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In the letter-press many important improvements will be introduced; their details would require greater space than can be given to them in an advertisement.

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4, Leadenhall-street, 30th November, 1847.

ACCEPTABLE PRESENTS.

THE present season is hallowed by one of the most delightful offices of friendship and affection; the interchange of gifts, as remembrances of the donors, and tokens of their esteem for the receivers. While large sums are expended upon the most costly baubles and elegant trifles, no more appropriate present can be made at this season of the year than a package of ROWLAND'S MACASSAR OIL, KALYDOR, and ODONTO, combining, as these articles do, the most sterling utility with elegance and luxury.

BEWARE OF SPOURIOUS IMITATIONS.—Some are offered under the impudic sanction of Royalty, and the Government Departments, with similar attempts at Deception. The only Genuine "MACASSAR OIL," "KALYDOR," and "ODONTO," are "ROWLANDS'," and the Wrapper of each bears the Name of "ROWLANDS" preceding that of the Article, with their Signature at the foot, in Red Ink, thus—

A. ROWLAND AND SON.

Sold by them at 20, Hatton Garden, London, and by every respectable Chemist and Perfumer throughout the kingdom.

THE ATRAPILATORY, or

LLIQUID HAIR DYE; the only dye that really answers for all colours, and does not require re-doing but as the hair grows, as it never fades or acquires that unnatural red or purple tint common to all other dyes. **BOTANIC WATER and BEAR'S GREASE.**—When the hair is becoming thin and falling off, the only effectual remedy besides shaving the head is the use of the two above-named articles, applied alternately—the botanic water to cleanse the roots from scurf, and as a stimulant, and the bear's grease as a nourisher. **THE NEW TOOTH-PICK BRUSH,** thoroughly cleansing between the teeth, when used up and down, and polishing the surface when used cross-ways. The hair warranted never to come out. **THE UNION and TRIPLE HAIR BRUSHES.** **THE DOUBLE ANTI-PRESSURE NAIL BRUSH.** **THE MEDIUM SHAVING BRUSH.** **THE RAILWAY STROP and POWDER.**

The above new and elegant articles, in addition to a very extensive assortment of beautiful PERFUMES, are the sole MANUFACTURES and INVENTIONS of MESSRS. ROSS AND SONS, 119 and 120, Bishopsgate-street, London.

GROSSMITH'S READING HAIR NOURISHER, IN POTS, ONE SHILLING EACH, is unequalled for promoting the growth and general improvement of the Hair. Shaving Soap, Scent of Flowers, Cream for Lips, and Razor Stropps, all 1s. each. Tooth Powder, 9d. 135, Strand, corner of Waterloo Bridge. Works at Reading. N.B.—Every person should use Grossmith's Soaps during the Winter Season.

EASE AND COMFORT IN SHAVING.—B. and S. COWVAN'S CANTON STROP, or Quadrilateral Chinese Razor Sharpener, patronised by H.R.H. Prince Albert, renders shaving pleasant to a tender skin. The keenest edge may be given to the bluntest razor. Testimonials of its excellence have been received from that eminent surgeon, Aston Key, Esq., as well as from other professional and scientific individuals. May be had of the inventors, B. and S. COWVAN, 164, Fenchurch Street, and of all perfumers, &c. Prices, 5s. 6d., 7s. 6d., 9s. 6d.: Canton razor paste, 1s. per packet; vegetable shaving powder, 1s. 6d. per box, and peculiarly tempered razors. &c

SICK HEADACHES, BILE, AND

INDIGESTION CURED by HOLLOWAY'S PILLS.—The innumerable proofs of the efficacy of these INVALUABLE PILLS in the cure of BILE, SICK HEADACHES, and INDIGESTION; are so convincing, that every person subject to these distressing complaints should immediately have recourse to a few doses to insure relief, for there has been no medicine hitherto discovered that possesses such powerful properties in eradicating the causes of these disorders. It acts so peculiarly on the system, that all impurities are removed, and the patient becomes permanently invigorated. Holloway's Pills are also an infallible remedy for liver complaints, and rank in the highest estimation as a Family Medicine.—Sold by all Druggists, and at Professor Holloway's establishment, 244, Strand, London.

THE MANDARIN PICKLE-

SAUCE is now first imported. The nobles of China never dine without this delicious luxury. It is remarkable for its piquant flavour and digestive qualities. Mixed with

STELLA SALAD OIL

it is unrivalled as a fish sauce; for boiled meats, much superior to capers; and to cold meats, chops, steaks, and sandwiches, it is a very agreeable novelty.—Sold in registered jars, at 1s 6d., by the following agents for the STELLA SALAD OIL: Hedges and Butler, 155, Regent-street; Hickson and Co., Welbeck-street; Lazenby and Sons, 6, Edward-street; Wood, 132, New Bond-street; Clifford, 82, Grosvenor-street; Metcalfe, 16, Southampton-row; Sharpe, 44, Bishopsgate-street; and by all respectable oil and Italian warehousemen and grocers. Wholesale by the sole consignees, WM. ORRIDGE and Co., No. 11, Pilgrim-street, London.

STELLA SALAD OIL.

