

Sybil.

241

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Chap. P 92779

Shelf S 2558

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

By the same Author.

FAITH AND FANCY.

1 VOL., 12MO.

E V A,
A GOBLIN ROMANCE,
In Five Parts.

1 VOL., 12MO.

SYBIL:

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.

BY
✓
JOHN SAVAGE.
"



NEW YORK:
JAMES B. KIRKER,
(LATE EDWARD DUNIGAN & BROTHER,)
599 BROADWAY, (UP STAIRS.)
1865.

PS 2779
S 25 58

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1858,
By JOHN SAVAGE,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the District of
Columbia.

RENNIE, SHEA & LINDSAY,
STEREOTYPERS & ELECTROTYPERS,
81, 83 & 85 Centre-st., R. CRAIGHEAD, PRINTER.
NEW YORK.

TO

THOMAS SEATON DONOHO,

AUTHOR OF "IVYWALL," "CROMWELL, A TRAGEDY," ETC.

MY DEAR FRIEND—

IT is now eight years since "Sybil" was written, and six since it was put upon the stage. In committing it to the press I desire to dedicate it to you to mark my regard for you as a poet—though you will persist in keeping your light under a bushel—and my affection for you as the almost daily companion of over four years' residence in Washington. On whom could I more becomingly inflict the dedication of the drama? You were the first to mention it in the public press, even before its production; and the sympathetic sharer in its earlier successes, when the newspapers brought us accounts of the enthusiasm created by the young and brilliant tragic actress—Miss Avonia Jones—then representing the heroine.

I have never seen Miss Jones in the part, but can well imagine how greatly her powerful acting, superadded to her admirable presence, tended to kindle the public to a generous reception of the piece.

It is needless now to recall in detail the too flattering recognition of a majority of the critics—inspired, doubtless, more by enthusiasm for the actress than any knowledge of the author—or the equally unmerited severity of a minor branch of the fraternity. Leaving the latter in the hands of the audiences, I offer sincere acknowledgments to the former. In this connection my thanks are especially due to that fine poet and wit, George D. Prentice, who, unknown to me save by reputation,

acted as mediator on behalf of Authors' Rights, on an exciting occasion, to which the following letter, addressed to a New York journal, refers:—

“WASHINGTON, Oct. 31, 1858.

“In your paper of yesterday's date the article on the drama contained the following:

“‘John Savage's play of “Sybil,” after running with great enthusiasm, has been withdrawn in consequence of the remonstrances of the family where the chief incident occurred. It is not, perhaps, known that it is founded on an event which happened in Kentucky. Its dramatic success, however, will, no doubt, induce Mr. Savage to try again on a less dangerous subject.’

“Permit me to say that ‘Sybil’ has not been withdrawn. The acting of it was postponed one night in Louisville, out of respect to the request of the Governor of Kentucky, and for reasons which the leading journals of Louisville then thought sufficient. Owing to certain criticisms having preceded the play, and to the probably injudicious announcement of it by the manager in Louisville, it was thought by some persons to reflect upon a respectable family in that State, some incidents of the play having been suggested by a notable passage in the criminal and domestic history of Kentucky. Upon this supposition the play was, after some negotiation, suppressed on the night for which it was first announced in Louisville. Upon its representation, however, ‘Sybil’ was declared to be a fiction. The *Louisville Courier*, while paying it such compliments as I would blush to reproduce, repudiated the idea that it was a representation of facts, and said: ‘Let it rather be called “Sybil,” with no attempt to invest it with the terrors of a local incident, which it does not attempt to portray according to history or tradition.’ I willingly accept the proposition of the *Courier*, for as Mr. G. D. Prentice previously said in his *Journal*, ‘The author, ——, knew nothing, and sought to know nothing, as to the life and death of ——, except from tradition, and he relied partly upon these, but far more upon his own fancy and invention, in the composition of the piece, his whole purpose being to render the play, both in incident and in language, as effective as he possibly could.’

“The representation of ‘Sybil’ was attended by a most remarkable success (as the papers testify). Miss Avonia Jones was re-engaged for three nights, and performed it each night with great enthusiasm on the part of the audience, and increased honor to herself as an actress of wonderful original powers. The details of the ‘excitement’ I omit, but submit

the above facts in explanation and correction of your paragraph, which was, no doubt, based upon the articles announcing the temporary postponement of 'Sybil' in Louisville.

"Yours respectfully,

"JOHN SAVAGE."

This letter is reprinted in justice to myself, especially as lengthily "Statements" were put forth suggesting an imputation on my motives in using the material which furnished the key note of the drama. William Gilmore Simms wrote two novels on the subject; Charles Fenno Hoffman, I learn, also made it the theme of a novel. Our friend, Clifton W. Tayleure, drew a melodrama from it, and the excitement jointly produced by the representation of "Sybil" and the Statements against it made me acquainted with the fact that other dramas and stories had been founded upon it. With much more justice might the motives of these authors be impugned, if any such imputation be warranted by the use of facts which have gone into history. The late distinguished author of the "Blithedale Romance," in his preface to that work—fearful lest readers might confound his romance with the persons and scenes of a certain community—stated, that while availing himself of actual reminiscences to give a more life-like tint to the creation of his fancy, he so used scenes, incidents, and persons, that "the creatures of his brain might play their phantasmagorical antics without exposing them to too close a comparison with the actual events of real lives." The same, in a still greater degree, is true of the use of material in "Sybil."

I would not willingly wound the feelings of any one, much less those already scared by tender connection with the victim of a foul deed. It does not follow, that because a dramatist, or other writer, takes certain incidents as the basis of a work, he may not produce them by the means of characters totally different from those concerned in their actual perpetration. Natures of a directly opposite stamp may, for all dramatic, poetic, and moral purposes, be most suitable to heighten the effect of such acts or incidents. It is so in the present instance. Between the chief Statement, by its own showing, and the story as

conveyed in this piece, there is but one point of similarity—the fact of an assassination. There is no resemblance between the contrivers and perpetrators, as respectively drawn; the character of the victim in the one, is as opposite to that of the other as noonday and midnight: and the attempt to create an identity between them is as unjust to the memory of the actual, as to the dramatist who now presents the acted, character. The unfortunate use of a name found in a stray newspaper article, which first suggested the theme, and retained in Simms' novel—the only one on the subject I was then aware of—and to which I was further indebted, gave a clue to a supposed identity not to be found on even a casual examination. This name has been changed; and I would not now allude to the matter at all, but that when represented, the critics, otherwise but too kind, taking their cue from the original "excitement," as mentioned above, constantly refer to it; and on giving it to the press, I could not run the risk of having my silence construed into even a remote acquiescence in the injustice of the Statements, so far as they refer to "Sybil" or its author.

After such an unpleasant, though necessary digression, I may be permitted to refresh myself with memories more suitable to my nature—thoughts conjured up by reminiscences of our homes in Washington, and of days spent with you on the hills of Maryland and Virginia and along the then delightful banks of the Potomac. The mention of Washington evokes memories of an eventful and instructive, even if laborious period of my life, and the social and generous companionship of many dear friends: it calls up the hospitable and brilliant board of John F. Coyle; the serene enjoyment and unflagging interest of the statesmen-groups gathered around our benign host of Strawberry Knoll, Mr. Kingman; the trusty good nature of my friend of many years, Dr. Thomas Antisell; the pleasant hours in the artistic *salon* of J. C. McGuire; besides, a host, out of which it would be ungracious to individualize, many of whom have since gone forth from rival camps, and found a resting-place, once again, side by side—in death. You know my sense of duty to my country—and I will not dwell on that theme here lest the passions, which mortality cannot

shake off, might arise to crush out the beauty of the past. In dedicating this little book to you, I could not repress a tribute to days past, and to the friends who contributed so much to make them joyous and happy.

With great esteem,

I beg to subscribe myself,

Your friend,

JOHN SAVAGE.

NEW ORLEANS, Sept. 14, 1864.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

EUSTACE CLIFDEN.
RUFUS WOLFE.
OLD ACTON.
WILLIAM ACTON.
MR. LOWE.
BARNABAS.
LANDLORD OF THE RED HEIFER.
GENTLEMEN.

SYBIL HARDY.
MRS. HARDY.
MAUDE CLIFDEN.
JANETTE.

SCENE.—*In the State of Kentucky.*

TIME.—*First decade of the Nineteenth Century.*

SYBIL.



ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Club-room, handsomely furnished.*

RUFUS WOLFE, BARNABAS, MR. LOWE, and several gentlemen, reading papers, &c.

Wolfe. Our new member is not stirring yet.

1st Gent. No—thanks to your sleight of hand last night. I should not be surprised if he didn't stir for a month.

2d Gent. I never saw a jollier initiation!

Bar. He may not be so jolly when he's sober.

Wolfe. Oh, he won't remember his assaults on our friend Lowe: eh, Cardinal?

Lowe. But I'll take care he shall.

Wolfe. He's young and inexperienced; and the deeds of wine evaporate with its effects.

Bar. I never saw a wilder fellow in his cups.

Wolfe. I thought him rather serious. Did not you, Cardinal? (*To Lowe.*)

Lowe. I tell you what, gentlemen, I'll resign my presidency of this club, if I'm not protected against every dare-devil, who, inspired by Wolfe's mad humors, plays off his drunken jokes on me—I will.

All. No—no. Ha ! ha !

Lowe. I will, gentlemen,—I do protest I will,—if it even shatters the unity of the society—I will.

Several. Oh, no.

Enter EUSTACE CLIFDEN.

1st Gent. Our new member !

Wolfe. Good morning, Clifden.

Several. Good morning. (*Salute him.*)

Clif. Good morning, gentlemen. (*Goes to Lowe.*) Mr. Lowe, I am very glad to see you here ; it saves me the necessity of calling upon you.

Wolfe. Bravo, Clifden !

Lowe. Calling upon me, sir ! for what, Mr. Clifden ?

Wolfe. For what ? Oh, innocent Cardinal—for satisfaction, to be sure.

Lowe. Sir, I'll resign this moment.

Clif. Allow me, Mr. Lowe, to apologize for my rudeness to you last night. I was not conscious of it, I assure you ; and I am indebted to the kindness of some friends for the information this morning.

Lowe. You were rude, sir, that you were.

Clif. I am sorry for it, Mr. Lowe ; sorry that I should, without cause, affront any man, but more especially one whose position should be sufficient protection against insult. I sincerely apologize.

1st Gent. I should think an apology from any member of the club, for any reason, decidedly inexcusable.

Several. Decidedly—decidedly.

Clif. (*calmly.*) It was, sir, thoroughly unwarrantable on my part to offer a rudeness to you ; and I say again, I apologize.

Lowe. It was unwarrantable ; but, sir, since you have

the manliness to apologize, I give you my hand (*Lowe and Clifden shake hands*), and I hope you have safely survived the pains of initiation.

Wolfe. Does the head ache still?

Bar. Are the nerves disordered?

1st Gent. Hand shaky?

Lowe. In a word, my good sir, are you washed out?
Ha! ha!

Clif. No, but to say truth, I feel inexpressibly ashamed.

Bar. and 1st and 2d Gent. Ha! ha! he!

Wolfe. Nonsense, man.

Clif. I am very sorry you persuaded me to join your club.

Wolfe. Persuade! 'Twas scarcely possible to avoid it. Every young lawyer, to be recognized, must go through it.

Bar. Your regrets are treasonable.

Clif. I feel them, nevertheless. I must have been wild, if what I hear be true.

1st Gent. *Slightly elevated*, that's all.

Clif. I never was *slightly elevated* before, and, club or no club, I never will be again.

Wolfe. We have all said the same thing once.

Clif. I cannot, even now, understand it. I drank but little wine.

Lowe. Precious little. Ha! ha! But you may thank Wolfe's adroitness in mingling the liquors.

Clif. What!

Wolfe. Pshaw, Clifden, you were never born for a Puritan. You are a fellow for fun, high frolic, and the enjoyment of the earth.

1st Gent. Certainly, and if a man may forget himself

and be mad for a night, it is that night when he is admitted to the Temple of Anacreon. Don't take it so seriously.

Bar. All over now, you know.

Lowe. You are young, sir, and likely to be abused; take the advice of an older man—these gay fellows are making fun of you, Mr. Clifden.

Several. Ha! ha! Good!

1st Gent. Very good, your reverence!

Lowe. He! he! he! you puppies, I shall leave you to your politics. (*Going.*) I see young Acton is in the field against you (*to Wolfe*); take care lest you force me into the opposition. (*Exit, followed by the gents.*)

Wolfe. Yes, Acton is in the field against me, and I need the services of all my friends. I count on you, Clifden.

Clif. Whatever I can, I will do; but—

Wolfe. No buts. You are already popular, and the time is auspicious. The life of a man almost depends on his first marked effort. You are just admitted to the bar, and with your reputation as a speaker here, something is expected of you. There could not be a better opportunity to distinguish yourself. You must meet Acton in discussion.

Clif. *Me?* He will need a stronger opponent. Why not do this yourself?

Wolfe. I long for nothing better, but I cannot be everywhere. I'll seek him in time. When do you leave town?

Clif. To-day; within the hour.

Bar. So soon?

Wolfe. Why, I expected you to dinner; Mrs. Wolfe will be disappointed.

Clif. I am sorry to deny myself the pleasure, but urgent matters—very urgent indeed—demand my presence.

Bar. But a day or two?

Clif. I wrote to—to—my sister—

Wolfe. What of that. A little delay will make you the more welcome. Let the girls wait; don't be a boy always. You will meet some excellent fellows, see how we commence the campaign, and so forth.

Bar. Strong temptations.

Clif. Yes, but I confess to my boyhood, and will prove my manhood by resisting your temptations.

Wolfe. Stubborn. Well, I will write to you then. I have a strong desire—apart from my own interests—to see you in the field.

Clif. Thank you, I shall hear from you. Adieu.

Wolfe. } Adieu. (*Shake hands.*) [Exit CLIF.
Bar. }

Wolfe. He does not know his own powers. We must bring him fully out.

Bar. 'Tis not so easy to meet Acton. What is there against him?

Wolfe. His pamphlet. Every line a man writes is political capital for his enemies. Then, he is obscure, that's certain. Little known among the masses, and for a good reason—he does not mix with them; he is a haughty aristocrat, a man who only knows the people when he wants their votes.

Bar. Is that actually the case?

Wolfe. Simpleton! We must make it so.

Bar. Oh—ah—yes.

Wolfe. It may be, or may not be, what is the difference to us. That he is shy and reserved is, I understand,

a fact. Well, it is just as likely he is so from pride as any thing else, do you see? Perhaps he's a fellow of delicate feelings! So much the better. People don't like fellows of delicate feelings. Ha! ha! Delicate feelings are very unpopular things. They alone would go hard against him. If we could have him persuaded to wear kid gloves it would save us a few thousand. Kid gloves are not popular; if any thing, they are more ruinous than the feelings aforesaid. Then he is cautious of taverns. Couldn't the popular eye discover a demijohn in his study—ay, could it! Ha! ha! Pride, tender feelings, kid gloves, private demijohn—political death, certain. Come along, Barnabas, old boy, we must let the people know of these things.

[*Exit WOLFE and BAR.*]

SCENE II.—*On the skirt of a wood overlooking the ruined village of Eaglemont.*

Enter OLD ACTON and WILLIAM ACTON.

Old A. (contemplating the scene). We are here again, William; here, without a single companion of all those old ones who were associated with that once dear village; and yet we are not without some of the old friends—the old trees and rocks and hills are about us. Bless me, I feel the former life, if not the old feelings; yet, what a change. Five years have done it all. Five years only, yet what an eternity it seems.

Acton. I see no sign of human life.

Old A. Indeed, it looks as if there were none. Shall we descend into the valley and inquire further?

Acton. Why, sir, further? Here, it seems to me, we can

Behold enough for melancholy thought.
 See—yonder ruins of my father's home ;
 There I first wak'd to this now weary world ;
 There was a child ; there sprang from youth to man,
 Beneath the touch of Love's delicious hopes—
 Hopes which, alas, that same old roof saw blasted.

Old A. And there my school-house stands, as years
 ago,

Save that it glooms with age and loneliness.
 I could embrace my dear old fav'rite oaks !
 They seem to welcome me with outstretched arms ;
 Or, it may be, they wave me from the scene.
 How much do they recall ! Their shapes have grown
 Into my heart with the old books I've read
 Beneath their patriarchal shelter.

Acton (musing). How brief a term makes life deso-
 lation ?

