and consequently best philosopher, endeavours to demonstrate that there is no difference between right and wrong."

"I have no idea of what you mean," cried Sir Christopher.

"Idea!" exclaimed the pious philosopher. "Sir, give me leave to tell you that no solid proof has ever been advanced of the existence of ideas: they are a mere fiction and hypothesis. Nay, Sir, 'hence arises that scepticism which disgraces our philosophy of the mind.' Ideas!—Findlater, you are a sceptic and an idealist."

"I?" cried the affrighted baronet; "upon my honour I am no such thing. Every body knows that I am a Christian, and—"

“ Ah !” interrupted Callythorpe, with a solemn look, “ every body knows that you are not one of those horrid persons—those atrocious deists, and atheists, and sceptics, *et hoc genus*, from whom the church and freedom of old England have suffered such danger. I am a true Briton of the good old school ; and I confess, Mr. Trollop, that I do not like to hear any opinions but the right ones.”

“ Right ones being only those which Mr. Callythorpe professes,” said Clarence.

“ Exactly so !” rejoined Mr. Callythorpe.

“ The human mind,” commenced Mr. Trollop, stirring the fire ; when Clarence, who began to be somewhat tired of this conversation, rose.—“ You will excuse me,” said he, “ but I am particularly engaged, and it is time to dress. Harrison will get you tea, or whatever else you are inclined for.”

“ The human mind,” renewed Trollop, not heeding the interruption ; and Clarence forthwith left the room.

CHAPTER IV.

“ You blame Marcius for being proud.”

Coriolanus.

“ Here is another fellow, a marvellous pretty hand at fashioning a compliment.”

The Tanner of Tyburn.

THERE was a brilliant ball at Lady T——’s, a personage who, every one knows, did, in the year 17—, give the best balls, and have the best dressed people at them, in London. It was about half past twelve, when Clarence, released from his three friends, arrived at the countess’s. When he entered, the first thing which struck him was Lord Borodaile in close conversation with Lady Flora.

Clarence paused for a few moments; and then sauntering towards them, caught Flora’s eye—coloured, and advanced. Now, if there

was a haughty man in Europe, it was Lord Borodaile. He was not proud of his birth, nor fortune, but he was proud of himself; and next to that pride, he was proud of being a gentleman. He had an exceeding horror of all common people; a Claverhouse-sort of supreme contempt to “puddle blood;” his lip seemed to wear scorn as a garment; a lofty and stern self-admiration, rather than self-love, sat upon his forehead as on a throne. He had, as it were, an awe of himself; his thoughts were so many mirrors of Viscount Borodaile, dressed *en dieu*. His mind was a little Versailles, in which *self* sate like Louis XIV., and saw nothing but pictures of *its* self, sometimes as Jupiter, and sometimes as Apollo. What marvel, then, that Lord Borodaile was a very unpleasant companion; for every human being he had “something of contempt.” His eye was always eloquent in disdaining: to the plebeian it said—“You are not a gentleman;” to the prince, “You are not Lord Borodaile.”

Yet, with all this, he had his good points. He was brave as a lion; strictly honourable, even in play; and though very ignorant, and very self-sufficient, had that sort of dogged good sense which one very often finds in men of

stern hearts, who, if they have many prejudices, have little feeling, to overcome.

Very stiffly, and very haughtily, did Lord Borodaile draw up, when Clarence approached, and addressed Lady Flora; much more stiffly, and much more haughtily, did he return, though with old fashioned precision of courtesy; Clarence's bow, when Lady Westborough introduced them to each other. Not that this hauteur was intended as a particular affront: it was only the agreeability of his Lordship's *general* manner.

“Are you engaged?” said Clarence, to Flora.

“I am, at present, to Lord Borodaile.”

“After him, may I hope?”

Lady Flora nodded assent, and disappeared with Lord Borodaile.

His Royal Highness the Duke of — came up to Lady Westborough; and Clarence, with a smiling countenance, and an absent heart, plunged into the crowd. There he met Lord Aspeden, in conversation with the Earl of Holdenworth, one of the administration.

“Ah, Linden!” said the winning diplomatist, shaking Clarence cordially by the hand, “how are you? You have been dancing of course?”

Ah! how wonderfully you accomplish a cotillon—nay! 'tis true, upon my honour it is! You always remind me of the beautiful lines of the poet—

“ ‘ We thought thy head unequalled ; now we greet
That head as far less heavy than thy feet.’ ”

Clarence bowed. “ Your lordship’s compliments are beyond all hope of return.”

“ Nay, nay, my dear boy, never despair! consider I have been twenty years in diplomacy.”

“ You forget,” said Lord Holdenworth, “ that you promised to introduce me to your friend, Mr. Linden.”

“ Ah! so I did. Linden, let me introduce you to Lord Holdenworth. I do assure your lordship, that you will find my young friend exceedingly clever; he plays the flute beautifully; and your friend, Lord Quintown, when I told him of it the other night, very justly said, that—that—well, I quite forget what he said; but, however rude it may seem in me to do so, I do assure your lordship, that it is nothing more than my constant custom. I never can remember a single word of what our friend says. But he is so

eloquent. His oratory always reminds me of the poet's fine line on a stream—

“ ‘ Which runs, and as it runs, for ever shall run on. ’ ”

And at this flattering quotation, Lord Aspenden ceased, and looked round for applause. Meanwhile, Lord Holdenworth entered into conversation with Clarence, in a familiar tone and manner, not usually exercised by men in power towards young gentlemen of twenty-three. “ You will dine with me, then, tomorrow, Mr. Linden ? ” said the great man, as he moved away.

Clarence bowed ; and turning, beheld Lady Flora, whose hand he immediately claimed.

My dear Reader, you and I, who are not dancing with the ladies of our first love, have now seen enough of this ball, and accordingly we will go home and finish this chapter.

CHAPTER V.

“ 'Tis true his nature may with faults abound;
But who will cavil when *the heart* is sound ?”

STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

“ Dum vitant stulti vitia in contraria currant.”

HOR.

THE next day, Sir Christopher Findlater called on Clarence. “ Let us lounge into the park,” said he.

“ With pleasure,” replied Clarence; and into the park they lounged.

By the way they met a crowd, who were hurrying a man to prison. The good-hearted Sir Christopher stopped—“ Who is that poor fellow ?” said he.

“ It is the celebrated,”—(in England all criminals are celebrated. Thurtell was a hero, Thistlewood a patriot, and Fauntleroy was

discovered to be exactly like Buonaparte)—“it is the celebrated robber, John Jefferies, who broke into Mrs. Wilson’s house, and cut the throats of herself and her husband, wounded the maid servant, and split the child’s skull with the poker.”

Clarence pressed forward:—“I have seen that man before,” thought he. He looked again, and recognized the face of the robber who had escaped from Talbot’s house, on the eventful night which had made Clarence’s fortune. It was a strongly marked, and rather handsome countenance, which would not be easily forgotten; and a single circumstance of excitement will stamp features on the memory, as deeply as the common-place intercourse of years.

“John Jefferies!” exclaimed the Baronet, “let us come away.”

“Linden,” continued Sir Christopher, “that fellow was my servant once. He robbed me to some considerable extent. I caught him. He appealed to my heart, and you know, my dear fellow, that was irresistible, so I let him off. Who could have thought he would have turned out so?” And the baronet proceeded to eulogize his own good nature, by which it is just necessary to remark, that one miscreant had

been saved for a few years from transportation in order to rob and murder *ad libitum*, and having fulfilled the office of a common pest, to suffer on the gallows at last. What a fine thing it is to have a good heart !

Both our gentlemen now sunk into a reverie, from which they were awakened, at the entrance of the park, by a young man in rags, who, with a piteous tone, supplicated charity. Clarence, who, to his honour be it spoken, spent an allotted and considerable part of his income in judicious and laborious benevolence, had read a little of political morals, then beginning to be understood, and walked on. The good-hearted baronet put his hand in his pocket, and gave the beggar half a guinea, by which a young, strong man, who had only just commenced the trade, was confirmed in his imposition for the rest of his life; and instead of the useful support, became the pernicious incumbrance, of society.

Sir Christopher had now recovered his spirits. —“What’s like a good action?” said he to Clarence, with a swelling breast.

The park was crowded to excess; our loungers were joined by Lord St. George. His lordship was a staunch Tory. He could not endure Wilkes, liberty, or general education.

He launched out against the* enlightenment of domestics.

“What has made you so bitter?” said Sir Christopher.

“My valet!” cried Lord St. George,—“he has invented a new toasting fork, is going to take out a patent, make his fortune, *and leave me*; that’s what I call ingratitude, Sir Christopher; for I ordered his wages to be raised five pounds but last year.”

“It *was* very ungrateful,” said the ironical Clarence.

“Very!” reiterated the good-hearted Sir Christopher.

“You cannot recommend me a valet, Findlater,” renewed his lordship, “a good, honest, sensible fellow, who can neither read nor write?”

“N—o—o—that is to say, yes! I can; my old servant, Collard, is out of place, and is as ignorant as—as—”

* The ancestors of our present footmen, if we may believe Sir William Temple, seem to have been to the full as intellectual as their descendants. “I have had,” observes the philosophic statesman, “several servants far gone in divinity, others in poetry; have known in the families of some friends, a keeper deep in the Rosicrusian mysteries, and a laundress firm in those of Epicurus.”

“ I—or you are,” said Lord St. George, with a laugh.

“ Precisely,” replied the baronet.

“ Well, then, I take your recommendation : send him to me to-morrow at twelve.”

“ I will,” said Sir Christopher.

“ My dear Findlater,” cried Clarence, when Lord St. George was gone, “ did you not tell me some time ago, that Collard was a great rascal, and closely *lié* with Jefferies? and now you recommend him to Lord St. George !”

“ Hush, hush, hush !” said the baronet ; “ he was a great rogue to be sure ; but, poor fellow, he came to me yesterday with tears in his eyes, and said he should starve if I would not give him a character ; so what could I do ?”

“ At least, tell Lord St. George the truth,” observed Clarence.

“ But then Lord St. George would not take him !” rejoined the good-hearted Sir Christopher, with forcible *näiveté*. “ No, no, Linden, we must not be so hard-hearted ; we must forgive and forget,” and so saying, the baronet threw out his chest, with the conscious exultation of a man who has uttered a noble sentiment. The moral of this little history is, that Lord St. George, having been pillaged

“through thick and thin,” as the proverb has it, for two years, at last missed a gold watch, and Monsieur Collard finished his career, as his exemplary tutor, Mr. John Jefferies, had done before him. Ah! what a fine thing it is to have a good heart.

But, to return, just as our wanderers had arrived at the farther end of the park, Lady Westborough and her daughter passed them. Clarence, excusing himself to his friend, hastened towards them, and was soon occupied in saying the prettiest things in the world to the prettiest person, at least in his eyes; while Sir Christopher having done as much mischief as a good heart well can do in a walk of an hour, returned home to write a long letter to his mother, against “learning, and all such nonsense, which only served to blunt the affections and harden the heart.”

“Admirable young man!” cried the mother, with tears in her eyes: “a good heart is better than all the heads in the world.”

Amen!

CHAPTER VI.

“ *Arbaces*.—Why now you flatter.

Mardonius.—I never understood the word.”

A King and no King.

PUNCTUALLY at the appointed dinner hour, did Clarence find himself at the house of Lord Holdenworth. Two people only had yet arrived. The one was Mr. Trollop, the other Lord Aspeden; Lady Holdenworth, a meek, mild, matronly woman, was sitting by the window, and his lordship standing, *à l'Anglais*, with his back to the grate, even though there was *no* fire from which to exclude the rest of the party.

In all houses, it was Clarence's great rule, for which he was indebted to the precepts of Talbot, to make friends with the mistress, cost what it might with the rest. Accordingly, he lost no time in paying his court to Lady Holdenworth,

a person who, being neither young, handsome, nor greatly *à la mode*, was very little accustomed to such attention, and *par conséquence*, very easily pleased. Just as Clarence had succeeded in winning his way into the good graces of the Countess, the door was thrown open, and Lord Quintown entered. Then came another nobleman—then another—then a lady—then another;—the party increased—the daylight waned—the number was completed—and the dinner began.

Lord Aspeden sat next to Madame de Crumenbach, one of the plumpest (plumpness is a beauty) women in all Austria, and wife of one of the thinnest men in the same empire. *Les extrêmes touchent* ; below him, though not immediately, sat Clarence ; and opposite to Clarence, Mr. Henry Trollop, a person whom Callythorpe, rather humorously than (according to Cicero's and Berkeley's application of the epithet) justly, designated by the title of "The Minute Philosopher."

"Were you at Lady T.'s ball last night?" said Lord Aspeden to Madame Crumenbach, with his most insinuating air.

"Yes," replied Madame, in French, "what a charming ball it was!"

“ Ah !” observed Lord Aspeden, inclining his face close to La Crumenbach, with the air of one going to make a charming remark, “ I knew you would think so, you must be very *fond of dancing!*”

It was with the greatest difficulty poor Madame Crumenbach could descend the stairs ; judge then of the peculiar appositeness of the diplomatist’s polite observation. Had she been accused of playing *la femme intriguante* with *Monsieur son Mari*, we do verily believe she would have been less displeased.

“ Lord Aspeden,” said the handsome Lord Quintown, “ suffer me to take wine with you !”

What the diplomatist replied, escaped every ear but that for which it was intended ; but, by the courtly bow and smile which accompanied his words, and the hurried look of discomfiture with which Quintown turned to renew his conversation with his next neighbour, we imagine that Lord Aspeden’s answer was made with his usual happiness of expression.

Meanwhile, Clarence, without uttering a single compliment, was charming those around him with the grace of word and manner so peculiarly his own ; and Mr. Trollolop, turning his back upon the lady to his right, was pouring

mysterious truths into the "human mind" of the gentleman on his left.

The dinner past—the dessert appeared—the Duchess of Cosmowell sat opposite to Lord Aspeden—she painted more systematically than any woman in London, since the death of Lady E——, who kept a "Repairer."

Lord Aspeden, who took every thing for *la belle nature*, and particularly admired a fine complexion, had long watched his opportunity. It came—he seized it.

"Your grace must allow me," said he, with his sweetest smile, "to send you a peach."

The duchess shook her head—(you may be sure it was very *gently*, "for gentle motions are required by art.")

"No! well, then," said Lord Aspeden, with a sentimental sigh, "I must take one for *your* sake."

"And why for my sake?" asked the duchess, smiling.

"Because," answered Lord Aspeden, with a profound bow, "it reminds me of your grace's complexion; for, as the dramatist has said—

" 'In her cheek the hues
Were painted in the fashion of a peach.' "

The duchess drew back—and Lord Aspeden looked the picture of vanity at a dinner table, smiling on itself.

The ladies withdrew—O, that mystical ceremony!—the men drew nearer to each other; presently all was silence, and then the great deeps were broken up, and all was “the flow of soul.” Sir John Seaford, a prodigious eater, and a particularly good fellow, found himself next to Lord Aspeden—

“*Mantua vae miseræ nimium Vicina Cremonæ.*”

Now, all the world knows that Sir John Seaford had, in 17—, one of the prettiest wives possible. We say all the world knows, for it was not poor Lady Seaford’s fault if all the world did not know it; and at that particular time, Mr. Tarleton, the Grammont of the day, flattered himself that he knew more about the matter than all the rest.

“A splendid woman, the Duchess of Cosmowell,” said Lord Aspeden, emphatically, to Sir John.

“Humph! a miserable confiture this!” said the particularly good fellow.

“And what is more,” resumed Lord Aspeden,

with a confidential air, "I think she is very much like Lady Seaford."

"You do, do you, my Lord," said Sir John. "I will trouble you to pass the wine."

"I do declare," resumed the flattering diplomatist, "that Lady Seaford is the 'paragon' of London; and when I told Mr. Tarleton so, the other night, he said, very prettily, that then you were the 'crescent;' meaning, I suppose, that you were always coupled together."

"My dear lord," cried Sir John, across the table, "just make room for me beside you. I have something to speak to you about." And the baronet rising with a most unwonted celerity, Lord Aspeden was "left alone in his glory."

"How rude some people are," said he to Clarence *sotto voce*. "It's only we of the corps diplomatique who know any thing *des petites mœurs et des grâces de la cour*."

Politics were now touched upon. A severe attack had been made on the administration about three nights ago, and Lord Quintown was a little sore on the subject.

"We must depend on your vote to-morrow night," said he to Lord Aspeden, "for it's absolutely necessary that we should muster strong, and set a *good face* on the matter."

“ True, my lord,” said Lord Aspeden, *en souriant aimablement*, “ for Machiavel well observes, that ‘ a good face is thought the sign of a good conscience,’ and I may therefore well say to your lordship in the beautiful lines of Pope :

“ ‘ That’s *thy wall of brass* ;
Compar’d to this a minister’s an ass ! ’ ”

There was a general smile. Lord Aspeden smiled more than all the rest. It was the sweetest compliment he had ever paid, and two quotations into the bargain.

“ Few people,” said he, in a whisper to Clarence, “ combine wit and learning : that union is reserved for us of the *corps diplomatique*.”

But if Lord Aspeden had so well availed himself of *his* opportunities, his *attaché* had been no less on the alert. He had quoted Swift to a Whig who had ratted, and his own speeches to the handsome minister. He had talked without ceasing to the silent Mr. Mumford, and listened without speaking, to the loquacious Earl of Chatterton. The party rose, and Clarence left the room first.

“ What a wonderful young man ! ” said Lord Quintown.

“ Wonderful ! ” said the Whig who had ratted.

“ So modest,” said Mr. Mumford.

“And so eloquent,” added the Earl of Chatterton.

“He is indeed prodigiously clever,” observed Lord Aspeden, “and very musical too. You must hear him play the flute.”

“While his ambassador plays the fool,” muttered Lord Quintown.

“*Chacun à son métier!*” answered Lord Holdenworth, who overheard him. “*Will your lordship join the ladies?*”

CHAPTER VII.

“What say you to the men of wit? I hope their conversation is of a higher degree in your esteem.”

The Humours and Conversations of the Town.

“My dear Linden,” said Mr. Trollop (how the name glides off my pen), “this is unworthy a philosopher. We are both asked to Mrs. Mosop’s—all the literati will be there. It is not yet too late—let us go. The human mind—”

“We *will* go!” interrupted Clarence.

They passed Lord Aspeden. He was whispering little melodies into the ear of the Duchess of Cosmowell. “To your Grace,” said he, raising his voice, in order that the two young men might hear, to admire and to profit by his appropriate flattery—“to your Grace may indeed be applied the lines of our great poet—You are all

“‘That painting can express,
Or ———’”

The closing door shut out the concluding line from the ears of our adventurer and philosopher.

The Mrs. Mossop of that day was the Lydia of this. Is there a man of wit, taste, or notoriety in England, who has not heard of Lydia? If so, let him, for a punishment (the moral legislation of the present age punishes our misfortunes, not our faults), go and drink tea with Lady D——e. He will then know, by contrast, the value of Lydia. Poor Lydia! who among all thy friends mourns while he misses thee! But thou wast a philosopher in thy patience, and didst know the depth and breadth of all worldly friendships. Thou didst know that while the tie lasts, there is union, and when death divides it, Forgetfulness flings the broken strings into her panniers, where all the loves, hatreds, hopes, and fears of our ancestors lie “with the things before the flood.” How unjust are we in our selfishness, when we ask from our summer acquaintances that strength and fidelity of fondness which we find not in the loves, wherein we have built our shelter from the winds, and anchored our refuge in the storm! How often the *wounds of our vanity make the secret of our pathos*. We sigh because we grave no lasting character in the very hearts which, while we repine that they can-

not bless us, we own that we cannot bless; and we breathe our mortifications into music, because the minions we despise are

“None that with kindred consciousness endued,
If we were not, would seem to smile the less.”

Ah! happy, perhaps, for us, that our poetry decreases as our knowledge advances. Happy, even though we regret the change, that the *overkeenness* of the sword is blunted, that it gains in its strength what it loses in its edge, and is no longer too sharp for the sheath, and too brittle for resistance.

When Clarence and the “Minute Philosopher,” arrived at Mrs. Mossop’s, they found about a dozen people assembled. The lady herself reclined on a sofa, and was not the least animated of the party, nor altogether forgetful of the day, when she was more anxious for the distinction of the *belle* than the reputation of the *savante*.

The conversation turned upon painting. “Have you seen Sir Joshua’s last picture?” said a Mr. Nettletop, usually termed Nose Nettletop, a great literary character, for he had seen the pyramids, contemplated answering Junius, wore a loose neckcloth, and had a nose, to

which that of the stranger in Slawkenbergius's tale, was a snub.

“No,” answered Trollop, with contempt, for like all false pretenders to science, he affected to despise the arts. “No, such trifles I hold to be unworthy of the human mind!”

“And pray,” said Lady Dryaden, who was a bit of a humourist, “do you so very highly estimate the human mind?”

“Estimate it, Madam!—by no means: we are only better than the brutes, because of our exterior organization.”

“You do well to despise the fine arts, then,” said Lady Dryaden.

“Sir Joshua,” observed some one, sagely, “is a very tolerable painter.”

“In the human mind,” said Trollop, taking snuff emphatically, and see-sawing himself to and fro in his chair—“in the human mind, we may resolve our original perceptions into particular principles of the human constitution—”

When, at that instant, the chair, not being accustomed to be see-sawed by a philosopher, gave way, and Mr. Trollop fell with a sudden violence on the floor.

“It was a very heavy fall,” cried Lady Dryaden, pityingly.

“It was a law of nature,” said the philosopher, rising, and rubbing himself with tears in his eyes.

“The chair was in fault,” observed Mrs. Mossop; “it is an easy chair.”

“I should think, rather,” said Nettletop, wisely, “that the floor was in fault; it is a hard floor.”

“You are both mistaken,” said Mr. Trollop; “my constitution was in fault: hardness and motion are particular principles of the human constitution.”

“I cannot think so,” said Nettletop, crossing his legs with the determined manner of one who is about to contest a point.

“You cannot think so!” cried the philosopher, who being still in pain, was naturally inclined to be testy; “then give me leave to tell you, Sir, that you violate one of the most sacred laws of Nature. In the human mind, Mr. Nettletop,” (and here Trollop looked round with a serious air)—“there is an original principle, implanted by the Supreme Being, to confide in the veracity of others, and to believe what they tell us?”

“How learned Mr. Trollop is!” said a gentleman, more credulous than wise, to Mr. Perrivale.

“Yes,” growled the wit; “he is what Ethege calls ‘a person of great acquired follies.’”

Clarence moved away towards another group: he was stopped by a gentleman, who appeared to him somewhat inspired by the rosy god: a very ludicrous air of self-importance sat upon a countenance, naturally a little pert, and somewhat insignificant. Walking on his tiptoes up to Clarence, with whom he was very slightly acquainted, this gentleman said—“I congratulate you, I congratulate you heartily, Mr. Linden.”

“Pardon me, Mr. Boswell, for what?”

“For what, Sir!” answered Mr. Boswell, elevating his eyebrows, “for what?—do you not see, Sir, that you are in the same room, nay, within a few feet of the Colossus of the Age? Do you not feel elated as it were—now that you are breathing the Johnsonian ethereality!”

“Is that indeed the celebrated Dr. Johnson?” said Clarence, looking towards a large and singular figure, in whom he recognized the truth of the usual description given of the great lexicographer.

“It is indeed, Sir!” said Mr. Boswell, staring at him, with eyes so ludicrously dilated, that Clarence could scarcely forbear laughing; “it is

indeed. How do you feel, Sir? Somewhat awe-stricken, eh! But never mind it. Had you, like me, the extreme happiness to be intimately acquainted with that illustrious sage, you would grow accustomed to the air of greatness—nay, you would partake of its nature. I will tell you a wonderful anecdote of my immortal friend. As we were driving the other day to Ashbourne, Dr. Johnson recommended me to drink water only; ‘for,’ said he, with his usual intelligence, and unrivalled profundity of observation—‘for if you drink water only, you are sure never to get drunk; whereas if you drink wine, you are *never* sure!’”*

“Admirable, indeed!” said Clarence, drily. “I wonder you do not give such notable sayings to the world; it would be ten thousand pities, if in the existence of type and paper, the public were deprived of so much of the ‘Johnsonian ethereality!’”

“But the public shan’t, Sir, it shan’t,” said Mr. Boswell, with great vivacity. “I have them all down in a book already.”

“I suppose,” said Clarence, “that I dare not venture to ask an introduction to your extraordinary friend.”

* Literally in Boswell’s *Life*, Vol. III. p. 165.

“Why—yes, Sir! he is the most affable of beings—a little rough or so; may tell you, you are a knave or a fool; but he is really the gentlest of moralists. I will give you, Sir, a memorable instance. I thought I had had reason to complain of my illustrious friend, at a dinner party at Sir Joshua Reynolds’s, upon the 12th of April last; and some time afterwards I told him he had been too hard upon me. ‘Sir,’ said the enlightened sage, ‘you are an unnatural Scotchman, ignorant of your own interest. You resemble a drum, and it is only by being too hard upon you, that I can arouse you from your empty inanity into the distinction of making a noise.’ There was something truly dignified in this benevolent rebuke; and it is the more remarkable, because it contains a sort of pun, a species of wit generally odious to my illustrious friend!”

“Good heavens!” thought Clarence in astonishment, “can any man be such a simpleton as to boast of being a butt.” Poor Clarence! he knew not that it was reserved for Mr. Boswell to be the Dogberry of the age, and to feel proud “of writing himself an ass.”

“But come, Sir,” said Mr. Boswell, “I will just whisper your wish to my illustrious friend,

and I do not doubt that he will render you happy for life, by suffering you to spend a few minutes, in listening to the profound wisdom of the great Dr. Johnson."

Clarence bowed; the whisper was made; an introduction took place; and Clarence, drawing a chair into the verge of the Johnsonian vicinity, was, in the opinion of Mr. Boswell, rendered happy for life.

With the person who sat next to him Clarence was greatly struck. This was a stout and somewhat clumsily built man, tawdrily drest, and of rather an affected manner; but Clarence had already learnt that great men are not altogether free from the peculiarities of little men, and did not, on account of a few innocent coxcombs, do as Mr. Boswell was inclined to do, and set down his neighbour as a fool; on the contrary, he imagined that he saw in a forehead remarkably high, and finely developed, and in an eye, which, while the rest of the countenance seemed supine and heavy, never relaxed in a quick, though half careless observation of all around—something not only contradicting the clownish stupidity usually supposed to characterize the air of the person in question, but strongly indicative of genius.

“Who is my neighbour to the right!” whispered Clarence to Boswell.

“Oh! only Goldy!” said Boswell, with a tone of indifferent contempt.

“Goldy,” repeated Clarence; “who is he?”

“Why, Sir, he is the author of the ‘Traveller,’ and the ‘History of England,’ and some other very ingenious pieces.”

“What! is that the great Goldsmith, the first poet, comic writer, and novelist (without the most distant comparison) of the day?” said Clarence, in surprise that Mr. Boswell, having so much admiration for the author of the ‘Rambler,’ and ‘London,’ had none for the author of the ‘Traveller’ and the ‘Vicar of Wakefield.’

“The same, Sir,” said Boswell, blowing his nose.

“He does not like the great Johnson to call him Goldy, though that illustrious personage calls even *me* Bozzy.”

“You surprise me!” said Clarence.

“Hist,” said Boswell! “the doctor is about to speak.”

And Clarence listened, and was indeed delighted and surprised. The doctor was a little

excited by a home thrust from Beauclerk, (who, secure in the courage and ready wit of a man who had made his intellect live for the world, appears to have been the boldest of Johnson's coterie), and excited into warmth without reaching rudeness, his eloquence rioted in one of its happiest and most luxuriant displays.

After a speech, rather of oratorical than conversational length, Johnson concluded by observing, that "Truth, requiring unwearied solicitation, frequently yielded to the modesty of patience, what she had denied to the arrogance of wisdom or the impetuosity of genius."

"Then," said Goldsmith—who had for some time been in vain endeavouring to speak, and who now retaliated by a reproof joined to a compliment—"then, doctor, the lady is more likely to favour your listeners than yourself."

"Sir," said Doctor Johnson, "you are politely uncivil!"

"What a pity," said Mr. Boswell, with an air of contemptuous superiority, "what a pity that poor Goldy should attempt to shine!"*

And forthwith Mr. Boswell blazed off in an harangue.

* A very common complaint with Mr. Boswell. See his Life of Johnson.

“Bozzy,” said the doctor, with a paternal air, interrupting his disciple in a most luminous period—“Bozzy, you certainly exhibit a singular ostentation of colloquial volubility.”

The delighted Laird of Auchinleck bowed.

“Such praise from the illustrious Johnson is more valuable than degrees from all the universities of Europe.”

“Why, yes, Sir!” resumed the sage, more gravely; “your talk is to your intellect what extravagance is to poverty: the nakedness of the reality is not concealed by the glitter of the shew; and while the spendthrift imagines he is attracting applause, by his profusion, he is exciting only ridicule for his pretensions, or compassion for his folly.”

“What a pity poor Bozzy should attempt to shine,” said Beauclerk, drily; and the doctor rising with a chuckle, the group was broken up.

Clarence lounged away, and found himself by Trollop.

“The human mind,” said the would-be metaphysician, “I think I have now proved to your satisfaction, is a substance, unextended and indivisible; *and, consequently*, a mere bundle of ideas. It is, you perceive, incapable of attaining above a certain pitch, and is therefore

enabled to arrive at the highest perfection ; and, consequently, before many centuries are past, all the world will be philosophers, and as nothing exists to a philosopher, the philosophers will be all the world !”

“ I understand you, then,” said Lady Dryaden. “ In a few centuries, as there will be nothing but philosophers, who are nothing, every thing will be nothing.”

“ Clearly so ?” said Trollop, taking snuff.

“ What a fine thing for philosophers !” cried Lady Dryaden.

“ By no means,” said Nollekins, gravely ; “ for when they have reduced every thing *into* nothing, they will only fall to work again, and make every thing *out of* nothing !”

CHAPTER VIII.

“ Make way, Sir Geoffrey Peveril, or you will compel me to do that I may be sorry for !”

“ You shall make no way here but at your peril,” said Sir Geoffrey ; “ this is my ground.”

Peveril of the Peak.

WHEN Clarence left Mrs. Mossop's house, why, instead of returning home like a rational man, did he go exactly in the opposite direction ? Because, my dear reader, in Hanover-square lived Lady Westborough, and it was Clarence's nightly custom to watch at a certain hour beneath the windows of that house which held the lady of his love, until he had caught one glimpse of her form, or sometimes, for she appreciated the gallantry, though she reproached the indiscretion, till he received some token in return—a look, a gesture, a flower, dropped from

the window, or a kiss of the hand, committed to the heraldry of the air.

It was a beautiful still night, and the stars looked out upon the deserted streets, making even cities holy. Clarence walked on, calmly and musingly, yielding himself up to the mellow and tender melancholy which such nights instil into all hearts, not like ours, grown too chilled and stubborn for romance. When he came to the house, all was silent; the shutters were closed, and the lights veiled. With a sickening and disappointed heart, he turned away.

As he entered George-street, he observed a man before him walking with an uneven and agitated step. His right hand was clenched, and he frequently raised it as with a sudden impulse, and struck fiercely as if at some imagined enemy. He is one of the magazine poets, thought Clarence, or possibly the laureate himself.

The stranger slackened his pace. Clarence passed him, and turning round to satisfy a curiosity, which his supposition had inspired, his eye met a dark, lowering, iron countenance, which, despite the lapse of four years, he recognized on the moment; it was Wolfe, the republican.

Clarence moved, involuntarily, with a quicker step; but in a few minutes, Wolfe, who was vehemently talking to himself, once more past him: the direction he took was also Clarence's way homeward, and he therefore followed the republican, though at some slight distance, and on the opposite side of the way. A gentleman on foot, apparently returning from a party, met Wolfe, and, with an air, half haughty, half unconscious, took the wall; though, according to old fashioned rules of street courtesy, he was on the wrong side for asserting the claim. The stern republican started, drew himself up to his full height, which was much superior to that of the stranger, and sturdily and doggedly placed himself directly in the way of the unjust claimant. Clarence was now nearly opposite to the two, and saw all that was going on.

With a motion, a little rude and very contemptuous, the passenger attempted to put Wolfe aside and win his path. Little did he know of the unyielding nature he had to do with; the next instant, the republican, with a strong hand, forced him from the pavement into the very kennel, and silently and coldly continued his way.

The wrath of the discomfited passenger was vehemently kindled.

“Insolent dog!” cried he in a loud and arrogant tone, “your baseness is your protection.” Wolfe turned rapidly, and made but two strides before he was once more by the side of his defeated opponent.

“What were you pleased to observe?” said he, in his low, deep, hoarse voice.

Clarence stopped. There will be mischief done here, thought he, as he called to mind the stern temper of the republican.

“Merely,” said the other, struggling with his rage, “that it is not for men of my rank to avenge the insults offered us by those of yours!”

“Your rank,” said Wolfe, bitterly retorting the contempt of the stranger, in a tone of the loftiest disdain; “your rank, poor changeling! And what are you, that you should lord it over me? Are your limbs stronger? your muscles firmer? your proportions juster? or, if you disclaim physical comparisons, are your mental faculties of a higher order than his who now mocks at your pretensions, and challenges you to prove them? Are the treasures of science expanded to your view? Are you lord of the

elysium of poetry, or the thunderbolts of eloquence? Have you wit to illumine, or judgment to combine, or energy to controul? or are you, what in reality you appear, dwindled and stunted in the fair size and sinews of manhood—overbearing, yet impotent—tyrannical, yet ridiculous? Fool! fool!—(and here Wolfe's voice rose, and his dark countenance changed its expression of mockery into fierceness)—go home, and revenge yourself on your slaves, for the reproof you have drawn down upon yourself! Go!—goad! gall! trample!—the more you grind your minions now, the more terrible will be their retribution hereafter; excite them beyond endurance, with your weak and frivolous despotisms, the debauched and hideous abortions of a sickly and unnatural state of civilization! Go! every insult, every oppression, you heap on those whom God has subjected to your hand, but accelerates the day of their emancipation—but files away, link by link, the iron of their bondage—but sharpens the sword of justice, which, in the first wrath of an incensed and awakened people, becomes also for their conquered oppressors the weapon of revenge!”

The republican ceased, and pushing the

stranger aside, turned slowly away. But this last insult enraged the passenger (who, during the whole of the reformer's harangue, had been almost foaming with passion) beyond all prudence. Before Wolfe had proceeded two paces, he muttered a desperate, but brief oath, and struck the reformer with a strength so much beyond what his slight and small figure appeared to possess, that the powerful and gaunt frame of Wolfe recoiled backward several steps, and had it not been for the iron railing of the neighbouring area, would have fallen to the ground.

Clarence pressed forward; the face of the rash aggressor was turned towards him; the features were Lord Borodaile's. He had scarcely time to make this discovery, before Wolfe had recovered himself. With a wild and savage cry, rather than exclamation, he threw himself upon his antagonist, twined his sinewy arms round the frame of the struggling but powerless nobleman, raised him in the air, with the easy strength of a man lifting a child, held him aloof for one moment, with a bitter, and scornful laugh of wrathful derision, and then dashed him to the ground, and, planting his foot upon Borodaile's breast, said—

“ So shall it be with all of you : there shall be but one instant between your last offence and your first but final debasement. Lie there ; it is your proper place ! By the only law which you yourself acknowledge, the law which gives the right divine to the strongest, if you stir limb or muscle, I will crush the breath from your body.”