THE continued experiments of the eminent Signor BENTIVOGLIO on the culture of the olive tree have met with the most successful result, and produced an Oil of extraordinary beauty and fine flavour, infinitely superior to any hitherto imported. It is the growth of one choice estate in the best olive district in Italy, and has been named the STELLA SALAD OIL. Its purity and extreme delicacy will entirely remove the prejudice frequently entertained against the use of oil. It is sold in registered pint bottles, of a form suitable to the table, at 1s. 6d., by the following agents for the

MANDARIN PICKLE SAUCE:

Hedges and Butler, 155, Regent-street; Hickson and Co., Welbeck-street; Lazenby and Sons, 6, Edward-street; Wood, 132, New Bond-street; Clifford, 82, Grosvenor-street; Metcalfe, 16, Southampton row; Sharpe, 44, Bishopsgate-street; and by all respectable oil and Italian warehousemen and grocers. Wholesale, of the sole consignees, WM. ORRIDGE and Co. No. 11, Pilgrim-street, London.

REMOVAL. — MRS. MELLISH, PURCHASER OF LADIES' WARDROBES, begs to acquaint Ladies and her Friends, that she has Removed from opposite Buckingham Palace, Picnic, to her old Establishment, No. 106, GREAT PORTLAND STREET, OXFORD STREET, where she still continues to buy and sell every description of Ladies' left-off Wearing Apparel. Ladies waited on at any time by addressing Mesdames Hendry and Mellish, 106, Great Portland-street, Oxford-street. — Parcels from the Country, will meet with immediate attention.

CHUBB'S LOCKS AND FIRE-PROOF SAFES.—CHUBB'S New Patent Detector Locks give perfect security from false Keys, and also detect any attempt to open them.

CHUBB'S Patent Fire-proof Safes and Boxes are the best preservatives of deeds, books, plate, &c., from fire and thieves.

Cash Boxes, and Japan Deed Boxes, Street Door Latches with very neat Keys.

C. CHUBB and SON, 57, St. Paul's Churchyard, London; and 28, Lord-street, Liverpool.

ESPRIT AROMATIQUE.—A delightful Perfume for the Handkerchief.—W. DELATOUCHE begs most respectfully to inform the Nobility and Gentry, that he has purchased of Mr. De Lisle (the successor of the late Mr. Fisher, of 76, New Bond-street), the receipt for the above delicious perfume, together with the exclusive sale thereof. W. Delatouche is prepared, by introducing it more generally to the public, to supply precisely the same article at a reduced price. Sold in bottles at 2s. 6d. and 4s. 6d. each, by W. Delatouche (late Perkins and Co.), Chemist, &c., 147, Oxford-street, nearly opposite Bond-street.

BEAUTIFUL WOMEN.—The Thorn that veils the Primrose from our View is not more invidious in Nature than superfluous Hair on the Face, Neck, or Arms of Beauty. For its removal HUBERT'S ROSEATE POWDER stands pre-eminent. Beware of Counterfeits. The Genuine has been signed G. H. HOGARD for the last forty years. Sold for the Proprietor by HOOPER, Chemist, 24, Russell Street, Covent Garden; and by most Perfumers. Price 4s.; or two in one parcel, 7s.

SMITH'S GOLD REVIVER, 1s. 6d. per Bottle, gives in one instant the splendour of new gilding to the most disfigured frames, by merely touching the surface. **GOLD VARNISH, 1s. 6d.,** repairs defects. May be applied by any one. **ELECTRO-PLATING LIQUID SILVER, 1s.,** puts a durable coating of pure Silver upon the Copper parts of worn plated articles. Cost and trouble less than cleaning. Sole Manufacturer, Smith, 281, Strand, (exactly opposite Norfolk Street).

14, DEVONSHIRE SQUARE, 19th July, 1847.
MR. FRED^R. BRADSHAW having lost some portion of his Hair from RINGWORM, has had it so perfectly and WONDERFULLY RESTORED by only a short application of Mr. GRIMSTONE'S AROMATIC REGENERATOR, feels thus called upon gratefully and publicly to acknowledge it.

Mr. BRADSHAW has much pleasure in thus bearing testimony to the remedy, and Mr. Grimstone is at perfect liberty to make any use of this communication he pleases.

To Mr. WM. GRIMSTONE, Herbarry, Highgate, 19th July, 1847.

This extraordinary discovery is an Essential Spirit, sold in triangular bottles by all Chemists, Druggists, and Perfumers, inclosed in a Pamphlet containing Testimonials, and the signature of WILLIAM GRIMSTONE, at 4s., 7s., and 11s. each; the 11s. size contains four times the 4s. size; the 11s. costs by post 12s.



Brown, 4s. 6d. per bottle.
Pale, 5s. ditto.



3s. per bottle.



10s. per doz. large bottles.
7s. per doz. small ditto,
exclusive of carriage from
London.

"THE STANDARD OF COGNAC,"

WHICH IS THE BEST FOREIGN BRANDY,

THE PATENT BRANDY, AND THE GENUINE SELTERS WATER, protected by the Patent Metallic Capsule, the only sure and self-evident safeguard against adulteration, can be obtained throughout the Kingdom at the respective prices above mentioned, or at

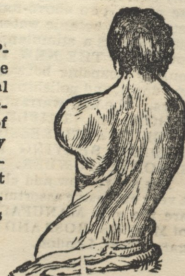
7, SMITHFIELD BARS, AND 96, ST. JOHN'S STREET, LONDON.

DEFORMITIES OF THE CHEST AND SPINE.

ENGLAND'S newly invented INVISIBLE SPINE SUPPORTERS will be found well deserving the attention of the medical profession, and of persons suffering under Spinal deformity and its consequences. As any attempt at a description must needs fall short of giving a correct idea of the plan itself, Mr. ENGLAND solicits an inspection. They are beautifully simple and eminently successful, quite imperceptible, and conceal the deformity from the keenest observer. Mr. E. has the pleasure to add, that he is empowered to refer to ladies of the highest respectability as to the remedial effects produced by their use.