Why shall we wonder that no vestige marks
 The spots where stood the cities of the past ;
 When here, what was, a few short years ago,
 A thriving, robust village, is but now
 A bundle of old gables ?

Old A. Discontent

Between a couple of families, my son,
 Has Sundered towns more populous than this.
 This very cause made you the first to leave.

Acton. Yes, but not willingly I left my home—
 A loving heart, a cruel, brutal fate
 Drove me from out my native sanctuary.

Old A. Well, I rejoice that it was so. The necessity
 which expelled you was the mother of a glorious future.
 It brought out the manhood that was in you, and will
 crown your name with honor.

Acton. Yet, sir, I would gladly exchange all—
All that I am, all that I hope to be,
For the dear dreams that fill'd my boyhood's home.

Old A. No, no. To-morrow, when you return to the political action you have entered upon, you will feel how idle was the sentiment, seeming so natural to you now. What? If this was the scene of your sports and love, was it not also the theatre of your denial, your strife, and bitter humiliation : would you feel those pangs anew ?

Acton. No, no ; do not remind me. See there—see !
(*Catching Old Acton's arm.*) Dost not descry a female figure ? There—

Below the copse : 'Tis lost now. There, again,
Anear the margin of the lake it stands.
It looks like her ! Could it be Margaret !

Old A. I see.

Acton. Stay, father—I would speak with her. (*Going, Old A. detains him.*)

Old A. Why should ye speak—have you any thing pleasant to communicate to each other ? You are unreasonable, my son. (*William subdued.*) And tell me, William, is it still in your mind to marry Margaret Cooper.

Acton. Oh no, sir—no ! How could you suppose it !

Old A. I do not suppose it ; therefore I say you are unkind, cruel, my son, in your attempt to see that woman you believed to be her. You have no business with her.

Acton. Father—my more than father, you are right. I deserve reproof. 'Twas a blind impulse. I am a boy still. Let us leave this place.

Old A. Forget these dreams. All your thoughts need other direction now. Your antagonist if less able,

is a more practised politician, and works upon a very perfect organization.

Acton. I was not made for political strife.

Old A. It is the very sphere of action that will attract you from the chimeras of fancy and boyhood. When you have a seat in Congress you will, in the expansive field before you, forget that such a little village as this beneath us has ever been on a map. Come, William, to-morrow will see us harnessed for the fight.

[*Exit* OLD ACTON, *leading* WILLIAM ACTON.

SCENE III.—*A Room in Clifden's Country Cottage, neatly furnished.*

MAUDE CLIFDEN, JANETTE, *seated.*

Maude. Brother Eustace is outstaying his time. I am the more anxious for his return, because I thought he left us in rather a melancholy mood. Did you not think so?

Jan. Do not fear but he will keep his appointment. Even if he would disappoint us, there are other attractions in this neighborhood from which he would not willingly remain distant. (*Taking a book from the table.*) See there, Maude.

Maude (*reading from fly-leaf*). "Sybil Hardy." Why, what a rogue—he never mentioned he had met her.

Jan. Which only proves the truth of what I say.

Maude. Where did you find this?

Jan. On his dressing-table.

Maude. Ah, Eustace, we have found you out. Well, I'm glad of it—ain't you? There will be some reason for his staying with us now—we have scarcely seen him since he went studying that stupid law.

Jan. I would it were some other than our melancholy neighbor.

Maude. Why, Janette, I do believe you are jealous.

Jan. If I were I would not show it, Maude.

Maude. Ha! ha! why 'twas but yesterday you said jealousy was the only thing a woman could not hide.

Jan. Well—yes, a woman who was in love.

Maude. Of course, a woman could not be jealous without being in love.

Jan. But she might love without being jealous.

Maude. And that is what my cousin could not do.

Jan. (*who has retired towards the window.*) Here he is. Look how he steals along, as though he were going to a friend's funeral; and now he stops, and dallies, and looks behind him, as if expecting some one.

Maude. Does he not look handsome—so tall and graceful.

Jan. There's a cloud upon his brow.

Maude. We will dispel it. Here he comes.

Enter EUSTACE CLIFDEN.

Welcome, brother. (*Embraces him.*)

Clif. Ah—dear Maude. Has Cousin Janette no welcome for me? She forgets the customs of our childhood, when she would cling to me as a vine round the trellis.

Jan. And Eustace then told all his secrets to his little cousin.

Maude. Yes, indeed. Ah, ha! brother, we have found you out. (*Clifden puzzled.*)

Jan. (*Showing the book.*) Eh, Master Cunning!

Clif. So, Miss Pry-about. Well, Coz, kiss me and I'll tell you all about it.

Maude. There now, make up. (*Pulling them togeth-*

er, Clifden kisses Janette, who offers coy resistance—they all sit.)

Jan. You did not tell us of your visits to Miss Hardy.

Clif. You did not tell me that such a beauty adorned the vicinity.

Jan. Do you think *her* a beauty?

Maude. Of course he does. (*To him.*) Well, how did you meet her?

Clif. Well, when home last week I went out shooting—

Jan. And was struck yourself.

Maude. Now, Janette.

Clif. I went out shooting, or to shoot; and, toiling after game in the wood, started, by a lucky shot, a young lady from the thicket: common courtesy commanded me to apologize—

Maude. Of course.

Clif. And see that the frightened creature was not hurt—

Jan. Or pierced through the heart.

Clif. She, however, avoided me.

Jan. Of course, to drag you after her.

Maude. Oh, Janette, how can you.

Clif. She hastened, with becoming delicacy, to the open path. I followed, and though she declined my service as escort, I continued, gently insisting, until she came within sight of her cottage.

Jan. Did you not go home with her?

Clif. No; but on my return through the wood I found—fortunate discovery—her veil, which I restored next day; and made bold to borrow that book—and that's all.

Maude. Quite an adventure; how could you keep it from us?

Jan. It was too charming for expression. Why, he's blushing, as I live. Ha! ha!

Clif. Tut, tut; Janette—nonsense!—just heated with walking.

Jan. Heated, indeed, at a snail's pace. You sauntered along, and looked from side to side, as though thinking whether you'd go over to Miss Hardy's or come here; and sighed—oh, dear! you could be heard half a mile away.

Clif. Sigh—oh, ridiculous. (*Sighs.*) What do you know of the lady—eh, Maude? Janette, who is she?

Jan. She's a mystery of some sort or another. Maybe an exiled queen, good lack, or she wants to be thought one.

Maude. Oh, Janette!

Jan. Well, is it not true? Does she not carry herself like a queen, and is she not as proud and stately as if she would remind us all we were beneath her.

Clif. She certainly does look queenly.

Jan. A tragedy-queen!

Maude. I'm sure she is unhappy.

Jan. I don't believe in her unhappiness at all. She is too proud to be so unhappy as you think.

Clif. Might not pride itself be the very cause or the effect of unhappiness?

Jan. But are we to sympathize with it?

Clif. (to Maude). How long has she resided here-about?

Maude. She and her mother came some two years ago—just after you left us to study law. They bought the Widow Davis's cottage, and fixed themselves and a few servants very comfortably. Mrs. Hardy is a good-natured body.

Jan. And very silly. I don't believe she is the mother of our queen at all.

Clif. (to *Maude*). And the daughter?—

Maude. She is not very sociable. She is seldom seen by casual visitors; and, indeed, has not been here more than four or five times. Janette thinks her proud, but I do not. Her manners are dignified; but there is such a look of sadness in her eyes, that I cannot help thinking her unhappy. Probably she has been disappointed in love.

Jan. Maude is making a heroine of her. One day she is a recluse; another, she has been engaged, and her lover played false and deserted her—

Maude. No, I said he might have been killed in a duel, as any man might be for such a woman.

Clif. Bravo—bravo—Maude!

Jan. 'Tis well you're not a man, Maude, or our tragedy-queen would help to kill our cousin.

Maude. Is she not beautiful? Is she not, brother? They say, too, that she is intellectual and learned.

Clif. Who says?

Jan. Who, but old Mrs. Fisher, and solely because she saw her fixing a basketful of books on her shelves.

Maude. Why, Judge Weldon told me he spoke with her, and that he never believed a woman could be so sensible before.

Jan. That only shows what a poor judge he is.

Maude. But Miss Hardy is sensible. I have spoken with her myself.

Jan. Well, she's old enough to have the sense of two young women at least.

Clif. Old? the lady I mean is certainly not old.

Maude. Cousin Janette is only teasing, thinking that

our lovely, but melancholy friend, has bewitched you. She is not old, cannot be more than one or two and twenty.

Jan. And is not that old? you are but sixteen, Maude, and I'm not eighteen—I'm sure Miss Hardy is twenty-five if she's a day.

Maude. Come, come, Janette, if you stay another minute you'll have Miss Hardy a gaunt old lady, with a few teeth and a pair of spectacles.

[*Exit MAUDE and JANETTE, laughing.*]

Clif. Maude is right—Sybil's truly beautiful!

Oh, why have I not known her before now.
 The moment I but glanced into her eyes
 I read my destiny. I look'd and loved.
 From the creative heaven of her face
 A whole new world leaped into my heart;
 A world teeming with a thousand hopes,
 Each taking inspiration from that face.
 I've heard, but never felt its truth till now,
 That persons of congenial souls exchange
 Themselves on first collision of their eyes.
 She has my being, and to win her not
 Is to abandon and forsake myself.
 How much I've lived within a week, and yet,
 My very strength of feeling calls up fears
 That goad me with a reckless speed to know,
 If I may not in her heart's empire dwell,
 As she fills up the whole domain of mine.

[*Music as act drop falls.*]



ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A wood. A paper mark on trunk of a tree. SYBIL. HARDY discovered in the foreground firing at the mark with a pistol. After firing, SYBIL looks with calm eagerness at the effect.*

Sybil. Thank heaven, I fail not ; each unerring shot
Is certain intimation of revenge,
And daily gives me courage to live on. (*Moves.*)
Without this all-sustaining, grateful hope,
The solitude I breathe were death : and death
That might have been a heav'nly gift, ere fled
My happy childhood trembling from my heart
(As though affrighted by its haughty blood),
Would now be that most unforgiving curse
This wilful, woful, wretched brain could bear.
Five years, like monumental marbles rise
Above my girlish beauty, and record
The gnawing consciousness of coarse deceit,
The bitter anguish of defrauded hopes,
Mocked aims ; the loss of name, position, love ;
The loss of all those dear amenities
That should have been the guerdon and the guide,
The life itself of the proud, withered youth beneath.
(*Weeps.*)

'Tis strange these maddening, these blighting years
Have left untouched one corner of my brain :
That here, far distant from the village where
I ruled, already in my youth a queen ;
Far from my friends' condole, my foes' contempt,
That here unknown, unfriended—save by one,

A doting mother, whose unwavering heart
 Still dulls her ears to censure, and whose eyes
 Still fling a tearful glory round her child—
 I teach the woman in her pallid prime
 T' avenge my girlhood's blushing trustfulness.
 (*Starts.*) Here is my neighbor whom I fear to meet,
 And yet there is a restless sympathy,
 Some dread, electric chain that brings us close.
 I would avoid him : would that he would me.
 Oh heaven ! that I were younger by five years. (*Con-
 ceals the pistol.*)

Enter EUSTACE CLIFDEN.

Clifden. Ah, Miss Hardy, pardon my intrusion. It was unintentional.

Sybil. Your presence is pardonable, Mr. Clifden, but scarcely your excuse.

Clif. I feared my presence would but awaken a disdain, that one of us, at least, should bear unanswered.

Sybil. Sir, I fear you understand yourself less than you even understand me. I shall relieve your feelings by withdrawing. (*Going.*)

Clif. Stay, Miss Hardy. (*Goes after her.*)
 Sybil, dear Sybil, do not leave me thus :
 Hear me but for a moment. Well I know,
 After what has transpired, that I am
 Bound to your pity, mercy, or contempt.
 But an absorbing love like mine fears not
 The self-reproaches of a callous pride,
 That tames the blood of those who think they love.
 Love is a slave, yet those who think they have
 Timely control of all its dang'rous ecstasies

Have never loved—or have no power to love.
You bid me go, but *I* dare not depart.

Sybil. Clifden, 'twere wrong to listen yet again,
To what 'twere better I had never heard.
I must not—better for us both I should not.
You found *me* here in solitude. To me
You were a stranger. Strangers each to each.
You nothing know of me :—of you, I nothing.
Let us be friends as neighbors :—seek no more :
If not, then let us part.

Clif. Know nothing of you !
Sybil, ask your heart.

Sybil (energetically). Ha ! sir ! what mean you ?
What can you know of me ?

Clif. (Sybil betrays much anxiety.) Much !
These solemn cloistered woods are witnesses—
These oaks that eloquently stretch their arms
To heaven, and bless you in their sheltering calm—
These my loved rivals for affection, feel
In thy dear presence what I proudly know ;
That you among earth's fairest are alone—
Alone in beauty, in intellect alone !
This do I know and feel ; and is not this
All that I ever wish to know.

Sybil (staggering and faint). Thank heaven ! (*Aside.*)

Clif. (supporting her). You are ill—

Sybil. Do not be alarmed, I (*regains her position*)—
I am better now (*disengages herself*) ; I am subject to
such attacks, and they form a sufficient reason, Mr. Clif-
den, why I should not distress strangers with them.

Clif. Strangers ! but I to whom love makes you all—
To whom the hope—

Sybil. Hope!--hope nothing from me.
I would not have you hope in vain.

Clif. That kind desire assures me that I may not.

Sybil. You deceive yourself—Do not question me,
This meeting has awakened in my brain
Many a dreary thought. Again I say,
As, Eustace Clifden, I before have said,
I am divided, cut off from the world.
How or why it matters not : it is so.

Clif. Your destiny, dim as you paint its path,
But throbs my heart with willingness to share
And soothe it.

Sybil. That can never be.

Clif. If you but knew my heart—

Sybil. Enough that I do know my own ; and it
Has but one prayer, for peace ; one passion, and that—

Clif. Is—relieve me, Sybil—but say not you love
Another.

Sybil (*scornfully*). Love ! no sir, I do not love.
Happily I am free from such a weakness.

Clif. Is that a weakness which inspires all strength,
And gives the only purpose life possesses ?

Sybil. When we met I hoped I had met a friend,
And now I grieve that we have ever met.

Clif. I pray, thee, Sybil, do not wrong me in this
decision.

Sybil. I do not. Your worth, your generous soul
And loving nature well I know.
You've offered me far more than I deserve ;
More than I dare accept—

Clif. Then you would—

Sybil. Ay :

Were it possible I could ever wed,

I do not know a mortal unto whom
 I could so well my best affections trust,
 As to you, Eustace : but that cannot be.
 There is between us a broad barrier—

Clif. What barrier can come between us
 That we ourselves will not ! Here face to face,
 Before the smiling face of heaven, what
 Can separate us. This barrier, Sybil,
 Is but some gloomy mountain of the mind,
 Which I can speedily surmount. Whate'er
 Stout heart and willing hand can do, I'll do.
 What is it ?

Sybil. The very question deeper makes the gulf
 And lifts the barrier higher : it opes
 A breach that might an angry ocean bed.
 Reveal it ! Powers of Innocence and Truth (*aside*)
 I cannot, dare not. 'Tis enough I ne'er
 Can listen to your prayer—or be your wife.

Clif. Sybil—

Sybil. Nor the wife of any man.
 I entreat thee ask no more :—you'll drive me mad.
 Farewell, Eustace, farewell. (*Going, he follows.*) Do
 not follow

If you love me. We must not meet again.
 (*He droops and kisses her hand.*) Farewell.

[*Exit* SYBIL.]

SCENE II.—*Street.*

Enter RUFUS WOLFE, BARNABAS, and MR. LOWE.

Wolfe. But, Lowe, my dear friend, you do not mean
 to come out for Acton, eh ? I really cannot do without
 your services.

Lowe. Well, the fact is, I have no settled political opinions: I have not made up my mind on the one hand, and on the other I believe young Mr. Acton, whom I have met sometimes, to be a very good and clever fellow. Indeed, I think he would be a very serious addition to our club.

Bar. A very *serious* addition, no doubt.

Lowe. Well, I've been thinking, Wolfe, if I had two votes I would give you one each; but as I have only one, I have almost determined not to hurt either of my friends by using it.

Wolfe. A most unpatriotic speech—

Bar. And opposed to the best interests of the community; for if you are not wholly with us, you are against us. Besides, every one should know the right side and use the privilege of citizenship.