But Clarence was now by the side of Wolfe, a new and more powerful opponent.

“ Look you,” said he : “ you have received an insult, and you have done yourself justice. I condemn the offence, and quarrel not with you for the punishment ; but that punishment is now past : remove your foot, or—”

“ What ?” shouted Wolfe, fiercely, every vein in his countenance swelling, and his lurid and vindictive eye, from its black and shaggy brow, flashing with the released fire of long-pent and cherished passions.

“ Or,” answered Clarence, calmly, “ I will hinder you from committing murder.”

At that instant, the watchman’s voice was heard, and the night’s guardian himself was seen hastening from the far end of the street, towards the place of contest. Whether this circumstance, or Clarence’s answer, somewhat changed

the current of the republican's thoughts, or whether his anger, suddenly raised, was now as suddenly subsiding, we know not ; but he slowly and deliberately moved his foot from the breast of his baffled foe, and, bending down, seemed endeavouring to ascertain the mischief he had done. Lord Borodaile was perfectly insensible.

“ You have killed him !” cried Clarence, in a voice of horror, “ but you shall not escape ;” and he placed a desperate and nervous hand on the republican.

“ Stand off,” said Wolfe, “ my blood is up ! I would not do more violence to-night than I have done. Stand off ! the man moves ; his hour is not yet come.”

And Lord Borodaile uttering a long sigh and attempting to rise, Clarence released his hold of the republican, and bent down to assist the fallen nobleman. Meanwhile, Wolfe, muttering to himself, turned from the spot, and strode haughtily away.

The watchman now came up, and, with his aid, Clarence raised Lord Borodaile. Bruised, stunned, half insensible as he was, that personage lost none of his characteristic stateliness ; he shook off the watchman's arm, as if there

was contamination in the touch; and his countenance, still menacing and defying in its expression, turned abruptly towards Clarence as if he yet expected to meet and struggle with a foe.

“How are you, my lord?” said Linden, “not severely hurt, I trust?”

“Well—quite well,” cried Borodaile. “Mr. Linden, I think?—I thank you cordially for your assistance; but the dog—the rascal—where is he?”

“Gone,” said Clarence.

“Gone! Where—where?” cried Borodaile; “that living man should insult me, and yet escape!”

“Which way did the fellow go?” said the watchman, anticipative of half a crown. “I will run after him in a trice, your honour—I warrant I nab him.

“No—no—” said Borodaile proudly, yet generously. “I leave my quarrels to no man: if I could not master him myself, no one else shall do it for me. Mr. Linden, excuse me, but I am perfectly recovered, and can walk very well without your polite assistance. Mr. Watchman, I am obliged to you: there is a guinea to reward your trouble.”

With these words, intended as a farewell, the *fier* patrician, smothering his pain, bowed with extreme courtesy to Clarence—again thanked him, and walked on unaided, and alone.

“He is a game blood,” said the watchman, pocketing the guinea.

“He is worthy his name,” thought Clarence; “though he was in the wrong—my heart yearns to him.”

CHAPTER IX.

“ Things wear a vizard which I think to like not.”

Tanner of Tyburn.

CLARENCE from that night appeared to have formed a sudden attachment to Lord Borodaile. He took every opportunity of cultivating his intimacy, and invariably treated him with a degree of consideration, which his knowledge of the world told him was well calculated to gain the good will of his haughty and arrogant acquaintance; but all this was ineffectual in conquering Borodaile's coldness and reserve. To have been once seen in a humiliating and degrading situation is quite sufficient to make a proud man hate the spectator, and with the confusion of all prejudiced minds to transfer the

sore remembrance of the event to the association of the witness. Lord Borodaile, though always ceremoniously civil, was immoveably distant, and avoided as well as he was able Clarence's insinuating approaches and address. To add to his indisposition to increase his acquaintance with Linden, a friend of his, a captain in the Guards, once asked him who that Mr. Linden was? and, on his lordship's replying that he did not know, Mr. Percy Bobus, the son of a wine merchant, though the nephew of a duke, rejoined, "Nobody *does* know."

"Insolent intruder!" thought Lord Borodaile: "a man whom nobody knows to make such advances to *me*!"

A still greater cause of dislike to Clarence arose from jealousy. Ever since the first night of his acquaintance with Lady Flora, Lord Borodaile had paid her unceasing attention. In good earnest, he was greatly struck by her beauty, and had for the last year been thinking of the necessity of presenting the world with a Lady Borodaile. Now, though his lordship did look upon himself in as favourable a light as a man well can do, yet he could not but own, that Clarence *was* very handsome—had a devilish gentlemanlike air—talked with a better grace

than the generality of young men, and danced to perfection. "I detest that fellow!" said Lord Borodaile, involuntarily and aloud, as these unwilling truths forced themselves upon his mind.

"Whom do you detest?" asked Mr. Percy Bobus, who was lying on the sofa, in Lord Borodaile's drawing room, and admiring a pair of red-heeled shoes which decorated his feet.

"That puppy, Linden!" said Lord Borodaile, adjusting his cravat.

"He is a deuced puppy certainly!" rejoined Mr. Percy Bobus, turning round in order to contemplate more exactly the shape of his right shoe. "I can't bear conceit, Borodaile."

"Nor I—I abhor it—it is so d——d disgusting!" replied Lord Borodaile, leaning his chin upon his two hands, and looking full into the glass, "do you use Mac Neil's divine pomatum?"

"No, it's too hard; I get mine from Paris; shall I send you some?"

"Do," said Lord Borodaile.

"Mr. Linden, my lord," said the servant, throwing open the door; and Clarence entered.

"I am very fortunate," said he, with that

smile, which so few ever resisted, "to find you at home, Lord Borodaile; but as the day was wet, I thought I should have some chance of that pleasure; I therefore wrapped myself up in my roquelaire, and *me voici!*"

Now, nothing could be more diplomatic than the compliment of choosing a wet day for a visit, and exposing one's-self to "the pitiless shower," for the greater probability of finding the visited at home. Not so thought Lord Borodaile; he drew himself up, bowed very solemnly, and said, with cold gravity,

"You are very obliging, *Mr. Linden.*"

Clarence coloured, and bit his lip as he seated himself. Mr. Percy Bobus, with true insular breeding, took up the newspaper.

"I think I saw you at Lady C.'s last night," said Clarence; "did you stay there long?"

"No, indeed," answered Borodaile; "I hate her parties."

"One *does* meet such odd people there," observed Mr. Percy Bobus; "creatures one never sees any where else."

"I hear," said Clarence, who never abused any one, even the givers of stupid parties, if he could help it, and therefore thought it best to

change the conversation—"I hear, Lord Borodaile, that some hunters of yours are to be sold. I purpose being a bidder for Thunderbolt."

"I have a horse to sell you, Mr. Linden," cried Mr. Percy Bobus, springing from the sofa into civility, "a superb creature."

"Thank you," said Clarence, laughing; "but I can only afford to buy *one*, and I have taken a great fancy to Thunderbolt."

Lord Borodaile, whose manners were very antiquated in their affability, bowed. Mr. Bobus sunk back into his sofa, and resumed the paper.

A pause ensued. Clarence was chilled in spite of himself. Lord Borodaile played with a paper cutter.

"Have you been to Lady Westborough's lately?" said Clarence, breaking silence.

"I was there last night," replied Lord Borodaile.

"Indeed!" cried Clarence. "I wonder I did not see you there, for I dined with them."

Lord Borodaile's hair curled of itself. "*He* dined there, and I only asked in the evening," thought he; but his sarcastic temper suggested a very different reply.

"Ah," said he, elevating his eye-brows,

“Lady Westborough told me she had had some people to dinner, whom she had been *obliged* to ask. Bobus, is that the Public Advertiser? See whether that d——d fellow Junius has been writing any more of his stupid letters.”

Clarence was not a man apt to take offence, but he felt his bile rise: it will not do to shew it, thought he; so he made some farther remark in a jesting vein; and, after a very ill sustained conversation of some minutes longer, rose, apparently in the best humour possible, and departed, with a solemn intention never again to enter the house. From thence he went to Lady Westborough’s.

The marchioness was in her boudoir: Clarence was as usual admitted, for Lady Westborough loved amusement above all things in the world, and Clarence had the art of affording it better than any young man of her acquaintance. On entering, he saw Lady Flora hastily retreating through an opposite door. She turned her face towards him for one moment—that moment was sufficient to freeze his blood; the large tears were rolling down her cheeks, which were as white as death, and the expression of those features, usually so laughing and joyous, was that of utter and ineffable despair.

Lady Westborough was as lively, as bland, and as wooing as ever; but Clarence thought he detected something restrained and embarrassed lurking beneath all the graces of her exterior manner; and the single glance he had caught of the pale and altered face of Lady Flora, was not calculated to reassure his mind or animate his spirits. His visit was short; when he left the room, he lingered for a few moments in the anti-chamber, in the hope of again seeing Lady Flora. While thus loitering, his ear caught the sound of Lady Westborough's voice: "When Mr. Linden calls again, you have my orders never to admit him into this room; he will be shewn into the drawing-room."

With a hasty step and a burning cheek Clarence quitted the house, and hurried, first to his solitary apartments, and thence (like all men under the fever of excitement, impatient of loneliness) to the peaceful retreat of his benefactor.

CHAPTER X.

“ A maiden’s thoughts do check my trembling hand.”

DRAYTON.

THERE is something very delightful in turning from the unquietness and agitation, the fever, the ambition, the harsh and worldly realities of man’s character, to the gentle and deep recesses of woman’s more secret heart. Within her musings is a realm of haunted and fairy thought, to which the things of this turbid and troubled life have no entrance. What to her are the changes of state, the rivalries and contentions which form the staple of *our* existence? For her there is an intense and fond philosophy, before whose eye substances flit and fade like shadows, and shadows grow glowingly into truth. Her soul’s creations are not as the moving and

mortal images seen in the common day : they are things, like spirits steeped in the dim moonlight, heard when all else are still, and busy when earth's labourers are at rest ! They are

“ Such stuff
As dreams are made of, and their little life
Is rounded by a sleep.”

Her's is the real and uncentered *poetry of being*, which pervades and surrounds her as with an air, which peoples her visions and animates her love, which shrinks from earth into itself, and finds marvel and meditation in all that it beholds within, and which spreads even over the heaven in whose faith she so ardently believes the mystery and the tenderness of romance.

LETTER THE FIRST FROM LADY FLORA ARDENNE
TO MISS ELEANOR TREVANION.

“ You say that I have not written to you so punctually of late as I used to do before I came to London, and you impute my negligence to the

gaities and pleasures by which I am surrounded. *Eh bien!* my dear Eleanor, could you have thought of a better excuse for me? You know how fond *we*—ay dearest, you as well as I—used to be of dancing, and how earnestly we were wont to anticipate those children's balls at my uncle's, which were the only ones we were ever permitted to attend. I found a stick the other day on which I had cut seven notches, significant of seven days more to the next ball—we reckoned time by balls then, and danced chronologically. Well, my dear Eleanor, here I am now, brought out, tolerably well behaved, only not dignified enough, according to mamma—as fond of laughing, talking, and dancing as ever; and yet, do you know, a ball, though still very delightful, is far from being the most important event in creation; its anticipation does not keep me awake of a night; and, what is more to the purpose, its recollection does not make me shut up my inkstand, burn my *portfeuille*, and forget you, all of which you seem to imagine it has been able to effect.

“ No, dearest Eleanor, you are mistaken; for were she twice as giddy, and ten times as volatile as she is, your own Flora could never, never forget you, nor the happy hours we have spent

together, nor the pretty goldfinches we had in common, nor the little Scotch duets we used to sing together, nor our longings to change them into Italian, nor our disappointment when we did so, nor our laughter at Signior Shriekalini, nor our tears when poor darling Bijou died. And do you remember, dearest, the charming green lawn where we used to play together, and plan tricks for your governess? She was very, very cross, though, I think, we were a little to blame too. However, I was much the worst! And pray, Eleanor, don't you remember how we used to like being called pretty, and told of the conquests we should make? Do you like all that now? For my part, I am tired of it, at least from the generality of one's flatterers.

“ Ah! Eleanor, or heigho! as the young ladies in novels write, do you remember how jealous I was of you at —, and how spiteful I was, and how you were an angel, and bore with me, and kissed me, and told me that—that I had nothing to fear? Well, Clar—, I mean Mr. Linden, is now in town, and so popular and so admired! I wish we were at ——— again, for there we saw him every day, and now we don't meet more than three times a week; and though I like hearing him praised above all things, yet

I feel very uncomfortable when that praise comes from very, very pretty women. I wish we were at —— again ! Mamma, who is looking more beautiful than ever, is very kind ; she says nothing, to be sure, but she must see how—that is to say—she must know that—that I—I mean that Clarence is very attentive to me, and that I blush and look exceedingly silly whenever he is ; and therefore I suppose that whenever Clarence thinks fit to ask me, I shall not be under the necessity of getting up at six o'clock, and travelling to Gretna Green, through that odious North road, up the Highgate Hill, and over Finchley Common.

“ ‘ But when will he ask you ? ’ My dearest Eleanor, that is more than I can say. To tell you the truth, there is something about Linden which I cannot thoroughly understand. They say he is nephew and heir to the Mr. Talbot, whom you may have heard Papa talk of as the *chevalier le plus à la mode* in his day ; but if so, why the hints, the insinuations, of not being what he seems, which Clarence perpetually throws out, and which only excite my interest without gratifying my curiosity ? ‘ It is not,’ he has said, more than once, ‘ as an obscure adventurer that I will claim your love ; ’ and if I venture, which

is very seldom (for, *pour dire vrai*, I am a little afraid of him), to question his meaning, he either sinks into utter silence, for which, if I had loved *according to book*, and not so naturally, I should be very angry with him, or twists his words into another signification, such as that he would not claim me till he had become something higher and nobler than he is now. Alas, my dear Eleanor, it takes a long time to make an ambassador out of an *attaché*.

“ See now if you reproached me justly with scanty correspondences. If I write a line more, I must begin a new sheet, and that will be beyond the power of a frank—a thing which would, I know, break the heart of your dear, good, generous, but a little too prudent aunt, and irrevocably ruin me in her esteem. So God bless you, dearest Eleanor, and believe me most affectionately yours,

“ FLORA ARDENNE.”

LETTER II.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

“ Pray, dearest Eleanor, does that good aunt of yours—now, don't frown, I am not going to

·speak disrespectfully of her—ever take a liking to young gentlemen whom you detest, and insist upon the fallacy of your opinion, and the unerring rectitude of hers? If so, you can pity and comprehend my grief. Mamma has formed quite an attachment to such a disagreeable person. He is Lord Borodaile, the eldest, and, I believe, the only son of Lord Ulswater. Perhaps you may have met him abroad, for he has been a great traveller; his family is among the most ancient in England, and his father's estate covers half a county. All this mamma tells me, with the most earnest air in the world, whenever I declaim upon his impertinence or *disagreeability*—(is there such a word? there ought to be.) ‘Well,’ said I to-day, ‘what’s that to me?’ ‘It may be a great deal to you,’ replied mamma, significantly, and the blood rushed from my face to my heart. She could not, Eleanor, she could not mean, after all her kindness to Clarence, and in spite of all her penetration into my heart—Oh, no, no—she could not. How terribly suspicious this love makes one!

“But if I disliked Lord Borodaile at first, I have hated him of late; for, some how or other, he is always in the way. If I see Clarence hastening through the crowd to ask me to dance,

at that very instant, up steps Lord Borodaile, with his cold, changeless face, and his haughty, old fashioned bow, and his abominable dark complexion—and mamma smiles—and he hopes he finds me disengaged—and I am hurried off—and poor Clarence looks so disappointed and so wretched! You have no idea how ill-tempered this makes me. I could not help asking Lord Borodaile, yesterday, if he was *never* going abroad again, and the hateful creature played with his cravat, and answered ‘Never!’ I was in hopes that my sullenness would drive his lordship away, *tout au contraire*; ‘Nothing,’ said he to me, the other day, when I was in full pout, ‘Nothing is so plebeian as good humour! Patrician blood is always in a ferment!’

“I wish, then, Eleanor, that he could see your governess; she must be majesty itself in his eyes.

“Ah, dearest, how we belie ourselves. At this moment, when you might think, from the idle, rattling, silly flow of my letter, that my heart was as light and free as it was when we used to play on the green lawn, and under the sunny trees, in the merry days of our childhood, the tears are running down my cheeks; see where they have fallen on the page, and my head throbs

as if my thoughts were too full and heavy for it to contain. It is past one ! I am alone, and in my own room. Mamma is gone to a rout at H—— House ; but I knew I should not meet Clarence there, and so I said I was ill, and remained at home. I have done so often of late, whenever I learnt from *him* that he was not going to the same place as mamma. Indeed, I love much better to sit alone and think over his words and looks ; and I have drawn, after repeated attempts, a profile likeness of him ; and Oh, Eleanor, I cannot tell you how dear it is to me ; and yet there is not a line, not a look of his countenance which I have not learnt by heart, without such useless aids to my memory. But I am ashamed of telling you all this, and my eyes ache so, that I can write no more.

“ Ever, as ever, dearest Eleanor, your affectionate friend.”

LETTER III.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

“ ELEANOR, I am undone ! My mother—my mother has been so cruel ; but she cannot, she

cannot intend it, or she knows very little of my heart. With some, ties may be as easily broken as formed; with others they are twined around life itself.

“ Clarence dined with us yesterday, and was unusually animated and agreeable. He was engaged on business with Lord Aspeden afterwards, and left us early. We had a few people in the evening; Lord Borodaile among the rest; and my mother spoke of Clarence, and his relationship to, and expectations from Mr. Talbot. Lord Borodāile sneered: ‘ You are mistaken,’ said he, sarcastically; ‘ Mr. Linden may feel it convenient to give out that he is related to so old a family as the Talbots; and since God only knows who or what he is, he may as well claim alliance with one person as another; but he is certainly not the nephew of Mr. Talbot of Scarsdale Park, for that gentleman had no sisters, and but one brother, who left an only daughter, that daughter had also but one child, certainly no relation to Mr. Linden. I can vouch for the truth of this statement; for the Talbots are related to, or at least nearly connected with, myself; and I thank Heaven that I have a pedigree, even in its collateral branches, worth learning by heart.’ And then Lord Borodaile — I little thought,

when I railed against him, what serious cause I should have to hate him—turned to me, and harassed me with his tedious attentions the whole of the evening.

“ This morning mamma sent for me into her boudoir. ‘ I have observed,’ said she, with the greatest indifference, ‘ that Mr. Linden has, *of late*, been much too particular in his manner towards you—your foolish and undue familiarity with every one, has perhaps given him encouragement. After the gross imposition which Lord Borodaile exposed to us last night, I cannot but consider the young man as a mere adventurer; and must not only insist on your putting a total termination to civilities, which we must henceforth consider presumption, but I myself shall conceive it incumbent upon me greatly to limit the advances he has thought proper to make towards my acquaintance.’

“ You may guess how thunderstruck I was by this speech. I could not answer; my tongue literally clove to my mouth, and I was only relieved by a sudden and violent burst of tears. Mamma looked exceedingly displeased, and was just going to speak, when the servant threw open the door, and announced Mr. Linden. I rose hastily, and had only just time to escape, as he

entered; but when I heard that dear, dear voice, I could not resist turning for one moment. He saw me—and was struck mute, for the agony of my soul was stamped visibly on my countenance. That moment was over—with a violent effort I tore myself away.

“Eleanor, I can now write no more. God bless you! and *me* too—for I am very, very unhappy.

“ F. A.”

We have given thee, Reader, these three letters, partly to unfold more accurately the playful and infantine, but tender and feeling, character of their writer, and partly to explain and illustrate the late incidents in our tale.

Adjourn we now to our unfortunate lover.

CHAPTER XI.

“What a charming character is a kind old man.”

STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

“CHEER up, my dear boy,” said Talbot, kindly, “we must never despair. What though Lady Westborough has forbidden you the *boudoir*, a *boudoir* is a very different thing from a daughter, and you have no right to suppose that the veto extends to both. But now that we are on this subject, do let me reason with you seriously. Have you not already tasted all the pleasures and been sufficiently annoyed by some of the pains of acting the ‘Incognito?’ Be ruled by me: resume your proper name; though not coupled with titular rank, or set off with fortune, it is at least one which the proudest might

acknowledge; and its discovery will remove the greatest obstacle to the success which you so ardently desire."

Clarence, who was labouring under strong excitement, paused for some moments, as if to collect himself, before he replied: "I have been thrust from my father's home—I have been made the victim of another's crime—I have been denied the rights and the name of son; perhaps—and I say this bitterly—justly denied them, despite of my own innocence. What would you have me do? Resume a name never conceded to me—perhaps not righteously mine—thrust myself upon the unwilling and shrinking hands, which disowned and rejected me—blazon my virtues by pretensions which I myself have promised to forego, and foist myself on the notice of strangers by the very claims which my nearest relations dispute? Never—never—never! With the simple name I have assumed—the friend I myself have won—you, my generous benefactor, my real father, who never forsook, nor insulted me for my misfortunes—with these, I have gained some steps in the ladder; with these, and those gifts of nature, a stout heart, and a willing hand, of which none can rob me, I will either ascend the rest, even to-

the summit, or fall to the dust, unknown, but not contemned; unlamented, but not despised."

"Well, well," said Talbot, brushing away a tear which he could not deny to the feeling, even while he disputed the judgment of the young adventurer—"well, this is all very fine and very foolish; but you shall never want friend or father while I live, or when I have ceased to live; but come—sit down, share my dinner, which is not very good, and my dessert, which is: help me to entertain two or three guests who are coming to me in the evening to talk on literature, sup, and sleep; and to-morrow you shall return home, and see Lady Flora in the drawing-room, if you cannot in the *boudoir*."

And Clarence was easily persuaded to accept the invitation.

Talbot was not of those men who are forced to exert themselves to be entertaining. He had the pleasant and easy way of imparting his great general and curious information, that a man, partly humorist, partly philosopher, who values himself on being *l'homme de lettres*, and is despite of himself *l'homme du monde*, always ought to possess. Clarence was soon beguiled from the remembrance of his mortifications, and,

by little and little, entirely yielded to the airy and happy flow of Talbot's conversation.

Who shall say that there is no wisdom in inculcating external address, no virtue in the excellence of manner, no merit due to the invisible but mighty arts, which, more than folios on morality, increase our happiness or soften our griefs? Who shall say that the writer, who above all has contributed to this end, is only the preacher of dissimulation and deceit? that Chesterfield has not been almost equally misinterpreted by the ignorant and abused by the vulgar, as the great names of Epicurus and Helvetius? and that the man whom we have been taught to condemn as the hypocritical minion of the world, ought not rather to be venerated as the philosopher of benevolence, and the expounder of its more subtle, yet more customary laws?*

* This observation, which we confess looks a little like rhapsody, requires more detailed proof than would find a fitting place in these volumes. A very attentive consideration of the life and letters of Lord Chesterfield has, however, so strongly possessed us with the belief that the character of both, especially the latter, has been misunderstood, that we shall take an early opportunity, in some work more adapted than this to that purpose, of expressing at large the grounds of our opinion. If there is one literary pleasure better than fame, it is the attempting to do justice to a great man.

In the evening, three or four men of literary eminence (as many as Talbot's small Tusculum could accommodate with beds) arrived, and in a conversation, free alike from the jargon of pedants and the insipidities of *ton*, the night fled away swiftly and happily, even to the lover.

CHAPTER XII.

“ We are here (in the country) among the vast and noble scenes of nature ; we are there (in the town) among the pitiful shifts of policy. We walk here in the light and open ways of the divine bounty—we grope there in the dark and confused labyrinths of human malice : our senses are here feasted with all the clear and genuine taste of their objects, which are all sophisticated there, and for the most part overwhelmed with their contraries : here pleasure, methinks, looks like a beautiful, constant, and modest wife ; it is there an impudent, fickle, and painted harlot.”

COWLEY.

LUCRETIUS has said beautifully, in the most hacknied passage of his poem, that there is nothing sweeter than to behold afar, from the quiet and safe temples of philosophy, the great crowd rolling below, wandering, confused, erring, seeking to and fro the *viam vitæ*, wasting days

and nights in the laborious pursuit of wealth and honour, and in the vague hope to enjoy them when possessed.*

Here, as at the hush of night, I lay aside the masterpieces of human invention, and recur to these idle and worthless pages; (how far short of the vague dreams of future excellence which the enthusiasm of boyhood kindled and conceived!) Here, amid the trees waving before my windows in the air of the solemn night, which breathes wild and fresh from the recesses of many woods, and over the free grass of the untilled and unpeopled wastes which surround my home—here, as the dim fire struggles (like our own pent and restless spirit) upward from the mass which clogs, and amid the vapour which curls around it, and my lone lamp casts its light on walls covered with the breathing canvas, relics or copies of no ignoble hands, and on the greater treasures which knowledge has

* Voltaire, so generally wrong when he asserts a fact, is sometimes wonderfully in the right when he impeaches an opinion. There is a very acute commentary upon this passage in Lucretius, to be found in the "Dictionnaire Philosophique," article 'Curiosité.' Voltaire's interpretation of the causes of our pleasure at the distresses from which we are exempt, is both better and more benevolent than the literal sense of Lucretius.

condensed into few volumes, matter for incalculable thought—here, when I recal my remembrances of the world beyond

“ That great sea, whose ebb and flow
At once is deaf and loud,”

and sit me down to weave them into a worldly tale, there comes over me a gentle, but deep delight,

“ Like babbling gossips, safe—who hear the war
Of winds, and sigh—but tremble not.”

I look upon the past as on a different existence from that which I now hold—an existence wherein all ill passions and feverish desires, concentrated in one narrow space, found no outlet, and preyed upon themselves. I know not if my life has been more romantic than that of others; but no fiction that I have ever dreamed of seems to me so strange as the realities I have undergone. But these are sunk into the depths of time;

“ And sand filled up the palaces of old.”

The waters of life flow onward, in a tide so still, so utterly unbroken, that the very heaven and earth, which are their solitary witness,

appear changed from what they were. I sometimes ask my heart for its old ambition, its thirst for pleasure, its craving of enterprise and action, the very melancholy which it once breathed in from all around it, like an air—I ask my heart, but receive no answer: the thousand voices, formerly so loud, are mute; the ancient race of Thought are no more; they have left but a single successor, and its name is “Peace.”

I smile when I think my young desires of fame are sunk into these pages; and wonder that with the smile is mingled no sigh of regret. But the world is not to me what it has been, and “in the hollowness of common praise there is no longer music.” I feel a pleasure even in that thought of oblivion, which once to me seemed the bitterest of pangs—a pleasure, to think that envy, rancour, hatred, will not even have a name to which to cling. None on this earth—not even thou, in whose deep and earnest eyes the love which surpasses thought keeps its unceasing watch—none have pierced the mysteries of my heart—nor shall they! In that temple there is one sanctuary which no human thing shall know. There are some who have loved to find in the beings of romance, a channel,

through which to pour the secrets of their own nature, and have modelled their creations from themselves. To me it has been an aim to shun the ideal fellowship they have sought, and a pleasure to recognize, in the shadows I have called to life, no single congeniality to myself. What triumph to vanity could atone for the sacrifice of pride? Or what is there in the gloom of secrecy to compare with the torment of disclosure? Who that has felt the sanctity of hoarded thought—the reverence, brooding over an eventful but buried past—would bare to the curious crowd, the graves of years, the tombs on which Solitude and Nature have kept watch like angels? Who would “enfeoff to popularity” the shrinking and vestal mind; or render hacknied to the eyes of men the unviolated altars which, in night and loneliness, have been hushed beneath the influence of God?

These digressions and egotisms will be the ruin of my book! Draw up the curtain! The scene is the Opera.

The pit is crowded; the connoisseurs in the front row are in a very ill humour. It must be confessed, that extreme heat is a little trying to the temper of a critic.

The Opera then was not what it is now, nor even what it had been in a former time. It is somewhat amusing to find Goldsmith questioning, in one of his Essays, whether the Opera could ever become popular in England? But on the night on which we have summoned our reader to that "theatre of sweet sounds," a celebrated singer from the continent made his first appearance in London, and all the world thronged to "that odious Opera-house," to hear or to say they had heard the famous Sopraniello.

"A most unusually full house, my lord," said the lean Mr. Callythorpe, to the courtly Earl of Aspeden.

"So full," replied his lordship, with a bow, "that it is quite refreshing to see you. One loves a contrast you know.

" ' Refreshing sight, when at the crowded feast
We hail thy head—*one* empty spot at least.' "

"D——d impertinent!" muttered Mr. Callythorpe.

Clarence now joined them. "How ill you are looking, Linden," said Mr. Callythorpe, rejoiced at an opportunity of venting his spleen.

"It is the mind," said Lord Aspeden; "the

mind is very wearing ; that is what makes you look so like a spectre, my dear Mr. Callythorpe."

"*Spectre*, my lord !" cried the lean gentleman, in a pretty considerable d——d particular rage ; "spectre ! one need not have a plethora to look in health ; and now I think of it, Lord Aspeden, have you seen the doctor who cures fits ? You really ought ; you look very apoplectic. I speak as a friend, you know, my dear lord."

"Odious person !" said Lord Aspeden, to Clarence, in a whisper ; "is it not quite dreadful ? Imagine my having mixed in diplomacy for so many years, to come among these bears at last—after all my compliments too !"—and his lordship smiled and sauntered away.

"Horrid fool that Lord Aspeden !" said Callythorpe ; "if he had stayed two minutes longer I should have told him so, for I never flatter—it is unworthy an English gentleman. By the by, I must go and court Lady —— for a card to her next rout. Do you know, my dear Clarence, that Lord Borodaile says you are no relation to Talbot ? and people begin to ask a great many questions about you, just as if

you were a sharper? You are not offended? I'm your true friend, and always take your part."

"Thank you," said Clarence, hiding with a laugh his vexation; "and so adieu. I am going to make my round through the boxes."

"Oh, Mr. Foreigner, Mr. Foreigner," said Clarence to himself, as he ascended the stairs, "whose name I forget, but who didst tell the credulous Duke of Orleans, that while in all other nations, people inquired into your rank, your power, your pedigree, or your fortune, in England the only question ever asked about you was, 'What sort of a man is he?' Oh! Mr. Foreigner, how grievously were you mistaken, or how lamentably are we changed!"

With a nervous step, Clarence proceeded to Lady Westborough's box; and it was many minutes that he lingered by the door before he summoned courage to obtain admission.

He entered; the box was crowded; but Lady Flora was not there. Lord Borodaile was sitting next to Lady Westborough. As Clarence entered, Lord Borodaile raised his eyebrows, and Lady Westborough her glass. However disposed a great person may be to drop a lesser one, no one of real birth or breeding ever

cuts another. (This fact we beg leave fully to impress upon your mind, my dear Author or Authoress of —; the next time you write a novel, and take the maxims of Brummel, who was not a gentleman, for truths.) Lady Westborough, therefore, though much colder, was no less civil than usual; and Lord Borodaile bowed lower than ever to *Mr.* Linden, as he punctiliously called him. But Clarence's quick eye discovered instantly that he was no welcome intruder, and that his day with the beautiful marchioness was over. His visit, consequently, was short and embarrassed. When he left the box, he heard Lord Borodaile's short, low, sneering laugh, followed by Lady Westborough's "hush" of reproof.

His blood boiled. He hurried along the passage, with his eyes fixed upon the ground, and his hand clenched.

"What, ho! Linden, my good fellow, why you look as if all the ferocity of the great Figg were in your veins," cried a good humoured voice. Clarence started, and saw the young and high spirited Duke of Haverfield.

"Are you going behind the scenes?" said his grace. "I have just come from thence; and you had much better drop into La Meronville's

box with me. You sup with her to-night, do you not?"

"No, indeed!" replied Clarence; "I scarcely know her, except by sight."

"Well, and what think you of her?"

"That she is the prettiest Frenchwoman I ever saw."

"Commend me to secret sympathies!" cried the duke. "She has asked me three times who you were, and told me three times that you were the handsomest man in London, and had quite a foreign air; the latter recommendation being of course far greater than the former. So after this you cannot refuse to accompany me to her box, and make her acquaintance."

"Nay," answered Clarence, "I shall be too happy to profit by the taste of so discerning a person; but it is cruel in you, Duke, not to feign a little jealousy—a little reluctance to introduce so formidable a rival."

"Oh, *quant à moi*," said Haverfield, "I only like her for her mental, not her personal attractions. She is very agreeable, and a little witty; *voilà des attractions pour une femme qui demeure à Londres*."

"But do tell me a little of her history," said Clarence; "for, in spite of her renown, I only

know her as La belle Meronville. Is she not living *en ami* with some one of our acquaintance?"

"To be sure," replied the Duke, "with Lord Borodaile. She is prodigiously extravagant; and Borodaile affects to be prodigiously fond, a thing which you and I, who know (thanks to Trollop) that there is only a certain fund of affection in the 'human mind,' and that all Lord Borodaile's is centred *in* Lord Borodaile, are convinced cannot really be the case."

"Is he jealous of her?" said Clarence.

"Not in the least! nor indeed does she give him any cause. She is very gay, very talkative, gives excellent suppers, and always has her box at the Opera crowded *avec des adorateurs*; but that is all. She encourages many, and favours but one. Happy Borodaile! My lot is less fortunate! You know, I suppose, that Julia has deserted me?"

"You astonish me—and for what?"

"Oh, she told me, with a vehement burst of tears, that she was convinced I did not love her, and that a hundred pounds a month was not sufficient to maintain a milliner's apprentice. I answered the first assertion, by an assurance that I adored her; but I preserved a total

silence with regard to the latter : and so I found Trevanion *tête-à-tête* with her the next day."

"What did you?" said Clarence.

"Sent my valet to Trevanion, with an old coat of mine, my compliments, and my hopes that, as Mr. Trevanion was so fond of my cast off conveniences, he would honour me by accepting the accompanying trifle."

"He challenged you, without doubt?"

"Challenged me! No. He tells all his friends that I am the wittiest man in Europe."

"A fool can speak truth you see," said Clarence, laughing.

"Thank you, Linden: you shall have my good word with La Meronville for that; *mais allons.*"

Mademoiselle *de la Meronville*, as she pointedly entitled herself, was one of those charming adventuresses, who, making the most of a good education and a prepossessing person, a delicate turn *pour des épîtres*, and a lively vein of conversation, come to England for a year or two, as Spaniards were wont to go to Mexico, and who return to their native country with a profound contempt for the barbarians whom they have so egregiously despoiled. M. *de la Meronville* was small, beautifully formed, had the

prettiest hands and feet in the world, and laughed *musically*. By-the-by, how difficult it is to laugh, or even to smile, at once naturally and gracefully. We have often thought it one of Steele's finest touches of character, where he says of Will Honeycomb, "He can smile when one speaks to him, and laughs easily."

In a word, our *jolie Française* was precisely formed to turn the head of a man like Lord Borodaile, whose pride made him love being courted, and whose unintellectuality required to be amused. Madame de la Meronville received Clarence with a great deal of grace, and a little reserve, the first chiefly natural, the last wholly artificial.