21, COVENTRY STREET, HAYMARKET, LONDON.

*** Hours 11 till 6.



THE GENTLEMAN'S REAL HEAD OF HAIR, or INVISIBLE PERUKE.

The principle upon which this Peruke is made is so superior to everything yet produced, that the Manufacturer invites the honour of a visit from the Sceptic and the Connoisseur, that one may be convinced and the other gratified, by inspecting this and other novel and beautiful specimens of the Perruquean Art, at the establishment of the Sole Inventor, F. BROWNE, 47, FENCHURCH-ST.



BROWNE'S INFALLIBLE MODE OF MEASURING THE HEAD.

Round the head in manner of a fillet, leaving the Ears loose	As dotted 1 to 1.	Inches.	Eighths
From the Forehead over to the poll, as deep each way as required	As dotted 2 to 2.		
From one Temple to the other, across the rise or Crown of the head to where the Hair grows	As marked 3 to 3.		

THE CHARGE FOR THIS UNIQUE HEAD OF HAIR ONLY £1 10s.

CHILDREN'S FROCKS, COATS, AND PELISSÉS,

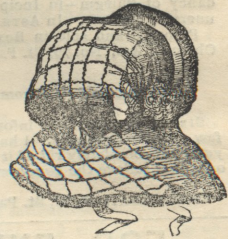


Infant's Cloaks, Hoods, Hats, and Bonnets, Long and Short Robes, French Cambric Caps, Day and Night Gowns, Lawn and Cambric Night Caps, Robe Blankets, Nursery Baskets, Bassinets, with every other requisite in Baby Linen, at SHEARMAN'S, 5, Finsbury Pavement. Several hundred of Children's Dresses constantly on view, from the useful in-door at 11s. 1d.; Medium 5s. 6d., 7s. 6d., 10s. 6d.; Handsome ditto, 15s., 20s., 25s., up to the richest goods made; with every other article usually required for a young family—thus completely obviating the trouble and inconvenience so long complained of in going from shop to shop, when juvenile clothing is required.—An Illustrated Pamphlet, affording additional information, sent free on receiving a paid letter.



SOILED
Robes, French Cambric Caps,
LAWN AND CAMBRIC SHIRTS,
ROBE BLANKETS & SQUARES,
MONTHLY GOWNS,
INFANTS', CHILDREN'S, AND LADIES'
UNDER CLOTHING.

A WEST END STOCK of the above Goods, including a very large Lot of Children's Dresses, now selling at SHEARMAN'S, 5, Finsbury Pavement, at one-third the original Prices.



NEW PATENT OIL.

G. M. CLARKE begs respectfully to call the attention of the Nobility and Gentry to his **NEW PATENT OIL**, called "The Patent Albany Oil," price 5s. 6d. per gallon. This Oil will be found superior to the finest Sperm, at little more than half the cost. It will burn in any lamp, is very pale, free from smell, and, from its extreme purity, lamps burning this oil will not require half the cleaning of any other, and warranted never to injure the lamps. Can be obtained only at the Patentee's Lamp and Candle Manufactory, 55, Albany Street, Regent's Park. Orders, by post, executed within two hours after receipt. A large assortment of Oil and Candle Lamps, Candelabra, &c., of the newest patterns, always in stock.

STOOPING OF THE SHOULDERS & CONTRACTION OF THE CHEST

Are entirely prevented, and gently and effectually removed in Youth, and Ladies and Gentlemen, by the occasional use of the **IMPROVED ELASTIC CHEST EXPANDER**, which is light, simple, easily applied, either above or beneath the dress, and worn without any uncomfortable constraint or impediment to exercise. To Young Persons especially it is highly beneficial, immediately producing an evident **IMPROVEMENT** in the **FIGURE**, and tending greatly to prevent the incursion of **PULMONARY DISEASES**; whilst to the Invalid, and those much engaged in sedentary pursuits, such as Reading or Studying, Working, Drawing, or Music, it is found to be invaluable, as it expands the Chest and affords a great support to the back. It is made in Silk; and can be forwarded, per post, by **Mr. ALFRED BINYON**, Sole Manufacturer and Proprietor, No. 40, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, London; or full particulars, with Prices and Mode of Measurement, on receipt of a Postage Stamp.



SOVEREIGN LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY,

No. 5, ST. JAMES'S STREET, LONDON.

TRUSTEES.

SIR A. BRYDGES HENNIKER, BART.
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BANKERS.—SIR CLAUDE SCOTT, BART., and CO.

SOLICITORS.—Messrs. DAVIES, SON, and CAMPBELL.

Assurances on the lives of persons in every station of life and every part of the world, granted on a plan which combines the utmost amount of benefit to the families of the assured at death, with every attainable advantage during life, which the system of Life Assurance is capable of affording.

Perfect security in a subscribed Capital, which guarantees the prompt settlement of every claim, with participating and non-participating rates on the lowest scale, especially for terms of years.

The Assured can anticipate or obtain the advance of the full amount of the Policy, on giving approved available security for a certain number of annual payments, as explained by the Prospectus.

Every facility afforded to persons assuring the lives of others, so as to render such Policies effectual securities.

A new plan of gradual or accumulative Assurance, particularly adapted for young lives, and for such as cannot, without inconvenience, undertake the payment of a fixed premium, securing at once provision in case of premature death, and an accumulating fund, available during life, should occasion require.

ANNUITIES, ENDOWMENTS, ADVANCES, and LOANS, on liberal terms.

Detailed Prospectuses, forms of Proposal, and every information, may be had on application, either personally or by letter, at the Company's Offices.