Lowe. But, my gay fellows, I really do not know the points at issue, if any, between the parties.

Bar. Pshaw! go for your friends, and hang the points at issue. You know our friend Wolfe. Everybody knows him; while Acton, on the contrary, is but of a few years' growth amongst us. It is nothing but personal ambition with him.

Lowe. I think you mistake the young man, or I do.

Wolfe (*motioning to Barnabas*). Our worthy president is right, but he will pledge us his silence; for next to his aid for us, is his silence for our antagonist.

Lowe. Ah, Colonel, very graceful, I assure you, but you overrate me as much as Barnabas underrates Acton.

Wolfe. Acton's address is written well and artfully.

Bar. Rather puritanical.

Wolfe. You must admit, Cardinal, my good friend, that he comes rather disadvantageously into the field

just now. A few years hence and he might have an opening.

Lowe. Well, well, to be sure ; but a man may as well commence some time, you know. By the way, have you any objection to meet him ?

Wolfe. Not at all, but quite the contrary. It is no reason, because we are political rivals, why we should not be personal friends.

Lowe. I meet the old gentleman this evening, at his lodgings at the *Red Heifer*. If you agree to call for me, I will be happy to prepare him for an introduction.

Wolfe. Certainly—what say you, Barnabas ?

Bar. I am agreed.

Lowe. At eight (*going*).

Both. Eight.

[*Exit* LOWE.]

Wolfe. Then we can the better see the mettle of this stripling, and judge what strength we must put forth.

Bar. His friends are enthusiastic, and busy everywhere.

Wolfe. And mine are nearly asleep. We must arouse them. Come.

[*Exeunt*.]

SCENE III.—*Room in the Red Heifer Inn.*

WILLIAM ACTON *seated thoughtfully at a table.*

Acton. Five years of what the world calls success
Have passed ; yet still my rustic memories cling
About my honors with a saddening gloom.
'Tis only action makes the present light ;
Each resting moment brings the weighty past.
Her image ever pleads before my thought
With strange prophetic feeling—now bright as dawn,
Pure in the opening bounty of its light ;

And then, as dismal as a shadow cast
 Across some ravine where a hidden stream
 Gurgles and moans with wretched energy.
 Two images of one, and how unlike each other.
 One, like the eagle soaring in the sun,
 Its brave soul bounding with the air of heaven ;
 And proud eye looking down a scorn on earth.
 The other, gloomy as the great bird, caged,
 Tattered in plumage and with broken wing,
 Fettered in spirit, and its eyes grown weak
 With madly gazing at obscurity.

Enter OLD ACTON.

Old A. (aside). Pondering still, ever on the sad old
 theme—

(Slaps him on the back.) Dreaming of fame and fortune
 in your grasp?

Acton. (Sighs.) The scene we witnessed yesterday has
 dragg'd

All the old associations up.

They crowd the glories of the present out.

Old A. But you must leave the past where it left you
 I tell thee, William, that your loss in youth
 Was the most fortunate of all your gains,
 Great as they have been.

Acton. My gain was great, indeed,
 In having you adopt me as your son.

Old A. Your own strong character has been your
 crown.

Had your wild passions won a tame success
 You'd soon have sunk into the dull routine
 And healthy torpor of the farmer's life.
 The subtle knowledge of yourself were lost,

Which only disappointment made you find.
The raging troubles of a blighted heart
Comfort themselves in the disguise of pride,
Which with the insight into life love breeds,
Gives talent concentration, and makes man
Strong to bear up 'gainst nature's keen delusions.
The time will come you'll wonder this girl e'er
Could have been dear to you.

Acton. Never, never.

Old A. The passion of the boy, is but a boy passion.

Acton. My mind had not then reached the easy width
Which yields an entrance to the grosser thoughts
Of years. My heart alone was living then ;
And lived but in the thought of her.

Old A. Years bring grossness only to the gross.
Had you your rival's knowledge of the world
You might have been successful. Simply he
Held up the mirror to her vanity
And pleased her with herself. He fed her with
Her own ambition ; little troubling him
With her affections, which he soon found were
All bonded to her brain. This made her bold
And confident in fancied strength that proved
Her total weakness. He knew her nature.

Acton. It maddens me to hear the villain's name.
I'd freely give up all—all I have won,
All that you fondly hope I'll win, to know,
Where at this moment I could place my hand
Upon his throat.

Old A. Would that restore her
To her peace of mind, or obliterate
Your memories ?

Acton. No, but it would drag

The libertine from bold obscurity,
To public retribution and disgrace.

Old A. Which would with equal scandal fall upon
His wretched victim. See what you would do.

Acton. 'Tis true. Father, I yield to you, my best,
My wisest, and most loving counsellor.

Old A. 'Tis sad, and false in spirit as in deed,
To know and feel society's so formed,
That we must often chain the tongue to save
That very one, whose wrongs the loudest call.
For honest vindication.

Enter MR. LOWE.

Welcome, Mr. Lowe, welcome.

Acton. I feared you had forgotten us.

Lowe. Not so ; indeed, my dear sir, I remembered
you so well that I refused to take any side in politics lest
I might injure your prospects.

Acton. How so ?

Lowe. Well, by taking part with Wolfe, or by adopt-
ing your side, in not being able to expound it.

Old A. Could you expound the opposition ?

Lowe. By my word, I did not think of that : but
you can have an opportunity of hearing an authority on
that head if you so desire.

Acton. The more we know of it the better shall we be
able to refute it.

Lowe. You have never met your opponent Colonel
Wolfe ?

Acton. Not to my knowledge.

Lowe. He knows your reputation ; and as you are
both lawyers, and understand the courtesy due to rivalry ;
I asked him to stop here for me as he was passing.

Old A. You did well, friend Lowe, to initiate the contest with a friendly feeling.

Enter LANDLORD of Red Heifer.

Landlord (uneasily). Squire—

Old A. What's the matter?

Land. The place is a' most besieged with a gang of fellows belonging to the t'other side. They'll ruin me 'fore election day comes on. There won't be left a tod- dy in the town. (*Hurrahs outside.*) There they go, and Colonel Wolfe himself's at the head of them.

Old A. Colonel Wolfe—Mr. Lowe's friend—show him up.

Land. Wolfe! (*in amazement*) up here!

Old A. Yes, up here; and give his friends good welcome down below. [*Exit LANDLORD.*] Ha! ha! the landlord, who's an ardent partisan of ours, can scarcely reconcile Wolfe's presence in the enemy's headquarters.

Enter RUFUS WOLFE and BARNABAS.

Lowe (meeting them). Up to time, sirs. (*Addressing all parties.*) Now, gentlemen, introduce yourselves as fearless rivals ought.

BARNABAS *smirkingly approaches* OLD ACTON, *who extends his hand.*

Old A. Welcome, gentlemen.

Wolfe (advancing to Wm. Acton). Mr. William Acton, I believe; I am Colonel Wolfe.

Acton. (suddenly withdrawing his extended hand and peering steadfastly at Wolfe). You, sir, Rufus Wolfe?—You? (*General surprise.*)

Wolfe.

What is this?

I am Colonel Wolfe ; and you, sir—
Are you not Mr. William Acton ?

Acton. Ay, sir,
And Acton cannot know Colonel Wolfe.

Old A. (coming to Acton, aside). What do you mean, my son—why this strange anger ?

Acton (to old A.). Do you not see ? Do you not recognize ? (*Presses his forehead. Wolfe and Barnabas confer aside.*)

Lowe. What the deuce is this ? I surely am not in the club.

Wolfe (to Lowe). I demand an explanation.

Bar. (to Acton). Yes, sir, you must explain why you cannot

Know my friend.

Acton. For the simple reason that
I know him far too well already.

Wolfe. Know me ?

Acton. As a villain—a base, consummate villain.
(*Wolfe furiously grapples with Acton, who flings him off. The parties present interfere.*)

Wolfe. Unhand me, Barnabas : shall I submit
To a blow—

Bar. No ; but this is not the way—

Wolfe. You are right—there must be blood : see
to it.

Bar. (to Wolfe). Stand back. We must have an apology, or a meeting. Sir, an ample apology.

Acton. Apology ! To that worthless scoundrel ?
You much mistake me, sir. 'Twould seem, likewise,
You equally mistake your friend. He will
Scarcely demand one when he knows me.

(*Wolfe tries to distinguish Acton.*)

Lowe. What does all this mean !

Bar. Who, then, are you, sir ?

Acton. Nay, sir, speak for your friend ; who has I deem,

As many aliases as any rogue
Of London. Let Colonel Wolfe, if such be
In truth his name—

Lowe. It is his name.

Bar. Why do you doubt it ?

Acton. I have known him by
Another—one associated with
The foulest infamy.

Wolfe (aside). Ha !

Acton (looking full at Wolfe). Look at me, Alfred
Stevens,

For such I still must call you :—look on me.
Behold one who is ready to avenge
Margaret Cooper's bold and deep betrayal.
Ha ! villain, do you start ! Do you shrink ?
Do you remember the smooth-spoken knave
Who, thus to doubly foul all moral law,
In the staid garment of a preacher sought
The home of innocence to wreck its peace,
And its young inmate ruin. Once before
We met in strife. Your hellish purpose then
Had not been consummated. Would to heaven
I had slain you on the spot. 'Tis not too late
For vengeance. (*Wolfe recovers his self-possession.*)

Wolfe. The man is mad. I know not what he means.

Acton. Liar ! This will not serve you. You shall not
'scape me.

You can't deceive the eye of honesty.
The trembling eddies of your secret soul,

If such dark conscience hath a living soul,
Break on your face and accent, and aloud
Proclaim the wretch I have pronounced you.

Bar. This is very strange (*aside*).

Wolfe. Sheer madness :

Or 'tis a low, political design,
To undermine by an unmanly fraud,
The reputation you can't fairly shake :
A poor, base trick—but let the sland'rer know
The people understand these things too well.

Acton. They shall know thee better. Alfred Stevens,
The charge I utter you dare not deny.

Wolfe. It is as false as hell !

Acton. 'Tis true as heav'n ;

And atonement craves—blood only will suffice.

Lowe. Dear me ! My dear friend, you are a young
man ;

Perchance you are mistaken : let me beg,
Just for your own sake, you admit so much,—
And shake hands on it.

Acton. Sir !

Bar. I am sorry you persist in this unhappy business.

Wolfe. Pshaw ! The fellow is a madman or a fool ;
Why trouble yourself further. Let him have
Whate'er he wishes.

Bar. My friend will withdraw.

I shall wait on you immediately.

(*BAR. and WOLFE retire up.*)

Acton. I shall await you (*going*).

Lowe. My dear friends, I regret—(*to Acton.*)

Acton (going). No apology :

You have, sir, unintentionally done
The greatest favor you could have conferr'd

Upon me—placing that bad man within
My grasp.

Lowe. I am a most unfortunate man, to be a cause of
bloodshed.

Acton. Fortunate rather,
In being even the unknowing means
Of avenging a woman's honor. [*Exit ACTON.*]

Old A. Let me request a pledge of secrecy, Mr. Lowe,
as to what you have witnessed.

Lowe. Certainly, my good sir, I have no desire to
make myself responsible for any thing not belonging to
me. I'm as secret as the grave.

[*Exit OLD A. and MR. LOWE.*]

Bar. I saw at once the fellow's tale was true. It was
so like you.

Wolfe. How if I deny it?

Bar. I wouldn't believe you. Where's the girl now?

Wolfe. That is a mystery I should not mind
Paying to find out. A splendid creature!

Bar. I reckon this fellow loved her.

Wolfe. He did.

A rude, half-witted sort of rustic he,
At Eaglemont. Margaret despised him.
'Tis true, we almost fought for her before.
Ashley, if I remember, was his name.
Could I have dreamt, that in him I'd behold
The now quite noted Acton. Barnabas,
Look you! We did not think the pistol might
Aid us to level our young orator.
Ha! ha!

Bar. And will you do it?

Wolfe. There's no alternative. He will have none:
And should he blab—

Bar. Wing him ! that will be enough.

Wolfe. Curse him ! Who made him Margaret's champion ?

Were he her husband I might let him off
With moderate chastisement, but he must pay
The penalty of upstart insolence.
I owe him an old grudge, too. He struck me
On that day at Eaglemont.

Bar. He did !

Wolfe. I feel it now. I will *kill* him.
Ev'n if I had not ground most personal,
Think what a stroke of policy it were
To get him from the field.

Bar. But what if he shoots ?

Wolfe. Ah ! (*thinking*) secure *my* distance, a little
adroitness will give me the advantage.

Bar. And you will commission the bullet—
You will kill him ?

Wolfe. I must.

[*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter OLD ACTON *and* WILLIAM ACTON.

Old A. Do not be downcast. I know not how you
could have acted otherwise ; and yet the affair is very
shocking.

Acton. It is ; but crime is shocking, and so are
The thousand deeds that hourly rack man's life,
Though hourly, death admonishes to good.
Therefore the best philosophy is that
Which girds us up with resolution
To meet what seems as unavoidable,
As though we were prepared for death.

Old A. It *may* be death, my son.

Acton. And if it were,

And brought a sight of vengeance with it, then
 I could feel happy. When I think of her—
 So beautiful, so proud, so bright, so dear
 Then to this heart—so dear to me, ev'n now
 I feel the worthlessness of my life's laurels. (*Weeps.*)

Old A. Give way not thus, my son. Be a man.

Acton. Am I not? What have I not endured—what
 Have I not o'ercome. Will you not suffer
 A little moment's weakness, in exchange
 For those dread years' convulsive silence.

Old A. It is worse than useless to brood, my son,
 Upon those days.

Acton. What might they not have been.
 And now, I see her as an angel fall'n ;
 And in this wretch the arch-fiend. Oh ! surely,
 To slay *him* cannot be an endless crime.

Enter BARNABAS.

Bar. Very awkward business, Mr. Acton—no adjust-
 ing it now. May I have the pleasure of knowing your
 friend? (*Acton bows and hands him a card.*)

Bar. (*Reads aloud.*) Major Randolph.

Old A. (*coming forward takes the card from Bar.'s
 hand.*) I will act for you, William.

Acton. You, sir?

Bar. You, old gentleman?

Old A. Yes. Shall I be more reluctant than you to
 serve a friend. This, sir, is my adopted son. I love him
 as if he were my own. I love him better than life.
 Shall I leave him at the very time his life is perilled !
 No, sir. I am sorry for this affair, but will stand by
 him to the last. Let us see to the arrangements.

Bar. You have seen service before, old gentleman.

Old A. I have been young.

Bar. True blue, still. Though I regret equally with yourself the sad duty, yet it gives me pleasure to deal with a gentleman of the right spirit. I trust your son is a shot.

Old A. He has nerve and eye.

Bar. Good things enough—very necessary—but a spice of practice does no harm. Now, Wolfe has a knack with a pistol that makes it *curious* to see him, if you be *only a looker on*.

Old A. Let me stop you, sir. When I was a young man, such a remark would have been held an impertinent intimidation.

Bar. Egad, you have me! Are we agreed on the weapons—shall it be pistols?

Old A. Yes—at sunrise to-morrow.

Bar. Good.

Old A. Place—Red Grange. Distance—

Bar. Twelve, I suppose—usual thing.

Old A. (*after a momentary pause*). We will settle that on the ground.

Bar. (*Bites his lip*.) Well, to-morrow morning—Red Grange—

Old A. At sunrise.

(*Picture. Barnabas in the doorway.*)



ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Exterior of the Red Heifer Inn.**Enter MR. LOWE from Inn.*

Lowe. Bad business, by Jove! and may be a sad business, too. Acton is too wild and Wolfe too wary for good to come of it. So much for my leaving the town, and becoming political mediator in the heat of a raging election. But my conscience is clear as to my good intentions. How could I tell that Wolfe was such a scapegrace, and Acton such a perfect wildcat. I gave sound advice, too, but it was well I was not eaten up alive. I'll make back to town as expeditiously as possible, and if any of these fire-eaters get me in their trail, under any pretence whatsoever, again, my name is not Lafayette Hancock Lowe. Something is done by this, for here comes Barnabas, and alone. What if Wolfe is killed?

Enter BARNABAS.

What news, Barnabas?

Bar. Good news.*Lowe.* Is Wolfe killed?*Bar.* Would that be good news?*Lowe.* Well, there might be worse and there might be better. What is your good news?*Bar.* Here it is— [They stand aside.]*Enter OLD ACTON and SURGEON supporting WILLIAM ACTON, who is pale and feeble.**Acton.* I am better—the cloud has gone from my

eyes. Forgive me, father, if in this I have gone against your will. I deeply deplore the pain I inflict on you, which I know is more acute than what I feel—forgive me.