"Well," said the duke, (in French), "you have not told me yet who are to be of your party this evening—Borodaile, I suppose, of course?"

"No, he cannot come to-night."

"*Ah, quel malheur!* then the hock will not be iced enough—Borodaile's looks are the best wine coolers in the world."

"Fie!" cried La Meronville, glancing towards Clarence: "I cannot endure your malevolence; wit makes you very bitter."

"And that is exactly the reason why *la*

belle Meronville loves me so ; nothing is so sweet to one person as bitterness upon another ; it is human nature and French nature (which is a very different thing) into the bargain."

"Bah ! my lord duke, you judge of others by yourself."

"To be sure I do," cried his grace : "and that is the best way of forming a right judgment. Ah ! what a foot that *petite demoiselle* has—you don't admire her, Linden?"

"No, duke, my admiration is like the bird in the cage—chained here, and cannot fly away !" answered Clarence, with a smile at the frippery of his compliment.

"Ah, Monsieur," cried the pretty Frenchwoman, leaning back, "you have been at Paris I see—one does not learn those graces of language in England. I have been five months in your country—brought over the prettiest dresses imaginable, and have only received three compliments, and (pity me) two out of the three were upon my pronunciation of 'How do you do !'"

"Well," said Clarence, "I should have imagined that in England, above all other countries, your vanity would have been gratified, for you know we pique ourselves on our sincerity, and say all we think."

“ Yes ! then you always think, very unpleasantly ; *voilà l'alternative !* which is the best, to speak ill or to think ill of one ? ”

“ *Pour l'amour de dieu,* ” cried the duke, “ don't ask such puzzling questions ; you are always getting into those moral subtleties, which I suppose you learn from Borodaile. He is a wonderful metaphysician, I hear—I can answer for his chemical knowledge : the moment he enters a room he draws all the oxygen out of it, the very walls grow damp. As for me, I dissolve ; I should flow into a fountain like Arethusa, if happily his lordship did not freeze one again into substance as fast as he dampens one into thaw. ”

“ *Fi donc !* ” cried La Meronville. “ I should be very angry, had you not taught me to be very indifferent— ”

“ To *him !* ” said the duke, drily. “ I'm glad to hear it. He is not worth *une grande passion*, believe me—but tell me, *ma belle*, who else sups with you ? ”

“ *D'abord*, Monsieur Linden, I trust, ” answered La Meronville, with a look of invitation (not an inviting look), to which Clarence bowed and smiled his assent. “ Milord D——, and

Mons. Trevanion, Mademoiselle Caumartin, and Monsieur Le Prince Pietro d'Urbini."

"Nothing can be better arranged," said the duke. "But see, they are just going to drop the curtain. Let me call your carriage."

"You are too good, milord," replied La Meronville, with a bow, which said, "of course;" and the duke, who would not have stirred three paces for the first princess of the blood, hurried out of the box (despite of Clarence's offer to undertake the commission) to inquire after the carriage of the most notorious adventuress of the day.

Clarence was alone in the box with the beautiful Frenchwoman. To say truth, our hero was far too much in love with Lady Flora, and too occupied, as to his other thoughts, with the projects of ambition, to be easily led into any disreputable or criminal *liaison*; he therefore conversed with his usual ease, though with rather more than his usual gallantry (for he knew well how to suit his language to the person he addressed), without feeling the least touched by the charms of La Meronville, or the least desirous of supplanting Lord Borodaile in her favour.

The duke reappeared, and announced the carriage. As, with *la Meronville* leaning on his arm, Clarence hurried out, he accidentally looked up, and saw on the head of the stairs Lady Westborough with her party (Lord Borodaile among the rest) in waiting for her carriage. For almost the first time in his life, Clarence felt ashamed of himself; his cheek burned like fire, and he involuntarily let go the fair hand which was leaning upon his arm. However, the weaker our cause the better face we should put upon it, and Clarence, recovering his presence of mind, and vainly hoping he had not been perceived, buried his face as well as he was able in the fur collar of his cloak, and hurried on.

“ You saw Lord Borodaile ?” said the duke to *La Meronville*, as he handed her into her carriage.

“ Yes, I accidentally looked back after we had passed him, and then I saw him.”

“ Looked back !” said the duke ; “ I wonder he did not turn you into a pillar of salt.”

“ *Fi donc !*” cried *La belle Meronville*, tapping his grace playfully on the arm, in order to do which *she was forced to lean* a little harder

upon Clarence's, which she had not yet relinquished—" *Fi donc!—François chez moi!*"

"My carriage is just behind," said the duke. "You will go with me to La Meronville's, of course."

"Really, my dear duke," said Clarence, "I wish I could excuse myself from this party. I have another engagement."

"Excuse yourself! and leave me to the mercy of Mademoiselle Caumartin, who has the face of an ostrich, and talks me out of breath! Never, my dear Linden, never! Besides, I want you to see how well I shall behave to Trevanion. Here is the carriage. *Entrez, mon cher.*"

And Clarence weakly and foolishly (but he *was* very young and very unhappy, and so, longing for an escape from his own thoughts) entered the carriage, and drove to the supper party, in order to prevent the Duke of Haverfield being talked out of breath by Mademoiselle Caumartin, who had the face of an ostrich.

CHAPTER XIII.

“ Yet truth is keenly sought for, and the wind
Charg'd with rich words, poured out in thought's defence;
Whether the church inspire that eloquence,
Or a Platonic piety, confin'd
To the sole temple of the inward mind;
And one there is who builds immortal lays,
Though doomed to tread in solitary ways;
Darkness before, and danger's voice behind!
Yet not alone ——”

WORDSWORTH.

LONDON—thou Niobe, who sittest in stone,
amidst thy stricken and fated children;—Nurse
of the desolate, that hidest in thy bosom the
shame, the sorrows, the sins of many sons; in
whose arms the fallen and the outcast shroud
their distresses, and shelter from the proud
man's contumely; Epitome and Focus of the
disparities and maddening contrasts of this

wrong world, that assemblest together in one great heap the woes, the joys, the elevations, the debasements of the various tribes of man; Mightiest of levellers, confounding in thy whirlpool all ranks, all minds, the graven labours of knowledge, the straws of the maniac, purple and rags, the regalities and the loathsomeness of earth — palace and lazar-house combined! Grave of the living, where, mingled and massed together, we couch, but rest not—“for in that sleep *of life* what dreams *do* come”—each vexed with a separate vision—“shadows” which “grieve the heart,” unreal in their substance, but faithful in their warnings, flitting from the eye, but graving unfleeting memories on the mind, which reproduce new dreams over and over, until the phantasm ceases, and the pall of a heavier torpor falls upon the brain, and all is still, and dark, and hushed!—“From the stir of thy great Babel,” and the fixed tinsel glare in which sits Pleasure like a star, “which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays,” we turn to thy deeper and more secret haunts. “Thy wilderness is all before us—where to choose our place of rest;” and to our eyes, thy mysteries are bared, and thy hidden recesses are pierced as with a spell.

The clock of St. Paul's had tolled the second hour of morning. Within a small and humble apartment in the very heart of the city, there sat a writer, whose lucubrations, then obscure and unknown, were destined years afterwards to excite the vague admiration of the crowd, and the deeper homage of the wise. They were of that nature which is slow in winning its way to popular esteem; the result of the hived and hoarded knowledge of years—the produce of deep thought and sublime aspirations, influencing in its bearings the interest of the many, yet only capable of analysis by the judgment of the few. But the stream broke forth at last from the cavern to the daylight, although *the source* was never traced; or, to change the image—albeit none know the hand which executed, and the head which designed—the monument of a mighty intellect has been at length dug up, as it were, from the envious earth, the brighter for its past obscurity, and the more certain of immortality from the temporary neglect it has sustained.

The room was, as we before said, very small and meanly furnished; yet were there a few articles of costliness and luxury scattered about, which told that the tastes of its owner had

not been quite humbled to the level of his fortunes. One side of the narrow chamber was covered with shelves, which supported books, in various languages; and though chiefly on scientific subjects, not utterly confined to them. Among the doctrines of the philosopher, and the golden rules of the moralist, were also seen the pleasant dreams of poets, the legends of Spencer, the refining moralities of Pope, the lofty errors of Lucretius, and the sublime relics of *our* "dead kings of melody."* And over the hearth was a picture, taken in more prosperous days, of one, who had been, and was yet, to the tenant of that abode, better than fretted roofs and glittering banquets, the objects of ambition, or even the immortality of fame. It was the face of one very young and beautiful, and the deep, tender eyes looked down, as with a watchful fondness upon the lucubrador and his labours. While beneath the window, which was left unclosed, for it was scarcely June, were simple, yet not inelegant vases, filled with flowers :

" Those lovely leaves, where we
 May read how soon things have
 Their end, though ne'er so brave."†

* Shakspeare and Milton.

† Herrick.

The writer was alone, and had just paused from his employment: he was leaning his face upon one hand, in a thoughtful and earnest mood, and the air which came chill, but gentle, from the window, slightly stirred the locks from the broad and marked brow, over which they fell in thin but graceful waves. Partly owing perhaps to the waning light of the single lamp, and the lateness of the hour, his cheek seemed very pale, and the complete, though contemplative rest of the features partook greatly of the quiet of habitual sadness, and a little of the languor of shaken health; yet the expression, despite of the proud cast of the brow and profile, was rather benevolent than stern or dark in its pensiveness, and the lines spoke more of the wear and harrow of deep thought, than the inroads of ill-regulated passion.

There was a slight tap at the door—the latch was raised, and the original of the picture we have described entered the apartment.

Time had not been idle with her since that portrait had been taken: the round elastic figure had lost much of its youth and freshness; the step, though light, was languid, and in the centre of the fair, smooth cheek, which was a little sunken, burned one deep bright spot—fatal

sign to those who have watched the progress of the most deadly and deceitful of our national maladies ; yet still the form and countenance were eminently interesting and lovely ; and though the bloom was gone for ever, the beauty which not even death could wholly have despoiled, remained to triumph over debility, misfortune, and disease.

She approached the student, and laid her hand upon his shoulder—

“ Dearest !” said he, tenderly yet reproachfully, “ yet up, and the hour so late, and yourself so weak ? Fie, I must learn to scold you.”

“ And how,” answered the intruder, “ how could I sleep or rest while you are consuming your very life in those thankless labours ?”

“ By which,” interrupted the writer, “ with a faint smile, we glean our scanty subsistence.”

“ Yes,” said the wife (for she held that relation to the student), and the tears stood in her eyes, “ I know well that every morsel of bread, every drop of water is wrung from your very heart’s blood, and I—I am the cause of all ; but surely you exert yourself too much, more than can be requisite. These night damps, this sickly and chilling air, heavy with the rank vapours of

the coming morning, are not suited to thoughts and toils which are alone sufficient to sear your mind and exhaust your strength. Come, my own love, to bed: and yet, first, come and look upon our child, how sound she sleeps! I have leant over her for the last hour, and tried to fancy it was you whom I watched, for she has learnt already your smile, and has it even when she sleeps."

"She has cause to smile," said the husband, bitterly.

"She has, *for she is yours!* and even in poverty and humble hopes, that is an inheritance which may well teach her pride and joy. Come, love, the air is keen, and the damp rises to your forehead—yet stay, till I have kissed it away."

"Mine own love," said the student, as he rose and wound his arm round the slender waist of his wife: "wrap your shawl closer over your bosom, and let us look for one instant upon the night. I cannot sleep till I have slaked the fever of my blood; the air hath nothing of coldness in its breath to me."

And they walked to the window and looked forth. All was hushed and still in the narrow street; the cold grey clouds were hurrying fast along the sky, and the stars, weak and waning

in their light, gleamed forth at rare intervals upon the mute city like the expiring watch-lamps of the dead.

They leaned out, and spoke not ; but when they looked above upon the melancholy heavens, they drew nearer to each other, as if it were their natural instinct to do so, whenever the world without seemed discouraging and sad.

At length the student broke the silence ; but his thoughts, which were wandering and disjointed, were breathed less to her than vaguely and unconsciously to himself. “ Morn breaks—another and another !—day upon day !—while we drag on our load like the blind beast which knows not when the burthen shall be cast off, and the hour of rest be come.”

The woman pressed his hand to her bosom, but made no rejoinder—she knew his mood—and the student continued.

“ And so life frets itself away ! Four years have passed over our seclusion—four years ! a great segment in the little circle of our mortality ; and of those years what day has pleasure won from labour, or what night has sleep snatched wholly from the lamp ? Weaker than the miser, the insatiable and restless mind traverses from east to west ; and from the nooks, and corners, and cre-

vices of earth collects, fragment by fragment, grain by grain, atom by atom, the riches which it gathers to its coffers—for what?—to starve amidst the plenty! The fantasies of the imagination bring a ready and substantial return: not so the treasures of thought.* Better that I had renounced the soul's labour for that of its hardier frame—better that I had 'sweated in the eye of Phoebus,' than 'eat my heart with crosses and with cares,'—seeking truth and wanting bread—adding to the indigence of poverty its humiliation;—wroth with the arrogance of those who weigh in the shallow scales of their meagre

* If the poet, the novelist, the man of letters, sometimes, even in the present day, complains justly of the neglect of his cotemporaries, how can the philosopher, who outstrips his age, hope, until time grows up to the measure of his intellect, to be appreciated, since he is not even understood? In literature, unless it be mingled with moral or political reasonings, there are, comparatively speaking, few prejudices, and still fewer hostile interests, to contend with or assuage. But in science, wherever the innovator treads he tramples upon a long cherished opinion; he is girt round with the sanctity of error. Fond of excitement, we pant for novelty in fiction: interested in the existence of present doctrines, we shudder at novelty in truth. Happy is he who is only neglected—not persecuted or starved! Happy he who, amidst Arcadian plenty, ponders at his leisure upon the subtleties of schoolmen. Let him not lament, *si FRUSTRA sapit*, but rejoice with us that *inter literas NON esurit*.

knowledge the product of lavish thought, and of the hard hours for which health, and sleep, and spirit have been exchanged;—sharing the lot of those who would enchant the old serpent of evil, which refuses the voice of the charmer!—struggling against the prejudice and bigotted delusion of the bandaged and fettered herd to whom, in our fond hopes and aspirations, we trusted to give light and freedom;—seeing the slavish judgments we would have redeemed from error, clashing their chains at us in ire;—made criminal by our very benevolence;—the martyrs whose zeal is rewarded with persecution, whose prophecies are crowned with contempt!—Better, oh, better that I had not listened to the vanity of a heated brain—better that I had made my home with the lark and the wild bee, among the fields and the quiet hills, where life, if obscurer, is less debased, and hope, if less eagerly indulged, is less bitterly disappointed. The frame, it is true, might have been bowed to a harsher labour, but the heart would at least have had its rest from anxiety, and the mind its relaxation from thought.”

The wife's tears fell upon the hand she clasped. The student turned, and his heart smote him for the selfishness of his complaints. He

drew her closer and closer to his bosom; and gazing fondly upon those eyes which years of indigence and care might have robbed of their young lustre, but not of their undying tenderness, he kissed away her tears, and addressed her in a voice which never failed to charm into forgetfulness her grief.

“Dearest and kindest,” he said, “was I not to blame for accusing those privations or regrets which have only made us love each other the more! Trust me, mine own treasure, that it is only in the peevishness of an inconstant and fretful humour, that I have murmured against my fortune: For, in the midst of all, I look upon you, my angel, my comforter, my young dream of love, which God, in his mercy, breathed into waking life—I look upon you, and am blest and grateful. Nor in my juster moments do I accuse even the nature of these studies, though they bring us so scanty a reward. Have I not hours of secret and overflowing delight, the triumphs of gratified research—flashes of sudden light, which reward the darkness of thought, and light up my solitude as a revel?—These feelings of rapture, which nought but Science can afford, amply repay her disciples for worse evils and severer hardships than it has been my destiny to

endure. Look along the sky, how the vapours struggle with the still yet feeble stars: even so have the mists of error been pierced, though not scattered, by the dim but holy lights of past wisdom; and now the morning is at hand, and in that hope we journey on, doubtful, but not utterly in darkness. Nor is this *all my* hope; there *is* a loftier and more steady comfort than that which mere philosophy can bestow. If the certainty of future fame bore Milton rejoicing through his blindness, or cheered Galileo in his dungeon, what stronger and holier support shall not be given to *him* who has loved mankind as his brothers, and devoted his labours to their cause?—who has not sought but relinquished his own renown?—who has braved the present censures of men for their future benefit, and trampled upon glory in the energy of benevolence? Will there not be for him something more powerful than fame to comfort his sufferings now, and to sustain his hopes beyond the grave? If the wish of mere posthumous honour is a feeling rather vain than exalted, the love of our race affords us a more rational and noble desire of remembrance. Come what will, that love, if it animates our toils, and directs our studies, shall, when we are dust, make our relics of value,

our efforts of avail, and consecrate the desire of fame, which were else a passion selfish and impure, by connecting it with the welfare of ages, and the eternal interests of the world and its Creator! Come, my beloved, we will to bed."

CHAPTER XIV.

“A man may be formed by nature for an admirable citizen, and yet, from the purest motives, be a dangerous one to the State in which the accident of birth has placed him.”

STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

THE night again closed, and the student once more resumed his labours. The spirit of his hope and comforter of his toils sat by him, ever and anon lifting her fond eyes from her work to gaze upon his countenance, to sigh, and to return sadly and quietly to her employment.

A heavy step ascended the stairs, the door opened, and the tall figure of Wolfe, the republican, presented itself. The female rose, pushed a chair towards him with a smile and grace suited to better fortunes, and, retiring from the table, reseated herself silent and apart.

“It is a fine night,” said the student, when the mutual greetings were over. “Whence come you?”

“From contemplating human misery and worse than human degradation,” replied Wolfe, slowly seating himself.

“Those words specify no place—they apply universally,” said the student, with a sigh.

“Ay, Glendower, for misgovernment is universal,” rejoined Wolfe.

Glendower made no answer.

“Oh!” said Wolfe, in the low, suppressed tone of intense passion, which was customary to him, “it maddens me to look upon the willingness with which men hug their trappings of slavery,—bears, proud of the rags which deck, and the monkeys which ride them. But it frets me yet more when some lordling sweeps along, lifting his dull eyes above the fools whose only crime and debasement are—what?—their subjection to *him*! Such an one I encountered a few nights since; and he will remember the meeting longer than I shall. I taught that ‘god to tremble.’”

The female rose, glanced towards her husband, and silently withdrew.

Wolfe paused for a few moments, looked curiously and pryingly round, and then rising,

went forth into the passage to see that no loiterer or listener was near—returned, and drawing his chair close to Glendower, fixed his dark eye upon him and said,

“ You are poor, and your spirit rises against your lot; you are just, and your heart swells against the general oppression you behold; can you not dare to remedy your ills, and those of mankind?”

“ I can dare,” said Glendower, calmly, though haughtily, “ all things but crime.”

“ And which is crime? the rising against, or the submission to, evil government? Which is crime, I ask you?”

“ That which is the most imprudent,” answered Glendower. “ We may sport in ordinary cases with our own safeties, but only in rare cases with the safety of others.”

Wolfe rose, and paced the narrow room impatiently to and fro. He paused by the window, and threw it open. “ Come here,” he cried,—“ come and look out.”

Glendower did so—all was still and quiet.

“ Why did you call me?” said he; “ I see nothing.”

“ Nothing?” exclaimed Wolfe, “ look again—look on yon sordid and squalid huts—look at

yon court, that from this wretched street leads to abodes to which these are as palaces : look at yon victims of vice and famine plying beneath the midnight skies their filthy and infectious trade. Wherever you turn your eyes, what see you ? Misery, loathsomeness, sin ! Are you a man, and call you these nothing ! And now lean forth still more—see afar off by yonder lamp, the mansion of ill-gotten and griping wealth. He who owns those buildings, what did he that he should riot while we starve ? He wrung from the negro's tears and bloody sweat, the luxuries of a pampered and vitiated taste ; he pandered to the excesses of the rich ; he heaped their tables with the product of a nation's groans. Lo !—his reward ! He is rich—prosperous—honoured ! He sits in the legislative assembly ; he declaims against immorality ; he contends for the safety of property, and the equilibrium of ranks. Transport yourself from this spot for an instant — imagine that you survey the gorgeous homes of aristocracy and power—the palaces of the west. What see you there—the few, sucking, draining, exhausting the blood, the treasure, the very existence of the many. Are we, who are of the many, wise to suffer it ?”

“Are we of the many !” said Glendower.

“We could be,” said Wolfe, hastily.

“I doubt it,” replied Glendower.

“Listen,” said the republican, laying his hand upon Glendower’s shoulder, “listen to me. There are in this country, men, whose spirits not years of delayed hope, wearisome persecution, and, bitterer than all, misrepresentation from some, and contempt from others, have yet quelled and tamed. We watch our opportunity ; the growing distress of the country, the increasing severity and misrule of the administration, will soon afford it us. Your talents, your benevolence, render you worthy to join us. Do so, and—”

“Hush !” interrupted the student : “you know not what you say ; you weigh not the folly, the madness of your design ! I am a man more fallen, more sunken, more disappointed than you. I, too, have had at my heart the burning and lonely hope, which, through years of misfortune and want, has comforted me with the thought of serving and enlightening mankind—I, too, have devoted to the fulfilment of that hope, days and nights, in which the brain grew dizzy, and the heart heavy and clogged with the intensity of my pursuits.

Were the dungeon and the scaffold my reward, Heaven knows that I would not flinch eye or hand, or abate a jot of heart and hope in the thankless prosecution of my toils. Know me, then, as one of fortunes more desperate than your own ; of an ambition more unquenchable ; of a philanthropy no less ardent ; and, I *will* add, of a courage no less firm : and behold the utter hopelessness of your projects with others, when to me they only appear the visions of an enthusiast !”

Wolfe sunk down in the chair.

“ Is it even so ?” said he, slowly and musingly. “ Are my hopes but delusions ?—Has my life been but one idle though convulsive dream ?—Is the goddess of our religion banished from this great and populous earth, to the seared and barren hearts of a few solitary worshippers, whom all else despise as madmen, or persecute as idolaters ?—And if so, shall we adore her the less ?—No ! though we perish in her cause, it is around her altar that our corpses shall be found !”

“ My friend,” said Glendower, kindly, for he was touched by the sincerity, though opposed to the opinions of the republican, “ the night is yet early : we will trim the lamp, and sit down to

discuss our several doctrines calmly, and in the spirit of truth and investigation."

"Away!" cried Wolfe, rising and slouching his hat over his bent and lowering brows; "away! I will not listen to you—I dread your reasonings—I would not have a particle of my faith shaken. If I err, I have erred from my birth: erred with Brutus and Tell, Hampden and Milton, and all whom the thousand tribes and parties of earth consecrate with their common gratitude and eternal reverence. In that error I will die! If our party can struggle not with hosts, there may yet arise some minister with the ambition of Cæsar, if not his genius—of whom a single dagger can rid the earth!"

"And if not?" said Glendower.

"I have the same dagger for myself!" replied Wolfe, as he closed the door.

CHAPTER XV.

“ Thus I clothe my naked villany
With old odd ends, stolen forth of holy writ,
And seem a saint when most I play the devil.”

SHAKSPEARE.

THE only two acquaintances in this populous city, whom Glendower possessed, who were aware that in a former time he had known a better fortune, were Wolfe, and a person, of far higher worldly estimation, of the name of Crauford. With the former the student had become acquainted by the favour of chance, which had for a short time made them lodgers in the same house. Of the particulars of Glendower's earlier history, Wolfe was utterly ignorant; but the addresses upon some old letters, which he had accidentally seen, had informed him, that Glendower had formerly borne another

name ; and it was easy to glean from the student's conversation, that something of greater distinction and prosperity than he now enjoyed, was coupled with the appellation he had renounced. Proud, melancholy, austere—brooding upon thoughts, whose very loftiness received somewhat of additional grandeur from the gloom which encircled it—Glendower found in the ruined hopes and the solitary lot of the republican, that congeniality which neither Wolfe's habits, nor the excess of his political fervour might have afforded to a nature which philosophy had rendered moderate and early circumstances refined. Crauford was far better acquainted than Wolfe with the reverses Glendower had undergone. Many years ago, he had known, and indeed travelled with him upon the continent ; since then, they had not met till about six months prior to the time in which Glendower is presented to the reader. It was in an obscure street of the city, that Crauford had then encountered Glendower, whose haunts were so little frequented by the higher orders of society, that Crauford was the first, and the only one, of his former acquaintance, with whom for years he had been brought into contact. That person recognized him at once, accosted

him, followed him home, and three days afterwards surprised him with a visit. Of manners which, in their dissimulation, extended far beyond the ease and breeding of the world, Crauford readily appeared not to notice the altered circumstances of his old acquaintance; and by a tone of conversation artfully respectful, he endeavoured to remove from Glendower's mind that soreness which his knowledge of human nature told him his visit was calculated to create.

There is a certain species of pride which contradicts the ordinary symptoms of the feeling, and appears most elevated when it would be reasonable to expect it should be most depressed. Of this sort was Glendower's. When he received the guest who had known him in his former prosperity, some natural sentiment of emotion called, it is true, to his pale cheek a momentary flush, as he looked round his humble apartment, and the evident signs of poverty it contained; but his address was calm and self-possessed, and whatever mortification he might have felt, no intonation of his voice, no tell-tale embarrassment of manner, revealed it. Encouraged by this air, even while he was secretly vexed by it, and perfectly unable to do justice to the dignity of mind which gave something of majesty, rather than

humiliation, to misfortune, Crauford resolved to repeat his visit, and by intervals, gradually lessening, renewed it, till acquaintance seemed, though little tinctured, at least on Glendower's side, by *friendship*, to assume the semblance of *intimacy*. It was true, however, that he had something to struggle against in Glendower's manner, which certainly grew colder in proportion to the repetition of the visits; and, at length, Glendower said, with an ease and quiet which abashed, for a moment, an effrontery both of mind and manner, which was almost without parallel—"Believe me, Mr. Crauford, I feel fully sensible of your attentions; but as circumstances at present are such as to render an intercourse between us little congenial to the habits and sentiments of either, you will probably understand and forgive my motives in wishing no longer to receive civilities which, however I may feel, I am unable to return."

Crauford coloured, and hesitated, before he replied. "Forgive me," then said he, "for my fault. I did venture to hope that no circumstances would break off an acquaintance to me so valuable. Forgive me if I did imagine that an intercourse between mind and mind could be equally carried on, whether the mere body were

lodged in a palace or a hovel;" and then suddenly changing his tone into that of affectionate warmth, Crauford continued: "My dear Glendower, my dear friend, I would say, if I durst, is not your pride rather to blame here? Believe me, in my turn, I fully comprehend and bow to it; but it wounds me beyond expression. Were you in your proper station, a station much higher than my own, I would come to you at once, and proffer my friendship—as it is, I cannot; but your pride wrongs me, Glendower—indeed it does."

And Crauford turned away, apparently in the bitterness of wounded feeling.

Glendower was touched; and his nature, as kind as it was proud, immediately smote him for conduct certainly ungracious, and perhaps ungrateful. He held out his hand to Crauford; with the most respectful warmth, that personage seized and pressed it; and from that time Crauford's visits appeared to receive a license which, if not perfectly welcome, was at least never again questioned.

"I shall have this man now," muttered Crauford, between his ground teeth, as he left the house, and took his way to his counting-house. There, cool, bland, fawning, and weaving in his

close and dark mind various speculations of guilt and craft, he sat among his bills and gold like the very gnome and personification of that Mammon of gain to which he was the most supple, though concealed adherent.

Richard Crauford was of a new, but not unimportant family. His father had entered into commerce, and left a flourishing firm, and a name of great respectability in his profession, to his son. That son was a man whom many and opposite qualities rendered a character of very singular and uncommon stamp. Fond of the toiling acquisition of money, he was equally attached to the ostentatious pageantries of expense. Profoundly skilled in the calculating business of his profession, he was devoted equally to the luxuries of pleasure; but the pleasure was suited well to the mind which pursued it. The divine intoxication of that love where the delicacies and purities of affection consecrate the humanity of passion, was to him a thing that not even his youngest imagination had ever dreamt of. The social concomitants of the wine cup (which have for the lenient an excuse, for the austere a temptation)—the generous expanding of the heart—the increased yearning to kindly affection—the lavish spirit throwing off its exuber-

rance in the thousand lights and emanations of wit—these which have rendered the molten grape, despite of its excesses, not unworthy of the praises of immortal hymns, and taken harshness from the judgment of those averse to its enjoyment—these never presented an inducement to the stony temperament and dormant heart of Richard Crauford.

He looked upon the essences of things internal, as the common eye upon outward nature, and loved the many shapes of evil as the latter does the varieties of earth, not for their graces, but their utility. His loves, coarse and low, fed their rank fires from an unmingled and gross depravity. His devotion to wine was either solitary and unseen—for he loved safety better than mirth—or in company with those whose station flattered his vanity, not whose fellowship ripened his crude and nipped affections. Even the recklessness of vice in him had the character of prudence; and in the most rapid and turbulent stream of his excesses, one might detect the rocky and unmoved heart of the calculator at the bottom.

Cool, sagacious, profound in dissimulation, and not only observant of, but deducing sage consequences from, those human inconsistencies

and frailties by which it was his aim to profit, he cloaked his deeper vices with a masterly hypocrisy—and for those too dear to forego, and too difficult to conceal, he obtained pardon by the intercession of virtues it cost him nothing to assume. Regular in his attendance at worship—professing rigidness of faith, beyond the tenets of the orthodox church—subscribing to the public charities, where the common eye knoweth what the private hand giveth—methodically constant to the forms of business—primitively scrupulous in the proprieties of speech—hospitable, at least to his superiors—and, being naturally smooth, both of temper and address, popular with his inferiors—it was no marvel that one part of the world forgave, to a man rich and young, the irregularities of dissipation—that another forgot real immorality in favour of affected religion—or that the remainder allowed the most unexceptionable excellence of words to atone for the unobtrusive errors of a conduct which prejudiced not *them*.

“ It is true,” said his friends, “ that he loves women too much; but he is young—he will marry and amend.”

Mr. Crauford did *marry*—and, strange as it may seem, for love—at least for that brute-like

love, of which only he was capable. After a few years of ill-usage on his side, and endurance on his wife's, they parted. Disgusted with her person, and profiting by her gentleness of temper, he sent her to an obscure corner of the country, to starve upon the miserable pittance which was all he allowed her from his superfluities. Even then—such is the effect of the showy proprieties of form and word—Mr. Crauford sunk not in the estimation of the world.

“ It was easy to see,” said the spectators of his domestic drama, “ that a man in temper so mild—in his business so honourable—so civil of speech—so attentive to the stocks and the sermon—could not have been the party to blame. One never knew the rights of matrimonial disagreements, nor could sufficiently estimate the provoking disparities of temper. Certainly Mrs. Crauford never did look in good humour, and had not the open countenance of her husband ; and certainly the very excesses of Mr. Crauford betokened a generous warmth of heart, which the sullenness of his conjugal partner might easily chill and revolt.”

And thus, unquestioned and unblamed, Mr. Crauford walked onward in his beaten way ; and secretly laughing at the toleration of the crowd,

continued at his luxurious villa, the orgies of a passionless yet brutal sensuality.

So far might the character of Richard Crauford find parallels in hypocrisy and its success. Dive we now deeper into his soul. Possessed of talents, which, though of a secondary rank, were in that rank consummate, Mr. Crauford could not be a villain by intuition, or the irregular bias of his nature: he was a villain upon a grander scale; he was a villain upon system. Having little learning, and less knowledge, out of his profession, his reflection expended itself upon apparently obvious deductions from the great and mysterious book of life. He saw vice prosperous in externals, and from this sight his conclusion was drawn. "Vice," said he, "is not an obstacle to success; and if so, it is at least a pleasanter road to it than your narrow and thorny ways of virtue." But there are certain vices which require the mask of virtue, and Crauford thought it easier to wear the mask than to school his soul to the reality. So to the villain he added the hypocrite. He found the success equalled his hopes, for he had both craft and genius: nor was he, naturally, without the minor amiabilities, which to the ignorance of the herd seem more valuable than coin of a more important amount.

Blinded as we are by prejudice, we not only *mistake* but *prefer* decencies to moralities; and, like the inhabitants of Cos, when offered the choice of two statues of the same goddess, we choose, not that which is the most beautiful, but that which is the most dressed.

Accustomed easily to dupe mankind, Crauford soon grew to despise them; and from justifying roguery by his own interest, he now justified it by the folly of others: and as no wretch is so unredeemed as to be without excuse to himself, Crauford actually persuaded his reason, that he was virtuous upon principle, and a rascal on a system of morality. But why the desire of this man, so consummately worldly and heartless, for an intimacy with the impoverished and powerless student? This question is easily answered. In the first place, during Crauford's acquaintance with Glendower abroad, the latter had often, though innocently, galled the vanity and self-pride of the *roturier* affecting the aristocrat, and in poverty, the *roturier* was anxious to retaliate. But this desire would probably have passed away after he had satisfied his curiosity, or gloated his spite, by one or two insights into Glendower's home—for Crauford, though at times a malicious, was not a vindic-

tive man—had it not been for a much more powerful object which afterwards occurred to him. In an extensive scheme of fraud, which for many years this man had carried on, and which for secrecy and boldness was almost unequalled, it had of late become necessary to his safety to have a partner, or rather tool. A man of education, talent, and courage, was indispensable, and Crauford had resolved that Glendower should be that man. With the supreme confidence in his own powers, which long success had given him—with a sovereign contempt for, or rather disbelief in human integrity—and with a thorough conviction that the bribe to him was the bribe with all, and that none could on any account be poor if they had the offer to be rich, Crauford did not bestow a moment's consideration upon the difficulty of his task, or conceive that in the nature and mind of Glendower there could exist any obstacle to his design.

Men addicted to calculation are accustomed to suppose those employed in the same mental pursuit arrive, or ought to arrive, at the same final conclusion. Now, looking upon Glendower as a philosopher, Crauford looked upon him as a man who, however he might conceal his real opinions, secretly laughed, like Crauford's self,

not only at the established customs, but at the established moralities of the world. Ill acquainted with books, our worthy Richard was, like all men similarly situated, somewhat infected by the very prejudices he affected to despise; and the vulgar ill-opinion of the hearts of those who cultivate the head, he in no small degree shared. Glendower himself had confirmed this opinion by lauding, though he did not entirely subscribe to, those moralists who have made an enlightened self-interest the proper measure of all human conduct; and Crauford, utterly unable to comprehend this system in its grand, naturally interpreted it in a partial sense. Espousing self-interest as his own code, he deemed that in reality Glendower's principles did not differ greatly from his; and as there is no pleasure to a hypocrite like that of finding a fit opportunity to unburthen some of his real sentiments, Crauford was occasionally wont to hold some conference and argument with the student, in which his opinions were not utterly cloaked in their usual disguise; but, cautious even in his candour, he always forbore stating such opinions as his own: he merely mentioned them as those which a man, beholding the villainies and follies of his kind, might be tempted

to form; and thus Glendower, though not greatly esteeming his acquaintance, looked upon him as one ignorant in opinion, but not likely to err in conduct.