The usual commission to Solicitors and Agents.

H. D. DAVENPORT, Secretary.

KEATING'S COUGH LOZENGES

A CERTAIN REMEDY for disorders of the PULMONARY ORGANS—in Difficulty of Breathing—in Redundancy of Phlegm—in Incipient CONSUMPTION (of which Cough is the most positive indication) they are of unerring efficacy. In ASTHMA, and in WINTER COUGH, they have never been known to fail.

Prepared and sold in Boxes, 1s. 1½d., and Tins, 2s. 9d., 4s. 6d., and 10s. 6d. each, by THOMAS KEATING, Chemist, &c., No. 79, St. Paul's Church-yard, London.

IMPORTANT TESTIMONIAL.

Copy of a Letter from COLONEL HAWKER, (the well-known Author on "GUNS AND SHOOTING").

Longparish House, near Whitechurch, Hants, October 21st, 1846.

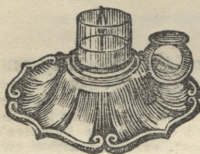
SIR,—I cannot resist informing you of the extraordinary effect that I have experienced by taking only a few of your Lozenges. I had a cough for several weeks, that defied all that had been prescribed for me; and yet I got completely rid of it by taking about half a small box of your Lozenges, which I find are the only ones that relieve the cough without deranging the stomach or digestive organs.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

P. HAWKER.

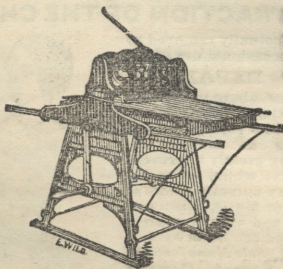
To Mr. KEATING, 79, St. Paul's Church Yard, London.

FOR EXPORTATION.—NIGHT LIGHTS.



THE breakage and uncertain burning of rushlights render them useless. The dirt, smoke, and smell from oil is very disagreeable. The inconvenience in not being able to move the common Mortars after being lighted, and the liability of the paper taking fire, make them extremely dangerous articles, and should not be used. All these defects are remedied in CLARKE'S PATENT MORTAR LAMPS and LAMP MORTARS, which are clean, elegant, economical, and safe, give three times the light of all Mortars with paper round them, can be carried without extinguishing the light, and have neither smell nor smoke. Persons burning night-lights should not use any other. The Lamps are made in japanned, gilt and bronze metal, plain, coloured, and beautifully painted glass, and in papier maché, from 6d. each.

Mortars, 6d. per box. May be obtained, wholesale and retail, at the Patentee's Lamp Manufactory, 55, Albany Street, Regent's Park.



LITHOGRAPHY & ZINCOGRAPHY.

The attention of Artists, Publishers, Armateurs &c., is respectfully called to STRAKER'S Establishment, 80, Bishopsgate Street Within, London.

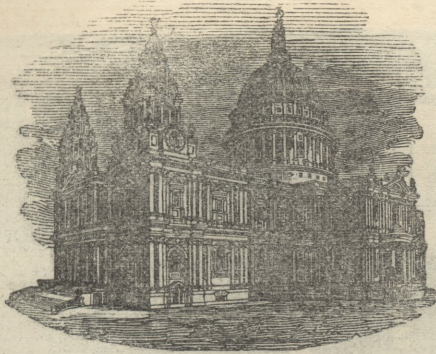
For the execution, either on ZINC or STONE, of every Description or LANDSCAPES, PORTRAITS, BOTANICAL, MECHANICAL, ANATOMICAL, AND OTHER DRAWINGS, MAPS AND PLANS OF ESTATES, ELEVATIONS, FAC SIMILIES, WRITINGS, CIRCULAR LETTERS, ETC., ETC.,

With the utmost Dispatch, and on the most moderate Terms.
STRAKER'S Improved Lithographic Presses,
Warranted of the best Construction.

At the following greatly Reduced Prices for Cash: 8 in by 14, 25 5s.; 14 in. by 18, 27 10s.; 18 in. by 23, 29 10s.; 21 in. by 26, 212 12s. Larger sizes in like proportion.—List of Prices, with Design of his Improved Presses, on application.

MATERIAL REQUIRED IN THE ART, forwarded to all parts of the World.
ZINC PLATES, STONES, and EVERY
IMPORTER OF GERMAN STONES.—THE TRADE SUPPLIED AT THE LOWEST CURRENT RATES.

NUMBER ONE, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.



DAKIN AND COMPY., TEA MERCHANTS.

THE very best TEAS that the Chinese have shipped to England for the space of three years have had the preference by DAKIN and COMPY., and have been

THE TEAS SUPPLIED AT "NUMBER ONE."

The prices of Black Teas vary from 3s. to 5s. 4d.; of Green Teas, from 3s. 2d. to 7s. per pound. The prices of the most favourite sorts are as follows:—

BLACK TEAS, per pound.

Rough and strong Congou, little Souchong flavour	3s. 6d.	} An acceptable tea to the public in general.
Very strong Congou, even black leaf	4s. 0d.	
The finest Congou Tea, full Pekoe Souchong flavour	4s. 4d.	} A matured tea, with plenty of strength and good flavour.
Choice Souchong, now only	4s. 6d.	
		} This tea will give every satisfaction.
		} This is an old-fashioned fine tea, possessing strength, richness of flavour, and excellence of quality.

GREEN TEAS, per pound.

Good Hyson Tea	4s. 0d.	} This tea will give great satisfaction.
Very fine Hyson, with strength and flavour	5s. 0d.	
Superior Hyson, or Gunpowder, with fine flavour	6s. 0d.	} Most desirable green teas, and will be greatly improved of.