Old A. Bless you, my son ; you have acted as became a man. (*With great affection.*) Let us go in.

Surgeon. The sooner he is completely at ease the better. The wound, though not mortal, is of a delicate and perhaps tedious nature.

[*Exit OLD A., ACTON, and SURGEON, into Inn.*]

Lowe. Is that your good news ?

Bar. It is better than I expected to have. But for the old fellow's pluck the young one would have been a dead man.

Lowe. Ha ! How so ?

Bar. Why, at ten paces Wolfe is sudden death ; but Old Acton had the choice of distance, and insisted on five paces, back to back, wheel and fire.

Lowe. Oh, the old blunderbuss—a most murderous affair.

Bar. The suddenness of the proposition rather irritated Wolfe, who counted on ten ; but for that the news might have been much worse.

Lowe. And Wolfe ?

Bar. Had a very narrow escape—Acton's ball took the brim off his hat, just over the ear—he's gone across the country to Clifden's.

Lowe. I'm off in the other direction—to town—after I congratulate my friends.

Bar. If this affair is mentioned, just stop all conjectures on the matter, by alluding to it as a political difference.

Lowe. I assure you I will not make the slightest allu-

sion to it—none at all, whatever. I will not make myself responsible to either party by telling any of their stories. Just think of my meeting Old Acton, at five paces, with double-shotted howitzers. No, no—good-day—adieu.

[*Exit into Inn. Exit BARNABAS opposite side.*]

SCENE II.—*Room in Eustace Clifden's house.*

CLIFDEN, *seated.*

Clif. If she could marry, she would marry me :
 She will not—cannot—yet she would.
 She loves no other : I love her alone—
 And yet between us as between two banks
 Of some wide stream, the throbbing tide of life
 Rolls on, and fretfully on either shore
 Splashes fond discord, that in echoes mock
 The restless pleadings at the distant side.
 Must it be thus ? It cannot. I must solve
 The mystery in which she is enwrapped.
 To go, a prey to mad conjecture, were
 A living death, less torturous only
 Than this undying love.
 The clouds must part, and I the barrier see
 That dims my path, and keeps my sun from me. (*Going.*)

Enter RUFUS WOLFE, MAUDE, and JANETTE.

Maude. Whither, brother ? We have been seeking you.

Clif. (disconcerted). Why, my friend, I did not dream you were
 Within a dozen miles of us.

Wolfe.

While you

Were rustivating I have been at work ;
 And just rode over to confer upon
 Our prospects ; but, instead of finding you
 In mood for council, strong with healthy wit,
 Such as these glorious country scenes inspire,
 I meet you moody and weighed down as 'twere
 With premonitions of defeat. Cheer up,
 Clifden, the prospect brightens day by day.

Clif. (*musingly*). Indeed.

Jan. (*mimicking him*). Indeed—why yes—and so
 it is.

(*To Wolfe.*) Ah, Colonel, Love and Politics cannot dwell
 With harmony in that frail tenement.

Love is sweet music, full of pettish airs,
 And thoughtful pain, and pleasures without thought ;
 While Politics is selfishness grown bold,
 And for its ends confusing all things else.
 Love is the heart, and Politics the head,
 And when there's strife between them, I well know
 Which side good Cousin Eustace takes.

Maude. Ah, he has seen his goddess of the Wood—
 (*To Clifden, playfully*)—Have you not, brother ?

Jan. To be sure he has ;
 Naught else could make him look so cheerful.

Maude. Janette, you vex Eustace.

Wolfe. I did not dream such sweet allurements 'twas
 That held our brilliant Clifden from the town.
 Who, may I ask, is she that hath this magic wrought ?

Maude. Had you but seen her you would wonder not
 That he's possess'd with sudden passion for
 The air she breathes—indeed, she's beautiful !

Clif. (*abstractedly*). Very beautiful, Maude !

Jan. Yes, a thunder-storm sort of beauty ;

A dark and dismal grandeur, that outflashes,
Dazzling and terrifying one's poor heart.

Clif. Ha ! neither over nor under drawn.

Jan. To be sure not. Why, Colonel, when we first
Were left together, I felt crumpled up
With very fear.

Maude. Now, cousin, 'tis unkind
To harrow thus the mind of our dear Eustace.
A different likeness of fair Sybil, I
Can show. True, she is sad, and grave betimes,
And wrapt in volumes that we can but name,
But then she's kind, and from her gloomiest moods
Wakes into gentle radiance, like the moon,
Dispelling doubt that only came when we
Were in the dark.

Clif. (*aside*). Dear sister !

Wolfe. Can we not see the fair one ? You have roused
My curiosity almost to envy.
Is the fair solitary's grot remote ?

Jan. About a mile—a tassle as it were
Upon the fringe of the forest.

Clif. The lady
Is engaged to-day, and—

Wolfe. So am I :
Nor would I mar the sweet seclusion which
Hath the chief eloquence when lovers meet.
But, Clifden, I would speak to you of what
Our merry-hearted friends take little heed.

Jan. What's that ?

Wolfe. Myself.

Jan. Had you said one of us, we both might feel
A cause of quarrel o'er the pleasant doubt :
But as you made our heedlessness all one—

Maude. Why, then, we'll take notes quietly to solve
Whose careless tongue has most distracted
His to such a speech. Ha! ha! Come, cousin,
Come.

Wolfe. And may I hear the court's decision?

Jan. If we can decide. Ha! ha!

[*Exit MAUDE and JANETTE.*]

Clif. You will excuse my bluntness, if I pray
That you postpone—

Wolfe. I see impatience writ
On every movement, Clifden. I will not
Waste a word; but, as I leave within the hour,
Would fain impress you with the duty which
We owe—not to ourselves, for that were base
In its selfish ends—but to our country.
We much depend on you: your gift of speech,
Your crowd-controlling phrases, ready wit;
Your mastery of passion, that great drug
Which gives the secrets of the populace
A flavor of the heart; and makes each man
Of all the wondering multitude believe
The speaker spoke for him alone;—with you
To fling these quick'ning seeds broadcast into
The ready hotbed of the people's hearts,
Success is certain. Acton now is powerless.

Clif. You've never heard him speak, or you would feel
What baseless praises you have heaped on me.

Wolfe. I have heard him once, and had Fate been
kind

As she has been, he never would be heard again.

Clif. I do not understand you—

Wolfe. Simply this:
We met last night, and he, in violation

Of even plebeian hospitality,
 Hung a base fabrication to my name :
 We met this morning, and I shot him.

Clif. Unfortunate !

Wolfe. Yes, that I did not kill him.

Clif. Thank heaven, he is not dead !—

Wolfe. He is, however, beyond all usefulness ;
 And if you but leave your forest beauty—
 Pardon me—for a few days, the game is ours. .

Clif. As I promised, I shall do : but I grieve
 This early bloodshed on our side.

Wolfe. Pshaw !

All you lovers grow so tame in cooing
 Delicate fantasies to maiden ears,
 That oft I wonder how the maiden bends
 To such unmanly chirpings.

Clif. (*satirically*). To-morrow
 I shall feel stronger of voice : strong enough,
 Mayhap, to drug the crowd, as you infer.
 To-day, you see I have a fantasy
 Most delicate for other ears. Adieu ! [*Exit.*

Wolfe. Touchy and stubborn, as all lovers are ;
 Or, as they think they must be unto all
 Who will not mount with them the airy stilts
 On which they poise unsteady phrases
 Of devotion and what not ; all of which
 But tempt the exercise of woman's power :
 These women, who, like all great victors, live
 On the weak homage of their pris'ner's praise.
 Who can she be that holds his heart ? Methinks
 Its heat will burn her fingers and exhaust
 Itself. His nature runs into extremes.
 Frantic a day—a month melancholy—

An hour's passion, and a season's pain.
 His passion's up to-day, but, too ripe fruit,
 To-morrow's sun will melt it to the earth.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*A plain, but neatly furnished room in Mrs. Hardy's cottage. Book-case, table, &c.*

SYBIL *seated, her head buried in her hands.*

Sybil (rising). Why do I weep? Have I not said the
 word

That should dry up these fountains of the eye
 Which are the tender emblems of affection!
 Tears! What right have I with tears? I whose lone
 hope

Feeds on the sparks that iron destiny
 Strikes from the heart that's hardened into flint.

O woman! image of all feebleness
 Art thou. These garments are its badges. How long
 Must I still crave for retribution?

A day, an hour would have given to a man
 That prompt revenge which I have sought for years.

(*Muses.*) Fool that I was to have denied his suit.

Why did I not, at least, accept his *hand*—

The hand of man! He is an avenger
 Sent from heaven, and I have cast him off.

What is love, life, or fear, or joy to me,
 That I should weigh distinctions?

What is his love to me, that I should fear
 To use it for my hate? He still is mine

If I but say it; and not to say it,

Is to fling away the weapon heaven sent.

I cannot doubt his love! His love—ha! ha! ha!

Man's love! that brilliant shroud for infamy.

(*Pauses.*) Eustace Clifden, thou art mine : I take thy hand

And place within it all my woes, my wrongs,
My pent-up, silent-growing rage of years.
I take thy hand as Judith took the sword
That freed her from the libertine.

Oh, how near losing, by a word, was I,
The means of making vengeance perfect.
Yet while I plan perchance he flies the place,
And leaveth nothing but his heart behind.
I claim his hand—his *hand* is all I need.

(*Rushes to the door, opens it quickly, and falters on the threshold. Her arm drops. She returns, wearing an expression of remorse.*)

Oh Sybil, Sybil, thou'rt indeed debased.
What? Would'st thou send to shame, perdition, death,
This youth, whose only crime is loving thee ;
And who, if he had never seen thy face,
Would mount to honor in the face of earth.
What? Would'st thou fling thine arms about his heart,
And dupe his ardent nature to thy hate
With wanton kisses, weighty in deceit ;
Decoy his soul from out himself, and guage it
To the dim path where moans thy wrathful fate?
Oh, no—no—no—I must not wrong him thus :
So young, so generous, so full of truth,
And lovingness, and manly speech. Away
Ye fiends that wait on woman's doubts, to make
Her less than woman. (*Falls, weeping.*)

Enter MRS. HARDY. *Goes to Sybil and raises her.*

Mrs. Har. Why, daughter, will you drive yourself into
These paroxysms. Why waste your strength upon

The arid past, when it is needed for
The present and the future.

Sybil. The present?

I have no present ; and with such a past,
Can have no future.

Mrs. Har. Oh, must we ne'er,
Ne'er rid us of that past. Must you still cry—
Shame, shame, aloud, at thy poor self, now that
You have not the loud world to do it? Shame!
The past! Have you not expiated it?
Have you not made me suffer for it? Oh,
There are other things to live for now.

Sybil. True,
There are ; and if there were not, then, indeed,
Should I be desperate.

Mrs. Har. You have, my child,
Much, I hope, to live for yet ; new life of joy :
With our long solitude and altered name
The girl of Eaglemont's forgotten quite.
Ay, you will yet as good a husband have
As any girl in the land.

Sybil. Oh, mother,
Mother! for the sake of heaven, none of this.

Mrs. Har. Why not? Should brain and beauty, such
as yours,
Be buried here for ever?

Sybil. Peace, mother!
Peace—you will drive me mad.

Mrs. Har. Well, daughter, well,
I know not how to please you, but I'm sure
I only want to cheer and lift your heart ;
Your hopes are not so bad as you would think—
(*Sybil waves her hand impatiently.*)

No, indeed, not near so bad. Is there not
 Young Clifden fairly dying for your love?
 Why will you not wed him? A better mate
 No woman need desire—handsome, young, and good.

Sybil. Mother, you have deeply suffer'd for your child—
 Torn from the homestead that was sacred made
 By my dear father's love—torn from the scenes
 Of your bright wedded days—scenes that hold thoughts
 Which are the dearest solace of old age,
 For in such scenes we live our love anew.
 Torn you have been from those tried hearts and eyes
 That weave a glory round deserved success;
 You have forsaken every thing to prop
 The tottering youth of your once haughty child.
 These wrongs, which have upon your waning years,
 In their chill weight anticipated age,
 Not less than those I've suffer'd, make me quake
 To hear you talk as you have done. Marry?
 Clifden——?

Mrs. Har. Yes, daughter: think not of my wrongs;
 I cannot long be with you on the earth,
 And ere I go 'twould glad my heart to see
 You wed to one who in his noble love
 Would crown with joy the trials you've endur'd.

Sybil. In ev'ry quality of sense and heart
 Is Clifden nobly gifted; but could I
 So sacrilegious be as link his fate
 And spotless gifts with my unsettled soul!

Mrs. Har. If you were married unto such a man,
 Your life would have a purpose in his life.
 Domestic duties would exalt your mind
 Above the wilful dreams of horror, which
 You cherish now. Life would have purpose then.

Sybil. And has it not a purpose now ! A great,
A holy, soul-absorbing purpose.

Mrs. Har. Daughter, do not look so wild (*puts her
arm around her*).

Sybil. Purpose—
Have I not that oath to fulfil—

Mrs. Har. Margaret—
Oh Sybil, dear,—you fright me with these oaths.
What's done cannot be helped. You frighten me.
Be calm—there's some one at the wicket. See,
Clifden's coming up the path.

Sybil. I cannot
Meet him. (*Going.*)

Mrs. Har. For my sake !

Sybil. Mother, mother—place
On my affection some more worthy test—
I cannot, cannot marry.

Enter CLIFDEN.

Mrs. Har. Good day, Mr. Clifden.

Clif. Ladies, good day :
Pardon, I pray, this lack of ceremony.
Finding the wicket open, I thus far
Intruded, on a neighbor's privilege,
As to enter—

Mrs. Har. Your bright face brings its welcome,
The sunshine comes unbidden in, and why
Should you not—

Clif. Madam, you are kind, but while
Your daughter's here, there is, I'd say, no need
Of other light.

Sybil. Ah, Clifden, you are more
Polite than usual.

Clif. A just rebuke
For previous want of manners.

Mrs. Har. Sybil is not quite well ; you must not pit your ready wit against her. Be seated, Mr. Clifden ; I will leave you to enliven her, if you are not otherwise engaged (*Clifden bows*), while I make my domestic rounds. (*Sybil exhibits uneasiness and anger at her mother's leaving.*) [Exit MRS. HARDY.

Clif. (*approaching*). Miss Hardy—

Sybil (*rising, and raising her hands as if to command silence*). Clifden, I supplicate you—
Speak not ! For your own sake and mine do not.

Clif. But—

Sybil (*bitterly*). Why will you, sir, pursue me thus ?

Clif. No rest I'll find 'till I the barrier know,
That either in thy self-denying brain,
Or, in the actual fact, divides us.
I love you deeply, passionately !
As I ne'er fancied man could mortal love.
This passion rends my frame, distracts my mind,
And doubtful makes the tenure e'en of life.
I have seen you only to worship you.
Lost to me, I lose my divinities,
My faith.

Sybil. Oh, Clifden, spare *me*, and preserve yourself :
You woo destruction.

Clif. I can see there is
A deepening mystery about you.

Sybil. Ay, the mystery of a passion which
Controls all others.

Clif. Then but a pretext
Was your wide, blighting, though deceiving scorn,
For th' all-controlling passion—Love.

Sybil. A pretext? Would it were. Love makes no part

Of my existence, which now feeds alone
On the heart-hard'ning rival passion—Hate!

Clif. You hate?

Sybil. Ay, sir. Hate is my passion,
And dwells not here alone, since it commands
A slave of its own likeness—

Clif. And that?

Sybil. Is Revenge.

Ask thyself, then, with these within my breast,
Whether there can be room for aught else there.

Clif. (*pacing to and fro, muttering*). Revenge, Sybil,
revenge (*stops*)! Something of this
I understand (*cogitates*). Your culture, loveliness,
This solitude. These do not balance well.
(*To her.*) Some ruthless knave, perchance, in usury
steeped,

Taking advantage of thy mother's weeds,
Thy orphanage, has levell'd all your gods,
Has torn the splendor from your household heav'n,
And revels in the starry wealth once yours.
Mayhap the plunderer would barter it
For that bright beauty he could not enslave.
Your dignity and learning are cramp'd here,
They are not natural to this house or sphere.
You have an enemy—Sybil, I will be
Your greedy champion 'gainst the world. Give me
Your hate, and I will crush what bred it.