These conversations did, however, it is true, increase Crauford's estimate of Mordaunt's integrity, but they by no means diminished his confidence of subduing it. Honour, a deep and pure sense of the divinity of good, the steady desire of rectitude, and the supporting aid of a sincere religion—these he did not deny to his intended tool; he rather rejoiced that he possessed them. With the profound arrogance, the sense of immeasurable superiority which men of no principle invariably feel for those who have it, Crauford said to himself, "Those very virtues will be my best dupes—they cannot resist the temptations I shall offer, but they can resist any offer to betray me afterwards, for no man can resist hunger; but your fine feelings, your nice honour, your precise religion—he! he! he!—these can teach a man very well to resist a common inducement: they cannot make him submit to be his own executioner; but they can prevent his turning king's evidence, and being executioner to another. No, no—it is not to your common rogues that I may dare

trust my secret—*my* secret, which is my life ! It is precisely of such a fine, Athenian, moral rogue as I shall make my proud friend, that I am in want. But he has some silly scruples ; we must beat them away—we must not be too rash ; and, above all, we must leave the best argument to poverty. Want is your finest orator ;—a starving wife—a famished brat—he ! he !—these are your true tempters—your true fathers of crime, and fillers of gaols and gibbets. Let me see : he has no money I know, but what he gets from that bookseller. What bookseller, by-the-by ? Ah, rare thought ! I'll find out, and cut off that supply. My lady wife's cheek will look somewhat thinner next month, I fancy—he ! he ! But 'tis a pity, for she is a glorious creature ! Who knows but I may serve two purposes. However, one at present ; business first, and pleasure afterwards—and faith, the business is damnably like that of life and death."

Muttering such thoughts as these, Crauford took his way one evening to Glendower's house.

CHAPTER XVI.

“*Iago.*—Virtue ; a fig !—’tis in ourselves that we are thus and thus.”

Othello.

“So—so, my young friend, let me not disturb you. Madam, dare I venture to hope your acceptance of this fruit ? I chose it myself, and I am somewhat of a judge. Oh ! Glendower, here is the pamphlet you wished to see.”

With this salutation, Crauford drew his chair to the table by which Glendower sate, and entered into conversation with his purposed victim. A comely and a pleasing countenance had Richard Crauford ! The lonely light of the room fell upon a face which, though forty years

of guile had gone over it, was as fair and un-wrinkled as a boy's. Small, well cut features—a blooming complexion—eyes of the lightest blue—a forehead high though narrow, and a mouth from which the smile was never absent: these, joined to a manner at once soft and confident, and an elegant, though unaffected study of dress, gave to Crauford a personal appearance well suited to aid the effect of his hypocritical and dissembling mind.

“Well, my friend,” said he, “always at your books—eh! Ah! it is a happy taste; would that I had cultivated it more; but we who are condemned to business have little leisure to follow our own inclinations. It is only on Sundays that I have time to read; and then, to say truth, I am an old-fashioned man, whom the gayer part of the world laughs at; and then I am too occupied with the book of books, to think of any less important study.”

Not deeming that a peculiar reply was required to this pious speech, Glendower did not take that advantage of Crauford's pause which it was evidently intended that he should. With a glance towards the student's wife, our mercantile friend continued:—“I did once—once, in

my young dreams intend—that whenever I married I would relinquish a profession for which, after all, I am but little calculated. I pictured to myself a country retreat, well stored with books; and having concentrated in one home all the attractions which could have tempted my thoughts abroad, I had designed to surrender myself solely to those studies which, I lament to say, were but ill attended to in my earlier education. But—but,”—(here Mr. Crauford sighed deeply, and averted his face)—“fate willed it otherwise!”

Whatever reply of sympathetic admiration or condolence Glendower might have made, was interrupted by one of those sudden and overpowering attacks of faintness which had of late seized the delicate and declining health of his wife. He rose, and leant over her with a fondness and alarm which curled the lip of his visitor.

“Thus it is,” said Crauford to himself, “with weak minds, under the influence of habit. The love of lust becomes the love of custom, and the last is as strong as the first.”

When she had recovered, she rose, and (with her child) retired to rest, the only restorative she ever found effectual for her complaint. Glendower went with her, and after having seen

her eyes, which swam with tears of gratitude at his love, close in the seeming slumber she affected, in order to release him from his watch, he returned to Crauford. He found that gentleman leaning against the chimney-piece with folded arms, and apparently immersed in thought. A very good opportunity had Glendower's absence afforded to a man, whose boast it was never to lose one. Looking over the papers on the table, he had seen and possessed himself of the address of the bookseller the student dealt with. "So much for business—now for philanthropy," said Mr. Crauford, in his favourite antithetical phrase, throwing himself in his attitude against the chimney-piece.

As Glendower entered, Crauford started from his reverie, and, with a melancholy air and pensive voice, said—

"Alas, my friend, when I look upon this humble apartment, the weak health of your unequalled wife—your obscurity—your misfortunes; when I look upon these, and contrast them with your mind, your talents, all that you were born and fitted for; I cannot but feel tempted to believe with those who imagine the pursuit of virtue a chimera, and who justify their own worldly policy by the example of all their kind."

“Virtue,” said Glendower, “would, indeed, be a chimera, did it require support from those whom you have cited.”

“True — most true,” answered Crauford, somewhat disconcerted in reality, though not in appearance; “and yet, strange as it may seem, I have known some of those persons very good, admirably good men. They were extremely moral and religious; they only played the great game for worldly advantages upon the same terms as the other players; nay, they never made a move in it without most fervently and sincerely praying for divine assistance.”

“I readily believe you,” said Glendower, who always, if possible, avoided a controversy—“the easiest person to deceive is one’s own self.”

“Admirably said,” answered Crauford; who thought it, nevertheless, one of the most foolish observations he had ever heard. “Admirably said—and yet my heart does grieve bitterly for the trials and distresses it surveys. One must make excuses for poor human frailty; and one is often placed in such circumstances as to render it scarcely possible, without the grace of God”—(here Crauford lifted up his eyes)—“not to be urged, as it were, into the reasonings and actions of the world.”

Not exactly comprehending this observation, and not very closely attending to it, Glendower merely bowed, as in assent, and Crauford continued.

“I remember a remarkable instance of this truth. One of my partner’s clerks had, through misfortune or imprudence, fallen into the greatest distresses. His wife, his children (he had a numerous family), were on the literal and absolute verge of starvation. Another clerk, taking advantage of these circumstances, communicated to the distressed man a plan for defrauding his employer. The poor fellow yielded to the temptation, and was at last discovered. I spoke to him myself, for I was interested in his fate, and had always esteemed him.—‘What,’ said I, ‘was your motive to this fraud?’—‘My duty!’ answered the man fervently; ‘my duty. Was I to suffer my wife, my children, to starve before my very face, when I could save them at a little personal risk? No—my duty forbade it!’—and in truth, Glendower, there was something very plausible in this manner of putting the question.”

“You might, in answering it,” said Glendower, “have put the point in a manner equally plausible, and more true: was he to commit a

great crime against the millions connected by social order, for the sake of serving a single family?"

"Quite right," answered Crauford; "that was just the point of view in which I did put it—but the man who was something of a reasoner, replied, 'Public law is instituted for public happiness. Now, if *mine* and my children's happiness is infinitely and immeasurably more served by this comparatively petty fraud, than my employer's is advanced by my abstaining from or injured by my committing it, why, the origin of law itself allows me to do it.' What say you to that, Glendower? It is something in your own Utilitarian, or, as you term it, Epicurean* principle; is it not?" and Crauford, shading his eyes, as if from the light, watched narrowly Glendower's countenance, while he concealed his own.

"Poor fool!" said Glendower: "the man was ignorant of the first lesson in his moral primer. Did he not know that no rule is to be applied to a peculiar instance, but extended to its

* See the article on Mr. Moore's Epicurean in the Westminster Review. Though we deem the strictures on that beautiful work harsh and unjust, yet the part relating to the real philosophy of Epicurus is one of the most masterly things in criticism.

most general bearings? Is it necessary even to observe, that the particular consequence of fraud in this man might, it is true, be but the ridding his employer of superfluities, scarcely missed, for the relief of most urgent want in two or three individuals; but the general consequences of fraud and treachery would be the disorganization of all society? Do not think, therefore, that this man was a disciple of mine, or of any system of morality."

"It is very just, very," said Mr. Crauford, with a benevolent sigh; "but you will own that want seldom allows great nicety in moral distinctions, and that, when those whom you love most in the world are starving, you may be pitied, if not forgiven, for losing sight of the after laws of Nature, and recurring to her first ordinance, self-preservation."

"We should be harsh, indeed," answered Glendower, "if we did not pity; or, even while the law condemned, if the individual did not forgive."

"So I said, so I said," cried Crauford; "and in interceding for the poor fellow, whose pardon I am happy to say I procured, I could not help declaring, that if I were placed in the same

circumstances, I am not sure that my crime would not have been the same."

"No man *could* feel sure!" said Glendower, dejectingly.

Delighted and surprised with this confession, Crauford continued:—"I believe—I fear not—thank God, *our* virtue can never be so tried; but even you, Glendower, even *you*, philosopher, moralist as you are—just, good, wise, religious—even you might be tempted, if you saw your angel wife dying for want of the aid, the very sustenance, necessary to existence, and your innocent and beautiful daughter stretch her little hands to you, and cry in the accents of famine for bread."

The student made no reply for a few moments, but averted his countenance, and then in a slow tone said, "Let us drop this subject: none know their strength till they are tried: self-confidence should accompany virtue, but not precede it."

A momentary flush broke from the usually calm, cold eye, of Richard Crauford. "He is mine," thought he: "the very name of want abases his pride: what will the reality do? O human nature, how I know and mock thee!"

“ You are right,” said Crauford, aloud ; “ let us talk of the pamphlet.”

And after a short conversation upon indifferent subjects, the visitor departed.

Early the next morning was Mr. Crauford seen on foot, taking his way to the bookseller, whose address he had learnt. This bookseller was known as a man of a strongly evangelical bias. “ We must insinuate a lie or two,” said Crauford, inly, “ about Glendower’s principles. He ! he ! it will be a fine stroke of genius to make the upright tradesman suffer Glendower to starve, out of a principle of religion. But who would have thought my prey had been so easily snared ?—why, if I had proposed the matter last night, I verily think he would have agreed to it.”

Amusing himself with these thoughts, Crauford arrived at the bookseller’s. There he found Fate had saved him from one crime at least. The whole house was in confusion—the bookseller had that morning died of an apoplectic fit.

“ Good God ! how shocking !” said Crauford to the foreman ; “ but he was a most worthy man, and Providence could no longer spare him. The ways of Heaven are inscrutable ! Oblige me with three copies of that precious tract

termed the 'Divine Call.' I should like to be allowed permission to attend the funeral of so excellent a man. Good morning, Sir—Alas! alas!" and shaking his head piteously, Mr. Crauford left the shop.

"Hurra!" said he, almost audibly, when he was once more in the street, "hurra! my victim is made, my game is won—death or the devil fights for me. But, hold—there are other book-sellers in this monstrous city!—ay, but not above two or three in our philosopher's way. I must forestall him there—so, so—that is soon settled. Now, then, I must leave him a little while undisturbed to his fate. Perhaps my next visit may be to him in gaol; your debtors' side of the Fleet is almost as good a pleader as an empty stomach—he! he! he!—but the stroke must be made soon, for time presses, and this d—d business spreads so fast, that if I don't have a speedy help, it will be too much for my hands, griping as they are. However, if it holds on a year longer, I will change my seat in the lower House for one in the upper; twenty thousand pounds to the minister may make a merchant a very pretty peer. O brave Richard Crauford, wise Richard Crauford, fortunate Richard Crauford, *noble* Richard Crauford! Why, if thou art ever

hanged, it will be by a jury of *peers*. 'Gad, the rope would then have a dignity in it, instead of disgrace. But stay, here comes the Dean of —; not orthodox, it is said—rigid Calvinist—out with the 'Divine Call!'

When Mr. Richard Crauford repaired next to Glendower, what was his astonishment and dismay at hearing he had left his home, none knew whither, nor could give the inquirer the slightest clue.

"How long has he left?" said Crauford to the landlady.

"Five days, Sir."

"And will he not return to settle any little debts he may have incurred?" said Crauford.

"Oh, no, Sir—he paid them all before he went. Poor gentleman—for though he was poor, he was the finest and most thorough gentleman I ever saw—my heart bled for him. They parted with all their valuables to discharge their debts: the books, and instruments, and busts—all went; and what I saw, though he spoke so indifferently about it, hurt him the most—he sold even the lady's picture. 'Mrs. Croftson,' said he, 'Mr. —, the painter, will send for that picture the day after I leave you. See that he

has it, and that the greatest care is taken of it in delivery.’”

“And you cannot even guess where he has gone to?”

“No, Sir; a single porter was sufficient to convey his remaining goods, and he took him from some distant part of the town.”

“Ten thousand devils!” muttered Crauford, as he turned away. “I should have foreseen this! He is lost now. Of course he will again change his name; and in the d—d holes and corners of this gigantic puzzle of houses, how shall I ever find him out?—and time presses too! Well, well, well! there is a fine prize for being cleverer, or, as fools would say, more rascally than others; but there is a world of trouble in winning it. But come—I will go home, lock myself up, and get drunk! I am as melancholy as a cat in love, and about as stupid; and, faith, one must get spirits in order to hit on a new invention. But if there be consistency in fortune, or success in perseverance, or wit in Richard Crauford, that man shall yet be my victim—and preserver!”

CHAPTER XVII.

“Revenge is now the cud
That I do chew.—I’ll challenge him.”

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

WE return to “the world of fashion,” as the admirers of the polite novel of —— would say. The noon-day sun broke hot and sultry through half-closed curtains of roseate silk, playing in broken beams upon rare and fragrant exotics, which cast the perfumes of southern summers over a chamber, moderate, indeed, as to its dimensions, but decorated with a splendour rather gaudy than graceful, and indicating much more a passion for luxury than a refinement of taste.

At a small writing-table sat the beautiful La Meronville. She had just finished a note, written

(how Jean Jacques would have been enchanted!) upon paper *couleur de rose*, with a mother-of-pearl pen, formed as one of Cupid's darts, dipped into an inkstand of the same material, which was shaped as a quiver, and placed at the back of a little Love, exquisitely wrought. She was folding this billet, when a page, fantastically dressed, entered, and, announcing Lord Borodaile, was immediately followed by that nobleman. Eagerly and almost blushing did La Meronville thrust the note into her bosom, and hasten to greet and to embrace her adorer. Lord Borodaile flung himself on one of the sofas with a listless and discontented air. The experienced Frenchwoman saw that there was a cloud on his brow—

“My dear friend,” said she, in her own tongue, “you seem vexed—has any thing annoyed you?”

“No, Cecile, no.—By the by, who supped with you last night?”

“Oh! the Duke of Haverfield—your friend.”

“My friend!” interrupted Borodaile, haughtily—“he's no friend of mine—a vulgar, talkative fellow!—my friend, indeed!”

“Well, I beg your pardon: then there was Mademoiselle Caumartin, and the Prince Pietro

del Orbino, and Mr. Trevanion, and Mr. Lin—Lin—Linten, or Linden.”

“ And, pray, will you allow me to ask how you became acquainted with Mr. Lin—Lin—Linten, or Linden ?”

“ Assuredly—through the Duke of Haverfield.”

“ Humph. — Cecile, my love, that young man is not fit to be the acquaintance of my *amante*—allow me to strike him from your list.”

“ Certainly, certainly !” said La Meronville, hastily ; and stooping as if to pick up a fallen glove, though, in reality, to hide her face from Lord Borodaile’s searching eye, the letter she had written fell from her bosom. Lord Borodaile’s glance detected the superscription, and before La Meronville could regain the note, he had possessed himself of it.

“ A Monsieur Monsieur Linden !” said he, coldly, reading the address ; “ and, pray, how long have you corresponded with that gentleman ?”

Now La Meronville’s situation at that moment was by no means agreeable. She saw at one glance that no falsehood or artifice could avail her ; for Lord Borodaile might deem

himself fully justified in reading the note, which would contradict any glossing statement she might make. She saw this. She was a woman of independence—cared not a straw for Lord Borodaile at present, though she *had* had a caprice for him—knew that she might choose her *bon ami* out of all London, and replied—

“That is the first letter I ever wrote to him ; but I own that it will not be the last.”

Lord Borodaile turned pale.

“And will you suffer me to read it?” said he ; for even in these cases he was punctiliously honourable.

La Meronville hesitated. She did not know him. ‘If I do not consent,’ thought she, ‘he will do it without the consent: better submit with a good grace.’—“Certainly !” she answered, with an air of indifference.

Borodaile opened and read the note ; it was as follows :

“You have inspired me with a feeling for you which astonishes myself. Ah, why should that love be the strongest which is the swiftest in its growth ? I used to love Lord Borodaile—I now only esteem him—the love has flown to you. If I judge rightly from your words and

your eyes, this avowal will not be unwelcome to you. Come and assure me, in person, of a persuasion so dear to my heart.

“ C. L. M.”

“ A very pretty effusion !” said Lord Borodaile, sarcastically, and only shewing his inward rage, by the increasing paleness of his complexion, and a slight compression of his lip. “ I thank you for your confidence in me. All that I ask is, that you will not send this note till tomorrow. Allow me to take my leave of you first, and to find in Mr. Linden a successor rather than a rival.”

“ Your request, my friend,” said La Meronville, adjusting her hair, “ is but reasonable. I see that you understand these arrangements, and for my part I think that the end of love should always be the beginning of friendship—let it be so with us !”

“ You do me too much honour,” said Borodaile, bowing profoundly. “ Meanwhile I depend upon your promise, and bid you, as a lover, farewell for ever.”

With his usual slow step Lord Borodaile descended the stairs, and walked towards the central *quartier* of town. His meditations were of no

soothing nature. "To be seen by that man in a ridiculous and degrading situation—to be pestered with his d—d civility—to be rivalled by him with Lady Flora—to be duped and outdone by him with my mistress! Ay:—all this have I been; but vengeance shall come yet. As for La Meronville, the loss is a gain; and, thank Heaven, I did not betray myself by venting my passion and making a scene. But it was I who ought to have discarded her—not the reverse—and—death and confusion—for that upstart, above all men! And she talked in her letter about his eyes and words. Insolent coxcomb, to dare to have eyes and words for one who belonged to me. Well, well, he shall smart for this. But let me consider—I must not play the jealous fool—must not fight for a *fille Française*—must not show the world that a man, nobody knows who, could really outwit and outdo me—me—Francis Borodaile!—No, no—I must throw the insult upon him—must myself be the aggressor—and the challenged; then, too, I shall have the choice of weapons—pistols of course. Where shall I hit him, by the by?—I wish I shot as well as I used to do at Naples. I was in full practice then.—Cursed place, where there was nothing else to do but to practise."

Immersed in these, or somewhat similar reflections, did Lord Borodaile enter Pall Mall.

“Ah, Borodaile!” said Lord St. George, suddenly emerging from a shop. “This is really fortunate—you are going my way exactly—allow me to join you.”

Now Lord Borodaile, to say nothing of his happening at that time to be in a mood more than usually unsocial, could never at *any* time bear the thought of being made an instrument of convenience, pleasure, or good fortune to another. He, therefore, with a little resentment at Lord St. George’s familiarity, coldly replied, “I am sorry that I cannot avail myself of your offer. I am sure my way is *not* the same as yours.”

“Then,” replied Lord St. George, who was a good natured, indolent man, who imagined every body was as averse to walking alone as he was—“then I will make *mine* the same as yours.”

Borodaile coloured: though always uncivil, he did not like to be excelled in good manners; and therefore replied, that nothing but extreme business at White’s could have induced him to prefer his own way to that of Lord St. George.

The good-natured peer took Lord Borodaile’s arm. It was a natural incident, but it vexed the

punctilious viscount, that any man should *take*, not *offer*, the support.

“So, they say,” observed Lord St. George, “that young Linden is to marry Lady Flora Ardenne.”

“*Les on dits font la gazette des fous,*” rejoined Borodaile, with a sneer. “I believe that Lady Flora is little likely to contract such a *mésalliance*.”

“*Mésalliance!*” replied Lord St. George. “I thought Linden was of a very old family, which you know the Westboroughs are not, and he has great expectations—”

“Which are never to be realized,” interrupted Borodaile, laughing scornfully.

“Ah, indeed!” said Lord St. George seriously. “Well, at all events, he is a very agreeable, unaffected young man—and by the by, Borodaile, you will meet him *chez moi* to-day—you know you dine with me?”

“Meet Mr. Linden! I shall be proud to have that honour,” said Borodaile, with sparkling eyes: “will Lady Westborough be also of the party?”

“No, poor Lady St. George is very ill, and I have taken the opportunity to ask only men.”

“You have done wisely, my lord,” said

Borodaile, *secum multa revolvens*; “and I assure you I wanted no hint to remind me of your invitation.”

Here the Duke of Haverfield joined them. The duke never bowed to any one of the male sex; he therefore *nodded* to Borodaile, who, with a very supercilious formality, took off his hat in returning the salutation. The viscount had at least this merit in his pride, that if it was reserved to the humble, it was contemptuous to the high: his inferiors he wished to remain where they were; his equals he longed to lower.

“So I dine with you, Lord St. George, to-day,” said the duke; “who shall I meet?”

“Lord Borodaile, for one,” answered St. George. (The duke smiled at the viscount, and then, loosening his neckcloth, exclaimed, “Hang *these stiffeners*, they derange one entirely.”) Lord St. George resumed: “My brother, Aspeden, Findlater, Urbino, and Linden.”

“Linden!” cried the duke; “I’m very glad to hear it, *c’est un homme fait exprès pour moi*. He is very clever, and not above playing the fool; has humour without setting up for a wit, and is a good fellow without being a bad man. I like him excessively.”

“Lord St. George,” said Borodaile, who

seemed that day to be the very martyr of the unconscious Clarence, "I wish you good morning. I have only just remembered an engagement which I *must* keep before I go to White's, *à l'honneur!*"

And with a bow to the duke and a remonstrance from Lord St. George, Borodaile effected his escape. His complexion was, insensibly to himself, more raised than usual, his step more stately; his mind, for the first time for years, was fully excited and engrossed. Ah, what a delightful thing it is for an idle man, who has been dying of ennui, to find an enemy.

CHAPTER XVIII.

“ You must challenge him ;
There’s no avoiding—one or both must drop.”

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

“ Ha, ha, ha—bravo, Linden !” cried Lord St. George, from the head of his splendid board, in approbation of some witticism of Clarence’s ; and ha, ha, ha ! or he, he, he ! according to the cachinnatory intonations of the guests, rung around.

“ Your lordship seems unwell,” said Lord Aspeden to Borodaile ; “ allow me to take wine with you.”

Lord Borodaile bowed his assent.

“ Pray,” said Mr. St. George to Clarence, “ have you seen my friend Talbot lately ?”

“ This very morning,” replied Linden : “ in-

deed, I generally visit him three or four times a week—he often asks after you.”

“ Indeed !” said Mr. St. George, rather flattered : “ he does me much honour ; but he is a distinct connection of mine, and I suppose I must attribute his recollection of me to that cause. He is a near relation of yours, too, I think—is he not ?”

“ I *am* related to him,” answered Clarence, colouring.

Lord Borodaile leant forward, and his lip curled. Though, in some respects, a very weak man, he had, as we have said, his good points. He hated a lie as much as Achilles did ; and he believed in his heart of hearts that Clarence had just uttered one.

“ Why,” observed Lord Aspeden, making one of his luminously-unfortunate remarks—“ why, Lord Borodaile, the Talbots, of Scarsdale, are branches of *your* genealogical tree ; therefore your lordship must be related to Linden :—you are ‘ two cherries on one stalk !’ ”

“ We are by no means related,” said Lord Borodaile, with a distinct and clear voice, intended expressly for Clarence ; “ that is an honour which I must beg leave most positively to disclaim.”

There was a dead silence—the eyes of all who heard a remark so intentionally rude were turned immediately towards Clarence. His cheek burnt like fire; he hesitated a moment, and then said, in the same key, though with a little trembling in his intonation—

“Lord Borodaile cannot be more anxious to disclaim it than I am.”

“And yet,” returned the viscount, stung to the soul, “they who advance false pretensions ought at least to support them!”

“I do not understand you, my Lord,” said Clarence.

“Possibly not,” answered Borodaile, carelessly: “there is a maxim which says that people not accustomed to speak truth cannot comprehend it in others.”

Unlike the generality of modern heroes, who are always in a passion—off-hand, dashing fellows, in whom irascibility is a virtue, Clarence was peculiarly sweet-tempered by nature, and had, by art, acquired a command over all his passions to a degree very uncommon in so young a man. He made no reply to the inexcusable affront he had received. His lip quivered a little, and the flush of his countenance was succeeded by an extreme paleness—this was

all: he did not even leave the room immediately, but waited till the silence was broken by some well-bred member of the party; and then, pleading an early engagement as an excuse for his retiring so soon, he rose, and departed.

There was throughout the room an universal feeling of sympathy with the affront, and indignation against the offender; for, to say nothing of Clarence's popularity, and the extreme dislike in which Lord Borodaile was held, there could be no doubt as to the wantonness of the outrage or the moderation of the aggrieved party. Lord Borodaile already felt the punishment of his offence: his very pride, while it rendered him indifferent to the spirit, had hitherto kept him scrupulous as to the formalities of *les bienséances de société*; and he could not but see the grossness with which he had suffered himself to violate them, and the light in which his conduct was regarded. However, this internal discomfort only rendered him the more embittered against Clarence, and the more confirmed in his revenge. Resuming, by a strong effort, all the external indifference habitual to his manner, he attempted to enter into a conversation with those of the party who were

next to him ; but his remarks produced answers brief and cold : even Lord Aspeden forgot his diplomacy and his smile ; Lord St. George replied to his observations by a monosyllable ; and the Duke of Haverfield, for the first time in his life, asserted the prerogative which his rank gave him of setting the example — his grace did not reply to Lord Borodaile at all. In truth, every one present was seriously displeased. All civilized societies have a paramount interest in repressing the rude. Nevertheless, Lord Borodaile bore the brunt of his unpopularity with a steadiness and unembarrassed composure worthy of a better cause ; and finding, at last, a companion disposed to be loquacious in the person of Sir Christopher Findlater, (whose good heart, though its first impulse resented more violently than that of any heart present the discourtesy of the viscount, yet soon warmed to the *désagrémens* of his situation, and hastened to adopt its favourite maxim of forgive and forget,) Lord Borodaile sat the meeting out ; and if he did not leave the latest, he was, at least, not the first to follow Clarence.—*L'orgueil ou donne le courage, ou il y supplée.*

Meanwhile Linden had returned to his soli-

tary home. He hastened to his room—locked the door—flung himself on his sofa, and burst into a violent and almost feminine paroxysm of tears. This fit lasted for more than an hour; and when Clarence at length stilled the indignant swellings of his heart, and rose from his supine position, he started, as his eye fell upon the opposite mirror, so haggard and exhausted seemed the forced and fearful calmness of his countenance. With a hurried step—with arms now folded on his bosom—now wildly tossed from him, and the hand so firmly clenched, that the very bones seemed working through the skin—with a brow now fierce, now only dejected—and a complexion which one while burnt as with the crimson flush of a fever, and at another was wan and colourless, like his whose cheek a spectre has blanched—Clarence paced his apartment, the victim not only of shame—the bitterest of tortures to a young and high mind—but of other contending feelings, which alternately exasperated and palsied his wrath, and gave to his resolves at one moment an almost savage ferocity, and at the next an almost cowardly vacillation.

The clock had just struck the hour of twelve, when a knock at the door announced a visitor.

Steps were heard on the stairs, and presently a tap at Clarence's room-door. He unlocked it, and the Duke of Haverfield entered.

“*Je suis charmé de vous voir,*” cried the Duke, with his usual half kind, half careless address. “I was resolved to call upon you, and be the first to offer my services in this unpleasant affair.”

Clarence pressed the Duke's hand, but made no answer.

“Nothing could be so unhandsome as Lord Borodaile's conduct,” continued the Duke. “I hope you both fence and shoot well. I shall never forgive you, if you do not put an end to that piece of rigidity.”

Clarence continued to walk about the room in great agitation—the Duke looked at him with some surprise. At last Linden paused by the window, and said, half unconsciously—“It must be so—I cannot avoid fighting.”

“Avoid fighting!” cried his grace, in undisguised astonishment. “No, indeed—but that is the least part of the matter—you must kill as well as fight him.”

“Kill *him!*” cried Clarence wildly, “whom!” and then sinking into a chair, he covered his

face with his hands for a few moments, and seemed to struggle with his emotions.

“ Well,” thought the duke, “ I never was more mistaken in my life. I could have bet my black horse against Trevanion’s Julia, which is certainly the most worthless thing I know, that Linden had been a brave fellow; but these English heroes always go into fits at a duel: one manages such things, as Sterne says, better in France.”

Clarence now rose, calm and collected. He sat down—wrote a brief note to Borodaile, demanding the fullest apology, or the earliest meeting—put it into the duke’s hands, and said, with a faint smile, “ My dear duke, dare I ask you to be second to a man who has been so grievously affronted, and whose genealogy has been so disputed?”

“ My dear Linden,” said Haverfield, warmly, “ I have always been grateful to my station in life for this advantage, the freedom with which it has enabled me to select my own acquaintance, and to follow my own pursuits. I am now more grateful to it than ever, because it has given me a better opportunity than I should otherwise have had of serving one whom

I have always esteemed. In entering into your quarrel I shall at least shew the world, that there are some men, not inferior in pretensions to Lord Borodaile, who despise arrogance and resent overbearance even to others. Your cause, I consider the common cause of society ; but I shall take it up, if you will allow me, with the distinguishing zeal of a friend."

Clarence, who was much affected by the kindness of this speech, replied in a similar vein, and the duke having read and approved the letter, rose. "There is in my opinion," said he, "no time to be lost. I will go to Borodaile this very evening—adieu, *mon cher* : you shall kill the Argus, and then carry off the Io. I feel in a double passion with that ambulating poker, who is only malleable when he is red hot, when I think how honourably scrupulous you were with La Meronville last night, notwithstanding all her advances ; but I go to bury Cæsar, not to scold him.—*Au revoir.*"

CHAPTER XIX.

“ *Conon.*—You’re well met, Crates.

Crates.—If we part so, Conon.”

Queen of Corinth.

IT was, as might be expected from the character of the aggressor ! Lord Borodaile refused all apology, and agreed with avidity to a speedy rendezvous. He chose pistols (choice, then, was not merely nominal), and selected Mr. Percy Bobus for his second, a gentleman who was much fonder of acting in that capacity, than in the more honourable one of a principal. The author of “*Lacon*,” a very brilliant collection of common places, says, “that if all seconds were as averse to duels as their principals, there would be very little blood spilt in that way ;” and it was cer-

tainly astonishing to compare the zeal with which Mr. Bobus busied himself about this "affair," with that testified by him on another occasion, when he himself was more immediately concerned.

The morning came. Bobus breakfasted with his friend. "Damn it, Borodaile," said he, as the latter was receiving the ultimate polish of the *friseur*, "I never saw you look better in my life. It will be a great pity if that fellow shoots you."

"Shoots *me*!" said Lord Borodaile, very quietly, "*me*—no!—that is *quite* out of the question; but, joking apart, Bobus, I will not kill the young man. Where shall I hit him?"

"In the cap of the knee," said Mr. Percy, breaking an egg.

"Nay, that will lame him for life," said Lord Borodaile, putting on his cravat with peculiar exactitude.

"Serve him right," said Mr. Bobus. "Hang him, I never got up so early in my life—it's quite impossible to eat at this hour. Oh—*apropos*, Borodaile, have you left any little memoranda for me to execute?"

"Memoranda!—for what?" said Borodaile, who had now just finished his toilet.

“Oh!” rejoined Mr. Percy Bobus, “in case of accident, you know: the man may shoot well, though I never saw him in the gallery.”

“Pray,” said Lord Borodaile, in a great though suppressed passion, “pray, Mr. Bobus, how often have I to tell you, that it is not by Mr. Linden that my days are to terminate; you are sure that Carabine saw to that trigger.”

“Certain,” said Mr. Percy, with his mouth full, “certain—God bless me, here’s the carriage, and breakfast not half done yet.”

“Come, come,” cried Borodaile, impatiently, “we must breakfast afterwards. Here, Roberts, see that we have fresh chocolate, and some more *rognons* when we return.”

“I would rather have them now,” sighed Mr. Bobus, foreseeing the possibility of the return being single—Ibis! redibis? &c.

“Come, we have not a moment to lose,” exclaimed Borodaile, hastening down the stairs; and Mr. Percy Bobus followed, with a strange mixture of various regrets, partly for the breakfast that *was* lost, and partly for the friend that *might be*.

When they arrived at the ground, Clarence and the duke were already there: the latter,

who was a dead shot, had fully persuaded himself that Clarence was equally adroit, and had, in his providence for Borodaile, brought a surgeon. This was a circumstance of which the viscount, in the plenitude of his confidence for himself and indifference for his opponent, had never once dreamt.

The ground was measured—the parties were about to take their ground. All Linden's former agitation was vanished—his mien was firm, grave, and determined, but he shewed none of the careless and fierce hardihood which characterized his adversary; on the contrary, a close observer might have remarked something sad and dejected amidst all the tranquillity and steadiness of his brow and air.

“For Heaven's sake,” whispered the duke, as he withdrew from the spot, “square your body a little more to your left, and remember your exact level. Borodaile is much shorter than you.”

There was a brief, dread pause—the signal was given—Borodaile fired—his ball pierced Clarence's side; the wounded man staggered one step, but fell not. He raised his pistol; Haverfield bent eagerly forward; an expression of disappointment and surprise passed his lips: Cla-

rence had fired in the air. The next moment Linden felt a deadly sickness come over him—he fell into the arms of the surgeon. Borodaile, touched by a forbearance which he had had so little right to expect, hastened to the spot. He leaned over his adversary in greater remorse and pity than he would have readily confessed to himself. Clarence unclosed his eyes; they dwelt for one moment upon the subdued and earnest countenance of Borodaile.

“Thank God,” he said faintly, “that *you* were not the victim,” and with those words he fell back insensible. They carried him to his lodgings. His wound was accurately examined. Though not mortal, it was of a dangerous nature; and the surgeons ended a very painful operation, by promising a very lingering recovery.

What a charming satisfaction for being insulted!

CHAPTER XX.

“ Je me contente de ce qui peut s'écrire, et je rêve tout ce qui peut se rêver.”

DE SEVIGNE.

ABOUT a week after his wound, and the second morning of his return to sense and consciousness, when Clarence opened his eyes, they fell upon a female form seated watchfully and anxiously by his bed-side. He raised himself in mute surprise, and the figure, startled by the motion, rose, drew the curtain, and vanished. With great difficulty he rang his bell. His valet, Harrison, on whose mind, though it was of no very exalted order, the kindness and suavity of his master had made a great impression, instantly appeared.

“ Who was that lady ?” asked Linden. “ How came she here ?”

Harrison smiled—“ Oh, Sir,—pray please to lie down, and make yourself easy : the lady knows you very well, and *would* come here ; she insists upon staying in the house, so we made up a bed in the drawing-room, and she has watched by you night and day. She speaks very little English, to be sure, but your honour knows, begging your pardon, how well I speak French.”