Now, all these teas

ARE THE BEST OF THEIR CLASS,

and possess the three excellencies that distinguish good tea, namely, flavour, purity, and strength. Their flavour will please and delight the palate; their purity will refresh and exhilarate the spirits; and their strength will hold out to the second and even to the third cup. All who taste them are pleased with them; all who buy them, buy them with confidence; all who drink them, drink them with satisfaction; and all who purchase them, hasten to purchase them again and again. The best proof of which is to

LOOK NOW AT "NUMBER ONE,"

and to mark its rising and its growth; but three short years back, and how little a thing it was. It was even as an acorn, planted by the wayside, and suffered to grow; whilst the passer-by beheld its progress, signified his assent to it, and daily felt a greater liking for it, until at length, even now, he feels it a pleasure, and he knows it to be to his advantage, to help it to take root, so that some day he may say

"IT HAS BECOME A GOODLY TREE IN THIS GREAT FOREST OF A CITY."

He recommends it to the notice of his friends, and they effect all the saving and the intermediate saving that can be effected by purchasing their teas, at merchants' prices, from DAKIN and COMPY., Tea Merchants, Number One, St. Paul's Churchyard.

The usual overweight, being about one pound on every thirty pounds, as granted to the Trade by the Merchants and by Her Majesty's Customs, will be allowed to all purchasers of original packages.

The visitors to London are fearlessly assured, that they may save a considerable portion of their Railway expenses by purchasing their Teas and Coffees at

NUMBER ONE, SAINT PAUL'S CHURCHYARD,

which is in the very centre of England's Metropolis, and a position more easily identified than any in LONDON.

COFFEE AS IN FRANCE.



IT is a fact beyond dispute, that in order to obtain really fine COFFEE, there must be a combination of the various kinds; and to produce strength and flavour, certain proportions should be mixed, according to their different properties; thus it is we have become celebrated for our delicious COFFEE, at 1s. 8d., which is the astonishment and delight of all who have tasted it, being the produce of Four Countries, selected and mixed by rule peculiar to our Establishment, in proportions not known to any other house.

From experiments we have made on the various kinds of COFFEE, we have arrived at the fact, that no one kind possesses strength and flavour; if we select a very strong COFFEE, it is wanting in flavour; by the same rule we find the finest and most flavorful are generally wanting in strength; and as they are usually sold each kind separately, quite regardless of their various properties, the consumer is unable to obtain really fine COFFEE at any price. There is, also, another peculiar advantage which we possess over other houses—our roasting apparatus being constructed on decidedly scientific principles, whereby the strong aromatic flavour of the COFFEE is preserved, which in the ordinary process of roasting is entirely destroyed.

The rapid and still increasing demand for this COFFEE has caused great excitement in the trade; and several unprincipled houses have copied our papers, and profess to sell a similar article. We therefore think it right to CAUTION the Public, and to state that our superior mixture of Four Countries is a discovery of our own, and therefore the proportions are not known, nor can it be had of any other house, and that in future we shall distinguish it from all others as

SPARROW'S CONTINENTAL COFFEE, at 1s. 8d. per lb.

Packed in Tins of all sizes, perfectly air-tight, for the Country.

•• We have also Strong and Useful COFFEES, from 1s. to 1s. 4d.

TEAS of the true old-fashioned kind, as formerly imported by the East India Company, and with which the name of SPARROW has for many years been identified, at the following reduced scale of prices:—Strong and full flavoured Congou, a most economical Tea for large consumers, 3s. 8d.; Sterling Congou, of superior strength and flavour, 4s.; Finest Congou, strongly recommended, 4s. 4d.; Fine Ripe Old Pekoe, Souchong flavour, one of the finest specimens imported, 4s. 8d.; Strong Green, 3s. 8d. to 4s.; Genuine Hyson, or Young Hyson, 5s.; the Finest Cowslip Hyson, or Young Hyson, very fragrant, 6s.; Strong Gunpowder, 5s. 4d. to 6s.; and the Finest Gunpowder, heavy pearl leaf, 7s.

NO BOHEA OR INFERIOR TEAS KEPT.

Orders, by post or otherwise, containing a remittance, or respectable reference, will be dealt with in a way that will insure recommendations. The carts of this establishment deliver goods in all parts of town free of expense.

TEA ESTABLISHMENT, 95, HIGH HOLBORN,

Adjoining Day & Martin's, leading through into 22, Dean Street.

HENRY SPARROW, PROPRIETOR.