Sybil (*with eager forgetfulness*). Will you indeed do
this! But what do I say.

No, no—you cannot, must not avenge me.

No, no.

Clif. I will—I can. Your enemy shall be mine—
I will pursue him to the ends of earth.

Sybil (*aside*). Sustain me, heaven. (*To C.*) No, no—
you shall not—

I will not wrong your generosity,
Your daring love, by yielding to your pray'r.
Deeply, sincerely, do I feel for thee—

But (*aside*)—Oh, my brain—my heart will burst (*weeps
aside*).

Clif. Tears !

The words that vainly struggle to the tongue,
Break from the eye in liquid eloquence.

Sybil, I must and shall be your life's shield.

My own heart, in its lack of comfort, prompts

What's due to one, like thine, in agony.

I cannot leave you here alone, a prey

To this revenge, which worketh 'gainst thyself

More than its object, whatsoe'er it be.

Sybil. You rush upon a fate I'd give my life
To save you from.

Clif. Then why not link our lives
Upon it ! It is all I crave.

Sybil. Heaven is witness how I've striven for you,
And against myself. You seek to fathom
The thoughts that hang like night about my heart.

You love me, *Clifden* ! I believe you.

You love me, but the secret of my soul

Will be the death-blow to that love.

Clif. Speak, dearest, speak ! Your anxious fears but
prove

The tender majesty of woman's soul.

Speak ! I am your bondman.

Sybil. But the world's mock—

To see it, in the inner vision, point
Its skinny finger at my tale of woe.

Clif. Declare my service. Your possession
Will give me deeper purpose on the earth.
You have been wronged, I care not to know more.
My eyes but see you to adore, my ears
But hear your words of virgin purity ;
And in this faith I claim thy hand, thy cause,
Thy wrongs, thy vengeance. Make them mine alone,
That I a bright memorial may raise
Of virtuous revenge, which in the minds
Of men will live when we are in the dust.

Sybil (aside). How I could love this man. (*Aloud*) I
beg thee—go.

The fountains of my life are welling up—
My heart, like some weak swimmer, vainly breasts
The tide—it struggles, but it will not save
Itself to risk thy heart a sacrifice.

Clif. Oh, noblest hearted—let my strength bear thee.
Let our young hearts rest on the other's strength,
And like the 'butments of a bridge, bear up
The single arch of our existence.

Sybil (abstractedly). What fate is driving me to this.
Can it be

My mind at last has fallen from its throne !
Do I dream? Oh, Clifden, wilt thou not go—

Clif. And leave thee victim to thy fantasies,
Or the grim echoes solitude evokes
From old misfortune's crabbed voice ?

Sybil (looking imploringly to heaven). Give aid, that
I may drive my heart away ;
For sure no love of man—the man of all I love—
Can stand the ordeal I conjure up.

(*To Clifden.*) The hand you woo was by another won—
 Peace—you shall know all. 'Twas in life's early spring.
He found me sparkling in my native hills,
 As pure, if wayward, as the young cascades,
 That pant to spring out from the yawning glooms.
He found me proudly innocent, and vain
 Of girlish triumphs, that not envy's tongue
 Could lessen in our happy village.
He reached above my rustic haughtiness
 With all the city's legacy of ease,
 With bright audacity and subtle force,
 With ardor passionately robed in words
 Stolen from 'The Book of Everlasting Love ;
 And thus, as 'twere with wizard energy,
 My pride, my vanities, my hopes, my life
 Of life, under the magic spell-word—marriage—
 Were surrounded ; and—

Clif. You loved !—ay, love him yet.

(*Sybil goes to the book-case and returns with a pistol.*)

Sybil. Daily, for five long years, I've practised with
 This instrument of death. Here, in these woods,
 I've daily held a calm devotion, where
 Hate is the deity and vengeance dark
 The officiating votaress. Love yet !—ha !
 For years I've toiled with this delusive dream—
 Retribution ! But what can woman do—
 Where seek—how find her victim ? Ah, think you,
 Eustace Clifden, could I have met my foe
 I would divide the glory of this work
 Of gnawing vengeance !—No ! this eye and hand
 Are strangers to a woman's fears.

Clif. (*Taking hold of the hand with pistol.*) Give me
 the hand—

Sybil. Stay—be warned—
 Never was man to such conditions brought,
 As you to those by which you claim my love.

Clif. Hear me, thou just, impartial heaven !
 To stand between this woman and her wrongs—
 To take her heart and shrive it of its hate—
 To make her woes my own—

Sybil. Do not mock me.
 The barrier cannot, must not be o'erstepped.

Clif. I swear by this fair hand—

Sybil. Swear not, and be free :
 The hand you clasp is a dishonored hand !

Clifden (*recoils and drops her hand*).

Sybil (*with calm passion*). Who takes my hand must
 take the weapon from it.

My husband must avenge his wife's dishonor.

Clif. (*clasping her hand*). Thy hand, thy hate is mine.

Sybil. The oath !

Clif. I swear !

(*Sybil, overcome, hysterically falls into Clifden's
 arms.*)



ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Room in Clifden's House.*

EUSTACE CLIFDEN. RUFUS WOLFE. BARNABAS.

Wolfe. Truly, Clifden, I congratulate you.
Your wife's a noble woman : and her mind
As richly gifted as her beauty's rare.

Clif. I'm proud to think my best friends all agree,
I'm right in love as sound in politics.

Wolfe. Fortunate fellow ! I should say no man
Was ever more so. But your happiness
Will quickly end the reign of bachelors—
They'll want to rival your good fortune.
Shall we not give him a certificate,
On the unusual wisdom of his choice,
Making him free of all Club penalties
Made against those who wed without its leave ?

Bar. I suppose so, if you say it. I judge
Only of Mistress Clifden's lovely mien,
For you her conversation all engross'd.
I'll certify she's noble to the eye,
And take your measure of her mental worth.

Wolfe. You will be safe in doing so.

Clif. My friends, she's noble and as eloquent
Ev'n as she looks. Could I say more—

Wolfe. Or less !

Clif. But come, had we not best be on the road.

Wolfe. I fear my horse will not carry me. The brute
is snagged, or has a nail in his foot ; the quick is touch-
ed ; and indeed, but for the brute's sake, I'm not sorry.

We roused too late last night, and I have—a slight headache. I'll nurse myself this morning.

Clif. Shall we break up our excursion, Barnabas?

Bar. No, by Jove! I need fresh air after exhausting all my breath in taverns for the public good.

Clif. Come, then: make yourself at home (*to Wolfe*),
you will find

Some books about the house.

Wolfe. Thanks, my dear boy!—I feel myself at home.
(*Detains Barnabas.*)

Clif. (*to Bar.*). I shall await you at the stables. [*Exit.*]

Bar. What's the matter?

Wolfe. The strangest in the world.

Would you believe it, that girl, about whom
I fought with Acton, and young Clifden's wife,
Are one and the same person!

Bar. (*gives a long whistle*). The devil they are!

Wolfe. True! I have spoken with her as Margaret:
The recognition is complete.

Bar. Heavens!

How awkward.

Wolfe. Awkward! On the contrary,
This meeting I regard as fortunate,
Most fortunate: I ne'er was satisfied
With having lost her as I did; and now
To find her, is like finding a rich prize
I thought forever lost.

Bar. Do you not fear—
Might she not hint it to her husband?

Wolfe. She's not the fool you show yourself to be.
What wife would do it? or what woman? No—
She kept her secret when she married him,
And will not blab it now.

Bar.

But the affair

With Acton has from Clifden's ears been kept,
Only because he had no ear for aught
Save love. He soon must hear of it.

Wolfe. No mischief can it work. Did you not hear
Me ask him on our last night's rouse the name—
The maiden name of Mistress Clifden. Ha!
Forsooth the *maiden* name—ha! ha! ha!

Bar. Yes; her name, he said, was Hardy.

Wolfe. Sybil Hardy—*his* Sybil! Ha! ha! ha!

Bar. Do not laugh so loud—

Wolfe. You are as timid

As a hare in December. Don't you see
She has imposed upon him a false name.
What matters it to him, then, should he hear
Of Margaret Cooper and myself from this
Till doomsday. Clifden's safe in ignorance,
As in its knowledge are his wife and I.
At the same time, however, 'twill seem well
You give him true account of Acton's brawl—
All politics, all politics you know:
High words, and, to sum up the argument,
When reason failed and passion was supreme,
Exchange of shots, and so forth—do you see?

Bar. That may be very well—but, Jupiter!
I'd rather we were safely from this house.
Yes, yes—I will be off to-morrow.

Wolfe. Then, by Venus! you will start alone
Having beheld her, I'm convulsed with joy!
I see her now!

Those wild, bright, almost fierce, dilating eyes;
Those lips, that brow, that full and heaving breast—

Bar. Hush, you are mad. You say you spoke with her;

And did she calmly listen, nor abuse
Your wild audacity.

Wolfe. Pah ! Simpleton,
You ne'er could understand her. You must not
Think of this glorious creature as you would
Of ordinary and weak-soul'd women.
Abuse ? She is too proudly built for that—
She threatened me. Ha ! ha ! ha !

Bar. And you—

Wolfe. I laughed, of course ; and but your cursed return
With her boy-husband balked me, should have met,
And silenced her brave threats with kisses.

Bar. You'll have your throat cut one day or other
By some husband.

Wolfe. Ah ! Barnabas, you know
Little of husbands as you do of wives.
But in her love I've good security ;
Better even than in your stupidity.

Bar. Take care !

Wolfe. She loves me—

Bar. The deuce she does !
You're a conceited fellow.

Wolfe. I know she does.
The strongest passion is youth's mem'ried love :
Its freshness, bloom, and fragrance, never fades.
Think you a woman like her can forget
The lips that first within her bosom blew
The spark of love into a passionate flame ?

Bar. Under the circumstances, she'd be less
Than woman if she could forget you ; but
She seems so proud and cold : at times almost
So fiendish, I should not care to jog
Her memory about such days.

Wolfe. Masks, glorious masks—indignant virtue, ha!
 Now, in the morning neither of us leave.
 Fortune favors me—you'll not be less kind.
 You to my aid must come, good Barnabas.

Bar. What? to carry off our hostess! May I be—

Wolfe. Don't—indeed, you will.

Bar. To have that fellow,

Who is a perfect Mohawk when aroused—
 What? Clifden in my war-path—on *my* trail—
 To slit my carotid—not I—never.

Wolfe. I say there is no cause of fear to you :
 Keep out of sight, by keeping him away.
 You wish to ramble, I do not. He knows
 I've no great relish for horse-exercise.
 For you he'll start an elk-hunt, any thing :
 To go, I naturally will decline ;
 And if you both could only break your necks,
 It would be all the better. She won't miss
 Either of you, I'll wager on't. Ha ! ha ! ha !
 But, seriously, you're not in danger's way.
 I'm the offender—if offence there be ;
 And surely, you'll oblige a friend.

Bar. I don't

Half like such test of friendship.

Wolfe. Paltry test—

There was a time you would not e'en have dared
 To refuse me.

Bar. Ahem—Clifden awaits me (*going*).

Wolfe. Remember, while you're in his company
 Keep out of mine and Margaret's.
 Pleasant sport to you. Adieu !

[*Exit at opposite sides.*]

SCENE II.—*Another room in Clifden's house.*

SYBIL HARDY. MAUDE. JANETTE.

Maude. Why sad, sister Sybil? But three days ago and you were so bright and lively, that even Cousin Janette was dull in comparison.

Jan. Heigho! Eustace is away, and young wives are jealous of the magnets that draw husbands from their eyes; but, pet, he will be back soon. He is tearing over the hills, thinking only of his enjoyment. Ha! ha! Heigho! *I* never will get married if I am to feel as you do.

Sybil. You never will feel as I do.

Jan. What—have you a monopoly of affection?

Maude. Do not mind the teaze. Cousin can return to mother, and I will stay with you.

Sybil. Dear Maude, I will be well presently. I am so unused to society—I live and love so much in solitude—my household is so simple, that the very attention due to our guests has excited me more than one might dream of.

Jan. Ah, ha! Maude. Our lovers love to be alone. You could not comfort her more than by leaving.

Maude. But Eustace's sister—

Jan. Is a poor apology for Eustace himself. Come, child, come. (*To Sybil.*) Am I not, Sybil, the best comforter. (*Sybil smiles.*) Ah, I knew it. See that tell-tale smile. Come, Maude.

Maude. I have a great mind to stay. But—

Jan. Come, coz, come. (*Maude going, but returns and kisses Sybil.*) [Exit MAUDE and JAN.]

Sybil (after a pause). Oh, what a fate this thirsting for revenge

Has brought upon us, Eustace. Bitterly
 I feel my utter degradation.
 But I was mad. When I swore thee, Clifden,
 To slay this wretch, the woman I was not
 That now I am. I did not know how much
 I loved thee ; or what love thy love begot.
 The secret I must keep—this bloodshed stop :
 My husband's life is dearer than revenge.
 Oh, had the years since last I saw this fiend
 Been filled with prayers of penitence, not pride ;
 Prayers for grace from heav'n, not for hate on earth,
 Thy hand (*kneels*), great Father, were less heavy now.
 Spare me, spare me ! Let the trial be light.
 Oh, grant thy mercy on my husband's head,
 And give me strength, composure, and resolve,
 To meet this issue, as it must be met,
 Once and forever. (*Starts to her feet as she hears a noise.*)

Enter RUFUS WOLFE.

Wolfe (approaching with eagerness). Oh, for this
 meeting how I've wept and pray'd—
 With one so loved, so dearly loved—so long
 And bitterly lamented. Margaret—

Sybil. Sir, you see the wife of Eustace Clifden.

Wolfe. It is my sad misfortune that you are
 His wife, or wife of any heart but mine.
 Turn not away—you think I have wrong'd you.

Sybil. Think, sir, *think*—it matters little unto you
 What I may think. Remember you're a guest
 Beneath my husband's roof. Remember, too,
 Thy life is forfeit, as thy love was sworn
 To me and mine ;—that in his ignorance

Of your black crime, your safety only lies.

One word from me—

Wolfe. You will not speak that word.

Margaret—

Sybil (with satiric scorn). Will I not !

Wolfe. For the sake of the dear past you will not.

Sybil. The past ! Ah, were the past alone my guide,
I should not for my vengeance think of *him*.

An injured woman has a twofold strength.

Proud in the memory that she once was pure,

She holds the woman's nature still ; besides

The fallen angel that informs her hate,

A never absent Lucifer : both strong

To nerve the arm and unsex the brain,

If the dread past alone did beckon me.

Wolfe. If you the cruel necessity but knew
That kept me from you.

Sybil. Oh, false, false—and not more false than foolish.

I heard all—I know all. I know that I

The credulous victim of your subtle arts

Have been ; and you, successful coward, boasted

Over the conquest of a trustful girl.

Wolfe. The villain lied who told you this.

Sybil. Then, your own acts that lying villain prove.

If you were true, you had no need to shroud

Your purposes within a name as false.

Why fly ? Why not have kept the word to which

I fell a sacrifice ? Why for long years

Leave me the miserable mock of those

Who once were even proud of my contempt—

Living, desperately weak, insanely sane,

Verging on madness, that from day to day

Kept in my hand an instant means of death,

Which I did only not use on myself,
In the wild hope that I should meet with you.

Wolfe. I am here now. If needful be my death
To your sweet peace, command it, in love's name.

Sybil. A month ago I needed no such offer—
That time has changed me. Nature has succumbed
To the great bliss of being truly loved.
Go—live! Let not the morrow find you here:
Forget that you have ever known me;
Forget, if possible, you Clifden know,
For whose dear sake, alone, I spare you. Go! (*Moves.*)

Wolfe. For *his* sake, Margaret (*smiling*)—his sake!

No, no (*offers to take her hand*)—

It is impossible this young man could
Fill up the radiant hopes of such a soul,
Or any thing to such a woman be,
As you, who must remember that first love—

Sybil. Man or devil, remind me not of crime
That still demands my sworn vengeance.
Hark ye, Alfred Stevens (*almost in a whisper*), you are
not wise—

You are in the very den of danger.
I tell thee, Stevens, that I spare your life,
Though the weapon is shotted; though the knife
Is whetted. I spare you, even though I feel
The thirst to slay you rising in my soul,
On one condition—that you do depart.
Wake not my slumbering fury. Linger
Longer, and you may ne'er depart again.