“ French !” said Clarence, faintly—“ French ? In Heaven’s name, who is she ?”

“ A Madame—Madame—La Melon-veal, or some such name, Sir,” said the valet.

Clarence fell back.—At that moment his hand was pressed. He turned, and saw Talbot by his side. The kind old man had not suffered La Meronville to be Linden’s only nurse—notwithstanding his age and peculiarity of habits, he had fixed his abode all the day in Clarence’s house, and at night, instead of returning to his own home, had taken up his lodgings at the nearest hotel.

With a jealous and anxious eye to the real interest and respectability of his adopted son, Talbot had exerted all his address, and even

all his power, to induce La Meronville, who had made her settlement previous to Talbot's to quit the house, but in vain. With that obstinacy which a Frenchwoman, when she is sentimental, mistakes for nobility of heart, the *ci-devant amante* of Lord Borodaile insisted upon watching and tending one, of whose sufferings, she said and believed, she was the unhappy, though innocent cause; and whenever more urgent means of removal were hinted at, La Meronville flew to the chamber of her beloved, apostrophized him in a strain worthy of one of D'Arlincourt's heroines, and, in short, was so unreasonably outrageous, that the doctors, trembling for the safety of their patient, obtained from Talbot a forced and reluctant acquiescence in her *séjour*.

Ah! what a terrible creature a Frenchwoman is, when, instead of coquetting with a *caprice*, she insists upon conceiving a *grande passion*. Little, however, did Clarence, despite his vexation, when he learnt of the *bienveillance* of La Meronville, foresee the whole extent of the consequences it would entail upon him: still less did Talbot, who in his seclusion knew not the celebrity of the handsome adventuress, calculate upon the notoriety of her motions, or the ill effect her ostentatious attachment would have

upon Clarence's prosperity as a lover to Lady Flora. In order to explain these consequences more fully, let us, for the present, leave our hero to the care of the surgeon, his friends, and his would be mistress ; and while he is more rapidly recovering than the doctors either hoped or presaged, let us renew our acquaintance with a fair correspondent—for whose letters, though those of neither a Sévigné nor a D'Epinay, we profess some kindness, and a little interest.

LETTER FROM THE LADY FLORA ARDENNE, TO
MISS ELEANOR TREVANION.

“ MY DEAREST ELEANOR,

“ I have been very ill, or you would sooner have received an answer to your kind—too kind and consoling letter. Indeed I have only just left my bed : they say that I have been delirious, and I believe it ; for you cannot conceive what terrible dreams I have had. But these are all over now, and every one is so kind to me—my poor mother above all ! It is a pleasant thing to be ill when we have those who love us to watch our recovery.

“I have only been in bed a few days; yet it seems to me as if a long portion of my existence were past—as if I had stepped into a new era. You remember that my last letter attempted to express my feelings at mamma’s speech about Clarence, and at my seeing him so suddenly. Now, dearest, I cannot but look on that day, on these sensations, as on a distant dream. Everyone is so kind to me, mamma caresses and soothes me so fondly, that I fancy I must have been under some illusion. I am sure they could not seriously have meant to forbid *his* addresses. No, no: I feel that all will yet be well—so well, that even you, who are of so contented a temper, will own, that if you were not Eleanor you would be Flora.

“I wonder whether Clarence knows that I have been ill. I wish you knew him: he is just your style of beauty. Such eyes and forehead—such a perfect and noble figure, and an address that would have made Diana forswear Endymion. You see that I have not forgotten my mythology; indeed I produce it on all occasions with such a learned air, that mamma has lately insinuated bitter reproaches against *les femmes savantes*, and has, positively, quite insulted Mrs. Montague. You know that mammas, be-

their dimples ever so pretty, do not always smile ; and that the brightest eyes in the world can give cross glances now and then. Well, dearest, this letter—a very unhandsome return, I own, for your's—must content you at present, for they will not let me write more—though, so far as I am concerned, I am never so weak, in frame I mean, but what I could scribble to *you* about *him*.

“ *Addio—carissima.* ”

“ F. A. ”

“ I have prevailed on mamma, who wished to sit by me and amuse me, to go to the Opera to-night, the only amusement of which she is particularly fond. Heaven forgive me for my insincerity, but *he* always comes into our box, and I long to hear some news of him.”

LETTER.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

“ ELEANOR, dearest Eleanor, I am again very ill, but not as I was before, ill from a foolish

vexation of mind: no, I am now calm, and even happy. It was from an increase of cold only that I have suffered a relapse. You may believe this, I assure you, in spite of your well-meant but bitter jests upon my infatuation, as you very rightly call it, for Mr. Linden. You ask me what news from the Opera? Silly girl that I was, to lie awake, hour after hour, and refuse even to take my draught, lest I should be surprised into sleep, till mamma returned. I sent Jermyn down directly I heard her knock at the door, (oh, how anxiously I had listened for it!) to say that I was still awake, and longed to see her. So, of course, mamma came up, and felt my pulse, and said it was very feverish, and wondered the draught had not composed me—with a great deal more to the same purpose, which I bore as patiently as I could, till it was my turn to talk; and then I admired her dress and her *coiffure*, and asked if it was a full house, and whether the *prima donna* was in voice, &c. &c.; till, at last, I won my way to the inquiry of who were her visitors. ‘Lord Borodaile,’ said she, ‘and the Duke of ——, and Mr. St. George, and Captain Leslie, and Mr. De Retz, and many others.’ I felt so disappointed, Eleanor, but did not dare ask

whether he was not of the list? till, at last, my mother observing me narrowly, said—‘And, by the by, Mr. Linden looked in for a few minutes. I am glad, my dearest Flora, that I spoke to you so decidedly about him the other day.’ ‘Why, mamma?’ said I, hiding my face under the clothes. ‘Because,’ said she, in rather a raised voice, ‘he was quite unworthy of you!—but it is late now, and you should go to sleep—to-morrow I will tell you more.’ I would have given worlds to press the question then, but could not venture. Mamma kissed and left me. I tried to twist her words into a hundred meanings, but in each I only thought that they were dictated by some worldly information—some new doubts as to his birth or fortune; and, though that supposition distressed me greatly, yet it could not alter my love, or deprive me of hope; and so I cried, and guessed, and guessed, and cried, till at last I cried myself to sleep.

“When I awoke, mamma was already up, and sitting beside me; she talked to me for more than an hour upon ordinary subjects, till at last, perceiving how *distract*, and even impatient I appeared, she dismissed Jermyn, and spoke to me thus:—

“ ‘ You know, Flora, that I have always loved you, more perhaps than I ought to have done, more certainly than I have loved your brothers and sisters ; but you were my eldest child, my first-born, and all the happy associations of a mother are blent and entwined with you. You may be sure therefore that I have ever had only your happiness in view, and that it is only with a regard to that end that I now speak to you.’

“ I was a little frightened, Eleanor, by this opening, but I was much more touched, so I took mamma’s hand and kissed, and wept silently over it ;—she continued : ‘ I observed Mr. Linden’s attention to you, at —— ; I knew nothing more of his rank and birth then, than I do at present ; but his situation in the embassy and his personal appearance, naturally induced me to suppose him a gentleman of family, and, therefore, if not a great, at least not an inferior match for you, so far as worldly distinctions are concerned. Added to this, he was uncommonly handsome, and had that general reputation for talent which is often better than actual wealth or hereditary titles. I therefore did not check, though I would not encourage any attachment you might form for him ; and nothing being declared or decisive

on either side when we left —, I imagined that if your flirtation with him, did even amount to a momentary and girlish phantasy, absence and change of scene would easily and rapidly efface the impression. I believe that in a great measure it *was* effaced, when Lord Aspeden returned to England, and with him, Mr. Linden. You again met the latter in society almost as constantly as before; a caprice nearly conquered, was once more renewed; and in my anxiety that you should marry, not for aggrandizement, but happiness, I own, to my sorrow, that I rather favoured than forbade his addresses. The young man—remember Flora—appeared in society as the nephew and heir of a gentleman of ancient family and considerable property; he was rising in diplomacy, popular in the world, and; so far as we could see, of irreproachable character: this must plead my excuse for tolerating his visits, without instituting further inquiries respecting him, and allowing your attachment to proceed without ascertaining how far it had yet extended. I was awakened to a sense of my indiscretion, by an inquiry, which Mr. Linden's popularity rendered general, viz.: if Mr. Talbot was his uncle—who was his father—who his more immediate relations? and at that time

Lord Borodaile informed us of the falsehood, he had either asserted or allowed to be spread, in claiming Mr. Talbot as his relation. This you will observe entirely altered the situation of Mr. Linden with respect to you. Not only his rank in life became uncertain, but suspicious. Nor was this all: his very personal respectability was no longer unimpeachable. Was this dubious and intrusive person, without a name, and with a sullied honour, to be your suitor? No, Flora; and it was from this indignant conviction that I spoke to you some days since. Forgive me, my child, if I was less cautious, less confidential, than I am now. I did not imagine the wound was so deep, and thought that I should best cure you by seeming unconscious of your danger. The case is now changed; your illness has convinced me of my fault, and the extent of your unhappy attachment; but will my own dear child pardon me if I still continue, if I even confirm my disapproval of her choice? Last night at the Opera Mr. Linden entered my box. I own that I was cooler to him than usual. He soon left us, and after the Opera I saw him with the Duke of Haverfield, one of the most incorrigible *roués* of the day, leading out a woman of notoriously bad character, and of

the most ostentatious profligacy. He might have had some propriety, some decency, some concealment at least, but he passed just before me—before the mother of the woman to whom his vows of honourable attachment were due, and who at that very instant was suffering from her infatuation for him. Now, Flora, for this man, an obscure, and possibly a plebeian adventurer—whose only claim to notice has been founded on falsehood—whose only merit, a love of you, has been, if not utterly destroyed, at least polluted and debased—for this man, poor alike in fortune, character and honour, can you any longer profess affection or esteem ?

“ ‘Never, never, never !’ cried I, springing from the bed, and throwing myself upon my mother’s neck. ‘Never : I am your own Flora once more. I will never suffer any one again to make me forget you,’—and then I sobbed so violently that mamma was frightened, and made me lie down, and left me to sleep. Several hours have passed since then, and I could not sleep nor think, and I would not cry, for he is no longer worthy of my tears ; so I have written to you.

“ Oh, how I despise and hate myself for having so utterly, in my vanity and folly, forgotten

my mother, that dear, kind, constant friend, who never cost me a single tear, but for my own ingratitude. Think, Eleanor, what an affront to me—to me, who, he so often said, had made all other women worthless in his eyes. Do I hate him? No, I cannot hate. Do I despise? No, I will not despise, but I will forget him, and keep my contempt and hatred for myself.

“God bless you—I am worn out. Write soon, or rather come, if possible, to your affectionate but unworthy friend,

“F. A.”

“Good Heavens! Eleanor, he is wounded. He has fought with Lord Borodaile. I have just heard it; Jermyn told me. Can it, can it be true? What,—what have I said against him? Hate?—forget? No, no: I never loved him till now.”

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

(After an interval of several weeks.)

“TIME has flown, my Eleanor, since you left me, after your short but kind visit, with a heavy but healing wing. I do not think I shall

ever again be the giddy girl I have been ; but my head will change, not my heart ; *that* was never giddy, and that shall still be as much yours as ever. You are wrong in thinking I have not forgotten, at least renounced all affection for, Mr. Linden. I have, though with a long and bitter effort. The woman for whom he fought went, you know, to his house, immediately on hearing of his wound. She has continued with him ever since. He had the audacity to write to me once ; my mother brought me the note, and said nothing. She read my heart aright. I returned it unopened. He has even called since his convalescence. Mamma was not at home to him. I hear that he looks pale and altered. I hope not—at least I cannot resist praying for his recovery. I stay within entirely ; the season is now over, and there are no parties : but I tremble at the thought of meeting him even in the Park or the Gardens. Papa talks of going into the country next week. I cannot tell you how eagerly I look forward to it ; and you will then come and see me—will you not, dearest Eleanor ?

“ Ah ! what happy days we will have yet ; we will read Italian together, as we used to do ; you shall teach me your songs, and I will instruct you in mine : we will keep birds as we

did—let me see—eight years ago. You will never talk to me of my folly: let that be as if it had never been; but I will wonder with you about your future choice, and grow happy in anticipating your happiness. Oh, how selfish I was some weeks ago—then I could only overwhelm you with my egotisms; now, Eleanor, it is your turn, and you shall see how patiently I will listen to your's. Never fear that you can be too prolix: the diffuser you are, the easier I shall forgive myself.

“Are you fond of poetry, Eleanor? I used to say so, but I never felt that I was till lately. I will shew you my favourite passages, in my favourite poets, when you come to see me. You shall see if your's correspond with mine. I am so impatient to leave this horrid town, where every thing seems dull, yet feverish—insipid, yet false. Shall we not be happy when we meet? If your dear aunt will come with you, she shall see how I (that is, my mind) am improved.

“Farewell.

“Ever your most affectionate,

“F. A.”

CHAPTER XXI.

“ Brave Talbot, we will follow thee.”

Henry the Sixth.

“ MY letter insultingly returned—myself refused admittance—not a single inquiry made during my illness—indifference joined to positive contempt. By heaven, it is insupportable !”

“ My dear Clarence,” said Talbot, to his young friend, who, fretful from pain, and writhing beneath his mortification, walked to and fro his chamber, with an impatient stride ; “ My dear Clarence, do sit down, and not irritate your wound by such violent exercise. I am as much enraged as yourself at the treatment you have received, and no less at a loss to account for it. Your duel, however unfortunate the event,

must have done you credit, and obtained you a reputation both for generosity and spirit; so that it cannot be to that occurrence that you are to attribute the change. Let us rather suppose that Lady Flora's attachment to you has become evident to her father and mother—that they naturally think it would be very undesirable to marry their daughter to a man whose family nobody knows, and whose respectability he is forced into fighting in order to support. Suffer me then to call upon Lady Westborough, whom I knew many years ago, and explain your origin, as well as your relationship to me.”

Linden paused irresolutely.

“Were I sure that Lady Flora was not utterly influenced by her mother's worldly views, I would gladly consent to your proposal—but —”

“Forgive me, Clarence,” cried Talbot; “but you really argue much more like a very young man than I ever heard you do before—even four years ago. To be sure Lady Flora is influenced by her mother's views. Would you have her otherwise? Would you have her, in defiance of all propriety, modesty, obedience to her parents, and right feeling for herself, encourage an attachment to a person not only unknown,

but who does not even condescend to throw off the incognito to the woman he addresses? Come, Clarence, give me my instructions, and let me act as your ambassador to-morrow."

Clarence was silent.

"I may consider it settled then," replied Talbot: "meanwhile you shall come home and stay with me: the pure air of the country, even so near town, will do you more good than all the doctors in London; and, besides, you will thus be enabled to escape from that persecuting Frenchwoman."

"In what manner?" said Clarence.

"Why, when you are in my house, she cannot well take up her abode with you; and you shall, while I am forwarding your suit with Lady Flora, write a very flattering, very grateful letter of excuses to Madame la Meronville. But leave me alone to draw it up for you; meanwhile, let Harrison pack up your clothes and medicines, and we will effect our escape while Madame la Meronville yet sleeps."

Clarence rung the bell; the orders were given, executed, and, in less than an hour, he and his friend were on their road to Talbot's villa.

As they drove slowly through the grounds to

the house, Clarence was sensibly struck with the quiet and stillness which breathed around. On either side of the road, the honeysuckle and rose cast their sweet scents to the summer wind, which, though it was scarcely noon, stirred freshly among the trees, and waved, as if it breathed a second youth over the wan cheek of the convalescent. The windows of the house, which was now just before them, were partially unclosed, and the blinds flapped idly within, as if even they were glad to have a holiday with the cheerful breezes in their master's absence. Pretty idea that, Reader—Cowley would have made a good deal of it. The old servant's ear had caught the sound of wheels, and he came to the door, with an expression of quiet delight on his dry countenance, to welcome in his master. They had lived together for so many years, that they were grown like one another. Indeed, the veteran valet prided himself on his happy adoption of his master's dress and manner. A proud man, we ween, was that domestic, whenever he had time and listeners for the indulgence of his honest loquacity: many an ancient tale of his master's former glories was then poured from his unburthening remembrance. With what a glow, with what a

racy enjoyment did he expand upon the triumphs of the past; how eloquently did he particularize the exact grace with which *young* Mr. Talbot was wont to enter the room, in which he instantly became the cynosure of ladies' eyes; how faithfully did he minute the courtly dress, the exquisite choice of colour, the costly splendour of material, which were the envy of gentles, and the despairing wonder of their valets; and then the zest with which the good old man would cry—"I dressed the boy!" Even still, this modern Scipio (Gil Blas' Scipio, not Rome's) would not believe that his master's sun was utterly set: he was only in a temporary retirement, and would, one day or other, reappear and reastonish the London world. "I would give my right arm," Jasper was wont to say, "to see master at court. How fond the king would be of him.—Ah! well, well; I wish he was not so melancholy like with his books, but would go out like other people!"

Poor Jasper! Time is, in general, a harsh wizard in his transformations; but the change thou didst lament so bitterly, was happier for thy master than all his former "palmy state" of admiration and homage. "*Nous avons re-*

cherché le plaisir,” says Rousseau, in his own inimitable antithesis—“*et le bonheur a fui loin de nous.*” But, in the pursuit of pleasure, we pick up some stray flowers of wisdom, and when that pursuit is over, happiness will come at last to our prayers, and help us to extract and hive the honey which these flowers will afford us.

Talbot leant kindly upon his servant's arm as he descended from the carriage, and inquired after his rheumatism with the anxiety of a friend. The old housekeeper, waiting in the hall, next received his attention; and in entering the drawing-room with that consideration, even to animals, which his worldly benevolence had taught him, he paused to notice and caress a large grey cat which rubbed herself against his legs. Let me tell you, Mr. Reader, that there is some pleasure in making even a grey cat happy!

Clarence having patiently undergone all the shrugs, and sighs, and exclamations of compassion at his reduced and wan appearance, which are the especial prerogatives of ancient domestics, followed the old man into the room. Papers and books, though carefully dusted, were left scrupulously in the places in which Talbot had last deposited them—(incomparable good for-

tune ! what would we not give for such chamber hand-maidens !)—fresh flowers were in all the stands and vases ; the large library chair was jealously set in its accustomed place, and all wore, to Talbot's eyes, that cheerful yet sober look of welcome and familiarity which makes a friend of our house.

Clarence placed himself by the open window, and Talbot, rejoicing in the recovered shades of his crimson curtains, took his seat in the most favourable position his experience could select. The old man was in high spirits—

“ I know not how it is,” said he, “ but I feel younger than ever ! You have often expressed a wish to see my family seat at Scarsdale : it is certainly a great distance from hence ; but as you will be my *compagnon de voyage*, I think I will try and crawl there before the summer is over ; or, what say you, Clarence, shall I lend it to you and Lady Flora for the honey-moon ?— You blush !—A diplomatist blush !—Ah, how the world has changed since my time ! But come, Clarence, suppose you write to La Meronville ?”

“ Not to-day, Sir, if you please,” said Linden—“ I feel so very weak.”

“ As you please, Clarence ; but some years

hence you will learn the value of the present. Youth is always a procrastinator, and, consequently, always a penitent!" And thus Talbot ran on into a strain of conversation, half serious, half gay, which lasted till Clarence went up stairs to lie down and muse on Lady Flora Ardenne

CHAPTER XXII.

“ La vie est un sommeil.—Les vieillards sont ceux dont le sommeil a été plus long : ils ne commencent à se réveiller que quand il faut mourir.”

LA BRUYERE.

“ You wonder why I have never turned author, with my constant love of literature, and my former desire of fame,” said Talbot, as he and Clarence sate alone after dinner, ‘ discussing many things : ’ “ the fact is, that I have often intended it, and as often been frightened from my design. Those terrible feuds—those vehement altercations—that recrimination of eloquent abuse, which seem inseparable from literary life, appear to me too dreadful for a man not utterly hardened or

malevolent, voluntarily to encounter. Good Heavens! what acerbity sours the blood of an author! The manifestos of opposing generals, advancing to pillage, to burn, to destroy, contain not a tithe of the ferocity which animates the pages of literary controversialists! No term of reproach is too severe, no vituperation too excessive!—the blackest passions, the bitterness, the meanest malice, pour caustic and poison upon every page! It seems as if the greatest talents, the most elaborate knowledge, only sprung from the weakest and worst regulated mind, as exotics from dung. The private records, the public works of men of letters teem with an immitigable fury! Their histories might all be reduced into these sentences—“they were born—they quarrelled they died!”

“But,” said Clarence, “it would matter little to the world if these quarrels were confined merely to poets and men of imaginative literature, in whom irritability is perhaps almost necessarily allied to the keen and quick susceptibilities which constitute their genius. These are more to be lamented and wondered at among philosophers, theologians, and men of science; the coolness, the patience, the benevolence,

which ought to characterize their works, should at least moderate their jealousy, and soften their disputes.”

“ Ah !” said Talbot, “ but the vanity of discovery is no less acute than that of creation ; the self-love of a philosopher is no less self-love than that of a poet. Besides, those sects the most sure of their opinions, whether in religion or science, are always the most bigoted and persecuting. Moreover, nearly all men deceive themselves in disputes, and imagine that they are intolerant, not through private jealousy, but public benevolence ; they never declaim against the injustice done to themselves—no, it is the terrible injury *done to society* which grieves and inflames them. It is not the bitter expressions against *their* dogmas which gives them pain : by no means ; it is the atrocious doctrines—so prejudicial to the country, if in politics—so pernicious to the world, if in philosophy—which their duty, not their vanity, induces them to denounce and anathematize. Look at Warburton’s view of Lord Bolingbroke’s philosophy ! was there ever such delusion in argument ? yet that delusion blinded his own mind more than it ever did that of his reader : and the

episcopal champion, no doubt, thought he was wonderfully just, when he was only wonderfully abusive."

"There seems," said Clarence, "to be a sort of re-action in sophistry and hypocrisy; there has, perhaps, never been a deceiver who was not himself, by his own passions, the deceived."

"Very true," said Talbot: "and it is a pity that historians have not kept that fact in view; we should then have had a better notion of the Cromwells and Mahomets of the past, than we have now, nor judged as those utter impostors who were probably half dupes. But to return to myself. I think you will already be able to answer your own question, why I did not turn author, now that we have given a momentary consideration to the *désagrémens* consequent on such a profession. But in truth, now at the close of my life, I often regret that I had not more courage, for there is in us all a certain restlessness in the persuasion, whether true or false, of superior knowledge or intellect, and this urges us on to the proof; or, if we resist its impulse, renders us discontented with our idleness and disappointed with the past. I have every thing now in my possession which it has

been the desire of my late years to enjoy ; health, retirement, successful study, and the affection of one, in whose breast, when I am gone, my memory will not utterly pass away. With these advantages, added to the gifts of fortune, and an habitual elasticity of spirit, I confess that my happiness is not free from a biting and frequent *régret* : I would fain have been a better citizen ; I would fain have died in the consciousness, not only that I had improved my mind to the utmost, but that I had turned that improvement to the benefit of my fellow-creatures. As it is, in living wholly for myself, I feel that my philosophy has wanted generosity : and my indifference to glory has proceeded from a weakness, not, as I once persuaded myself, from a virtue ; but the fruitlessness of my existence has been the consequence of the arduous frivolities and the petty objects in which my early years were consumed ; and my mind, in losing the enjoyments which it formerly possessed, had no longer the vigour to create for itself a new soil, from which labour it could only hope for more valuable fruits. It is no contradiction to see those who most eagerly courted society in their youth, shrink from it the most sensitively in their age ; for those who

possess certain advantages, and are morbidly vain of them, will naturally be disposed to seek that sphere for which those advantages are best calculated; and when youth and its concomitants depart, the vanity so long fed still remains, and perpetually mortifies them by recalling not so much the qualities they have lost as the esteem which accompanied their possession; and by contrasting not so much their own present alteration, as the change they experience in the respect and consideration of others. What wonder, then, that they eagerly fly from the world, which has only mortification for their self-love, or that we find in biography how often the most assiduous votaries of pleasure have become the most rigid of recluses? For my part, I think that that love of solitude which the ancients so eminently possessed, and which, to this day, is considered by some as the sign of a great mind, nearly always arises from a tenderness of vanity, easily wounded in the commerce of the rough world; and that it is from disappointment that the hermitage is wrought. Diderot did right, even at the risk of offending Rousseau, to write against solitude. The more a moralist binds man to man, and forbids us to divorce our interests from our kind, the more effectually is the end of morality

obtained. They only are justifiable in seclusion who, like the Greek philosophers, make that very seclusion the means of serving and enlightening their race—who from their retreats send forth their oracles of wisdom, and make the desert which surrounds them eloquent with the voice of truth. But remember, Clarence, (and let my life, useless in itself, have at least this moral,) that for him who in nowise cultivates his talent for the benefit of others; who is contented with being a good hermit at the expense of being a bad citizen; who looks from his retreat upon a life wasted in the *difficiles nugæ* of the most frivolous part of the world, nor redeems in the closet the time he has mis-spent in the saloon; remember, that for him seclusion loses its dignity, philosophy its comfort, benevolence its hope, and even religion its balm. Knowledge, unemployed, will preserve us from vice—for vice is but another name for ignorance—but *knowledge employed is virtue*. Perfect happiness, in our present state, is impossible; for Hobbes says justly, that our nature is inseparable from desires, and that the very word desire (the craving for something not possessed) implies that our present felicity is not complete. But there is one way of attaining what we may term, if not utter,

at least mortal happiness ; it is this—a sincere and unrelaxing activity for the happiness of others. In that one maxim is concentrated whatever is noble in morality, sublime in religion, or unanswerable in truth. In that pursuit we have *all* scope for whatever is excellent in our hearts, and *none* for the petty passions which our nature is heir to. There, whatever be our errors, there will be nobility not weakness in our remorse ; whatever our failure, virtue not selfishness in our regret ; and in success, vanity itself will become holy and triumph eternal. As astrologers were wont to receive upon metals, ‘ the benign aspect of the stars, so as to detain and fix, as it were, the felicity of that hour which would otherwise be volatile and fugitive ;’ even so will that success leave imprinted upon our memory a blessing which cannot pass away—preserve for ever upon our names, as on a signet, the hallowed influence of the hour in which our great end was effected, and treasure up ‘ the relics of heaven’* in the sanctuary of an human fame.”

As the old man ceased, there was a faint and hectic flush over his face, and an impress of en-

* Bacon De Augmentis Scientiarum.

thusiasm on his countenance, which age made almost holy, and which Clarence had never observed there before. In truth, his young listener was deeply affected, and the advice of his adopted parent was afterwards impressed with a more awful solemnity upon his remembrance. Already he had acquired much worldly lore from Talbot's precepts and conversation. He had obtained even something better than worldly lore—a kindly and indulgent disposition to his fellow-creatures; for he had seen that foibles were not inconsistent with generous and great qualities, and that we judge wrongly of human nature, when we ridicule its littleness. The very circumstances which make the shallow misanthropical, incline the wise to be benevolent. Fools discover that frailty is not incompatible with great men, they wonder and despise; but the discerning find that greatness is not incompatible with frailty, and they admire and indulge.

But a still greater benefit than this of toleration, did Clarence derive from the commune of that night. He became strengthened in his honourable ambition, and nerved to unrelaxing exertion. The recollection of Talbot's last words, on that night, occurred to him often and often, when sick at heart, and languid with

baffled hope!—it roused him from that gloom and despondency which are always unfavourable to virtue, and incited him once more to that labour in the vineyard which, whether our hour be late or early, will, if earnest and devoted, obtain a blessing and reward.

The hour was now waxing late, and Talbot, mindful of his companion's health, rose to retire. As he pressed Clarence's hand and bade him farewell for the night, Linden thought there was something more than usually impressive in his manner, and affectionate in his words. Perhaps this was the natural result of their conversation.

The next morning, Clarence was awakened by a noise. He listened, and heard distinctly an alarmed cry proceeding from the room in which Talbot slept, and which was opposite to his own. He rose hastily and hurried to the chamber. The door was open, the old servant was bending over the bed: Clarence approached, and saw that he supported his master in his arms. "Good God!" he cried, "what is the matter?" The faithful old man lifted up his face to Clarence, and the big tears rolled fast from eyes, in which the sources of such emotion were well nigh dried up.

“He loved you well, Sir!” he said, and could say no more. He dropped the body gently, and throwing himself on the floor, sobbed aloud. With a foreboding and chilled heart, Clarence bent forward; the face of his benefactor lay directly before him, and the hand of death was upon it. The soul had passed to its account hours since, in the hush of night: passed, apparently, without a struggle or a pang, like the wind, which animates the harp one moment, and the next is gone.

Linden seized his hand—it was heavy and cold, his eye rested upon the miniature of the unfortunate Lady Merton, which, since the night of the attempted robbery, Talbot had worn constantly round his neck. Strange and powerful was the contrast of the pictured face, in which not a colour had yet faded, and where the hues, and fulness, and prime of youth dwelt, unconscious of the lapse of years, with the aged and shrunken countenance of the deceased.

In that contrast was a sad and mighty moral; it wrought, as it were, a contact between youth and age, and conveyed a rapid, but full history of our passions and our life.

The servant looked up once more on the countenance; he pointed toward it, and mut-

tered -- " See -- see ! how awfully it is changed !"

"But there is a smile upon it!" said Clarence, as he flung himself beside the body, and burst into tears.

CHAPTER XXIII.

“Virtue is like precious odours, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue.”

BACON.

It is somewhat remarkable, that while Talbot was bequeathing to Clarence, as the most valuable of legacies, the doctrines of a philosophy he had acquired, perhaps too late to practice, Glendower was carrying those very doctrines, so far as his limited sphere would allow, into the rule and exercise of his life.

Since the death of the bookseller, which we have before recorded, Glendower had been left utterly without resource. The others to whom he applied were indisposed to avail themselves of an unknown ability. The trade of book-

making was not then as it is now, and if it had been, it would not have suggested itself to the high-spirited and unworldly student. Some publishers offered, it is true, a reward tempting enough for an immoral tale; others spoke of the value of an attack upon the Americans; one suggested an ode to the minister, and another hinted, that a pension might possibly be granted to one who would prove extortion not tyranny. But these insinuations fell upon a dull ear, and the tribe of Barabbas were astonished to find that an author could imagine interest and principle not synonymous.

Struggling with want, which hourly grew more imperious and urgent; wasting his heart on studies which brought fever to his pulse, and disappointment to his ambition; gnawed to the very soul by the mortifications which his poverty gave to his pride; and watching with tearless eyes, but a maddening brain, the slender form of his wife, now waxing weaker and fainter, as the canker of disease fastened upon the core of her young but blighted life, there was yet a high, though, alas! not constant consolation within him, whenever, from the troubles of this dim spot his thoughts could escape, like birds released from their cage, and lose themselves in

the night, and lustre, and freedom of their native heaven.

“If the wind scatter, or the rock receive,” thought he, as he looked upon his secret and treasured work, “these seeds, they were at least dispersed by a hand which asked no selfish return, and a heart which would have lavished the harvest of its labours upon those who know not the husbandman, and trample his hopes into the dust.”

But by degrees, this comfort of a noble and generous nature, these whispers of a vanity, rather to be termed holy than excusable, began to grow unfrequent and low. The cravings of a more engrossing and heavy want than those of the mind, came eagerly and rapidly upon him; the fair cheek of his infant became pinched and hollow; his wife—(O woman! in ordinary cases so mere a mortal, how, in the great and rare events of life, dost thou swell into the angel!)—his wife conquered nature itself by love, and starved herself in silence, and set bread before him with a smile, and bade him eat.

“But you—you?” he would ask inquiringly, and then pause.

“I *have* dined, dearest: I want nothing; eat, love, eat.”

But he eat not. The food robbed from her seemed to him more deadly than poison; and he would rise, and dash his hand to his brow, and go forth alone, with nature unsatisfied, to look upon this luxurious world, and learn *content*.

It was after such a scene that, one day, he wandered forth into the streets, desperate and confused in mind, and fainting with hunger, and half insane with fiery and wrong thoughts, which dashed over his barren and gloomy soul, and desolated, *but conquered not*. It was evening: he stood (for he had strode on so rapidly, at first, that his strength was now exhausted, and he was forced to pause), leaning against the railed area of a house, in a lone and unfrequented street. No passenger shared the dull and obscure thoroughfare. He stood, literally, in scene as in heart, solitary amidst the great city, and wherever he looked—lo! there were none!

“Two days,” said he, slowly and faintly, “two days, and bread has only once passed my lips; and that was snatched from her—from those lips which I have fed with sweet and holy kisses, and from whence my sole comfort in this weary life has been drawn. And she—ay, she

starves—and my child, too. They complain not—they murmur not—but they lift up their eyes to me and ask for——. Merciful God! thou *didst* make man in benevolence; thou *dost* survey this world with a pitying and paternal eye—save, comfort, cherish them, and crush *me* if thou wilt.”

At that moment a man darted suddenly from an obscure alley, and passed Glendower at full speed; presently came a cry, and a shout, and the rapid trampling of feet, and, in another moment, the solitude of the street grew instinct and massed with life.

“Where is he!” cried a hundred voices, to Glendower—“where—which road did the robber take?”—But Glendower could not answer; his nerves were unstrung, and his dizzy brain swam and reeled: and the faces which peered upon him, and the voices which shrieked and yelled in his ear, were to him as the forms and sounds of a ghastly and eltrich world. His head drooped upon his bosom—he clung to the area for support—the crowd passed on—they were in pursuit of guilt—they were thirsting after blood—they were going to fill the dungeon and feed the gibbet—what to them was the virtue they could have supported, or the famine they

could have relieved? But they knew not his distress, nor the extent of his weakness, or some would have tarried and aided, for there is, after all, as much kindness as cruelty in our nature; perhaps they thought it was only some intoxicated and maudlin idler—or, perhaps, in the heat of their pursuit, they thought not at all.

So they rolled on, and their voices died away, and their steps were hushed, and Glendower, insensible and cold as the iron he clung to, was once more alone. Slowly he revived; he opened his dim and glazing eyes, and saw the evening star break from its chamber, and, though sullied by the thick and foggy air, scatter its faint yet holy smiles, upon the polluted city.

He looked quietly on the still night, and its first watcher among the hosts of heaven, and felt something of balm sink into his soul; not, indeed, that vague and delicious calm which, in his boyhood of poesy and romance, he had drunk in, by green solitudes from the mellow twilight, but a quiet, sad and sober, circling gradually over his mind, and bringing it back from its confused and disordered visions and darkness, to the recollection and reality of his bitter life.

By degrees the scene he had so imperfectly witnessed, the flight of the robber, and the eager pursuit of the mob, grew over him: a dark and guilty thought burst upon his mind.

“I am a man, like that criminal,” said he, fiercely. “I have nerves, sinews, muscles, flesh; I feel hunger, thirst, pain, as acutely; why should I endure more than he can? Perhaps he had a wife—a child—and he saw them starving inch by inch, and he felt that he *ought* to be their protector—and so he sinned.—And I—I—can I not sin too for mine? can I not dare what the wild beast, and the vulture, and the fierce hearts of my brethren dare for their mates and young? One gripe of this hand—one cry from this voice—and my board might be heaped with plenty, and my child feed, and *she* smile as she was wont to smile—for one night at least.”