BEAS IN FRANCE

by the same

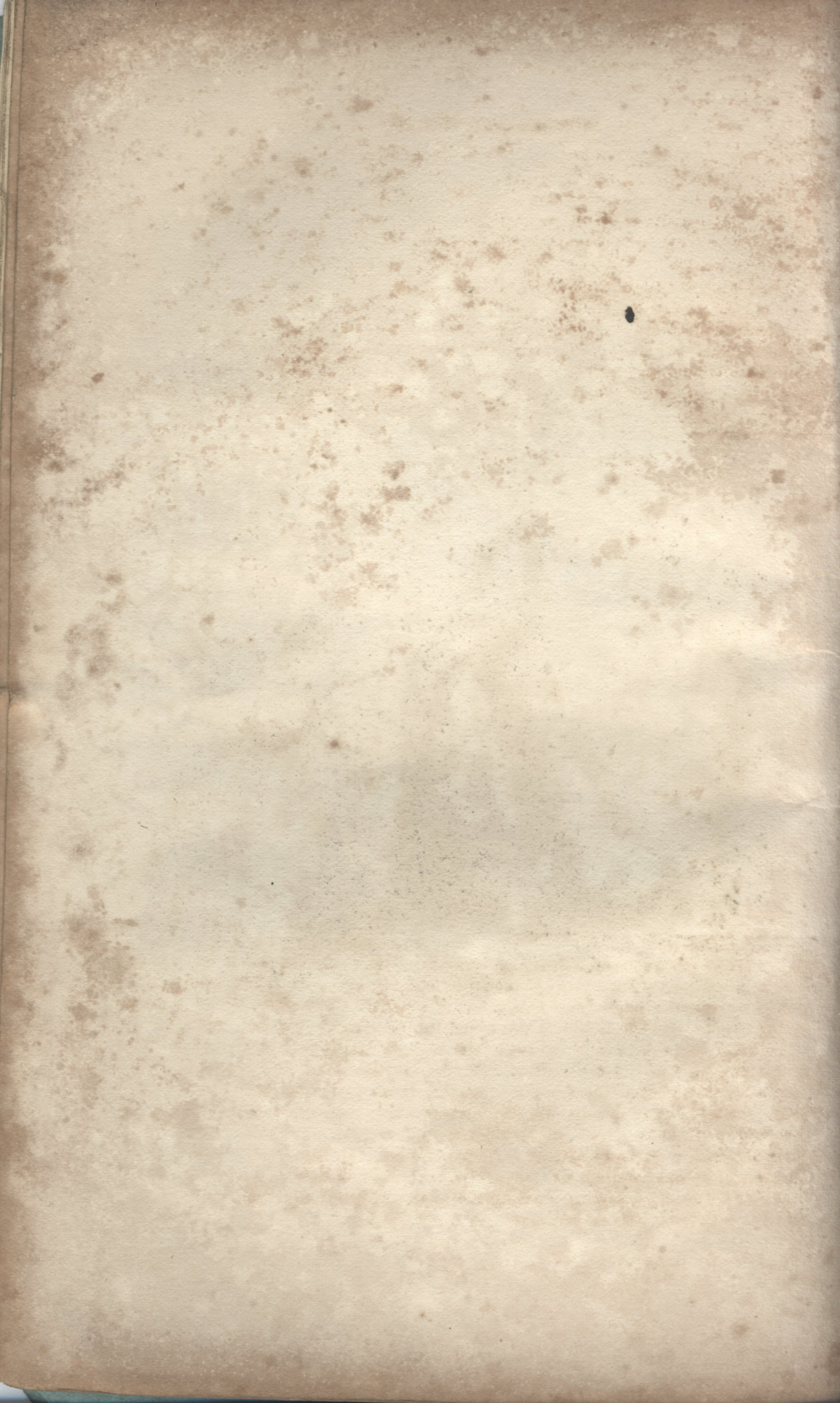
of the same



Abstraction & Recognitions.



Florence & Edith on the Staircase.



CHAPTER XLVI.

RECOGNIZANT AND REFLECTIVE.

AMONG sundry minor alterations in Mr. Carker's life and habits that began to take place at this time, none was more remarkable than the extraordinary diligence with which he applied himself to business, and the closeness with which he investigated every detail that the affairs of the House laid open to him. Always active and penetrating in such matters, he

among the tritons of the East, a rich man. It began to be said, among these shrewd observers, that Jem Carker, of Dombey's, was looking about him to see what he was worth; and that he was calling in his money at a good time, like the long-headed fellow he was; and bets were even offered on the Stock Exchange that Jem was going to marry a rich widow.

Yet these cares did not in the least interfere with Mr. Carker's watching of his chief, or with his cleanness, neatness, sleekness, or any cat-like quality he possessed. It was not so much that there was a change in him, in reference to any of his habits, as that the whole man was intensified. Everything that had been observable in him before, was observable now, but with a greater amount of concentration. He did each single thing, as if he did nothing else—a pretty certain indication in a man of that range of ability and purpose, that he is doing something which sharpens and keeps alive his keenest powers.

NOTICE.

The Publishers beg to announce that in consequence of the occupation of Mr. DICKENS's time with the story on which he is at present engaged, and which is now in course of publication, **no Christmas Book** by **Mr. Dickens** will be published this year, but that it is purposed to **resume the series in December 1848.**

1st December, 1847.

CHAPTER XLVI.

RECOGNIZANT AND REFLECTIVE.

AMONG sundry minor alterations in Mr. Carker's life and habits that began to take place at this time, none was more remarkable than the extraordinary diligence with which he applied himself to business, and the closeness with which he investigated every detail that the affairs of the House laid open to him. Always active and penetrating in such matters, his lynx-eyed vigilance now increased twenty-fold. Not only did his wary watch keep pace with every present point that every day presented to him in some new form, but in the midst of these engrossing occupations he found leisure—that is, he made it—to review the past transactions of the Firm, and his share in them, during a long series of years. Frequently when the clerks were all gone, the offices dark and empty, and all similar places of business shut up, Mr. Carker, with the whole anatomy of the iron room laid bare before him, would explore the mysteries of books and papers, with the patient progress of a man who was dissecting the minutest nerves and fibres of his subject. Perch, the messenger, who usually remained on these occasions, to entertain himself with the perusal of the Price Current by the light of one candle, or to doze over the fire in the outer office, at the imminent risk every moment of diving head foremost into the coal box, could not withhold the tribute of his admiration from this zealous conduct, although it much contracted his domestic enjoyments; and again, and again, expatiated to Mrs. Perch (now nursing twins) on the industry and acuteness of their managing gentleman in the City.