Wolfe. Why, this is madness.

Sybil. I am mad!

And otherwise than mad I cannot be
While you are here.

Wolfe. I cannot think you hate me.

Sybil. Can I think *you* ever loved me? No, no.
Do not deceive yourself (*Wolfe looks fawningly at Sybil*); provoke me not
With your defiling glances, and still less
With your dishonest tongue. Be warned in time;
Another day, and the command I hold
Upon myself, may die through sheer excess
Of agony that keeps it strong to-day.
To destroy you would gratify the hate
I've lived for, but 'twould also overthrow
The peace of *him* I prize beyond my life.
I strive not 'gainst my vows, in your behalf;
Not e'en in my own behalf the effort springs:
It is for him, who gave me love, new life,
A holy purpose with that name of names—
That name which, truly worn, is the richest gem
All earth can place on woman—name of wife.
It is for him alone, from out whose brain
I have regrown—for my husband, Clifden,
That I avert my vision from the past.
Beware—he comes! (*Sybil takes a seat at table. Wolfe, snatching a book, reclines in an arm-chair, apart from her.*)

Wolfe (rather loudly). My dear madam, you are right;
I wonder not you have a preference
For country life: such scenery around,
Such air, the body to invigorate,
Such books to bring the mind perennial strength;
And, above all, with a companion such
As Clifden, my young, noble friend. Indeed,
I know not which to most congratulate,
You each have made such admirable choice.

Sybil (aside). Villain !

Enter CLIFDEN.

Wolfe. I perceive, madam, by these underscorings, you are an appreciative student of the great moralist and man. Ah ! Clifden, so soon returned, or is it that the time sped quicker than I thought ?

Clif. Your doubt informs me you were not dull in my absence.

Wolfe. Oh, not at all, thanks to Mrs. Clifden. I took your advice, my dear boy, and made myself quite at home. Did I not, my dear madam ? The sight of these books reminded me of home. We have discussed the poets and all kinds of poetry, from the *Paradise Lost* to the *Loves of the Angels*. (*Sybil expresses surprise, disgust, and scorn, during this speech.*)

Clif. And which have you decided for ?

Wolfe. Well, strange to say, Mrs. Clifden thinks *Paradise Regained* preferable to either, which, you are aware, is opposed to all critical opinion.

Sybil (aside). Audacious villain !

Clif. (evidently uneasy). Well, you know ladies will differ with critics ; but you must have talked faster than we galloped, to get over so much ground in the space of time.

Wolfe. Then I was right—you hurried back. Ha ! you rogue, I thought you would not extend your excursion. Ha ! ha ! I was a young married man once myself.

Sybil (to Clif.). You are with us for the evening, dear ?

Clif. Not yet, Sybil. Our friend Barnabas is dull to-day, and dumb. I strove in vain to rouse him. Two miles I jogged beside him for a word—

Wolfe. The timid blockhead (*aside*).

Clif. And then bethought me I'd return, run over to Cottageville, bring back Maude and Janette, and thus do all our country life affords to make our city friends in pleasant humor. Here comes dull Barnabas—

Enter BARNABAS.

Bar. At your service.

Sybil. I'll strive and wear his dullness off till you return.

Clif. That were a difficult task, Sybil.

Wolfe. Not so to an enchantress—see her effect on me. You are not jealous, Clifden?

Sybil. Clifden has no need to be.

Clif. Ha! ha! Colonel, you had best take care how you break the wand of your enchantress. Come, Barnabas.

Sybil. Perhaps, Eustace, Mr. Barnabas would rather keep us company—he is tired; are you not (*to Bar.*)? You have failed to cheer him (*to Clif.*)—let us try. (*Wolfe motions to Barnabas, unobserved.*)

Bar. I fear, madam, I could ill sustain the gallant Colonel's banter.

Wolfe. Well, with permission of good madam, I will accompany Clifden (*moving*), and you shall discuss the poets.

Clif. Ah, ha! If so, instead of one dull person now, we'd have two on our return. No, Barnabas shall come with me (*exit Sybil*); Maude and our witty Janette will tease him into gay humor on the way back, and then we'll all be ready for a pleasant evening. Is not that best, Sybil (*looks round*)?

Wolfe. Your wife has an excellently organized mind,

very fine—original and well informed, and gentle too, but a little melancholy, I should say—I will strive to entertain her in your absence.

Clif. Do, Colonel, do. Nothing so pleases her as the dear old books, and talks about them.

Wolfe. Had I your eloquence—

Clif. You are determined to be complimentary. (*To Bar.*) I will wait on you in a moment. [*Exit.*

Wolfe. How near ruining all my hopes you were, by your infernal dullness.

Bar. I tell you, Wolfe, this recklessness won't do. It is tempting fortune too far. Besides, you owe your election chiefly to Clifden. If he was idle before he married, he certainly exerted himself greatly in your cause since.

Wolfe. How can I repay him better than by conferring all my love upon his wife. I'll get him a good office, too, in the State. You are a dolt. Hear me—take care that you do not betray me by your fears. Could you not get sick at the cottage, and delay, or maybe stay all night, and need his assistance, eh? Do any thing—but keep him out of my way.

Re-enter CLIFDEN.

Clif. Come, Barnabas.

Wolfe. He feels already much better at the prospect of flirting with the girls. He is a great rogue, this Barnabas.

Clif. I must see that he does not steal both their hearts at once. [*Exit CLIF. and BAR.*

Wolfe (*seating himself*). The game goes well. A woman fallen once

Has no retreat. She was mine. She must be mine ;

A breath can drive her from her husband's arms.
 Little he recks how she once worshipped me—
 More wildly e'en than he now worships her.
 Little he dreams the secrets that oppress
 The pillow next his own. Little he knows
 The bosom that he presses, such adepts
 In smiles and strategy these women are.
 She comes—with passion for her fear's defence,
 But when threats end beseechings will commence.
 She's here (*rises to receive her*).

Enter SYBIL.

Sybil (repulsing him). Colonel Wolfe, I come to
 warn you once more ;
 Again to implore you, leave this dwelling.
 You are trifling with your fate !

Wolfe. Not trifling :
 Say it not, my Margaret, *you* are my fate ;
 But after such a painful separation
 Your greeting's cruel and unnatural.

Sybil. I am your fate. That is the only truth
 You utter.

Wolfe. Why should recrimination
 Coldly invade the precious present.
 For the past let my unceasing love atone.
 If you e'er loved me as you said you did,
 With all the burning fervor of your soul,
 Hear me—

Sybil. I have no wish to let you add
 A second perjury to the first.

Wolfe. It is not perjury : you must hear me
 In justification.

Sybil. Justify yourself to heaven, not to me :

I will not hear you doubly curse your soul.
 If you have yet a spark of manhood left,
 The boon I ask has claims upon you now.
 Having trampled me to the dust in shame,
 Robbed my bright youth of pride and blissful peace,
 Why should you persecute the homely joys
 My broken life requires ?

Wolfe.

Persecution ?

It is love ! You were my first love ; you shall be
 My last. We were destined for each other.

Sybil. Peace ! I'm no longer blind and vain as when
 My ears were flattered to dishonor.

Wolfe. Oh that the tongue, whose power you still ad-
 mit,
 Could plead its truth to that same ear that once
 Delighted in its love. If you have grown
 Insensible to admiration,
 Your nature ne'er can grow insensible
 To love.

Sybil. Love—*your* love !

Wolfe. Yes, Margaret, *my* love. It conjures up
 Moments that were too precious to forget.
 Where'er I've been, the memory of that time
 Was with me. 'Tis impossible that you,
 So full of wealthy nature, and who shared
 With me your bosom's first emotions,
 Can be so cold. Your tongue's hot passion proves
 The struggle in your heart for its old love—
 The sweeping down the trammels of the new.
 Do I not know the duties, my beloved,
 This new-linked chain imposes ? Have no fear
 My sudden joy grim prudence will offend.
 No, dearest, no, that self-same prudence will

Weave round our lovingness a secret bliss,
 Which made the gods of old immortal. Ay,
 The kiss that is not trammelled by men's laws
 Hath a wild power no legal banns can grant.
 Let us, dear Margaret, as when first we loved,
 Feed on the stolen rapture of two hearts (*attempts to
 embrace her—she repulses him*).

Sybil. I have heard you, hellish fiend, to the close :
 Oh, would to heaven you had declared yourself
 Five years ago as now. Could I have seen,
 As now I see, the cloven foot, the tongue
 Of serpent, I had been as pure as you
 Were base ; nor would my palsied ear confront
 These words accursed—this blasphemy 'gainst God
 And man.

Wolfe. Margaret—

Sybil. Sir, I have heard you patiently. Once
 more—

I hate you with the bitterest loathing ;
 With scorn, behold you as the foulest fruit
 Hell could bear in black contrast to heaven ;
 Whose depth of blackness thwarts the daring scope
 Of your atrocious schemes ; abhor you
 As a coward below contempt—traitor
 To your own sex, and infidel to mine.
 Judge, then, the prospect you pursue.

Wolfe. Beware ! Margaret, beware, lest you rouse
 The unearthly terror that you picture.
 'Tis you that trifle with your fate. Despise
 My love—you cannot fly my power.

Sybil. Your power ? Do I rightly hear—Power ?

Wolfe. Ay, my power : but I entreat you, believe me
 your friend.

Sybil. You are my enemy—my first, my worst ;
Heaven forbid that I could think you friend again.

Wolfe. Yet still I am. I love you better far
Than I have ever loved a woman.

Sybil. You have a wife, Rufus Wolfe ?

Wolfe. Yes ; but—

Sybil. And children ?

Wolfe. Well—

Sybil. For their sakes if not for mine—for her sake,
Whose dreams are bless'd because she b'lieves you true ;
For the pure babes, who're fed to health or woe
By her sweet peace of mind they mother call :
For their sakes, I implore you to forbear.

*(Wolfe seizes Sybil ; she escapes, and catching up a
pistol from the bookcase, turns quickly round and
presents it at him, just as he reaches within arm's
length of her : pause and picture.)*

Go *(faltering, her arm drops to her side)*—go ! I spare
you for the sake of that

Wife and mother you would disgrace. Go, go—
For you 'tis well that I remembered her.

Wolfe (aside). To be thus baited by a frantic woman.
(Aloud.) Margaret, this mockery must end. You talk
Of fear, of fate, of honor, and forget
The greater theme of apprehension, which
To a woman, wife,—and most of all to *you*--
Your husband—

Sybil. What of my husband ?

Wolfe. Take care—

A word from me, and where is all your peace !
Ha ! am I understood ? Do you not feel
That I have power with one word to give
That living death a proud soul most abhors.

Sybil. Oh, worthy thought, with baseness all complete,

What a brave treachery, *my friend!*

Wolfe. Nay, I do not threaten, but remind.

Sybil. Oh, you are moderate—very moderate!
But know, that ere I wedded Eustace Clifden
I told the shame of this poor hand he wooed.

Wolfe. You did not—could not—dare not!

Sybil. By Him who knows
The secrets of all hearts, I did; nor held
Aught from him, save the name, the public name
As now it doth appear, of my deceiver.

Wolfe. He would not have married you!

Sybil. He did, and yet before he did, he swore
On Alfred Stevens to avenge my shame.
'Twas the condition of my hand, dowry,
Fortune, all I brought him—ay, it is true!

Wolfe. Ha! ha! this tale lacks probability.
I am a lawyer, Margaret, and detect
Its inconsistencies. (*Noise without.*)

Sybil. They have returned.

Hear me—you're doomed, unless you leave at once.

Wolfe. I am no child—(*aside*) and you a woman
are.

Sybil. Your blood, then, be on your own head. (*Sits
at table and conceals the pistol in her dress.*)

Wolfe (*seating himself*). Nothing by assault to be
done here; however,
Doom, or no doom, to be affrighted I
Am not, fair Mistress Clifden (*aside*).

Enter CLIFDEN, BARNABAS, MAUDE, and JANETTE.

Wolfe. A welcome back. Good day, ladies, I hope

you have frightened Mr. Barnabas into something like pleasantry.

Jan. Oh, yes, he's merry as a sexton during healthy weather.

Clif. I fear he'll need that functionary soon.
What think you, Sybil ; pining for his Club,
And vowing to be gone ere morrow's noon.

Wolfe. What a compliment to our fair hostess.

Maude and Janette. Oh, Mr. Barnabas !

Bar. Really, ladies, two days out of town undoes my constitution. The country is well enough for a day or so, but—excuse me, ladies—to one like me it is a—a—a bore. Yes, really, I must be off to-morrow.

Wolfe. To morrow ! Will you not wait for me ?

Clif. Of course he will—(*Sybil watching with great anxiety.*)

Bar. How long?

Wolfe. I intended to have stayed but a day or two ; but, bless me, it is so refreshing after our late excitement—besides, the pleasant nature of the topics (*to Sybil*) we have been discussing—that I am induced to make a week of it with Clifden.

Maude and Janette. Bravo, Colonel !

Sybil (with calm energy). Colonel Wolfe, that cannot be. It is

Needful you keep unto your first resolve—

At once. No longer can my husband be

Your host, or in this dwelling wish you grace. (*Astonishment of all.*)

Clif. How, Mistress Clifden ! What does this mean—to my friend, Sybil ?

Sybil. He is not your friend,

Clifden, nor thine or mine : but let me pass—
I cannot speak here. (*Rushes out.*)

Clif. Sybil? (*Exit after her.*)

[*Exit Maude and Janette in consternation.*]

Bar. What's this, in the devil's name?

Wolfe. In your name, coward. Can you not see it?
Have you any weapons?

Bar. My pistols are in the saddle-bags.

Wolfe. Curse the woman—who could have believed it!
Barnabas, should it come unto the worst,
We can but fly. Look you to the horses,
While I my coolness keep.

Bar. You wouldn't take my advice ; if—

Wolfe. This is no time for lecturing.
Your wisdom's always at the eleventh hour.
Your base ingratitude 'tis brings all this.
But hence, if thou would'st not o'erpower'd be,
And slain remorseless in the trap you've made ;
Prepare thyself in haste. See to the steeds—
If she explain, our start can't be too quick.

[*Exit hurriedly.*]

*Re-enter CLIFDEN, SYBIL clinging to him, both having
hold of the pistol.*

Sybil. The wrong is mine. Oh, go not, Eustace,
My hand shall avenge it. I am sworn to it.
If still the victim, let me victor be.
Your life is precious to me, husband dear,
More precious than the past—or hope, or name.

Clif. No, Sybil, you are mine, your wrongs are mine :
Before just heaven I renew my oath.

Sybil. Leave me to shame, despair, to any thing ;
But, Eustace, for the love you bear me, hear ;

For the dear sake of that new-born blessing
Your love has given my nature, hear me.
In the name of every tie that heaven
Welds in the undistinguishable flames
That leap from mutually enkindled souls—
In the name of all such union can inspire,
I here revoke the oath. When I proposed it
I was not thy wife, but a mad, heartless,
Vengeance-seeking slave. Nor wife, nor woman
Was I, but am both through thee, and as both,
Revoke that withering and peace-crushing oath.

Clif. Sybil, you're my life : but though you and I
Could in the narrowest corner of the earth
Find untold regions for our happy love,
All land and sea, the huge round globe itself
Hath not extent and verge enough to hold
Thy husband's hand and thy betrayer's heart
Together on it. While he's upon it
Earth's too confined for me. While he doth breathe,
I suffocate ; ay, though I stood upon
The healthy heights o' the Alleghanics,
And he on Himalaya's frozen roof,
With toiling nations and big seas between.
While his heart beats, congestion crushes mine.
I must have air. Which may usurp the earth ?
Either must perish that the other live.

Sybil. Oh, husband.

Clif. It must be so ; but, Sybil,
Whatever happens, to the last thou'rt mine. (*Kisses her
and dashes out.*)

Sybil. Thine, Clifden, thine—only thine, ever thine—
To the last—the last—the last. (*Pause, Sybil looks
about, screams.*)

He is gone, gone—gone for what?
Ha! I have sent him on this bloody work.
Surely it is a madness that doth move me.
Why should he slay Alfred Stevens? Why? (*Presses
her head.*)

What good will come of it? What safety? What?
(*Pause*) But why should he not! Miserable fate.
Are we never to be free? Must he e'er
Thrust his fiend's visage in our happy homes;
And blast our hopes, our peace, our love for ever?
No, no—ha! ha! ha! Better he should die!
Better we should all die. Strike him, Clifden—
Strike, and fear nothing! Strike for dear virtue
And immortal love! Husband, strike deep—
Strike to the very heart! Strike! Strike! Strike!
(*Falls overcome.*)

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Dungeon.*

CLIFDEN. SYBIL. MR. LOWE.