And as these thoughts broke upon him, Glendower rose, and with a step firm, even in weakness, he strode unconsciously onward.

A figure appeared; Glendower's heart beat thick. He slouched his hat over his brows, and for one moment wrestled with his pride and his stern virtue; the virtue conquered, but not the pride; and even the office of the suppliant

seemed to him less degrading than that of the robber. He sprung forward, extended his hands towards the stranger, and cried in a sharp voice, the agony of which rung through the long dull street with a sudden and echoless sound, "Charity—food!"

The stranger paused—one of the boldest of men in his own line, he was as timid as a woman in any other; mistaking the meaning of the petitioner, and terrified by the vehemence of his gesture, he said, in a trembling tone, as he hastily pulled out his purse—

"There, there! do not hurt me—take it—take all!"

Glendower knew the voice, as a sound not unfamiliar to him; his pride, that grand principle of human action, which in him, though for a moment suppressed, was unextinguishable, returned in full force. "None," thought he, "who know me, shall know my full degradation also." And he turned away; but the stranger, mistaking this motion, extended his hand to him, saying, "Take this, my friend—you will have no need of force!" and as he advanced nearer to his supposed assailant, he beheld, by the pale lamp-light, and instantly recognized, his features.

"Ah!" cried he, in astonishment, but inter-

nal rejoicing—"ah! is it you who are thus reduced!"

"You say right, Crauford," said Glendower, sullenly, and drawing himself up to his full height, "it is *I!* but you are mistaken;—I am a beggar, not a ruffian!"

"Good Heavens!" answered Crauford; "how fortunate that we should meet! Providence watches over us unceasingly! I have long sought you in vain. But"—(and here the wayward malignity, sometimes, though not always, the characteristic of Crauford's nature, irresistibly broke out)—"but that you, of all men, should suffer so—you, proud, susceptible, virtuous beyond human virtue—you, whose fibres are as acute as the naked eye—that *you* should bear this, and wince not!"

"You do my humanity wrong!" said Glendower, with a bitter and almost ghastly smile; "I do worse than wince!"

"Ay, is it so!" said Crauford: "have you awakened at last? Has your philosophy taken a more impassioned dye?"

"Mock me not!" cried Glendower; and his eye, usually soft in its deep thoughtfulness, glared wild and savage upon the hypocrite, who stood trembling, yet half sneering at the storm

he had raised—"my passions are even now beyond my mastery—loose them not upon you!"

"Nay," said Crawford, gently, "I meant not to vex or wound you. I have sought you several times since the last night we met, but in vain: you had left your lodgings, and none knew whither. I would fain talk with you. I have a scheme to propose to you which will make you rich for ever—rich—literally rich!—not merely above poverty, but high in affluence!"

Glendower looked incredulously at the speaker, who continued—

"The scheme has danger—*that* you can dare!"

Glendower was still silent; but his set and stern countenance was sufficient reply.

"Some sacrifice of your pride," continued Crawford—"that also you can bear!" and the tempter almost grinned with pleasure as he asked the question.

"He who is poor," said Glendower, speaking at last, "has a right to pride. He who starves has it too; but he who sees those whom he loves famish, and cannot aid, has it not!"

"Come home with me, then," said Crawford;

“ you seem faint and weak : nature craves food—come and partake of mine—we will then talk over this scheme, and arrange its completion.”

“ I cannot,” answered Glendower, quietly.

“ And why ?”

“ Because *they* starve at home !”

“ Heavens !” said Crauford, affected for a moment into sincerity—“ it is indeed fortunate that business should have led me here ; but, meanwhile, you will not refuse this trifle—as a loan merely. By and by our scheme will make you so rich, that I must be the borrower.”

Glendower *did* hesitate for a moment—he did swallow a bitter rising of the heart ; but he thought of those at home, and the struggle was over.

“ I thank you,” said he ; “ I thank you for their sake : the *time may* come”—and the proud gentleman stopped short, for his desolate fortunes rose before him, and forbade all hope of the future.

“ Yes !” cried Crauford, “ the time may come when you will repay me this money a hundred-fold. But where do you live ? You are silent. Well, you will not inform me—I understand you. Meet me, then, here, on this

very spot, three nights hence—you will not fail?"

"I will not," said Glendower; and pressing Crauford's hand with a generous and grateful warmth, which might have softened a heart less obdurate, he turned away.

Folding his arms, while a bitter yet joyous expression crossed his countenance, Crauford stood still, gazing upon the retreating form of the noble and unfortunate man whom he had marked for destruction.

"Now," said he, "this virtue is a fine thing, a very fine thing to talk so loftily about! A little craving of the internal juices, a little pinching of this vile body, as your philosophers and saints call our better part, and, lo! it oozes out like water through a leaky vessel, and the vessel sinks! No, no: virtue is a weak game, and a poor game, and a losing game. Why, there is that man, the very pink of integrity and rectitude, he is now only wanting temptation to fall—and he *will* fall, in a fine phrase, too, I'll be sworn! And then, having once fallen, there will be no medium—he will become utterly corrupt; while *I*, honest Dick Crauford, doing as other wise men do, cheat a trick or two, in playing with Fortune, without

being a whit the worse for it. Do I not subscribe to charities; am I not constant at church, ay, and meeting to boot; kind to my servants, obliging to my friends, loyal to my king? 'Gad, if I were less loving to myself, I should have been far less useful to my country! And, now, now, let me see what has brought me to these filthy suburbs? Ah, Madam H——. Woman, incomparable woman! on Richard Crauford thou hast made a good night's work of it hitherto!—Business seasons pleasure!" and the villain upon system moved away.

Glendower hastened to his home; it was miserably changed, even from the humble abode in which we last saw him. The unfortunate pair had chosen their present residence from a melancholy refinement in luxury; they had chosen it, because none else shared it with them, and their famine, and pride, and struggles, and despair, were without witness or pity.

With a heavy step Glendower entered the chamber where his wife sat; when at a distance he had heard a faint moan, but as he had approached, it ceased; for she, from whom it came, knew his step, and hushed her grief and pain, that they might not add, even by an atom, to his own. The peevishness, the querulous and sting-

ing irritations of want, came not to that affectionate and kindly heart; nor could all those biting and bitter evils of fate, which turn the love that is born of luxury into rancour and gall, scathe the beautiful and holy passion which had knit into one those two unearthly natures. They rather clung the closer to each other, as all things in heaven and earth spake in tempest or in gloom around them, and coined their sorrows into endearment, and their looks into smiles, and strove each, from the depth of despair, to pluck hope and comfort for the other.

This, it is true, was more striking and constant in her than in Glendower; for in love, man, be he ever so generous, is always outdone. Yet even when in moments of extreme passion and conflict, the strife broke from his breast into words, never once was his discontent vented upon her, or his reproaches lavished on any but fortune or himself, or his murmurs mingled with a single breath wounding to her tenderness, or detracting from his love.

He threw open the door; the wretched light cast its sick beams over the squalid walls, foul with green damps, and the miserable yet clean bed, and the fireless hearth, and the empty board, and the pale cheek of the wife, as she

rose and flung her arms round his neck, and murmured out her joy and welcome. "There," said he, as he extricated himself from her, and flung the money, scanty as it was, upon the table, "there, love, pine no more, feed yourself and our daughter, and then let us sleep and be happy in our dreams."

A writer, one of the most gifted of the present day, has told the narrator of this history, that no interest of a high nature can be given to extreme poverty. We know not if this be true; yet if we mistake not our own feelings, there is nothing to us so exalted, or so divine, as a great and brave spirit working out its end through every earthly obstacle and evil: watching through the utter darkness, and steadily defying the phantoms which crowd around it; wrestling with the mighty allurements, and rejecting the fearful voices of that want which is the deadliest and surest of human tempters; nursing through all calamity the love of species, and the warmer and closer affections of private ties; sacrificing no duty, resisting all sin; and amidst every horror and every humiliation, feeding the still and bright light of that genius which, like the lamp of the fabulist, though it may waste itself for years amidst the

depth of solitude, and the silence of the tomb, shall live and burn immortal and undimmed, when all around it is rottenness and decay.

And yet we confess that it is a painful and bitter task to record the humiliations, the wearing, petty, stinging humiliations of poverty ; to count the drops as they slowly fall, one by one, upon the fretted and indignant heart ; to particularize, with the scrupulous and nice hand of indifference, the minutest segments, the fractional and divided moments in the dial-plate of misery ; to behold the delicacies of birth, the masculine pride of blood, the dignities of intellect, the wealth of knowledge, the feminacies and graces of womanhood — all that ennoble and soften the stony mass of common places which is our life, frittered into atoms, trampled into the dust and mire of the meanest thoroughfares of distress ; life and soul, the energies and aims of man, ground into one prostrating want, cramped into one levelling sympathy with the dregs and refuse of his kind, blistered into a single galling and festering sore : this is, we own, a painful and a bitter task ; but it hath its redemption : a pride even in debasement, a pleasure even in woe : and it is therefore that while we have abridged, we have not shunned it. There are some whom the

lightning of fortune blasts, only to render holy. Amidst all that humbles and scathes—amidst all that shatters from their life its verdure, smites to the dust the pomp and summit of their pride, and in the very heart of existence writeth a sudden and “strange defeature,” *they* stand erect, riven, not uprooted, a monument less of pity than of awe. There are some who, exalted by a spirit above all casualty and woe, seem to throw over the most degrading circumstance the halo of an innate and consecrating power; the very things which, seen alone, are despicable and vile, associated with them, become almost venerable and divine; and some portion, however dim and feeble, of that intense holiness which, in the INFANT GOD, shed majesty over the manger and the straw, not denied to those who, in the depth of affliction, cherish the Angel Virtue at their hearts, flings over the meanest localities of earth an emanation from the glory of Heaven.

CHAPTER XXIV.

“ Letters of divers hands, which will absolve
Ourselves from long narration.”

Tanner of Tyburn.

ONE morning, about a fortnight after Talbot's death, Clarence was sitting alone, thoughtful and melancholy, when the three following letters were put into his hand :—

LETTER I.

FROM THE DUKE OF HAVERFIELD.

“ LET me, my dear Linden, be the first to congratulate you upon your accession of fortune : five thousand a year, Scarsdale, and eighty thousand pounds in the funds, are very pretty

foes to starvation! Ah, my dear fellow, if you had but shot that ‘frosty Caucasus’ of humanity, that pillar of the state, made not to bend, that—but you know already whom I mean, and so I will spare you more of my lamentable metaphors: had you shot Lord Borodaile, your happiness would now be complete. Every body talks of your luck. La Meronville tending on you with her white hands, the prettiest hands in the world—who would not be wounded, even by Lord Borodaile, for such a nurse? And then Talbot’s—yet, I will not speak of *that*, for you are very unlike the present generation; and who knows but you may have some gratitude, some affection, some natural feeling in you. I had once; but that was before I went to France—those Parisians, with their fine sentiments, and witty philosophy, play the devil with one’s good old-fashioned feelings. So Lord Aspeden is to have an Italian ministry. How delightful for the southern rascals! Will *he* not, like their own autumns, wither and chill with the gentlest air imaginable? By-the-by, shall you go with him, or will you not rather stay at home, and enjoy your new fortunes—hunt—race—dine out—dance—vote in the House of Commons, and,

in short, do all that an Englishman and a gentleman should do? *Ornamento e splendor del secol nostro.* Let me have the reversion of La Meronville, that is, if she will be *reverted*. Write me a line whenever you have nothing better to do.

“ And believe me,

“ Most truly yours,

“ HAVERFIELD.

“ Will you sell your black mare, or will you buy my brown one? *Utrum horum mavis accipe,* the only piece of Latin I remember.”

LETTER FROM LORD ASPEDEN.

“ MY DEAR LINDEN,

“ Suffer me to enter most fully into your feelings. Death, my friend, is common to all: we must submit to its dispensations. I heard accidentally of the great fortune left you by Mr. Talbot, your father, I suppose I may venture to call him. Indeed, though there is a silly

prejudice against illegitimacy, yet, as our immortal bard says,

“ ‘ Wherefore base ?

When thy dimensions are as well compact,
Thy mind as generous and thy shape as true
As honest madam’s issue !’

For my part, my dear Linden, I say, on your behalf, that it is very likely that you *are* a natural son, for such are always the luckiest and the best. Ah ! we, who are of the *corps diplomatique*, know well how to turn a compliment.

“ You have probably heard of the honour his majesty has conferred upon me, in appointing to my administration the city of ———. As the choice of a secretary has been left to me, I need not say how happy I shall be to keep my promise to you. Indeed, as I told Lord ——— yesterday morning, I do not know any where a young man who has more talent, to say nothing of your skill on the flute. But, my dear young friend, there are sad whispers about your morality and your acquaintance with that notorious Frenchwoman. Now you see, Linden, that we, who know *les usages du monde et les mœurs de la cour*, we, of the *corps diplomatique*, are not very scrupulous in these

matters; but we must humour the vulgar, and love, as our illustrious Shakspeare says, ‘wisely, not too well.’ A hint will, I know, be sufficient to a young gentleman of your sense and discretion, for the Swan of Avon has very prettily sung, ‘Thou wast a pretty fellow, when thou hadst no need to care for her frowning; now thou art an O without a figure; I am better than thou art now. I am a fool—thou art nothing!’

“Adieu, my dear young friend; you will, I know, appreciate this advice.

“And believe me,

“Very truly yours,

“ASPEDEN.”

LETTER FROM MADAME DE LA MERONVILLE.

(Translated.)

“You have done me wrong—great wrong. I loved you—I waited on you—tended you—nursed you—gave all up for you; and you forsook me—forsook me without a word. True, that you have been engaged in a melancholy duty, but, at least, you had time to write a line,

to cast a thought, to one who had shewn for you the love that I have done. But we will pass over all this; I will not reproach you—it is beneath me. The vicious upbraid—*the virtuous forgive!* I have, for several days, left your house. I should never have come to it, had you not been wounded, and, as I fondly imagined, for my sake. Return when you will, I shall no longer be there to persecute and torment you.

“Pardon this letter. I have said too much for myself—a hundred times too much to you; but I shall not sin again. This intrusion is my last.

“CECILE DE LA MERONVILLE.”

These letters will, probably, suffice to clear up that part of Clarence’s history which had not hitherto been touched upon; they will shew that Talbot’s will (after several legacies to his old servants, his nearest connexions, and two charitable institutions, which he had founded, and for some years supported) had bequeathed the bulk of his property to Clarence. The words in which the bequest was made, were kind and somewhat remarkable.—“To my re-

lation and friend, commonly known by the name of Clarence Linden, to whom I am bound alike by blood and affection," &c.—These expressions, joined to the magnitude of the bequest, the apparently unaccountable attachment of the old man to his heir, and the mystery which wrapt the origin of the latter, all concurred to give rise to an opinion, easily received, and soon universally accredited, that Clarence was a natural son of the deceased; and so strong in England is the aristocratic aversion to an unknown lineage, that this belief, unflattering as it was, procured for Linden a much higher consideration, on the score of birth, than he might otherwise have enjoyed. Furthermore, will the above correspondence testify the general *éclat* of Madame La Meronville's attachment, and the construction naturally put upon it. Nor do we see much left for us to explain, with regard to the Frenchwoman herself, which cannot equally well be gleaned by any judicious and intelligent reader, from the epistle last honoured by his perusal. Clarence's conscience did, indeed, smite him severely, for his negligence and ill requital to one, who, whatever her faults or follies, had at least done nothing with which *he* had a right to reproach her. It must, however, be considered,

in his defence, that the fatal event which had so lately occurred, the relapse which Clarence had suffered in consequence, and the melancholy confusion and bustle in which the last week or ten days had been passed, were quite sufficient to banish her from his remembrance. Still she was a woman, and had loved, or seemed to love; and Clarence, as he wrote to her a long, kind, and almost brotherly letter, in return for her own, felt that, in giving pain to another, one often suffers as much for avoiding as for committing a sin.

We have said his letter was kind—it was also frank, and yet prudent. In it he said that he had long loved another—which love alone could have rendered him insensible to her attachment; that he, nevertheless, should always recal her memory with equal interest and admiration; and then, with a tact of flattery which the nature of the correspondence and the sex of the person addressed rendered excusable, he endeavoured, as far as he was able, to soothe and please the vanity which the candour of his avowal was calculated to wound.

When he had finished this letter, he despatched another to Lord Aspeden, claiming a reprieve of some days before he answered the

proposal of the diplomatist. After these epistolary efforts, he summoned his valet, and told him, apparently in a careless tone, to find out if Lady Westborough was still in town. Then throwing himself on the couch, he wrestled with the grief and melancholy which the death of a friend, and more than a father, might well cause in a mind less susceptible than his, and counted the dull hours crawl onward till his servant returned. "Lady Westborough and all the family had been gone a week to their seat in——"

"Well," thought Clarence, "had *he* been alive, I could have entrusted my cause to a mediator; as it is, I will plead, or rather assert it, myself.—Harrison," said he aloud, "see that my black mare is ready by sun-rise to-morrow; I shall leave town for some days."

"Not in your present state of health, Sir, surely?" said Harrison, with the license of one who had been a nurse.

"Allow me to make my own plans," answered Clarence, haughtily. "See that I am obeyed." And Harrison, wondering and crest-fallen, left the room.

"Rich, independent, free to aspire to the heights which in England are only accessible to those who join wealth to ambition, I have at

least," said Clarence, proudly, "no unworthy pretensions even to the hand of Lady Flora Ardenne. If she can love me for myself, if she can trust to my honour, rely on my love, feel proud in my pride, and aspiring in my ambition, then, indeed, this wealth will be welcome to me, and the disguised name, which has cost me so many mortifications, become grateful, since she will not disdain to share it."

CHAPTER XXV.

“ A little druid wight,
Of withered aspect ; but his eye was keen
With sweetness mixed—in russet *brown* bedight.”

THOMSON'S *Castle of Indolence.*

“ Thus holding high discourse, they came to where
The cursed carle was at his wonted trade,
Still tempting heedless men into his snare,
In witching wise, as I before have said.”

Ibid.

It was a fine, joyous summer morning when Clarence set out, alone, and on horseback, upon his enterprise of love and adventure. If there be anything on earth more reviving and inspiriting than another, it is, to our taste, a bright day, a free horse, a journey of excitement before us, and loneliness. Rousseau—in his own way, a great, though rather a morbid epicure of this

world's enjoyments—talks with rapture of his pedestrian rambles when in his first youth. But what are your foot-ploddings, your ambulating rejoicings, to the free etherealities which our courser's light bound and exultant spurnings of the dull earth bring to the spirit! For our own parts, we do not love to touch the sordid clay, the mean soil, to which we gravitate—we do not love that the mire, and the dust, and the stony roughness of the plebeian and vulgar sod, from whence spring all the fleshy and grovelling particles of our frame, should weary the limbs and exhaust the strength, and make the free blood grow languid with a coarse fatigue. If we must succumb to the power of weariness, let it come by the buoyant and rushing streams of the air, through which we can cleave without touching the meaner element below; let it come by the continuity of conquest over the noble slave we have mastered to our will, and not by the measured labour of planting one jaded step after another upon this insensate earth.

But there are times when an iron and stern sadness locks, as it were, within itself our capacities of enjoyment; and the song of the birds, and the green freshness of the summer morning, and the glad motion of his generous steed,

brought neither relief nor change to the musings of the young adventurer.

He rode on for several miles without noticing any thing on his road, and only now and then testifying the nature of his thoughts and his consciousness of solitude by brief and abrupt exclamations and sentences, which proclaimed the melancholy yet exciting subjects of his meditations. During the heat of the noon, he rested at a small public house about * * * miles from town; and resolving to take his horse at least ten miles further before his day's journey ceased, he remounted towards the evening, and slowly resumed his way.

He was now entering the same county in which he first made his appearance in this history. Although several miles from the spot on which the memorable night with the gipsies had been passed, his thoughts reverted to its remembrance, and he sighed as he recalled the eager hopes which then fed and animated his heart. While thus musing, he heard the sound of hoofs behind him, and presently came by a sober looking man, on a rough strong pony, laden (beside its master's weight) with saddle bags of uncommon size, and to all appearance substantially and artfully filled.

Clarence looked, and, after a second survey, recognized the person of his old acquaintance, Mr. Morris Brown. Not equally reminiscent was the worshipful itinerant, who, in the great variety of forms and faces which it was his professional lot to encounter, could not be expected to preserve a very nice or distinguishing recollection of each.

“Your servant, Sir, your servant,” said Mr. Brown, as he rode his pony alongside of our traveller. “Are you going as far as W—— this evening?”

“I hardly know yet,” answered Clarence; “the length of my ride depends upon my horse rather than myself.”

“Oh, well, very well,” said Mr. Brown: “but you will allow me, perhaps, Sir, the honour of riding with you as far as you go.”

“You give me much gratification by your proposal, Mr. Brown!” said Clarence.

The broker looked in surprise at his companion. “So you know me, Sir!”

“I do,” replied Clarence. “I am surprised that you have forgotten *me*.”

Slowly Mr. Brown gazed, till at last his memory began to give itself the rousing shake—“God bless me, Sir, I beg you a thousand par-

dons—I now remember you perfectly—Mr. Linden, the nephew of my old patroness Mrs. Minden.—Dear, dear, how could I be so forgetful! I hope, by the by, Sir, that the shirts wore well. I am thinking you will want some more. I have some capital cambric, of curiously fine quality and texture, from the wardrobe of the late Lady Waddilove.”

“What, Lady Waddilove still!” cried Clarence. “Why, my good friend, you will offer next to furnish me with pantaloons from her ladyship’s wardrobe.”

“Why, really, Sir, I see you preserve your fine spirits; but I do think I have one or two pair of plum-coloured velvet inexpressibles, that passed into my possession when her ladyship’s husband died, which might, perhaps, with a *leetle* alteration, fit you, and, at all events, would be a very elegant present from a gentleman to his valet.”

“Well, Mr. Brown, whenever I or my valet wear plum-coloured velvet breeches, I will certainly purchase those in your possession; but, to change the subject, can you inform me what have become of my old host and hostess, the Copperasses, of Copperas Bower?”

“Oh, Sir, they are the same as ever—nice

genteel people they are, too. Master Adolphus has grown into a fine young gentleman, very nearly as tall as *you* and *I* are. His worthy father preserves his jovial vein, and is very merry whenever I call there. Indeed, it was but last week that he made an admirable witticism. ‘Bob,’ said he—(Tom—you remember Tom, or De Warens, as Mrs. Copperas was pleased to call him—Tom is gone)—‘Bob, have you stopt the coach?’ ‘Yes, Sir,’ said Bob. ‘And what coach is it?’ asked Mr. Copperas. ‘It be the Swallow, Sir,’ said the boy. ‘The Swallow! oh, very well,’ cried Mr. Copperas; ‘then, now, having swallowed in the roll, I will e’en roll in the Swallow!’—Ha! ha! ha! Sir, very facetious, was it not?”

“Very, indeed,” said Clarence; “and so Mr. De Warens has gone; how came that?”

“Why, Sir, you see, the boy was always of a *gay turn*, and he took to frisking it, as he called it, of a night, and so he was taken up for thrashing a watchman, and appeared before Sir John, the magistrate, the next morning.”

“Caractacus before Cæsar!” observed Linden; “and what said Cæsar?”

“Sir!” said Mr. Brown.

“I mean, what said Sir John?”

“ Oh ! he asked him his name, and Tom, whose head Mrs. Copperas (poor good woman !) had crammed with pride enough for fifty foot-boys, replied, ‘ De Warens,’ with all the air of a man of independence. ‘ De Warens !’ cried Sir John, amazed, ‘ we’ll have no De’s here ; take him to Bridewell !’ and so Mrs. Copperas, being without a foot-boy, she sent for me, and I supplied her with *Bob*.”

“ Out of the late Lady Waddilove’s wardrobe too ?” said Clarence.

“ Ha, ha ! that’s well, very well, Sir. No, *not exactly*, but he was a son of her late ladyship’s coachman. Mr. Copperas has had two other servants of the name of Bob before, but this is the biggest of all, so he humorously calls him ‘ Triple Bob Major.’ You observe that road to the right, Sir—it leads to the mansion of an old customer of mine, General Cornelius St. Leger ; many a good bargain have I sold to his sister. Heaven rest her !—when she died, I lost a good friend, though she was a little hot or so, to be sure. But she had a relation, a young lady—such a lovely, noble looking creature—it did one’s heart, ay, and one’s eyes also, good to look at her ; and she’s gone too—well, well, one loses one’s customers sadly ; it makes

me feel old and comfortless to think of it. Now, yonder, as far as you can see among those distant woods, lived another friend of mine, to whom I offered to make some very valuable presents upon his marriage with the young lady I spoke of just now; but, poor gentleman, he had not time to accept them; he lost his property by a law-suit, a few months after he was married, and a very different person now has Mordaunt Court."

"Mordaunt Court!" cried Clarence; "do you mean to say that Mr. Mordaunt has lost that property?"

"Why, Sir, one Mr. Mordaunt has lost it, and another has gained it: but the real Mr. Mordaunt has not an acre in this county or elsewhere, I fear, poor gentleman. He is universally regretted, for he was very good and very generous, though they say he was also mighty proud and reserved; but, for my part, I never perceived it. If one is not proud oneself, Mr. Linden, one is very little apt to be hurt by pride in other people."

"And where is Mr. Mordaunt?" asked Clarence, as he recalled his interview with that person, and the interest with which Algernon then inspired him.

“That, Sir, is more than any of us can say. He has disappeared altogether. Some declare that he has gone abroad, others that he is living in Wales in the greatest poverty. However, wherever he is, I am sure that he cannot be rich; for the law-suit quite ruined him, and the young lady he married had not a farthing.”

“Poor Mordaunt!” said Clarence, musingly.

“I think, Sir, that the squire would not be best pleased if he heard you pity him. I don't know why, but he certainly looked, walked, and moved like one whom you felt it very hard to pity. But I am thinking that it is a great shame that the general should not do any thing for Mr. Mordaunt's wife, for she was his own flesh and blood; and I am sure *he* had no cause to be angry at her marrying a gentleman of such old family as Mr. Mordaunt. I am a great stickler for birth, Sir—I learnt that from the late Lady W. ‘Brown,’ she said, and I shall never forget her ladyship's air when she did say it, ‘Brown, respect your superiors, and never fall into the hands of the republicans and atheists!’”

“And why,” said Clarence, who was much

interested in Mordaunt's fate, "did General St. Leger withhold his consent?"

"That we don't exactly know, Sir; but some say, that Mr. Mordaunt was very high and proud with the general, and the general was, to the full, as fond of his purse as Mr. Mordaunt could be of his pedigree—and so, I suppose, one pride clashed against the other, and made a quarrel between them."

"Would not the general, then, relent after the marriage?"

"Oh! no, Sir—for it was a runaway affair. Miss Diana St. Leger, his sister, was as hot as ginger upon it, and fretted and worried the poor general, who was never of the mildest, about the match, till at last he forbade the poor young lady's very name to be mentioned. And when Miss Diana died about two years ago, he suddenly introduced a tawny sort of *cretur*, whom they call a mulatto or creole, or some such thing, into the house; and it seems that he has had several children by her, whom he never durst own during Miss Diana's life, but whom he now declares to be his heirs. Well—they rule him with a rod of iron, and suck him as dry as an orange. They are a bad, griping set, all of them; and, I am sure, I don't say so

from any selfish feeling, Mr. Linden, though they have forbid me the house, and called me, to my very face, an old, cheating Jew. Think of *that*, Sir!—I, whom the late Lady W. in her exceeding friendship, used to call ‘honest Brown’—I whom your worthy —”

“And who,” uncourteously interrupted Clarence, “has Mordaunt Court now?”

“Why, a distant relation of the last squire’s, an elderly gentleman, who calls himself Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt. I am going there to-morrow morning, for I still keep up a connection with the family. Indeed the old gentleman bought a lovely little ape of me, which I did intend as a present to the late (as I may call him) Mr. Mordaunt; so, though I will not say I exactly like him—he is a hard hand at a bargain—yet at least I will not deny him his due.”

“What sort of person is he? What character does he bear?” asked Clarence.

“I really find it hard to answer that question,” said the gossiping Mr. Brown. “In great things he is very lavish and ostentatious, but in small things he is very penurious and saving, and miser-like—and all for one son, who is deformed, and very sickly. He seems to doat on that boy; and now I have got two or three little

presents in these bags for Mr. Henry. God forgive me, but when I look at the poor creature, with his face all drawn up, and his sour, ill-tempered voice, and his limbs crippled, I almost think it would be better if he were in his grave, and the rightful Mr. Mordaunt, who would then be the next heir, in his place."

"So, then, there is only this unhappy cripple between Mr. Mordaunt and the property?" said Clarence.

"No, Sir, there is not. But will you let me ask where you shall put up at W——? I will wait upon you, if you will give me leave, with some very curious and valuable articles, highly desirable either for yourself or for little presents to your friends."

"I thank you," said Clarence, "I shall make no stay at W——, but I shall be glad to see you in town next week. Favour me—meanwhile, by accepting this trifle."

"Nay, nay, Sir," said Mr. Brown, pocketing the money—"I really cannot accept this—any thing in the way of exchange—a ring, or a seal, or—"

"No, no, not at present," said Clarence; "the night is coming on, and I shall make the best of my way. Goodbye, Mr. Brown:" and

Clarence trotted off; but he had scarce got sixty yards before he heard the itinerant merchant cry out—"Mr. Linden, Mr. Linden," and looking back, he beheld the honest Brown putting his shaggy pony at full speed, in order to overtake him. So he pulled up.

"Well, Mr. Brown, what do you want?"

"Why, you see, Sir, you gave me no exact answer about the plum-coloured velvet inexpressibles," said Mr. Brown.

CHAPTER XXVI.

“ Are we contemned ?”

The Double Marriage.

IT was dusk when Clarence arrived at the very same inn at which, more than five years ago, he had assumed his present name. As he recalled the note addressed to him, and the insignificant sum (his whole fortune) which it contained, he could not help smiling at the change his fortunes had since then undergone: but the smile soon withered when he thought of the kind and paternal hand from which that change had proceeded, and knew that his gratitude was no longer availing, and that that hand, in pouring its last favours upon him, had become cold. He was ushered into No. 4, and left to his meditations till bed time.

The next day he recommenced his journey.

Westborough Park was, though in another county, within a short ride of W—; but as he approached it, the character of the scenery became essentially changed. Bare, bold, and meagre, the features of the country bore somewhat of a Scottish character. On the right side of the road was a precipitous and perilous descent, and some workmen were placing posts along a path for foot-passengers on that side nearest the carriage-road, probably with a view to preserve unwary coachmen or equestrians from the dangerous vicinity to the descent, which a dark night might cause them to incur. As Clarence looked idly on the workmen, and painfully on the crumbling and fearful descent we have described, he little thought that that spot would, a few years after, become the scene of a catastrophe affecting in the most powerful degree the interests of his future life. Our young traveller put up his horse at a small inn bearing the Westborough arms, and situated at a short distance from the park gates. Now that he was so near his mistress—now that less than an hour, nay, than the fourth part of an hour, might place him before her, and decide his fate, his heart, which had hitherto sustained him, grew faint, and presented, first fear, then

anxiety, and, at last, despondency to his imagination and forebodings.

“At all events,” said he, “I will see her alone before I will confer with her artful and proud mother, or her cipher of a father. I will then tell her all my history, and open to her all my secrets: I will only conceal from her my present fortunes, for even if rumour should have informed her of them, it will be easy to give the report no sanction; I have a right to that trial. When she is convinced that, at least, neither my birth nor character can disgrace her, I shall see if her love can enable her to overlook my supposed poverty, and to share my uncertain lot. If so, there will be some triumph in undeceiving her error and rewarding her generosity: if not, I shall be saved from involving my happiness with that of one who looks only to my worldly possessions. I owe it to her, it is true, to shew her that I am no low-born pretender; but I owe it also to myself to ascertain if my own individual qualities are sufficient to gain her hand.”

- Fraught with these ideas, which were natural enough to a man whose personal beauty had received such universal homage as Clarence's had—whose peculiar circumstances were well

calculated to make him feel rather soured and suspicious, and whose pride had been severely wounded by the contempt with which his letter had been treated—Clarence walked into the park, and, hovering around the house, watched and waited that opportunity of addressing Lady Flora, which he trusted her habits of walking would afford him; but hours rolled away, the evening set in, and Lady Flora had not once quitted the house.

More disappointed and sick at heart than he liked to confess, Clarence returned to his inn, took his solitary meal, and strolling once more into the park, watched beneath the windows till midnight, endeavouring to guess which were the casements of her apartments, and feeling his heart beat high at every light which flashed forth, and disappeared, and every form which flitted across the windows of the great staircase. Little did Lady Flora, as she sat in her room alone, and in tears, mused over Clarence's fancied worthlessness and infidelity, and told her heart again and again that she loved no more—little did she know whose eye kept vigils without, or whose feet brushed away the rank dews beneath her windows, or whose thoughts, though not altogether unmingled with reproach, were rivetted

with all the ardour of a young and first love upon her.

It was unfortunate for Linden that he had no opportunity of personally pleading his suit ; his altered form and faded countenance would at least have insured a hearing and an interest for his honest though somewhat haughty sincerity ; but though that day, and the next, and the next, were passed in the most anxious and unremitting vigilance, Clarence only once caught a glimpse of Lady Flora, and then she was one amidst a large party ; and Clarence, fearful of a premature and untimely discovery, was forced to retire into the thickesses of the park, and lose the solitary reward of his watches almost as soon as he had won it.

Wearied and racked by his suspense, and despairing of obtaining any favourable opportunity for an interview, without such a request, Clarence at last resolved to write to Lady Flora, entreating her assent to a meeting, in which he pledged himself to clear up all that had hitherto seemed doubtful in his conduct or mysterious in his character. Though respectful, urgent, and bearing the impress of truth and feeling, the tone of the letter was certainly that of a man who conceived he had a right to a little resent-

ment for the past, and a little confidence for the future. It was what might well be written by one who imagined his affection had once been returned, but would as certainly have been deemed very presumptuous by a lady who thought that the affection itself was a liberty.

Having penned this epistle, the next care was how to convey it. After much deliberation, it was at last committed to the care of a little girl, the daughter of the lodge-keeper, whom Lady Flora thrice a week personally instructed in the mysteries of spelling, reading, and calligraphy. With many injunctions to deliver the letter only to the hands of the beautiful teacher, Clarence trusted his dispatches to the little scholar, and, with a trembling frame, and wistful eye, watched Susan take her road, with her green satchel and her shining cheeks, to the great house.

One hour, two hours, three hours, passed, and the messenger had not returned. Restless and impatient, Clarence walked back to his inn, and had not been there many minutes before a servant, in the Westborough livery, appeared at the door of the humble hostel, and left the following letter for his perusal and gratification.

“SIR,

“The letter intended for my daughter, has just been given to me by Lady Westborough. I know not what gave rise to the language, or the very extraordinary request for a clandestine meeting, which you have thought proper to address to Lady Flora Ardenne; but you will allow me to observe, that if you intended to confer upon my daughter the honour of a matrimonial proposal, she fully concurs with me and her mother in the negative which I feel necessitated to put upon your obliging offer.