The same increased and sharp attention that Mr. Carker bestowed on the business of the House, he applied to his own personal affairs. Though not a partner in the concern—a distinction hitherto reserved solely to inheritors of the great name of Dombey—he was in the receipt of some per centage on its dealings; and, participating in all its facilities for the employment of money to advantage, was considered, by the minnows among the tritons of the East, a rich man. It began to be said, among these shrewd observers, that Jem Carker, of Dombey's, was looking about him to see what he was worth; and that he was calling in his money at a good time, like the long-headed fellow he was; and bets were even offered on the Stock Exchange that Jem was going to marry a rich widow.

Yet these cares did not in the least interfere with Mr. Carker's watching of his chief, or with his cleanness, neatness, sleekness, or any cat-like quality he possessed. It was not so much that there was a change in him, in reference to any of his habits, as that the whole man was intensified. Everything that had been observable in him before, was observable now, but with a greater amount of concentration. He did each single thing, as if he did nothing else—a pretty certain indication in a man of that range of ability and purpose, that he is doing something which sharpens and keeps alive his keenest powers.

The only decided alteration in him, was, that as he rode to and fro along the streets, he would fall into deep fits of musing, like that in which he had come away from Mr. Dombey's house, on the morning of that gentleman's disaster. At such times, he would keep clear of the obstacles in his way, mechanically; and would appear to see and hear nothing until arrival at his destination, or some sudden chance or effort roused him.

Walking his white-legged horse thus, to the counting-house of Dombey and Son one day, he was as unconscious of the observation of two pairs of women's eyes, as of the fascinated orbs of Rob the Grinder, who, in waiting a street's length from the appointed place, as a demonstration of punctuality, vainly touched and retouched his hat to attract attention, and trotted along on foot, by his master's side, prepared to hold his stirrup when he should alight.

"See where he goes!" cried one of these two women, an old creature, who stretched out her shrivelled arm to point him out to her companion, a young woman, who stood close beside her, withdrawn like herself into a gateway.

Mrs. Brown's daughter looked out, at this bidding on the part of Mrs. Brown; and there were wrath and vengeance in her face.

"I never thought to look at him again," she said, in a low voice; "but it's well I should, perhaps. I see. I see!"

"Not changed!" said the old woman, with a look of eager malice.

"He changed!" returned the other. "What for? What has *he* suffered? There is change enough for twenty in me. Isn't that enough?"

"See where he goes!" muttered the old woman, watching her daughter with her red eyes; "so easy, and so trim, a' horseback, while we are in the mud—"

"And of it," said her daughter, impatiently. "We are mud, underneath his horse's feet. What should we be?"

In the intentness with which she looked after him again, she made a hasty gesture with her hand when the old woman began to reply, as if her view could be obstructed by mere sound. Her mother watching her, and not him, remained silent; until her kindling glance subsided, and she drew a long breath, as if in the relief of his being gone.

"Deary!" said the old woman then. "Alice! Handsome gal! Ally!" She gently shook her sleeve to arouse her attention. "Will you let him go like that, when you can wring money from him. Why, it's a wickedness, my daughter."

"Haven't I told you, that I will not have money from him?" she returned. "And don't you yet believe me? Did I take his sister's money? Would I touch a penny, if I knew it, that had gone through his white hands—unless, it was, indeed, that I could poison it, and send it back to him? Peace, mother, and come away."

"And him so rich?" murmured the old woman. "And us so poor!"

"Poor in not being able to pay him any of the harm we owe him," returned her daughter. "Let him give me that sort of riches, and I'll take them from him, and use them. Come away. It's no good looking at his horse. Come away, mother!"

But the old woman, for whom the spectacle of Rob the Grinder returning down the street, leading the riderless horse, appeared to have some extraneous interest that it did not possess in itself, surveyed that

young man with the utmost earnestness; and seeming to have whatever doubts she entertained, resolved as he drew nearer, glanced at her daughter with brightened eyes and with her finger on her lip, and emerging from the gateway at the moment of his passing, touched him on the shoulder.

"Why, where's my sprightly Rob been, all this time!" she said, as he turned round.

The sprightly Rob, whose sprightliness was very much diminished by the salutation, looked exceedingly dismayed, and said, with the water rising in his eyes:

"Oh! why can't you leave a poor cove alone, Misses Brown, when he's getting an honest livelihood and conducting himself respectable? What do you come and deprive a cove of his character for, by talking to him in the streets, when he's taking his master's horse to a honest stable—a horse you'd go and sell for cats' and dogs' meat if you had *your* way! Why, I thought," said the Grinder, producing his concluding remark as if it were the climax of all his injuries, "that you was dead long ago!"

"This is the way," cried the old woman, appealing to her daughter, "that he talks to me, who knew him weeks and months together, my deary, and have stood his friend many and many a time among the pigeon-fancying tramps and bird-catchers."

"Let the birds be, will you Misses Brown?" retorted Rob, in a tone of the acutest anguish. "I think a cove had better have to do with lions than them little creeturs, for they're always flying back in your face when you least expect it. Well, how dy'e do and what do you want!" These polite inquiries the Grinder uttered, as it were under protest, and with great exasperation and vindictiveness.

"Hark how he speaks to an old friend, my deary!" said Mrs. Brown, again appealing to her daughter. "But there's some of his old friends not so patient as me. If I was to tell some that he knows, and has sported and cheated with, where to find him—"

"Will you hold your tongue, Misses Brown?" interrupted the miserable Grinder, glancing quickly round, as though he expected to see his master's teeth shining at his elbow. "What do you take a pleasure in ruining a cove for? At your time of life too! when you ought to be thinking of a variety of things!"