Sybil. There can be no cause for fear—I have none.
 You did not strike for me alone. The wives,
 The mothers, daughters of the State, are all
 Your debtors for the deed. And who that bears
 The lordly title, man, will honor risk
 To slay a brother for defending woman?
 No, I fear not. If law o'er justice vaunts
 I'll go myself into the open court,
 And, as 'fore heaven, will the story tell,
 In all its plain and foul deformity;
 No fear, no shame, shall pale or tinge my cheek,
 Or wither, by a fluctuating doubt,
 The fact's full force upon the jury's ear.
 They *must* believe me when they hear.

Clif.

My life—

It cannot be.

Lowe. Will you not be persuaded, my good sir, even now, at almost the last day, to employ the services of Acton? Young though he be, he's skilled, as well you know, in law; has no superior with a jury, is popular, and strange to say, likewise pure. Let me entreat—

Clif. Did you not say last night he fought with Wolfe on my account? What was't? My senses grow Dull as these granite walls.

Lowe. It is well known they quarrelled and fought at their first meeting, upon political grounds 'twas given out—

Clif. Yes, I remember—I heard that from Barnabas.

Lowe. But Barnabas, who was present, told me they quarrelled on account of Mrs. Clifden (*looking round*), whose name he said was Margaret.

Clif. Mrs. Clifden! (*Sybil looks up. Clifden motions her to retire. Exit Sybil.*)

Lowe. Pardon me, my young friend, I did not mean to hurt your feelings ; but—

Clif. It was some natural lie of Wolfe's. It could not be. Some foul invention To aid his black designs. I never heard Of Acton from my wife.

Lowe. A rumor is abroad which seems to back the assertion. (*Clifden listens eagerly.*) However, whether true or not, Acton must be the man for your defence. Wolfe's friends are very powerful, and will strain every nerve to effect your ruin.

Clif. Well, let them triumph ; they but mimic me : I've had *my* triumph. Of a truth, I feel That I have done the great deed of my life. Death to me now brings no such agony As it would bring had I not done this deed. And yet—to live for Sybil's sake ? Oh heart ! The thought of losing *her* brings many deaths, With deeper pangs than the mere loss of life.

Lowe. Allow me to see Acton.

Clif. (*eagerly*). Should I defend myself ? Declare the act

And justify it ? (*Pause.*) No : to my own soul— To God 'tis justified ; but men who judge, Must know my secret ere 'tis so to them. The damnd tale of Sybil's overthrow, The serpent progress of the venomous head

I've crushed forever, they must hear. How—how
Can *I* tell *that*? It is impossible.

Lowe. If you do not decide quickly your friends must
act for you. Be advised now—do, Clifden, do. His
friends *must* act for him (*aside, and going*).

Clif. I thank you sincerely, indeed I do.
I will think of what you say. I will—I will. [*Exit* *LOWE*.]

Re-enter SYBIL.

Sybil (*she comes to him and puts her arm about him*),
You never told me your acquaintance with Acton.

Sybil. Acton—

Clif. Whom we defeated.

Sybil. Dear, I know him not. Let me see—Acton?
'Tis like a waif from my dream-haunted youth.

(*Thinks*) I once did know a person of that name—
An old man—schoolmaster at Eaglemont;
I have nor seen nor heard of him for years.

Clif. An old man—how old?

Sybil. Some five-and-sixty years.

Clif. It is not the same. Perhaps he had a son?

Sybil. He had no son: was never married.

Clif. It is strange.

Sybil. What, Eustace—what is strange?

Clif. Nothing,—nothing.

Sybil (*aside*). I fear he wanders. (*He gazes fondly on
and kisses her*.) Eustace, will you not
Advised be, and give your holy cause
To Acton's hands? To him your friends all point
As one above the jealousies that rise
In selfish minds from zeal-distempered politics.
I've heard *you* laud his talents to the skies.

Clif. I have. All true! but, Sybil, my blood chills
To think of making a defence.

Sybil. Why this strange callousness.

Clif. I killed him; and evasion would not seek
From the confronted dangers of an act
Deliberate; and one I'd do again.
Evasion or suggestion cannot come
From me, or any interested in me.
It must not come. Truth will condemn me, and
I knew it with the weapon in my grasp.

Sybil. What—the *whole* truth condemn us?

Clif. Perhaps not; but how to get the whole truth
out:

And if it could be done, *I* could not do it.

Sybil. Why not, my husband? Shame now's gone
from us;

We are above the world or beneath it.

It gives our hearts no sustenance. It may

Scorn me, the miserable victim of its ways,

But can it, dare it, call me harlot? No!

I did not plunge, but fell into the gulf—

Fell through vain weakness which relied on man:

And, oh, if spirit ever felt remorse

That doth denote wronged virtue's penitence,

Believe me, Clifden, it was mine.

Clif. Do I not know it, dearest (*fondling her*)!

Sybil. I believe you feel it, which conviction gives
Strength to my soul to face a world. Let it
Know all, if all will any thing avail.

With my own tongue would I declare the facts

Before I'd see thee dragged unto the gallows.

Clif. And I would mount the scaffold a thousand
times,

Had I a thousand lives, than suffer you
 To work such cruel wrong against thyself.
 Live, dearest, live ; and living, daily read
 The boast I carve upon my tomb—I died
 For thee ! I wed thee for that purpose :
 I am true to it.

Sybil. You said you loved me !

Clif. And do I not ?

Sybil. Eustace, the more one loves
 The more he loves to live. 'Tis easier
 To die than live ; which makes life beautiful
 And grand to those who love ; for love's true tests
 Are not so much in overmast'ring hearts,
 As that grim world which makes the bright heart black.
 Let us o'erecome this world with the truth !
 It may frown, but that will only roughen
 Its own face, and never ruffle ours.

Clif. You make me chide myself.

Sybil. Have we no resource but sorrow, husband ?
 Who will meet these judges if not you or I ?
 Your friends all point to Aeton—why delay ?
 Oh, Clifden, husband, let no coward shame
 Hide from all ears the tale of your brave blow.
 If you or I can't speak, let us heap up
 Our two hearts' histories on Aeton's soul,
 Until he, heated with the treble fires
 Of wrong, death, eloquence,—hate, love, and fame,
 Shall drive the doubtful demon from men's hearts,
 And make them strong for deeds of mercy.
 They say he's brave, well-versed, high-minded, pure—
 Your lesser self !—What would you more ?

Clif. No more may be expected of a man.
 But wait, wife—wait—to-morrow—

Sybil. To-morrow !
(Aside.) To-morrow, and the chance is lost ; yet I
 Stand here as though unwed to my avenger,
 Seeing him fade before my very eyes,
 Dragging love, life, all hopes of earth and heaven
 With him. I'll see this Acton. *(Takes a basket and is
 going—looks at Clifden—returns.*
 Kiss me, Eustace *(kisses)*. Be cheerful as the day
 That saw us wedded *(going)*. 'Twas for life and death.
[Exit, Clifden looking fondly after her.

SCENE II.—*Room in Acton's house.*

Enter OLD ACTON and WILLIAM ACTON.

Acton. How little could I think that Clifden, he
 To whom I owe so much of my defeat,
 Was married to this girl. What a wild fate
 At once has prompted and waylaid her life—
 More wretched ev'n in her triumphal hour
 Of vengeance, than in all her days of shame.

Old A. As dreadful, too, the retribution on
 Alfred Stevens. Little could you have thought
 Your boyhood's rival for the village girl
 Would be your victor on the wider field
 Of politics : Or that his fastest friend
 And ablest advocate, in slaying him,
 Would by the blow avenge thy youthful wrongs.
 This woman's mission has been one of woe ;
 My son, 'twas well ye parted in your youth.

Acton. Had she been mine, this dreadfulest of tales
 Would never chill men's veins.

Old A. It is a tale
 Which future mothers will rehearse, to teach

The heads, if not to touch the hearts, of proud
And wilful daughters.

Acton. Can we not aid them?
Clifden's devotion, if not Margaret's wrongs,
Should fire with eloquence some honest voice.
Can we not aid them, father?

Old A. How, my son?
Clifden hath all resources of the law;
He hath, besides, a worthy pride of brain.
Our interference might be misconstrued,
If not by him, at least by tetchy friends,
So high the flame of party spirit runs,
As an assumption of superior skill:
And then your duel for the woman's sake,
When her identity is fully known,
Perhaps might only, 'stead of mercy, build
In the censorious such conjecture as
Would act against her.

Acton. I loved her—she refused me. That is all—
Is easily told; and I am not the man,
Nor you to teach me, to allow my pride
Rise in rebellion 'gainst a mortal's life.
I loved her—she refused me. (*Muses—turns aside and
leans his head on his hand.*)

Enter SYBIL.

Old A. (*recognizing her as she approaches*). Miss
Cooper!
Can it be (*in a low voice*)?

Sybil. It is. (*Aside.*) Old Acton of Eaglemont.
Go where I will, some ghost of that dread spot
Haunts me in human form.

There's some mistake, sir, I seek the lawyer,
Mr. William Acton.

Old A. My son—no mistake.

Sybil. Your son, sir!

Old A. Yes, my son, and your old friend.

He is here—William.

(Sybil approaches a few steps towards William Acton, he turns round—they recognize.)

Sybil (aside). William Ashley! *(To him)* You know me, Mr. Acton,

I see you know me.

Acton. Could I forget you!

Sybil. Not forget, perhaps: but—but—

Of course you know my person;—who I was,

But—not who I am.

Acton. Yes, that I know.

Sybil. Thank heaven! Something then is spared me!

Acton. I know the whole sad story, Margaret—
Mistress Clifden. Can I do thee service *(with emotion)*?
Is it for this you seek me!

Sybil. It is.

Acton. I'm ready. All that lies within my power
You can command. Most necessary 'tis
That I immediately your husband see.

Sybil. Cannot that be avoided—I know all.

Acton. Your husband's danger I'll not hide from you.
Society is sick of deeds of blood,
And will, I fear, exact law's coldest rigor.

Sybil (eagerly). But the provocation of the villain
Whom he slew—what have I said!

Acton. What you have said, you have in secret said:
Your husband well doth know the lawyer's need,

To do him justice I must see himself :
 To meet the worst, his friends must know the worst.
 And I will see him—I'm thy friend and his.

Sybil (aside). Eustace cannot refuse me when he's there.

'Tis best. I thank thee deeply, William Ashley—
 I feel I don't deserve this at thy hands.

Thou art avenged for all the past. (*Weeps.*)

Acton.

Margaret,

I need no such atonement. To see thee thus
 Brings me no feelings but of stubborn pain,
 Which cannot in thy misery be tamed.

Oh, such a youth—such pride of promise.

Sybil. Ay, indeed, such pride!—Such pride, and such
 a fall.

Acton. But is there not hope still—

Sybil. For *him*? You will save him?

Acton. I will try.

Sybil. I know you will—you must! But even then
 I sometimes think there is no hope on earth.

I am a wreck. If I outlive this storm,

'Twill be as a craft hereafter useless.

These storms have shattered me. I fear my brain

Will, like the hurricane, sweep wildly out,

And leave my head as empty as the space

'Twixt earth and sky, to either not allied—

Or filled with fathomless wild clouds, that give

Terror to earth below, in shutting out

All hopeful specks of heaven above.

[*Old Acton, who has been a quiet spectator, wipes
 away a tear, and exits silently.*]

Acton. Hope is the sustenance of youth, and you
 Are young.

Sybil. I've faith in you. I always had
Reliance on your truth.

Acton. Had you believed so *then*—

Sybil. I did believe so.

Acton. Could you have thought—

Sybil (trembling). No more—say no more.

Acton (half musing). Could it have been, there had
been now no wreck.

Sybil (with stern frenzy). Speak not thus. The past
is past.

It could not have been otherwise. There was
A fate to humble me, and I am humbled.

I am here to sue, to beg *your* succor.

'Tis best so. *You* have nothing to deplore.

Oh, William—William (*seizes him*)! forget the past—

Or, if you still will cling unto those days,

Remember them to save him, for *my* sake.

Save him—my life, my husband. Come—come—come—

Each moment from him is a lifetime now. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Dungeon, as before.*

Enter CLIFDEN, SYBIL, and JAILER. *JAILER exit, and
closes the door upon them. Noise of bolts.*

Clif. (embraces Sybil). The ordeal's past that I most
feared to meet.

The trial than the sentence has more dread,

To one who fears death less than scrutiny.

To be the gaze of every sottish boor

Who hiccoughs jeers and damns me for a fool ;

The criticised of cold and upright knaves

Who knit their brows in reverence of laws

They daily break, and say "how bold he looks—

The murderer ;” the fashionable chat
 Of fellows whose weak lives are lust, whose dreams
 Are drunken echoes of their days, and who
 In self-defence must say “ he looks a villain ;”
 The topic for those philanthropic dogs
 Who bark at every thing, and never bite,
 Who’d let the vilest progeny of hell
 Loose on the earth that they might rail against them ;—
 To be this ; hemmed in a dock, the bars of which
 Have propp’d up every crime that law and gold,
 Thirst, madness, tainted blood, foul head, black heart,
 Or tortured nature e’er invented ;—this
 Gives a shock to make a pure man quake.
 But it is over—the dread trial’s past,
 And I’m prepared. The verdict cannot bring
 Aught but relief.

Sybil (*doubtfully*). Does not the defence bring hope ?
 With all my actuality of wrong
 I never knew how great the villain was,
 My own infirmity, or your great soul,
 Till Acton set in dreadfulest display
 The picture ’fore my eyes.

Clif. A brave, bright soul !
 Upon whose brow great nature’s mark is good.
 As nobly balanced as the poles, as wide
 Of heart, and fathomless in honesty
 As the deep sea, whose currents, ever fresh,
 Play with the leaded line that seeks its depth.

Sybil. And when with such calm emphasis he rose
 To the laws venue, and declared that he,
 Knowing the vulture passions of the dead,
 Would not have held your weapon from the act
 That sent a life’s debts to be paid above,

I could have worshipped him before all eyes
 But that *his* speech did choke all words for mine.
 Oh, Clifden, how his words drag down my brain
 With thoughts which taunt me with my selfish ends.
 Have mercy on me—pardon my hot blood
 That fused your genius to my vengeance.
 Forgive me, husband, for nor earth nor heaven
 Will come between me and the odious sin.

Clif. (*putting his arm about her*). Sybil, my own—my
 beautiful—my bride—
 Look in my face, and see if there's a line
 By which you may not trace my heart's proud boast—
 That you're my wife! (*Noise of bolts. They watch the
 door.*)

Enter WILLIAM ACTON.

Sybil (*rushes towards Acton and falls on her knees*). If
 the full prayers of one like me can reach
 The throne, they are *there* pleading for you now.

Acton. Rise, Margaret (*raising her*)—rise: 'tis not for
 you to kneel

To me.

Clif. How can I measure my poor thanks
 To fill your measureless exertions!

Acton. Were the deed mine, I know you would have
 stood

In my defence where I have stood in yours,—
 That is thanks enough for me. But the court
 Waits; the jury have returned.

Sybil. So soon! (*Startled.*)

Clif. I am ready.

Sybil (*to Acton*). What prospect!—Did they bear
 Acquittal on their faces? Did they seem

As though their hearts throbb'd with a good deed?
 Or did their eyes see corpses in the air?
 Say, say. Did they breathe freely, or held up,
 Lest they might lack enough of breath to float
 That grave-stone sentence—"Guilty!" Ah, I feel
 My life is slipping through their hands.

Clif. We attend the court (*going*).

Acton. 'Tis better that your wife remain. (*Sybil listens.*)

Sybil (*screams*). Then all is lost!

(*Clifden kisses her; she struggles to go with him;
 he gently disengages her, and hurries out after
 Acton. Sybil falls on her knees in agony.*)

Sybil (*after a pause, gazing up wildly*). What say
 you—Guilty, or Not Guilty?