“I need not add, that all correspondence with my daughter must close here. I have the honour to be,

“Sir,

“Your very obedient servant,

“WESTBOROUGH.”

“Westborough Park.

“To Clarence Linden, Esq.”

Had Clarence's blood been turned to fire, his veins could not have swelled and burnt with a fiercer heat than they did, as he read the above letter—a masterpiece, perhaps, in the line of what may be termed the “d——d civil” of epistolary favours.

“Insufferable arrogance!” he muttered within his teeth. “I will live to pay this. Perfidious, unfeeling woman—what an escape I have had of her!—Now, now, I am on the world, and alone, thank Heaven. I will accept Aspeden’s offer, and leave this country; when I return, it shall not be as a humble suitor to Lady Flora Ardenne. Pish!—how the name sickens me: but come, I have a father—at least a nominal one. He is old and weak, and may die before I return. I will see him once more, and then, heigh for Italy! Oh! I am so happy—so happy at my freedom and escape. What, ho!—waiter—my horse, instantly!”

CHAPTER XXVII.

“ *Lucr.*—What has thy father done ?

Beat.—What have I done ?

Am I not innocent ?”

The Cenci.

THE twilight was darkening slowly over a room of noble dimensions, and costly fashion. Although it was the height of summer, a low fire burnt in the grate ; and, stretching his hands over the feeble flame, an old man, of about sixty, sate in an arm chair, curiously carved with armorial bearings. The dim, yet fitful flame cast its upward light upon a countenance, stern, haughty, and repellent, where the passions of youth and manhood had dug themselves graves in many an iron line and deep furrow ; the forehead, though high, was

narrow and compressed—the brows sullenly overhung the eyes, and the nose, which was singularly prominent and decided, age had sharpened, and brought out, as it were, till it gave a stubborn and very forbidden expression to the more sunken features over which it rose with exaggerated dignity. Two bottles of wine, a few dried preserves, and a water glass, richly chased and ornamented with gold, showed that the inmate of the apartment had passed the hour of the principal repast, and his loneliness, at a time usually social, seemed to indicate that few olive branches were accustomed to overshadow his table.

The windows of the dining-room reached to the ground, and without, the closing light just enabled one to see a thick copse of wood, which, at a very brief interval of turf, darkened immediately opposite the house. While the old man was thus bending over the fire, and conning his evening contemplations, a figure stole from the copse we have mentioned, and approaching the window, looked pryingly into the apartment; then with a noiseless hand it opened the spring of the casement, which was framed on a peculiar and old-fashioned construction, that required a practised and familiar touch—entered the

apartment, and crept on, silent and unperceived by the inhabitant of the room, till it paused and stood motionless, with folded arms, scarce three steps behind the high back of the old man's chair.

In a few minutes the latter moved from his position, and slowly rose; the abruptness with which he turned, brought the dark figure of the intruder full and suddenly before him; he started back, and cried, in an alarmed tone—
“ Who is there ?”

The stranger made no reply.

The old man, in a voice in which anger and pride mingled with fear, repeated the question. The figure advanced, dropped the cloak in which it was wrapt, and presenting the features of Clarence Linden, said, in a low but clear tone,

“ Your son !”

The old man dropped his hold of the bell-rope, which he had just before seized, and leaned as if for support against the oak wainscoat; Clarence approached.

“ Yes !” said he, mournfully, “ your unfortunate, your offending, but your guiltless son. More than five years I have been banished from your house; I have been thrown, while yet a

boy, without friends, without guidance, without name upon the wide world, and to the mercy of chance. I come now to you as a man, claiming no assistance, and uttering no reproach, but to tell you that him whom an earthly father rejected, God has preserved; that without one unworthy or debasing act, I have won for myself the friends who support, and the wealth which dignifies (since it renders independent) life. Through all the disadvantages I have struggled against, I have preserved, unimpaired, my honour, and unsullied my conscience; you have disowned, but you might have claimed me without shame. Father, these hands are pure!"

A strong and evident emotion shook the old man's frame. He raised himself to his full height, which was still tall and commanding, and, in a voice, the natural harshness of which was rendered yet more repellent by passion, replied, "Boy! your presumption is insufferable. What to me is your wretched fate? Go—go—go to your miserable mother; find her out—claim kindred there; live together, toil together, rot together; but come not to me—disgrace to my house—ask not admittance to my affections; the law may give you my name,

but sooner would I be torn piece-meal than own your right to it. If you want money, name the sum, take it; cut up my fortune to shreds—seize my property — revel on it — but come not *here*. This house is sacred; pollute it not: I disown you; I discard you; I — ay, I detest — I loathe you!”

And with these words, which came forth as if heaved from the inmost heart of the speaker, who shook with the fury he endeavoured to stifle, he fell back into his chair, and fixed his eyes, which glared fearfully through the increasing darkness upon Linden, who stood, high, erect, and sorrowfully before him!

“Unhappy old man!” said Clarence: “have not the years which have seared your form and whitened your locks, brought some meekness to your rancour, some mercy to your injustice, for one whose only crime against you seems to have been his birth. But I said I came not to reproach—nor do I. Many a bitter hour, many a pang of shame, and mortification, and misery, which have made scars in my heart that will never wear away, my wrongs have cost me—but let them pass. Let them not swell your future and last account whenever it be required. I am about to leave

this country, with a heavy and foreboding heart ; we may never meet again on earth. I have no longer any wish, any chance of resuming the name you have deprived me of. I shall never thrust myself on your relationship, or cross your view. Lavish your wealth upon him whom you have placed so immeasurably above me in your affections. But, I have not deserved your curse, father ; give me your blessing, and let me depart in peace.”

“ Peace ! and what peace have I had ? what respite from gnawing shame, the foulness and leprosy of humiliation and reproach, since—since—? But this is not your fault, you say : no, no—it is another’s ; and you are only the mark of my stigma, my disgrace, not its perpetrator. Ha ! a nice distinction, truly. My blessing, you say ! Come, kneel ; kneel, boy, and have it !”

Clarence approached, and stood bending and bareheaded before his father, but he knelt not.

“ Why do you not kneel ?” cried the old man, vehemently.

“ It is the attitude of the injurer, not of the injured !” said Clarence, firmly.

“ Injured !—insolent reprobate — Is it not I who am injured ? Do you not read it in my

brow—here, here?” and the old man struck his clenched hand violently against his temples. “Was I not injured”—(he continued, sinking his voice into a key unnaturally low)—“did I not trust implicitly?—did I not give up my heart without suspicion?—was I not duped deliciously?—was I not kind enough, blind enough, fool enough—and was I not betrayed—damnably, filthily betrayed? But that was *no* injury. Was not my old age turned into a drought, a sapless tree, a poisoned spring?—were not my days made a curse to me, and my nights a torture?—was I not, am I not, a mock, and a bye-word, and a miserable, impotent, unavenged old man? Injured!—But this is no injury!—Boy, boy, what are your wrongs to mine!”

“Father!” cried Clarence, deprecatingly, “I am not the cause of your wrongs: is it just that the innocent should suffer for the guilty?”

“Speak not in that voice!” cried the old man—“that voice!—fie, fie on it. Hence! away!—away, boy!—why tarry you?—My son, and have that voice?—Pooh, you are *not* my son. Ha, ha!—*my* son!”

“What am I, then?” said Clarence, soothingly; for he was shocked and grieved, rather

than irritated, by a wrath which partook so strongly of insanity.

“ I will tell you,” cried the father—“ I will tell you what you are—you are my curse !”

“ Farewell !” said Clarence, much agitated, and retiring to the window by which he had entered ; “ may your heart never smite you for your cruelty ! Farewell !—may the blessing you have withheld from me be with you !”

“ Stop !—stay !” cried the father ; for his fury was checked for one moment, and his nature, fierce as it was, relented : but Clarence was already gone, and the miserable old man was left alone to darkness, and solitude, and the passions which can make a hell of the human heart !

CHAPTER XXVIII.

“ Sed quæ præclara, et prospera tanti,
Ut rebus lætis par sit mensura malorum.”

JUVENAL.

WE are now transported to a father and a son of a very different stamp.

It was about the hour of one, P. M., when the door of Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt's study was thrown open, and the servant announced Mr. Brown.

“ Your servant, Sir—your servant, Mr. Henry,” said the itinerant, bowing low to the two gentlemen thus addressed. The former, Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt, might be about the same age as Linden's father. A shrewd, sensible, ambitious man of the world, he had made

his way from the state of a younger brother, with no fortune and very little interest, to considerable wealth, besides the property he had acquired by law; and to a degree of consideration for general influence and personal ability, which, considering he had no official or parliamentary rank, very few of his equals enjoyed. Persevering, steady, crafty, and possessing, to an eminent degree, that happy art of '*canting*' which is the great secret of earning character and consequence in England, the rise and reputation of Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt appeared less to be wondered at than envied; yet, even envy was only for those who could not look beyond the surface of things. He was at heart an anxious and unhappy man. The evil we do in the world is often paid back in the bosom of home. Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt was, like Crauford, what might be termed a mistaken utilitarian: he had lived utterly and invariably for self; but instead of uniting self-interest with the interest of others, he considered them as perfectly incompatible ends. But character was among the greatest of all objects to him; so that, though he had rarely deviated into what might fairly be termed a virtue, he had never transgressed what might rigidly be called a propriety. He

had not the genius, the wit, the moral audacity of Crauford: he could not have indulged in one offence with impunity, by a mingled courage and hypocrisy in veiling others—he was the slave of the formula which Crauford subjugated to himself. He was only so far resembling Crauford as one man of the world resembles another in selfishness and dissimulation: he could be dishonest, not villanous, much less a villain upon system. He was a *canter*, Crauford an *hypocrite*: his uttered opinions were, like Crauford's, differing from his conduct; but he *believed* the truth of the former even while sinning in the latter: he canted so sincerely that the tears came in his eyes when he spoke. Never was there a man more exemplary in words: people who departed from him went away impressed with the idea of an excess of honour—a plethora of conscience. “It was almost a pity,” said they, “that Mr. Vavasour was so romantic;” and thereupon they named him as executor to their wills, and guardian to their sons. None but he could have carried the law-suit against Mordaunt, and lost nothing in reputation by it. But there was something so specious, so ostensibly fair in his manner and words, while he was ruining

Mordaunt, that it was impossible not to suppose he was actuated by the purest motives, the most holy desire for justice—not for himself, he said, for he was old, and already rich enough, but for his son. From that son came the punishment of all his offences—the black drop at the bottom of a bowl, seemingly so sparkling. To him, as the father grew old, and desirous of quiet, Vavasour had transferred all his selfishness, as if to a securer and more durable firm. The child, when young, had been singularly handsome and intelligent; and Vavasour, as he toiled and toiled at his ingenious and graceful cheateries, pleased himself with anticipating the importance and advantages the heir to his labours would enjoy. For that son he certainly *had* persevered more arduously than otherwise he might have done in the lawsuit, of the justice of which he better satisfied the world than his own breast; for that son he rejoiced as he looked around the stately halls and noble domain from which the rightful possessor had been driven; for that son he extended economy into penuriousness, and hope into anxiety; and, too old to expect much more from the world himself, for that son he anticipated, with a wearing and fe-

verish fancy, whatever wealth could purchase, beauty win, or intellect command.

But as if, like the Castle of Otranto, there was something in Mordaunt Court which contained a penalty and a doom for the usurper, no sooner had Vavasour possessed himself of his kinsman's estate, than the prosperity of his life dried and withered away, like Jonah's gourd, in a single night. His son, at the age of thirteen, fell from a scaffold, on which the workmen were making some extensive alterations in the old house, and became a cripple and a valetudinarian for life. But still Vavasour, always of a sanguine temperament, cherished a hope that surgical assistance might restore him : from place to place, from professor to professor, from quack to quack, he carried the unhappy boy, and as each remedy failed, he was only the more impatient to devise a new one. But as it was the mind as well as person of his son in which the father had stored up his ambition ; so, in despite of this fearful accident, and the wretched health by which it was followed, Vavasour never suffered his son to rest from the tasks, and tuitions, and lectures of the various masters by whom he was surrounded. The poor boy, it is true, deprived of physical

exertion, and naturally of a serious and applicative disposition, required very little urging to second his father's wishes for his mental improvement; and as the tutors were all of the orthodox university calibre, who imagine that there is no knowledge (but vanity) in any other works than those in which their own education has consisted; so Henry Vavasour became at once the victor and victim of Bentleys and Scaligers, word-weighers and metre-scanners; till, utterly ignorant of every thing which could have softened his temper, dignified his misfortunes, and reconciled him to his lot, he was sinking fast into the grave, soured by incessant pain into morosity, envy, and bitterness; exhausted by an unwholesome and useless application to unprofitable studies; the best scholar (as it is termed), with the worst regulated and worst informed mind of almost any of his cotemporaries, equal to himself in the advantages of ability, original goodness of disposition, and the costly and profuse expenditure of education.

But the vain father, as he heard, on all sides, of his son's talents, saw nothing sinister in their direction; and though the poor boy grew daily more contracted in mind, and broken in

frame, Vavasour yet hugged more and more closely to his breast the hope of ultimate cure for the latter, and future glory for the former. So he went on heaping money, and extending acres, and planting, and improving, and building, and hoping, and anticipating, for one at whose very feet the grave was already dug, and the shroud laid.

But we left Mr. Brown in the study, making his bow and professions of service to Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt and his son.

“ Good day, *honest* Brown,” said the former, a middle sized and rather stout man, with a well powdered head, and a sharp, shrewd, and very sallow countenance; “ good day — Have you brought any of the foreign *liqueurs* you spoke of, for Mr. Henry ?”

“ Yes, Sir, I have some curiously fine *eau d’or* and *liqueurs de îles*, besides the *marasquino* and *curaçoa*. The late Lady Waddilove honoured my taste in these matters with her especial approbation.”

“ My dear boy,” said Vavasour, turning to his son, who lay extended on the couch reading, *not* the Prometheus, (that most noble drama ever created,) *but the notes upon it*—“ my dear

boy, as you are fond of *liqueurs*, I desired Brown to get you some peculiarly fine; perhaps—”

“Pish!” said the son, fretfully interrupting him, “do, I beseech you, take your hand off my shoulder. See now, you have made me lose my place. I really do wish you would leave me alone for one moment in the day.”

“I beg your pardon, Henry,” said the father, looking reverently on the Greek characters, which his son preferred to the newspaper. “It is very vexatious, I own; but do taste these *liqueurs*. Dr. Lukewarm said, you might have every thing you liked—”

“But quiet!” muttered the cripple.

“I assure you, Sir,” said the wandering merchant, “that they are excellent: allow me, Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt, to ring for a corkscrew. I really do think, Sir, that Mr. Henry looks much better—I declare he has quite a colour.”

“No, indeed!” said Vavasour, eagerly. “Well, it seems to *me*, too, that he is getting better. I intend him to try Mr. E——’s patent collar, in a day or two; but that will in some measure prevent his reading. A great pity; for I am very anxious that he should lose no

time in his studies just at present. He goes to Cambridge in October."

"Indeed, Sir. Well, he will set the town in a blaze, I guess, Sir! Every body says what a fine scholar Mr. Henry is—even in the servants' hall!"

"Ay, ay," said Vavasour, gratified, even by this praise, "he is clever enough, Brown; and, what is more, (and here Vavasour's look grew sanctified,) he is good enough. His principles *do equal honour to his head and heart*. He would be no son of mine, if he were not as much *the gentleman as the scholar*."

The youth lifted his heavy and distorted face from his book, and a sneer raised his lip for a moment; but a sudden spasm of pain seizing him, the expression changed, and Vavasour, whose eyes were fixed upon him, hastened to his assistance.

"Throw open the window; Brown, ring the bell—call—"

"Pooh, father," cried the boy, with a sharp, angry voice, "I am not going to die yet, or faint either; but it is all your fault. If you *will* have those odious, vulgar people here for *your own* pleasure, at least suffer me another day to retire."

“My son, my son!” said the grieved father, in reproachful anger, “it was my anxiety to give you some trifling enjoyment that brought Brown here—you must be sensible of that!”

“You tease me to death,” grumbled the peevish unfortunate.

“Well, Sir,” said Mr. Brown, “shall I leave the bottles here? or do you please that I should give them to the butler? I see that I am displeasing and troublesome to Mr. Henry; but as my worthy friend and patroness, the late Lady—”

“Go—go—honest Brown!” said Vavasour, (who desired every man’s good word)—“go, and give the *liqueurs* to Preston. Mr. Henry is extremely sorry that he is too unwell to see you now; and I—I have the heart of a father for his sufferings.”

Mr. Brown withdrew. “‘Odious and vulgar,’” said he to himself, in a little fury—for Mr. Brown peculiarly valued himself on his gentility—“‘odious and vulgar!’ To think of his little *lordship* uttering such shameful words! However, I will go into the steward’s room, and abuse him there. But, I suppose, I shall get no dinner in this house—no, not so much as a crust of bread; for while the old gentleman is

launching out into such prodigious expenses on a great scale—making heathenish temples, and spoiling the fine old house with his new picture gallery and nonsense—he is so close in small matters, that I warrant not a candle-end escapes him—griping, and pinching, and squeezing with one hand, and scattering money, as if it were dirt, with the other—and all for that cross, ugly, deformed, little whipper-snapper of a son. ‘Odious and vulgar,’ indeed! What shocking language. Mr. Algernon Mordaunt would never have made use of such words, I know. And, bless me, now I think of it, I wonder where that poor gentleman is—the young heir here is not long for this world, I can see; and who knows but what Mr. Algernon may be in great distress; and, I am sure, as far as four hundred pounds, or even a thousand or two thousand, go, I would not mind lending it him, only upon the post-obits of Squire Vavasour and his hopeful. I like doing a kind thing; and Mr. Algernon was always very good to me; and I am sure I don’t care about the security, though I think it will be as sure as sixpence; for the old gentleman must be past sixty, and the young one is the worse life of the two. One should help one another—it is

but one's duty : and if he is in great distress he would not mind a handsome premium. Well, nobody can say Morris Brown is not as charitable as the best christian breathing ; and, as the late Lady Waddilove very justly observed, ' Brown, believe me, a prudent risk is the surest gain ! ' I will lose no time in finding the late squire out."

Muttering over these reflections, Mr. Brown took his way to the steward's room.

CHAPTER XXIX.

“ *Clar.*—How, two letters ?”

The Lover's Progress.

LETTER FROM CLARENCE LINDEN, ESQ., TO THE
DUKE OF HAVERFIELD.

“ *Hotel —, Calais.*

“ MY DEAR DUKE,

“ After your kind letter, you will forgive me for not having called upon you before I left England—for you have led me to hope that I may dispense with ceremony towards you ; and, in sad and sober earnest, I was in no mood to visit even you during the few days I was in London, previous to my departure. Some French philosopher has said that, ‘ the best compliment we can pay our friends, when in

sickness or misfortune, is to avoid them.' I will not say how far I disagree with this sentiment: but I know that a French philosopher will be an unanswerable authority with you; and so I will take shelter even under the battery of an enemy.

“ I am waiting here for some days, in expectation of Lord Aspeden's arrival. Sick as I was of England, and all that has lately occurred to me there, I was glad to have an opportunity of leaving it sooner than my *chef diplomatique* could do; and I amuse myself very indifferently in this dull town, with reading all the morning, plays all the evening, and dreams of my happier friends all the night.

“ And so you are sorry that I did not destroy Lord Borodaile. My dear duke, you would have been much more sorry if I had! What could you then have done for a living Pasquin for your stray lampoons and vagrant sarcasms? Had an unfortunate bullet carried away

“ ‘ That peer of England—pillar of the state,’

as you term him, pray *on* whom could ‘ Duke Humphrey unfold his griefs?’—Ah; my lord, better as it is, believe me; and, whenever you

are at a loss for a subject for wit, you will find cause to bless my forbearance, and congratulate yourself upon the existence of its object.

“Dare I hope that, amidst all the gaieties which court you, you will find time to write to me? If so, you shall have in return the earliest intelligence of every new soprano, and the most elaborate criticisms on every budding figurante of our court.

“Have you met Trollop lately—and in what new pursuit are his intellectual energies engaged? There, you see, I have fairly entrapped your Grace into a question, which common courtesy will oblige you to answer.

“Adieu, ever,

“My dear Duke,

“Most truly, yours,” &c.

LETTER FROM THE DUKE OF HAVERFIELD TO
CLARENCE LINDEN, ESQ.

“A thousand thanks, *mon cher*, for your letter, though it was certainly less amusing and animated, than I could have wished it for your sake, as well as my own; yet it could not have been more welcomely received, had it been as

witty as your conversation itself. I heard that you had accepted the place of secretary to Lord Aspeden, and that you had passed through London on your way to the continent, looking—(the amiable Callythorpe, ‘who never flatters,’ is my authority)—more like a ghost than yourself. So you may be sure, my dear Linden, that I was very anxious to be convinced, under your own hand, of your carnal existence.

“Take care of yourself, my good fellow, and don’t imagine, as I am apt to do, that youth is like my hunter, Fearnought, and will carry you over everything. In return for your philosophical maxim, I will give you another. ‘In age, we should remember that we *have been* young, and in youth, that we are *to be* old.’—Ehem!—am I not profound as a moralist? I think a few such sentences would become my long face well; and, to say truth, I am tired of being witty—every one thinks he can be that—so I will borrow Trollop’s philosophy—take snuff, wear a wig out of curl, and grow wise, instead of merry.

“Apropos of Trollop; let me not forget that you honour him with your inquiries. I saw him three days since, and he asked me if I had been impressed lately with the idea vul-

garly called Clarence Linden; and he then proceeded to inform me that he had heard the atoms which composed your frame were about to be resolved into a new form. While I was knitting my brows very wisely at this intelligence, he passed on to apprise me that I had neither length, breadth, or extension, or any thing but mind. Flattered by so delicate a compliment to my understanding, I yielded my assent; and he then shifted his ground, and told me that there was no such thing as mind—that we were but modifications of matter—and that, in a word, I was all body. I took advantage of this doctrine, and forthwith removed my modification of matter from his.

“Findlater has just lost his younger brother in a duel. You have no idea how shocking it was. Sir Christopher, one day, heard his brother, who had just entered the — Dragoons, ridiculed for his want of spirit, by Major Elton, who professed to be the youth’s best friend—the honest heart of our worthy baronet was shocked beyond measure at this perfidy, and the next time his brother mentioned Elton’s name with praise, out came the story. You may guess the rest: young Findlater called out Elton, who shot him through the

lungs!—‘I did it for the best,’ cried Sir Christopher.

“*La pauvre petite Meronville!*—What an Ariadne! Just as I was thinking to play the Bacchus to your Theseus, —up steps an old gentleman from Yorkshire, who hears it is fashionable to marry *les bonas robas*, proposes honourable matrimony, and deprives me and the world of La Meronville! The wedding took place on Monday last, and the happy pair set out to their seat in the North. Verily, we shall have quite a new race in the next generation—I expect all the babes will skip into the world with a *pas de zéphir*, singing in sweet trebles—

“ ‘Little dancing loves we are—
Who the deuce is our papa?’

“I think you will be surprised to hear that Lord Borodaile is beginning to thaw—I saw him smile the other day! Certainly, we are not so near the North Pole as we were! He is going, and so am I, in the course of the autumn, to your old friends, the Westboroughs. Report says that he is *un peu épris de la belle Flore*; but, then, Report is such a liar!—For my own part, I always contradict her.

“ Tell me how Lord Aspeden’s flatteries are received in Italy. Somewhat like snow in that country, I should imagine—more surprising than agreeable! I eagerly embrace your offer of correspondence, and assure you that there are few people by whose friendship I conceive myself so much honoured as by yours. You will believe this; for you know that, like Callythorpe, I never flatter.—Farewell for the present.

“ Sincerely yours,

“ HAVERFIELD.”

CHAPTER XXX.

“ *Q. Eliz.*—Shall I be tempted of the devil thus ?

K. Rich.—Ay, if the devil tempt thee to do good.

Q. Eliz.—Shall I forget myself to be myself ?”

SHAKSPEARE.

IT wanted one hour to midnight, as Crauford walked slowly to the lonely and humble street where he had appointed his meeting with Glendower. It was a stormy and fearful night. The day had been uncommonly sultry, and as it died away, thick masses of cloud came labouring along the air, which lay heavy and breathless, as if under a spell—as if in those dense and haggard vapours the rider of the storm sat, like an incubus, upon the atmosphere beneath, and paralysed the motion and wholesomeness of the sleeping winds. And about the hour of twilight, or rather when twilight should have been, instead

of its quiet star, from one obscure corner of the heavens flashed a solitary gleam of lightning, lingered a moment,

“ And ere a man had power to say, Behold !
The jaws of darkness did devour it up.”

But then, as if awakened from a torpor by a signal universally acknowledged, from the courts and quarters of heaven, came, blaze after blaze, and peal upon peal, the light and voices of the Elements when they walk abroad. The rain fell not : all was dry and arid. The mood of Nature seemed not gentle enough for tears, and the lightning, livid and forked, flashed from the sullen and motionless clouds with a deadly fierceness, made trebly perilous by the panting drought and stagnation of the air. The streets were empty and silent, as if the huge city had been doomed and delivered to the wrath of the tempest—and ever and anon the lightnings paused upon the housetops, shook and quivered as if meditating their stroke, and then, baffled, as it were, by some superior and guardian agency, vanished into their gloomy tents, and made their next descent from some opposite corner of the skies.

— It was a remarkable instance of the force with

which a cherished object occupies the thoughts, and of the all-sufficiency of the human mind to itself, the slowness and unconsciousness of danger with which Crauford, a man luxurious as well as naturally timid, moved amidst the angry fires of heaven, and brooded, undisturbed, and sullenly serene, over the project at his heart.

“A rare night for our meeting,” thought he, “I suppose he will not fail me. Now let me con over my task. I must not tell him all yet. Such babes must be led into error before they can walk—just a little inkling will suffice—a glimpse into the arcana of my scheme. Well, it is indeed fortunate that I met him, for verily I am surrounded with danger, and a very little delay in the assistance I am forced to seek, might exalt me to a higher elevation than the peerage.”

Such was the meditation of this man, as, with a slow, shuffling walk, characteristic of his mind, he proceeded to the appointed spot.

A cessation of unusual length in the series of the lightnings, and the consequent darkness, against which the dull and scanty lamps vainly struggled, prevented Crauford and another figure, approaching from the opposite quarter, seeing each other till they almost touched.—Crauford stopped abruptly.

“Is it you?” said he.

“It is a man who has outlived fortune!” answered Glendower, in the exaggerated and metaphorical language which the thoughts of men who imagine warmly, and are excited powerfully, so often assume.

“Then,” rejoined Crauford, “you are the more suited for my purpose. A little urging of necessity behind, is a marvellous whetter of the appetite to danger before.—He! he!” And as he said this, his low, chuckling laugh jarringly enough contrasted with the character of the night and his companion.

Glendower replied not: a pause ensued; and the lightning, which, spreading on a sudden from east to west, hung over the city a burning and ghastly canopy, shewed the face of each to the other, working, and almost haggard, as it was, with the conception of dark thoughts, and rendered wan and unearthly by the spectral light in which it was beheld.—“It is an awful night!” said Glendower.

“True,” answered Crauford—“a very awful night; but we are all safe under the care of Providence.—Jesus! what a flash!—Think you it is a favourable opportunity for our conversation?”

“Why not?” said Glendower; “what have the thunders and wrath of Heaven to do with us?”

“H—e—m! h—e—m! God sees all things,” rejoined Crauford, “and avenges himself on the guilty by his storms!”

“Ay; but those are the storms of the heart! I tell you that even the innocent may have that within, to which the loudest tempests without are peace! But guilt, you say—what have *we* to do with guilt?”

Crauford hesitated, and, avoiding any reply to this question, drew Glendower’s arm within his own, and, in a low half-whispered tone said—

“Glendower, survey mankind; look with a passionless and unprejudiced eye upon the scene which moves around us: what do you see any where but the same re-acted and eternal law of nature—all, all preying upon each other? Or if there be a solitary individual who refrains, he is as a man without a common badge, without a marriage garment, and the rest trample him under foot! Glendower, *you* are such a man! Now hearken, I will deceive you not; I honour you too much to beguile you, even to your own good. I own to you, fairly and at once, that

in the scheme I shall unfold to you there may be something repugnant to the factitious and theoretical principles of education—something hostile to the prejudices, though not to the reasonings, of the mind; but—”

“ Hold !” said Glendower abruptly, pausing and fixing his bold and searching eye upon the tempter ; “ hold !—there will be no need of argument or refinement in this case : tell me at once your scheme, and at once I will accept or reject it !”

“ Gently,” answered Crauford : “ to all deeds of contract there is a preamble. Listen to me yet farther : when I have ceased, I will listen to you. It is in vain that you place man in cities—it is in vain that you fetter him with laws—it is in vain that you pour into his mind the light of an imperfect morality, of a glimmering wisdom, of an ineffectual religion : in all places he is the same—the same savage and crafty being, who makes the passions which rule himself the tools of his conquest over others ! There is in all creation but one evident law—self-preservation ! Split it as you like into hairbreadths and atoms, it is still fundamentally and essentially unaltered. Glendower, that self-preservation is our bond now. Of myself I

do not at present speak—I refer only to you: self-preservation commands you to place implicit confidence in me; it impels you to abjure indigence, by accepting the proposal I am about to make to you.”

“ You, as yet, speak enigmas,” said Glendower; “ but they are sufficiently clear to tell me, their sense is not such as I have heard you utter.”

“ You are right. Truth is not always safe—safe either to others, or to ourselves! But I bare open to you now my real heart: look in it—I dare to say that you will behold charity, benevolence, piety to God, love and friendship at this moment to yourself; but I own, also, that you will behold there a determination—which, to me, seems courage—not to be the only idle being in the world, where all are busy; or, worse still, to be the only one engaged in a perilous and uncertain game, and yet shunning to employ all the arts of which he is master. I will own to you that, long since, had I been foolishly inert, I should have been, at this moment, more pennyless and destitute than yourself. I live happy, respected, wealthy! I enjoy in their widest range the blessings of life. I dispense those blessings to others. Look

round the world—whose name stands fairer than mine? whose hand relieves more of human distresses? whose tongue preaches purer doctrines? None, Glendower, none. I offer to you means not dissimilar to those I have chosen—fortunes not unequal to those I possess. Nothing but the most unjustifiable fastidiousness will make you hesitate to accept my offer.”

“ You cannot expect that I have met you this night with a resolution to be unjustifiably fastidious,” said Glendower, with a hollow and cold smile.

Crauford did not immediately answer, for he was considering whether it was yet the time for disclosing the important secret. While he was deliberating, the sullen clouds began to break from their suspense. A double darkness gathered around, and a few large drops fell on the ground in token of a more general discharge about to follow from the floodgates of heaven. The two men moved onward, and took shelter under an old arch.

Crauford first broke silence. “ Hist,” said he—“ hist—do you hear any thing?”

“ Yes! I heard the winds and the rain, and the shaking houses, and the plashing pavements, and the reeking housetops—nothing more.”

Looking long and anxiously around to certify himself that none was indeed the witness of their conference, Crauford approached close to Glendower, and laid his hand heavily upon his arm. At that moment a vivid and lengthened flash of lightning shot through the ruined arch, and gave to Crauford's countenance a lustre which Glendower almost started to behold. That face, usually so smooth, calm, bright in complexion, and almost inexpressive from its extreme composure, now agitated by the excitement of the moment, and tinged by the ghastly light of the skies, became literally fearful. The cold blue eye glared out from its socket—the lips blanched, and parting in act to speak, shewed the white glistening teeth; and the corners of the mouth, drawn down in a half sneer, gave to the cheeks, rendered green and livid by the lightning, a lean and hollow appearance, contrary to their natural shape.

“It is,” said Crauford, in a whispered but distinct tone, “a perilous secret that I am about to disclose to you. I indeed have no concern in it, but my lords the judges have, and you will not therefore be surprised if I forestall the ceremonies of their court, and require an oath.”

Then, his manner and voice suddenly changing

into an earnest and deep solemnity, as excitation gave him an eloquence more impressive, because unnatural to his ordinary moments, he continued. "By these lightnings and commotions above—by the heavens in which they revel in their terrible sports—by the earth, whose towers they crumble, and herbs they blight, and creatures they blast into cinders at their will—by Him whom, whatever be the name he bears, all men in the living world worship and tremble before—by whatever is sacred in this great and mysterious universe, and at the peril of whatever can wither, and destroy, and curse—swear to preserve inviolable and for ever the secret I shall whisper to your ear!"

The profound darkness which now, in the pauses of the lightning, wrapt the scene, hid from Crauford all sight of the effect he had produced, and even the very outline of Glendower's figure; but the gloom made more distinct the voice which thrilled through it upon Crauford's ear.

"Promise me that there is not dishonour, nor crime, which is dishonour, in this confidence, and I swear."

Crauford ground his teeth. He was about to reply impetuously, but he checked himself. "I

am not going," thought he, "to communicate my own share of this plot, but merely to state that a plot does exist, and then to point out in what manner he can profit by it—so far, therefore, there is no guilt in his concealment, and consequently no excuse for him to break his vow."

Rapidly running over this self-argument, he said aloud—"I promise!"

"And," rejoined Glendower, "I swear!"

At the close of this sentence another flash of lightning again made darkness visible, and Glendower, beholding the countenance of his companion, again recoiled; for its mingled haggardness and triumph seemed to his excited imagination the very expression of a fiend!—"Now," said Crauford, relapsing into his usual careless tone, somewhat enlivened by his sneer, "now, then, you must not interrupt me in my disclosure, by those starts and exclamations which break from your philosophy like sparks from flint. Hear me throughout."

And bending down, till his mouth reached Glendower's ear, he commenced his recital. Artfully hiding his own agency, the master-spring of the gigantic machinery of fraud which, too mighty for a single hand, required an assistant—throwing into obscurity the sin, while knowing

the undaunted courage and desperate fortunes of the man, he did not affect to conceal the danger—expatiating upon the advantages, the immense and almost inexhaustible resources of wealth which his scheme suddenly opened upon one in the deepest abyss of poverty, and slightly sketching, as if to excite vanity, the ingenuity and genius by which the scheme originated, and could only be sustained—Crauford's detail of temptation, in its knowledge of human nature, in its adaptation of act to principles, in its web-like craft of self-concealment, and the speciousness of its lure, was indeed a splendid masterpiece of villainous invention.

But while Glendower listened, and his silence flattered Crauford's belief of victory, not for one single moment did a weak or yielding desire creep around his heart. Subtly as the scheme was varnished, and scarce a tithe of its comprehensive enormity unfolded, the strong and acute mind of one, long accustomed to unravel sophistry, and gaze on the loveliness of truth, saw at once, that the scheme proposed was of the most unmingled treachery and baseness. Sick, chilled, withering at heart, Glendower leant against the damp wall, as every word, which the tempter fondly imagined was irresistibly confirming his

purpose, tore away the last prop to which, in the credulity of hope, the student had clung, and mocked while it crushed the fondness of his belief.

Crauford ceased, and stretched forth his hand to grasp Glendower's. He felt it not.—“You do not speak, my friend,” said he; “do you deliberate, or have you not decided?” Still, no answer came. Surprised, and half alarmed, he turned round, and perceived by a momentary flash of lightning, that Glendower had risen, and was moving away towards the mouth of the arch.