Stay, stay—hear me! Old man, your looks are kind—
 You have a daughter; ah! I knew you had,
 There is such tender comfort in your eye.
 I had a father once: take care, old man,
 Your comfort may not wither 'neath the touch
 Of the destroyer. Ha! you shake your head:
 But look at me—who thought that I could fall?
 Old man, beware! Your heartlessness makes way
 For such as dragg'd me down. Go, go!
 You have a sister, sir; protect the man
 Who has protected her! You smile to think
 She needs protection;—Fool! all women do.
 You will not speak to me—go to, coward.
 And you;—but no, there's earth about your eyes—
 They're clay: debauch has settled on your cheek;
 Time's very precious, I cannot speak with you.
 Nor you, thou low-browed homily on man.
 But here, I have a man, and married too?
 'Tis well! He'll feel for me! What think you now—

Your bosom friend comes glozing round your wife
 And seeks to raise such hellish flames in her
 As leave you but in ashes—Eh—eh?
 Kill him you would? Brave husband! Then say which—
 “Guilty,” or “Not Guilty?” Speak it loud—loud—
 That your good presence may inspire these knaves.
 Gone—where is my good friend gone? All are going!
 Stay—look at this youth, my husband; think you
 He committed murder—ha! ha! He? No!
 He *did*? I say he did not! What a world
 Of men, fathers, brothers, husbands—all gone.
 Where is my Clifden? Gone too (*screams*)—they’ve
 taken him
 To death—the gallows! (*Cheering outside.*) Hear how
 the rabble shout
 To see a brave man die. Oh Clifden!—husband!

Enter CLIFDEN, ACTON, MAUDE, JANETTE, MR. LOWE,
 MRS. HARDY,

Voices outside. Not guilty!

Sybil (rushing to Clifden). Not guilty (*falls into his arms*)—not guilty! Did I hear aright?

Clif. Yes, dearest Sybil—yes. I am here—free!

Sybil. Free! Oh (*a long sigh*), this great joy has
 ta’en the little life

My sorrow left. Forgive me, William:
 Kiss me; dear mother—sisters, fare ye well.
 Oh, do not leave me, Eustace;—Let me feel you near—
 Close to my heart, my husband;—Come,—come.
 I cannot see you now—there is a film
 Hovering o’er my sight, Eustace, good-by!
 Have mercy, heaven!—“Not—Guilty.” (*Sinks.*)
 (*Slow music as curtain descends.*)

SYBIL — CAST OF CHARACTERS.

ST. LOUIS THEATRE.

September 6, 1858.

LOUISVILLE, KY.

<i>Eustace Clifden</i>	MR. CHARLES POPE.	MR. KEEBLE.
<i>Rufus Wolfe</i>	" HAMLIN.	" RILEY.
<i>Old Acton</i>	" GRIFFITHS.	" TOWNSEND.
<i>William Acton</i>	" WRIGHT.	" DICKSON.
<i>Mr. Lowe</i>	" HIND.	" LORTON.
<i>Barnabas</i>	" F. PAIGE.	" WM. SCALLAN.
<i>Landlord of the Red Heifer.</i>	" KLONE.	
<i>Gentlemen</i>	" PENNOYER.	
<i>Sybil Hardy</i>	MISS AVONIA JONES.	MISS AVONIA JONES.
<i>Mrs. Hardy</i>	MRS. F. S. BUXTON.	MRS. GILBERT.
<i>Maude Clifden</i>	" PENNOYER.	MISS IRENE WALKER.
<i>Janette</i>		" IDA VERNON.

ST. CHARLES.

New Orleans, 1859.

MOBILE, ALA.

<i>Eustace Clifden</i>	MR. CHAS. POPE.	MR. HANLEY.
<i>Rufus Wolfe</i>	" HAMLIN.	" RALTON.
<i>Old Acton</i>	" GRIFFITHS,	" CURRAN.
<i>William Acton</i>	" WRIGHT.	" ASHMED.
<i>Mr. Lowe</i>		
<i>Barnabas</i>	" F. PAIGE.	" RAYMOND.
<i>Landlord of the Red Heifer.</i>	" KRONE.	
<i>Gentlemen</i>		
<i>Sybil Hardy</i>	MISS AVONIA JONES.	MISS AVONIA JONES.
<i>Mrs. Hardy</i>	MRS. F. S. BUXTON.	" BERREL.
<i>Maude Clifden</i>	MISS PENNOYER.	MRS. LINGARD.
<i>Janette</i>	" FANNY DENHAM.	" H. BERNARD.

OPERA HOUSE.

San Francisco.

METROPOLITAN.

Sacramento, Cal.

<i>Eustace Clifden</i>	MR. LEWIS BAKER.	MR. LEWIS BAKER.
<i>Rufus Wolfe</i>	" KINGSLAND.	" KINGSLAND.
<i>Old Acton</i>	" MORTIMER.	" MORTIMER.
<i>William Acton</i>	" COAD.	" COAD.
<i>Mr. Lowe</i>	" THOMAN.	" THOMAN.
<i>Barnabas</i>	" DUMPHRIES.	" GLOVER.
<i>Landlord of the Red Heifer.</i>	" MCCABE.	" MACKLIN.
<i>Gentlemen</i>	" THAYER.	
<i>Sybil Hardy</i>	MISS AVONIA JONES.	MISS AVONIA JONES.
<i>Mrs. Hardy</i>	MRS. JUDAH.	" NELLIE BROWN.
<i>Maude Clifden</i>	MISS COGSWELL.	" COGSWELL.
<i>Janette</i>	" JENNIE MANDEVILLE.	" J. MANDEVILLE.

WINTER GARDEN. <i>New York.</i>		WALNUT STREET. <i>Philadelphia.</i>
<i>Eustace Clifden</i>	MR. BARTON HILL.	MR. LAWRENCE P. BARRETT
<i>Rufus Wolfe</i>	" J. J. PRIOR.	" E. L. TILTON.
<i>Old Acton</i>	" JEFFRIES.	" G. JOHNSON.
<i>William Acton</i>	" A. H. DAVENPORT.	" WRIGHT.
<i>Mr. Lowe</i>	" W. DAVIDGE.	" B. YOUNG.
<i>Barnabas</i>	" C. WALCOT, JR.	" BASCOMBE.
<i>Landlord of the Red Heifer.</i>	" STYLES.	" PORTER.
<i>Gentlemen</i>	{ " J. H. EVANS.	" RAYMOND.
	{ " CLARKE.	" MATTHEWS.
<i>Sybil Hardy</i>	MISS MATILDA HERON.	MRS. EMMA WALLER.
<i>Mrs. Hardy</i>	MRS. WALCOT.	MISS WOOD.
<i>Maude Clifden</i>	MISS ANNIE WILKS.	" JOSEPHINE TYSON.
<i>Janette</i>	" FANNY BROWNE.	" JOHNSON.

HOWARD ATHENÆUM.
Boston.

<i>Eustace Clifden</i>	MR. JAMES DUFF.
<i>Rufus Wolfe</i>	" F. E. AIKEN.
<i>Old Acton</i>	
<i>William Acton</i>	
<i>Mr. Lowe</i>	
<i>Barnabas</i>	
<i>Landlord of the Red Heifer.</i>	
<i>Gentlemen</i>	
<i>Sybil Hardy</i>	MRS. EMMA WALLER.
<i>Mrs. Hardy</i>	
<i>Maude Clifden</i>	MISS M. NEWTON.
<i>Janette</i>	

The casts at many prominent city theatres—such as those at Richmond, Cincinnati, Chicago, Memphis, Nashville, Providence, and other minor places in the United States, and Melbourne, Australia, were unattainable.

COPYRIGHT PRIVILEGE.

Managers or actors desirous of producing this drama will communicate with the author, "Times" office, New Orleans; or, care of the Publisher, New York.

A Handsome 12mo Volume, \$1.00.

Second Edition of Savage's Poems.

FAITH AND FANCY,

BY JOHN SAVAGE,

AUTHOR OF "SYBIL," A TRAGEDY.

Notices of the Press.

Mr. Savage betrays the workings of an ardent, poetical temperament. He is always in earnest, often enthusiastic, and is never at a loss for language or imagery to express his feelings. . . . He makes a successful appeal to the love of nature and the love of country, and kindles sympathy with his expression of manly and generous sentiment.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

Will add to Mr. Savage's reputation for brilliancy of imagination, sweetness of fancy, and force of diction. . . . "To an Artist" is a beautiful and solemn lyric, full of delicate and profound thought. . . . The "Washington" is the grandest and most exhaustive poem yet devoted to the Father of his Country.—*N. Y. Courier,*

Vigorous, patriotic, rhythmical, and many of them are marked with imaginative power. "The Muster of the North" is a bold and striking poem.—*Continental Monthly.*

There is one poem that, above all the rest, possesses a charm for us—that for its merits alone should insure immortality to the name of its author, and which we give in full, because it is intensely, entirely, and truthfully Irish in sentiment and inspiration. It is "Shane's Head," published many years since in the *Citizen*. There is a peculiar power and pathos observable in all the Irish poetry of this character, as all will remark who read such examples as the "Lament for O'Sullivan Beare," the "Lament for Patrick Sarsfield," and Davis's beautiful "Lament for Owen Roe O'Neil." All the best features of these are to be found in "Shane's Head," while

in dramatic power and faithful portrayal of the stormiest gusts of human passion—grief, despair, hate, and desire for revenge—it transcends them all.—*Irish American*.

It does not contain a tithe of Mr. Savage's heart-utterings in song, but there is sufficient here to stamp him as a poet. He has that eager abundance of expression, that rich affluence of language, that passionate swelling of thought, determined to find melodious utterance, which, in union, make the poet. The grand lyric, "The Starry Flag," and that other spirit-swelling ballad of '61, entitled "The Muster of the North," which have found echoes in thousands of quick bosoms, lead off this collection. There are several other war lyrics, a magnificent Irish ballad ("Shane's Head"), and the poem upon Washington's portrait, which, originally published in *Harper's Magazine*, obtained great praise at the time. The characteristics of Mr. Savage's poems are earnestness, fire, melody, truth. His is not a cold, phlegmatic nature, which can calmly set itself down to the mere making of verses—it is impulsive, eager, productive, and *will* utter what it thinks.—*Philadelphia Press*.

Marked by a vein of tenderness and humane charity that speaks well for the heart of the writer, and unites him at once in sympathy with his reader. We quote an instance (A Battle Prayer) which breathes of the Christian as well as the Soldier. The two strongest poems in the volume are "The Starry Flag," and "The Muster of the North." The latter is a spirit-stirring, earnest, and admirably descriptive poem. It is a ballad of '61, and describes with wonderful vivacity and faithfulness, the "hurry," the indignation, the wild enthusiastic rush to arms, which followed the rebel firing upon Fort Sumter. It is a poetical history of one of the most exciting incidents in the most eventful period of the nation's existence.—*Watson's Weekly Art Journal*.

"The Dead Year" is replete with poetic imagery; "Snow on the Ground" is an exquisite gem. . . . "At Niagara" is another poem of strength and beauty. Mr. Savage's writings partake of his spirit; he is an ardent lover of nature—the tiniest flower that blooms in the forest, or the grandest and most impressive of her monuments, alike inspire his poetic soul. He has a liberal nature, that blossoms into all human generousities at the sight of the Master's handiwork. Such natures make poets; they will be remembered, "growing fonder through ages," long after the poet's dust has mingled with its mother earth.—*Troy Daily Times*.

Replete with sentiment and pregnant with that sweet philosophy which seems to pervade all John Savage's rhythmical productions.—*N. Y. Dispatch*.

Vigorous in conception, often strikingly original both in thought and diction, and in versification varied, but always melodious. Mr. Savage is indisputably a true poet.—*N. Y. Atlas*.

The author exhibits a signal imaginative and verbal power—embodying the fancy in the most apposite diction. . . . “Flowers on my Desk,” “Mina,” and “Dreaming by Moonlight,” are perhaps the three gems of the book, and invite a repeated and grateful study.—*New Orleans Times*.

Mr. Savage inscribes his volume to the Hon. Charles P. Daly, in commendatory and affectionate appreciation of that gentleman’s “generous efforts in behalf of Letters, Science, Humanity, and Justice”—and in the dedication lets us into the secret, doubtless, of the influences which inspire himself. He says that every person who writes poetry makes his reader the confidant of his hopes, woes, experiences, or sensations; for, he adds, “if he aspire at all to transcribe or embody the feelings which evoke or prompt human action, he cannot help writing largely from his own heart’s blood, and in the hues it has taken by contact with Men, Faith, and Nature.” This accounts for the subtle, sensitive, picturesque, and passionate character of many of the principal pieces in the work. They bear distinctive marks of being studious and philosophical observations of life and landscape, of art, men, and books, guided and illuminated by that insight which amounts almost to intuition, and gives the poetical mind its power over lesser organizations.

The “Muster of the North” has been widely copied and quoted. Taking it, not as an expression of political faith, but as an historical photograph of what the Count De Gasparin calls the great uprising, it has all the characteristics of the thrilling epoch. It throbs with emotion and commotion from the first line to the last, and sweeps you breathlessly along on its bounding measure. It is difficult to make an extract from it, the atmosphere of concentrated action so surrounds the whole. It is full of scenes for a Darley to illustrate or an Eastman Johnson to paint.—*Merchants’ Magazine*.

John Savage’s book of Poems, “Faith and Fancy,” which is now far advanced in the second edition, has met a most favorable reception from the leading press of Ireland. The *Dublin Nation* devotes nearly a whole page to a review and many quotations. In the course of the article the critic says: “Of Mr. Savage’s powers as a writer no one could doubt who had read the graphic pages of his ‘98 and ‘48.’ The breadth and freedom of those sketches, the close perception of character, and the dramatic force of the whole, gave promise for the author, which since then he has continued to realize. His recent work, ‘Sybil, a Tragedy,’ we know only through

the critiques of the American press, which give it high meed of praise, and describe it as having proved a remarkable success on the stage. The little volume now before us consists of a number of poems contributed by the author to various American periodicals. Some of them have long been flitting about, in an anonymous, vagrant way, from journal to journal, brightening the 'Poet's Corners,' where they lit, like those gay-colored birds that give a flower *pro tem.* to every tree and shrub on which they rest; others, written since the outbreak of the war, and glowing with the patriotic excitement of the occasion, have received even a wider circulation." The *Nation*, strange to say, is lukewarm on the Union side of the American question, and thinks that however well Mr. Savage's National American lyrics "may reflect the popular enthusiasm, however effective they may be by the camp-fires or from the lips of recruiting-sergeants," they are of less beauty than those other compositions, in which "we get the more original ideas and the finer expressions of a 'poet born, not made.'" "The War Songs," it says, "may be the more popular now in America—the others will live longer in the literature of the country." Among the specimens quoted are the "Requiem for the Dead of the Irish Brigade," "Game Laws," which has also been translated in Germany with honorable mention, "Breasting the World," some of the "Winter Thoughts," "Niagara," in which, says the *Nation*, "there are some fine thoughts, and such a measured march of rhythm and gravity of expression as well befit the subject;" "Mina, a pretty sketch, touched easily and brilliantly," and the stormy emotional ballad of "Shane's Head;" the critic concluding with this suggestive paragraph:

"The collection from which we have taken the foregoing pieces is not a large one, but poetry is not to be measured by bulk. Mr. Savage's writings show that he has preferred to be the author of a few pieces, with his own thinking in them, rather than give to the public a mass of common thoughts and common phrases, jumbled into rhyme. His "Faith and Fancy" will find favor with all admirers of genuine poetry."

The *Irishman*, of the same city, gives the book a hearty welcome, and singles out "The Muster of the North," "God Preserve the Union"—"a splendid poem, now heard by many a camp fire;" "A Battle Prayer"—"for its profound feeling and piety" (we gave it in the *Art Journal*); "The God-child of July"—"a beautiful birthday ode;" "At Niagara"—"opening grandly and well sustained throughout;" and "Shane's Head," which it thinks "too popular to need quotation," for special mention. The *Irishman* is enthusi-

astically on the side of the Union as against the rebellion of the South, and in these hearty words generalizes its appreciation of Mr. Savage's literary character:

"John Savage is already well known as an author. His 'Ninety-Eight and Forty-Eight' obtained considerable popularity; while his tragedy of Sybil acquired a degree of success that attracted the eulogiums not only of American but of English journals. Indeed, his genius seems chiefly adapted to dramatic writing, even more than to the lighter class of poetic productions. Into the lyrics contained in this volume the author has put his heart and soul, and made them instinct with vehement life. Many of them have already become classical; those, especially, which treat of the great crisis now convulsing America, have obtained popularity extensive as the poet's imagination. The poet sings the cause of liberty in America with the same sacred fervor which inspired him in Ireland."—*Watson's Weekly Art Journal*, July 23, 1864.