“Good Heavens! Glendower,” cried Crauford, “where are you going?”

“Any where,” cried Glendower, in a sudden paroxysm of indignant passion, “any where in this great globe of suffering, so that the agonies of my human flesh and heart are not polluted by the accents of crime! And such crime!—Why, I would rather go forth into the highways, and win bread by the sharp knife, and the death struggle, than sink my soul in such mire and filthiness of sin. Fraud—fraud—treachery! Merciful Father! what can be my state, when these are supposed to tempt me!”

Astonished and aghast, Crauford remained rooted to the spot.

“ Oh !” continued Glendower—and his noble nature was wrung to the utmost ; ‘ Oh, man—man ! that I should have devoted my best and freshest years to the dream of serving thee. In my boyish enthusiasm, in my brief day of pleasure and of power, in the intoxication of love, in the reverses of fortune, in the squalid and obscure chambers of degradation and poverty, that one hope animated, cheered, sustained me through all. In temptation, did this hand belie, or in sickness did this brain forego, or in misery did this heart forget thy great and advancing cause ? In the wide world, is there one being whom I have injured, even in thought—one being who, in the fellowship of want, should not have drank of my cup, or broken with me the last morsel of my bread !—and now—now, is it come to this !”

And hiding his face with his hands, he gave way to a violence of feeling, before which the weaker nature of Crauford stood trembling and abashed. It lasted not long ; he raised his head from its drooping posture, and, as he stood at the entrance of the arch, a prolonged flash from the inconstant skies shone full upon his form. Tall, erect, still, the gloomy and ruined walls gave his colourless countenance and haughty

stature in bold and distinct relief; all trace of the past passion had vanished: perfectly calm and set, his features borrowed even dignity from their marble paleness, and the marks of suffering, which the last few months had writ in legible characters on the cheek and brow. Seeking out, with an eye to which the intolerable lightnings seemed to have lent something of their fire, the cowering and bended form of his companion, he said—

“Go home, miserable derider of the virtue you cannot understand—go to your luxurious and costly home—go and repine that human nature is not measured by your mangled and crippled laws—that the fall and the stain of a human soul is not upon your hands. Amidst these living fires of heaven—amidst the witness of the sweeping and roaring elements, do you not tremble to the centre of your petty being, when you remember your guilt? Reptile that you are, do you not tremble to creep forth upon your loathsome and venomous path, to add to the stings of fortune—to the poison of a full and bitter cup, by a sting and a poison deadlier than all! Go—if not to your home—elsewhere, upon your unholy errand; dive into prisons and hovels, and roofless sheds; profit by the deliri-

ous impulse of famishing want, and the spur of a craving and imperious nature—among rags and destitution, and men made mad by hunger, you may find a fit instrument for a fraud so monstrous and black. I leave you to that hope, and to—remembrance !”

As Glendower moved away, Crauford recovered himself. Rendered desperate by the vital necessity of procuring some speedy aid in his designs, and not yet perfectly persuaded of the fallacy of his former judgment, he was resolved not to suffer Glendower thus easily to depart. Smothering his feelings by an effort violent even to his habitual hypocrisy, he sprung forward, and laid his hand upon Glendower’s shoulder.

“ Stay, stay,” said he in a soothing and soft voice ; “ you have wronged me greatly. I pardon your warmth — nay, I honour it ; but hereafter you will repent your judgment of me. At least, do justice to my intentions. Was I an actor in the scheme proposed to you?—what was it to me? Was I in the smallest degree to be benefited by it? Could I, have had any other motive than affection for you? If I erred, it was from a different view of the question ; but is it not the duty of a friend to find expedients for distress, and to leave to the dis-

tressed person the right of accepting or rejecting them? But let this drop for ever—partake of my fortune—be my adopted brother. Here, I have hundreds about me at this moment; take them all, and own at least that I meant you well.”

Feeling that Glendower, who at first had vainly endeavoured to shake off his hand, now turned towards him; though at the moment it was too dark to see his countenance, the wily speaker continued.—“Yes, Glendower, if by that name I must alone address you, take half, take all I have—there is no one in this world dearer to me than you are. I am a lonely and disappointed man, without children or ties. I sought out a friend who might be my brother in life, and my heir in death. I found you—be that to me!”

“I am faint and weak,” said Glendower, slowly, “and I believe my senses cannot be clear; but a minute since, and you spoke at length, and with a terrible distinctness, words which it polluted my very ear to catch, and *now* you speak as if you loved me. Will it please you to solve the riddle?”

“The truth is this,” said Crauford: “I knew your pride—I feared you would not ac-

cept a permanent pecuniary aid, even from friendship. I was driven, therefore, to devise some plan of independence for you: I could think of no plan but that which I proposed. You speak of it as wicked: it may be so; but it seemed not wicked to me. I may have formed a wrong—I own it is a peculiar principle of morals; but it is, at least, sincere. Judging of my proposal by that principle, I saw no sin in it. I saw, too, much less danger than, in the honesty of my heart, I spoke of. In a similar distress, I solemnly swear, I myself would have adopted a similar relief. Nor is this all; the plan proposed would have placed thousands in your power. Forgive me if I thought your life, and the lives of those most dear to you, of greater value than these sums to the persons defrauded—ay—defrauded, if you will: forgive me if I thought, that with these thousands you would effect far more good to the community than their legitimate owners. Upon these grounds, and on some others, too tedious now to state, I justified my proposal to my conscience. Pardon me, I again beseech you: accept my last proposal; be my partner, my friend, my heir; and forget a scheme never proposed to you, if I had hoped (what I hope

now) that you would accept the alternative which it is my pride to offer, and which you are not justified, even by pride, to refuse."

"Great Source of all knowledge!" ejaculated Glendower, scarce audibly, and to himself. "Supreme and unfathomable God!—dost thou most loathe or pity thine abased creatures, walking in their dim reason upon this little earth, and sanctioning fraud, treachery, crime, upon a principle borrowed from thy laws! Oh! when—when will thy full light of wisdom travel down to us, and guilt and sorrow, and this world's evil mysteries, roll away like vapours before the blaze!"

"I do not hear you, my friend," said Crauford. "Speak aloud; you will—I feel you will, accept my offer, and become my brother!"

"Away!" said Glendower. "I will not."

"He wanders—his brain is touched!" muttered Crauford, and then resumed aloud—"Glendower, we are both unfit for talk at present—both unstrung by our late jar. You will meet me again to-morrow, perhaps. I will accompany you now to your door."

"Not a step: our paths are different."

"Well, well, if you will have it so, be it as you please. I have offended; you have a right

to punish me, and play the churl to-night, but your address?"

"Yonder," said Glendower, pointing to the heavens. "Come to me a month hence, and you will find me there!"

"Nay, nay, my friend, your brain is heated, but you leave me! Well, as I said, your will is mine—at least take some of these paltry notes in earnest of our bargain; remember when next we meet, you will share all I have."

"You remind me," said Glendower, quietly, "that we have old debts to settle. When last I saw you, you lent me a certain sum—there it is—take it—count it—there is but one poor guinea gone. Fear not—even to the uttermost farthing you shall be repaid."

"Why, why, this is unkind, ungenerous. Stay, stay—" but waving his hand impatiently, Glendower darted away, and passing into another street, the darkness effectually closed upon his steps.

"Fool, fool that I am," cried Crauford, stamping vehemently on the ground—"in what point did my wit fail me, that I could not win one whom very hunger had driven into my net! But I must yet find him—and I will—the police shall be set to work: these half confidences may

ruin me. And how deceitful he has proved—to talk more diffidently than a whining harlot upon virtue, and yet be so stubborn upon trial! Dastard that I am too, as well as fool—I felt sunk into the dust by his voice. But pooh, I must have him yet; your worst villains make the most noise about the first step. True, that I cannot storm, but I will undermine. But, wretch that I am, I must win him, or another soon, or I perish on a gibbet—Out, base thought!”

CHAPTER XXXI.

“ Formam quidem ipsam, Marce fili, et tanquam faciem honesti vides: quæ, si oculis cerneretur, mirabiles amores (ut ait Plato) excitaret sapientiæ.”

TULL.

IT was almost dawn when Glendower returned to his home. Fearful of disturbing his wife, he stole with mute steps to the damp and rugged chamber, where the last son of a princely line, and the legitimate owner of lands and halls which ducal rank might have envied, held his miserable asylum. The first faint streaks of coming light broke through the shutterless and shattered windows, and he saw that *she* reclined in a deep sleep upon the chair beside their child's couch. She would not go to bed herself till Glendower returned, and she had sat up, watching and

praying, and listening for his footsteps, till in the utter exhaustion of debility and sickness, sleep had fallen upon her. Glendower bent over her.

“ Sleep !” said he, “ sleep on ! The wicked do not come to thee now. Thou art in a world that has no fellowship with this—a world from which even happiness is not banished ! Nor woe, nor pain, nor memory of the past, nor despair of all before thee make the characters of thy present state ! Thou forestallest the forgetfulness of the grave, and thy heart concentrates all earth’s comfort in one word—‘ Oblivion.’ Beautiful, *how* beautiful thou art even yet ! — that smile, that momentary blush, years have not conquered *them*. They are as when, my young bride, thou didst lean first upon my bosom, and dream that sorrow was no more ! And I have brought thee unto this. These green walls make thy bridal chamber—you fragments of bread thy bridal board. Well ! it is no matter ! thou art on thy way to a land where all things, even a breaking heart, are at rest. I weep not ; wherefore should I weep ! Tears are not for the dead, but their survivors. I would rather see thee drop inch by inch into the grave, and smile as I beheld it, than save thee for an inheritance of sin. What is

there in this little and sordid life, that we should strive to hold it? What in this dreadful dream, that we should fear to wake?"

And Glendower knelt beside his wife, and, despite his words, tears flowed fast and gushingly down his cheeks; and wearied as he was, he watched upon her slumbers, till they fell from the eyes to which his presence was more joyous than the day.

It was a beautiful thing, even in sorrow, to see that couple, whom want could not debase, nor misfortune, which makes even generosity selfish, divorce! All that Fate had stripped from the poetry and graces of life, had not shaken one leaf from the romance of their green and unwithered affections! They were the very type of love in its holiest and most enduring shape: their hearts had grown together—their being had flowed through caves and deserts, and reflected the storms of an angry Heaven; but its waters had indissolubly mingled into one! Young, gifted, noble, and devoted, they were worthy victims of this blighting and bitter world! Their garden was turned into a wilderness; but, like our first parents, it was hand in hand that they took their solitary way! Evil beset them, but they

swerved not ; the rains and the winds fell upon their unsheltered heads, but they were not bowed ; and, through the mazes and briars of this weary life, their bleeding footsteps strayed not, *for they had a clue!* The mind seemed, as it were, to become visible and *external* as the frame decayed, and to cover the body with something of its own invulnerable power ; so that whatever should have attacked the mortal and frail part, fell upon that which, imperishable and divine, resisted and subdued it !

It was unfortunate for Glendower that he never again met Wolfe ; for neither fanaticism of political faith, nor sternness of natural temper, ever subdued in the republican the real benevolence and generosity which redeemed and elevated his character : nor could any impulse of party zeal have induced him, like Crauford, systematically to take advantage of poverty in order to tempt to participation in his schemes. — From a more evil companion Glendower had not yet escaped : Crauford, by some means or other, found out his abode, and lost no time in availing himself of the discovery. In order fully to comprehend his unwearied persecution of Glendower, it must constantly be remem-

bered, that to this persecution he was bound by a necessity which, urgent, dark, and implicating life itself, rendered him callous to every obstacle, and unsusceptible of all remorse. With the exquisite tact which he possessed, he never openly recurred to his former proposal of fraud: he contented himself with endeavouring to persuade Glendower to accept pecuniary assistance; but in vain. The veil once torn from his character, no craft could restore. Through all his pretences, and seven-fold hypocrisy, Glendower penetrated at once into his real motives: he was not to be duped by assurances of friendship which he knew the very dissimilarities between their natures rendered impossible. He had seen at the first, despite of all allegations to the contrary, that, in the fraud Crauford had proposed, that person could by no means be an uninfluenced and cold adviser. In after conversations, Crauford, driven, by the awful interest he had in success, from his usual consummateness of duplicity, betrayed in various important minutiae how deeply he was implicated in the crime for which he had argued; and not even the visible and progressive decay of his wife and child could force the stern mind of Glendower into accepting the wages of

that iniquity which he knew well were only offered as an earnest or a snare.

There is a majesty about extreme misery, when the mind falls not with the fortunes, which no hardihood of vice can violate unabashed. Often and often, humbled and defeated, through all his dissimulation, was Crauford driven from the presence of the man whom it was his bitterest punishment to fear most when most he affected to despise; and *as* often, recollecting his powers, and fortifying himself in his experience of human frailty when sufficiently tried, did he return to his attempts. He waylaid the door and watched the paths of his intended prey. He knew that the mind which even best repels temptation first urged, hath seldom power to resist the same suggestion, if daily, dropping, unwearying, presenting itself in every form, obtruded in every hour, losing its horror by custom, and finding in the rebellious bosom itself its smoothest vizard and most alluring excuse. And it was, indeed, a mighty and perilous trial to Glendower, when rushing from the presence of his wife and child—when fainting under accumulated evils—when almost delirious with sickening and heated thought, to hear at each prompting of

the wrung and excited nature, each heave of the black fountain that in no mortal breast is utterly exhausted, one smooth, soft, persuasive voice for ever whispering, "Relief!"—relief, certain, utter, instantaneous!—the voice of one pledged never to relax an effort or spare a pang, by a danger to himself, a danger of shame and death—the voice of one who never spake but in friendship and compassion, profound in craft, and a very sage in the disguises with which language invests deeds.

But VIRTUE has resources buried in itself, which we know not, till the invading hour calls them from their retreats. Surrounded by hosts without, and when nature itself turned traitor, is its most deadly enemy within; it assumes a new and a super-human power, which is greater than nature itself. Whatever be its creed—whatever be its sect—from whatever segment of the globe its orisons arise, Virtue is God's empire, and from his throne of thrones He will defend it. The orbs of creation; the islands of light which float in myriads on the ocean of the universe; suns that have no number, pouring life upon worlds that, untravelled by the wings of seraphim, spread through the depths of space without end; these are to the eye of God but the creatures of

a lesser exertion of His power, born to blaze, to testify His glory, and to perish! But Virtue is more precious than all worlds—an emanation, an essence of Himself—more ethereal than the angels—more durable than the palaces—of Heaven!—the mightiest masterpiece of Him who set the stars upon their courses, and filled Chaos with an universe! Though cast into this distant earth, and struggling on the dim arena of a human heart, all things above are spectators of its conflict, or enlisted in its cause. The angels have their charge over it—the banners of arch-angels are on its side; and from sphere to sphere, through the illimitable ether, and round the impenetrable darkness, at the feet of God, its triumph is hymned by harps, which are strung to the glories of its Creator!

One evening, when Crauford had joined Glendower in his solitary wanderings, the dissembler renewed his attacks.

“But why not,” said he, “accept from my friendship what to my benevolence you would deny? I couple with my offers, my prayers rather, no conditions. How then *do* you, *can* you, reconcile it to your conscience, to suffer your wife and child to perish before your eyes?”

“ Man—man,” said Glendower, “ tempt me no more—let them die ! At present, the worst is death—what you offer me is dishonour.”

“ Heavens !—how uncharitable is this ! Can you call the mere act of accepting money from one who loves you, dishonour ?”

“ It is in vain that you varnish your designs,” said Glendower, stopping, and fixing his eyes upon him. “ Do you not think that cunning ever betrays itself ? In a thousand words—in a thousand looks, which have escaped *you*, but not *me*, I know that, if there be one being on this earth whom you hate, and would injure, that being is myself. Nay, start not—listen to me patiently. I have sworn that it is the last opportunity you shall have. I will not subject myself to farther temptation : I am now sane ; but there are things which may drive me mad, and in madness you might conquer. You hate me : it is out of the nature of earthly things that you should not. But even were it otherwise, do you think that I could believe you would come from your voluptuous home to these miserable retreats ; that, among the lairs of beggary and theft, you would lie in wait to allure me to forsake poverty, without a stronger motive than love

for one who affects it not for you? I know you—I have read your heart—I have penetrated into that stronger motive—it is your own safety. In the system of atrocity you proposed to me, you are the principal. You have already bared to me enough of the extent to which that system reaches, to convince me that one miscreant, however ingenious, cannot, unassisted, support it with impunity. You want help: I am he in whom you have dared believe that you could find it. You are detected—now be undeceived.”

“Is it so?” said Crauford; and as he saw that it was no longer possible to feign, the poison of his heart broke forth in its full venom. The fiend rose from the reptile, and stood exposed in its natural shape. Returning Glendower’s stern but lofty gaze with an eye to which all evil passions lent their unholy fire, he repeated, “Is it so?—then you are more penetrating than I thought; but it is indifferent to me. It was for your sake, not mine, most righteous man, that I wished you might have a disguise to satisfy the modesty of your punctilios. It is all one to Richard Crauford whether you go blindfold or with open eyes into his snare. Go you must, and *shall*. Ay, frowns will not awe me. You have desired the truth; you shall have it. You are

right, I hate you—hate you with a soul whose force of hatred you cannot dream of. Your pride, your stubbornness, your coldness of heart, which things that would stir the blood of beggars, cannot warm—your icy and passionless virtue—I hate—I hate all! You are right also, most wise inquisitor, in supposing that in the scheme proposed to you, I am the principal—I am! You were to be the tool, and *shall*. I have offered you mild inducements—pleas to soothe the technicalities of your conscience—you have rejected them—be it so. Now, choose between my first offer and the gibbet. Ay, the gibbet! That night on which we made the appointment, which shall not yet be in vain—on that night you stopped me in the street—you demanded money—you robbed me—I will swear—I will prove it. Now, then, tremble, man of morality—dupe of your own strength—you are in my power—tremble! Yet in *my* safety is your escape—I am generous. I repeat my original offer—wealth, as great as you will demand, or—the gibbet—the gibbet—do I speak loud enough?—do you hear?”

“Poor fool!” said Glendower, laughing scornfully, and moving away. But when Crauford, partly in mockery, partly in menace, placed his

hand upon Glendower's shoulder, as if to stop him, the touch seemed to change his mood from scorn to fury—turning abruptly round, he seized the villain's throat with a giant's strength, and cried out, while his whole countenance worked beneath the tempestuous wrath within, "What if I squeeze out thy poisonous life from thee this moment!"—and then once more bursting into a withering laughter, as he surveyed the terror which he had excited, he added, "No, no; thou art too vile!"—and, dashing the hypocrite against the wall of a neighbouring house, he strode away.

Recovering himself slowly, and trembling with rage and fear, Crauford gazed round, expecting yet to find he had sported too far with the passions he had sought to controul. When, however, he had fully satisfied himself that Glendower was gone, all his wrathful and angry feelings returned with redoubled force. But their most biting torture was the consciousness of their impotence. For after the first paroxysm of rage had subsided, he saw, so clearly, that his threat could not be executed without incurring the most imminent danger of discovery. High as his character stood, it was possible that no charge against him might excite suspicion; but a

word might cause inquiry — and inquiry would be ruin. Forced, therefore, to stomach his failure, his indignation, his shame, his hatred, and his vengeance, his own heart became a punishment almost adequate to his vices.

“But my foe will die,” said he, clenching his fist so firmly that the nails almost brought blood from the palm: “he will starve, famish; and see them—his wife, his child—perish first! I shall have my triumph, though I shall not witness it!—But now, away to my villa: there, at least, will be some one whom I can mock, and beat, and trample, if I will! *Would—would—would that I were that very man, destitute as he is!* His neck, at least, is safe: if he dies, it will not be upon the gallows, nor among the hootings of the mob! O, horror! horror! What is my villa, my wine, my women, with that black thought, ever following me like a shadow?—Who—who, while an avalanche is sailing over him, who would sit down to feast?”

Leaving this man to shun or be overtaken by Fate, we return to Glendower. It is needless to say that Crauford visited him no more; and, indeed, shortly afterwards Glendower again changed his home. But every day and every hour

brought new strength to the disease which was creeping and burning through the veins of the devoted wife; and Glendower, who saw, on earth, nothing before them but a gaol, from which, as yet, they had been miraculously delivered, repined not as he beheld her approach to a gentler and benigner home. Often he sate, as she was bending over their child, and gazed upon her cheek with an insane and fearful joy at the characters which consumption had there engraved; but when she turned towards him her fond eyes, (those deep wells of love, in which truth lay hid, and which neither languor nor disease could exhaust,) the unnatural hardness of his heart melted away, and he would rush from the house, to give vent to an agony against which fortitude and manhood were in vain!

There was no hope for their distress. His wife had, unknown to Glendower, (for she dreaded his pride), written several times to a relation, who, though distant, was still the nearest in blood which fate had spared her, but ineffectually: the scions of a large and illegitimate family, which surrounded him, utterly prevented the success, and generally interrupted the application of any claimant on his riches but them-

selves. Glendower, whose temper had ever kept him aloof from all but the commonest acquaintances, knew no human being to apply to. Deprived by birth of the coarser refuges of poverty, and utterly unable to avail himself of the mine which his knowledge and talents should have proved—sick, and despondent at heart, and debarred by the loftiness of honour, or rather principle that nothing could quell, from any unlawful means of earning bread, which to most minds would have been rendered excusable by the urgency of nature, Glendower marked the days drag on in dull and protracted despair, and envied every corpse that he saw borne to the asylum in which all earth's hopes seemed centred and confined!

CHAPTER XXXII.

“ For ours was not like earthly love.

And must this parting be our very last ?

No ! I shall love thee still when death itself is past.

 * * * * *
 . * * * * *

Hush'd were his Gertrude's lips ! but still their bland

And beautiful expression seem'd to melt

With love that could not die ! and still his hand

She presses to the heart, no more that felt.

Ah, heart ! where once each fond affection dwelt.”

CAMPBELL.

“ I WONDER,” said Mr. Brown to himself, as he spurred his shaggy pony to a speed very unusual to the steady habits of either party—
 “ I wonder where I shall find him. I would not for the late Lady Waddilove's best diamond cross, have any body forestall me in the news. To think of my young master dying so soon

after my last visit, or rather my last visit but one—and to think of the old gentleman taking on so, and raving about his injustice to the rightful possessor, and saying that he is justly punished, and asking me so eagerly if I could discover the retreat of the late squire, and believing me so implicitly when I undertook to do it, and giving me this letter!” And here Mr. Brown wistfully examined an epistle sealed with black wax, peeping into the corners, which irritated, rather than satisfied his curiosity—“ I wonder what the old gentleman says in it—I suppose he will, of course, give up the estate and house. Let me see—that long picture gallery, just built, will, at all events, want furnishing. That would be a famous opportunity to get rid of the Indian jars, and the sofas, and the great Turkey carpet. How lucky, that I should just have come in time to get the letter. But let me consider how I shall find out?—an advertisement in the paper? Ah! that’s the plan. ‘Algernon Mordaunt, Esq.:—something greatly to his advantage—apply to Mr. Brown, &c.’ Ah! that will do well, very well. The Turkey carpet won’t be quite long enough. I wish I had discovered Mr. Mordaunt’s address before, and lent him some

money during the young gentleman's life; it would have seemed more generous. However, I can offer it now, before I shew the letter. Bless me, it's getting dark. Come, Dobbin, ye-hup." Such were the lucubrations of the faithful friend of the late Lady Waddilove, as he hastened to London, charged with the task of discovering Mordaunt, and with the delivery of the following epistle:—

“ You are now, Sir, the heir to that property which, some years ago, passed from your hands into mine. My son, for whom alone wealth, or, I may say, life, was valuable to me, is no more. I only, an old, childless man, stand between you and the estates of Mordaunt. Do not wait for my death to enjoy them. I cannot live here, where every thing reminds me of my great and irreparable loss. I shall remove next month into another home. Consider this, then, as once more yours. The house, I believe, you will find not disimproved by my alterations; the mortgages on the estate have been paid off; the former rental you will perhaps allow my steward to account to *you* for, and after my death the present one will be yours. I am informed that you are a proud man, and not

likely to receive favours. Be it so, Sir!—it is not as a favour on your side that I now make you this request—there are circumstances connected with my treaty with your father, which have of late vexed my conscience—and conscience, Sir, must be satisfied at any loss. But we shall meet, perhaps, and talk over the past; at present I will not enlarge on it. If you have suffered by me, I am sufficiently punished, and my only hope is, to repair your losses.

“ I am, &c.,

“ H. VAVASOUR MORDAUNT.”

Such was the letter, so important to Mordaunt, with which our worthy friend was charged. Bowed to the dust, as Vavasour was, by the loss of his son, and open to conscience as affliction had made him, he had lived too long for effect, not to be susceptible to its influence, even to the last. Amidst all his grief, and it was intense, there were some whispers of self-exaltation at the thought of the *éclat*, which his generosity and abdication would excite; and, with true worldly morality, the hoped-for plaudits of others gave a triumph, rather than humiliation, to his reconciliation with himself.

To say truth, there were indeed circum-

stances connected with his treaty with Mordaunt's father, calculated to vex his conscience. He knew that he had not only taken great advantage of Mr. Mordaunt's distress, but that, at his instigation, a paper, which could for ever have prevented Mr. Mordaunt's sale of the property, had been destroyed; these circumstances, during the life of his son, he had endeavoured to forget or to palliate. But grief is the father of remorse; and, at the death of that idolized son, the voice at his heart grew imperious, and he lost the power, in losing the motive, of reasoning it away.

Mr. Brown's advertisement was unanswered; and, with the zeal and patience of the Christian proselyte's tribe and calling, the good man commenced, in person, a most elaborate and painstaking research. For a long time, his endeavours were so ineffectual, that Mr. Brown, in despair, disposed of the two Indian jars for half their value, and heaved a despondent sigh, whenever he saw the great Turkey carpet rolled up in his warehouse, with as much obstinacy as if it never meant to unroll itself again.

At last, however, by dint of indefatigable and minute investigation, he ascertained that the object of his search had resided in London,

under a feigned name ; from lodging to lodging, and corner to corner, he tracked him, till at length he made himself master of Mordaunt's present retreat. A joyful look did Mr. Brown cast at the great Turkey carpet, as he passed by it, on his way to his street door, on the morning of his intended visit to Mordaunt. " It is a fine thing to have a good heart," said he, in the true style of Sir Christopher Findlater, and he again eyed the carpet. " I really feel quite happy at the thought of the pleasure I shall give !"

After a walk through as many obscure and filthy *wynds*, and lanes, and alleys, and courts, as ever were threaded by some humble fugitive from justice, the patient Morris came to a sort of court, situated among the miserable hovels in the vicinity of the Tower. He paused, wonderingly, at a dwelling, in which every window was broken, and where the tiles, torn from the roof, lay scattered in forlorn confusion beside the door ; where the dingy bricks looked crumbling away from very age and rottenness, and the fabric, which was of great antiquity, seemed so rocking and infirm, that the eye looked upon its distorted and over-hanging position with a sensation of pain and dread ; where the very rats

had deserted their loathsome cells, from the insecurity of their tenure, and the ragged mothers of the abject neighbourhood forbade their brawling children to wander under the threatening walls, lest they should keep the promise of their mouldering aspect, and, falling, bare to the obstructed and sickly day the secrets of their prison house. Girt with the foul and reeking lairs of that extreme destitution which necessity urges irresistibly into guilt, and excluded, by filthy allies, and an eternal atmosphere of smoke and rank vapour, from the blessed sun, and the pure air of Heaven, the miserable mansion seemed set apart for every disease to couch within—too perilous even for the hunted criminal—too dreary even for the beggar to prefer it to the bare hedge, or the inhospitable porch, beneath whose mockery of shelter the frosts of winter had so often numbed him into sleep.

Thrice did the heavy and silver-hilted cane of Mr. Brown resound upon the door, over which was a curious carving of a lion dormant, and a date, of which only the two numbers 15 were discernible. Roused by a note so unusual, and an apparition so unwontedly smug, as the worthy Morris, a whole legion of dingy

and smoke-dried brats, came trooping from the surrounding huts, and with many an elvish cry, and strange oath, and cabalistic word, which thrilled the respectable marrow of Mr. Brown, they collected in a gaping, and, to his alarmed eye, a menacing group, as near to the house as their fears and parents would permit them.

“It is very dangerous,” thought Mr. Brown, looking shiveringly up at the hanging and tottering roof, “and very appalling,” as he turned to the ragged crowd of infant reprobates which began with every moment to increase. At last he summoned courage, and inquired, in a tone half soothing and half dignified, if they could inform him how to obtain admittance, or how to arouse the inhabitants.

An old crone, leaning out of an opposite window, with matted hair hanging over a begrimed and shrivelled countenance, made answer. ‘No one,’ she said, in her peculiar dialect, which the *digne citoyen* scarcely comprehended, ‘lived there, or had done so for years;’ but Brown knew better; and while he was asserting the fact, a girl put her head out of another hovel, and said that she had sometimes seen, at the dusk of the evening, a man leave the house, but whether any one else lived in it, she could not tell.

Again Mr. Brown sounded an alarm, but no answer came forth, and in great fear and trembling he applied violent hands to the door; it required but little force: it gave way; he entered; and, jealous of the entrance of the mob without, re-closed and barred, as well as he was able, the shattered door. The house was *unnaturally* large for the neighbourhood, and Brown was in doubt whether first to ascend a broken and perilous staircase, or search the rooms below: he decided on the latter; he found no one, and with a misgiving heart, which nothing but the recollection of the great Turkey carpet could have inspired, he ascended the quaking steps. All was silent. But a door was unclosed. He entered, and saw the object of his search before him.

Over a pallet bent a form, on which, though youth seemed withered, and even pride broken, the unconquerable soul left somewhat of grace and glory, that sustained the beholder's remembrance of better days—a child in its first infancy knelt on the nearer side of the bed, with clasped hands, and vacant eyes that turned towards the intruder, and remained rivetted on his steps with a listless and lack-lustre gaze. But Glendower, or rather Mordaunt, as he bent over the pallet,

bered, that to this persecution he was bound by a necessity which, urgent, dark, and implicating life itself, rendered him callous to every obstacle, and unsusceptible of all remorse. With the exquisite tact which he possessed, he never openly recurred to his former proposal of fraud: he contented himself with endeavouring to persuade Glendower to accept pecuniary assistance; but in vain. The veil once torn from his character, no craft could restore. Through all his pretences, and seven-fold hypocrisy, Glendower penetrated at once into his real motives: he was not to be duped by assurances of friendship which he knew the very dissimilarities between their natures rendered impossible. He had seen at the first, despite of all allegations to the contrary, that, in the fraud Crauford had proposed, that person could by no means be an uninfluenced and cold adviser. In after conversations, Crauford, driven, by the awful interest he had in success, from his usual consummateness of duplicity, betrayed in various important minutiae how deeply he was implicated in the crime for which he had argued; and not even the visible and progressive decay of his wife and child could force the stern mind of Glendower into accepting the wages of

that iniquity which he knew well were only offered as an earnest or a snare.

There is a majesty about extreme misery, when the mind falls not with the fortunes, which no hardihood of vice can violate unabashed. Often and often, humbled and defeated, through all his dissimulation, was Crauford driven from the presence of the man whom it was his bitterest punishment to fear most when most he affected to despise; and as often, recollecting his powers, and fortifying himself in his experience of human frailty when sufficiently tried, did he return to his attempts. He waylaid the door and watched the paths of his intended prey. He knew that the mind which even best repels temptation first urged, hath seldom power to resist the same suggestion, if daily, dropping, unwearying, presenting itself in every form, obtruded in every hour, losing its horror by custom, and finding in the rebellious bosom itself its smoothest vizard and most alluring excuse. And it was, indeed, a mighty and perilous trial to Glendower, when rushing from the presence of his wife and child—when fainting under accumulated evils—when almost delirious with sickening and heated thought, to hear at each prompting of

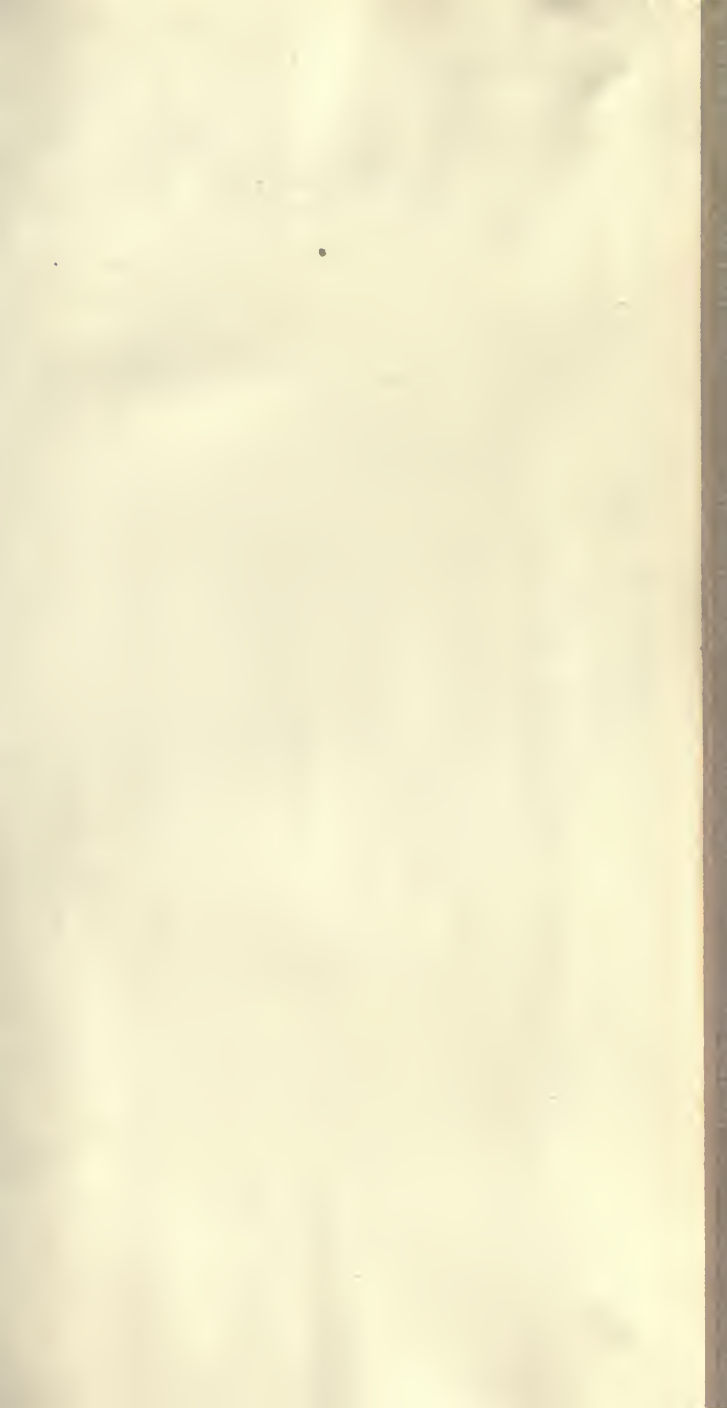
and surviving pilgrimage, that her last thought had been kindness to him, and her last act had spoken a forgetfulness even of death, in the cares and devotion of love.

END OF VOL. II.

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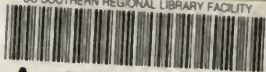
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