"What a gallant horse!" said the old woman, patting the animal's neck.

"Let him alone, will you Misses Brown?" cried Rob, pushing away her hand. "You're enough to drive a penitent cove mad!"

"Why, what hurt do I do him, child?" returned the old woman.

"Hurt?" said Rob. "He's got a master that would find it out if he was touched with a straw." And he blew upon the place where the old woman's hand had rested for a moment, and smoothed it gently with his finger, as if he seriously believed what he said.

The old woman looking back to mumble and mumble at her daughter, who followed, kept close to Rob's heels as he walked on with the bridle in his hand; and pursued the conversation.

"A good place, Rob, eh?" said she. "You're in luck, my child."

"Oh don't talk about luck, Misses Brown," returned the wretched Grinder, facing round and stopping. "If you'd never come, or if you'd go away, then indeed a cove might be considered tolerable lucky. Can't

you go along Misses Brown, and not foller me!" blubbered Rob, with sudden defiance. "If the young woman's a friend of yours, why don't she take you away, instead of letting you make yourself so disgraceful!"

"What!" croaked the old woman, putting her face close to his, with a malevolent grin upon it that puckered up the loose skin down in her very throat. "Do you deny your old chum! Have you lurked to my house fifty times, and slept sound in a corner when you had no other bed but the paving-stones, and do you talk to *me* like this! Have I bought and sold with you, and helped you in my way of business, schoolboy, sneak, and what not, and do you tell *me* to go along? Could I raise a crowd of old company about you to-morrow morning, that would follow you to ruin like copies of your own shadow, and do you turn on *me* with your bold looks! I'll go. Come Alice."

"Stop, Misses Brown!" cried the distracted Grinder. "What are you doing of? Don't put yourself in a passion! Don't let her go, if you please. I haven't meant any offence. I said 'how d'ye do,' at first, didn't I? But you wouldn't answer. How *do* you do? Besides," said Rob piteously, "look here! How can a cove stand talking in the street with his master's prad a wanting to be took to be rubbed down, and his master up to every individle thing that happens!"

The old woman made a show of being partially appeased, but shook her head, and mouthed and muttered still.

"Come along to the stables, and have a glass of something that's good for you, Misses Brown, can't you?" said Rob, "instead of going on, like that, which is no good to you, nor anybody else? Come along with her, will you be so kind?" said Rob. "I'm sure I'm delighted to see her, if it wasn't for the horse!"

With this apology, Rob turned away, a rueful picture of despair, and walked his charge down a bye street. The old woman, mouthing at her daughter, followed close upon him. The daughter followed.

Turning into a silent little square or court yard that had a great church tower rising above it, and a packer's warehouse, and a bottle-maker's warehouse, for its places of business, Rob the Grinder delivered the white-legged horse to the hostler of a quaint stable at the corner; and inviting Mrs. Brown and her daughter to seat themselves upon a stone bench at the gate of that establishment, soon reappeared from a neighbouring public-house with a pewter measure and a glass.

"Here's master—Mr. Carker, child!" said the old woman, slowly, as her sentiment before drinking. "Lord bless him!"

"Why, I didn't tell you who he was," observed Rob, with staring eyes.

"We know him by sight," said Mrs. Brown, whose working mouth and nodding head, stopped for the moment, in the fixedness of her attention. "We saw him pass this morning, afore he got off his horse; when you were ready to take it."

"Aye, aye?" returned Rob, appearing to wish that his readiness had carried him to any other place.—"What's the matter with her? Won't she drink?"

This inquiry had reference to Alice, who, folded in her cloak, sat a little apart, profoundly inattentive to his offer of the replenished glass.

The old woman shook her head. "Don't mind her," she said; "she's a strange creetur, if you know'd her, Rob. But Mr. Carker—"

"Hush!" said Rob, glancing cautiously up at the packer's, and at the bottle-maker's, as if, from any one of the tiers of warehouses, Mr. Carker might be looking down. "Softly."

"Why, he ain't here!" cried Mrs. Brown.

"I don't know that," muttered Rob, whose glance even wandered to the church tower, as if he might be there, with a supernatural power of hearing.

"Good master?" inquired Mrs. Brown.

Rob nodded; and added, in a low voice, "precious sharp."

"Lives out of town, don't he, lovey?" said the old woman.

"When he's at home," returned Rob; "but we don't live at home just now."

"Where then?" asked the old woman.

"Lodgings; up near Mr. Dombey's," returned Rob.

The younger woman fixed her eyes so searchingly upon him, and so suddenly, that Rob was quite confounded, and offered the glass again, but with no more effect upon her than before.

"Mr. Dombey—you and I used to talk about him, sometimes, you know," said Rob to Mrs. Brown. "You used to get me to talk about him."

The old woman nodded.

"Well, Mr. Dombey, he's had a fall from his horse," said Rob, unwillingly; "and my master has to be up there, more than usual, either with him, or Mrs. Dombey, or some of 'em; and so we've come to town."

"Are they good friends, lovey?" asked the old woman.

"Who?" retorted Rob.

"He and she?"

"What, Mr. and Mrs. Dombey?" said Rob. "How should I know!"

"Not them—Master and Mrs. Dombey, chick," replied the old woman, coaxingly.

"I don't know," said Rob, looking round him again. "I suppose so. How curious you are, Misses Brown! Least said, soonest mended."

"Why, there's no harm in it!" exclaimed the old woman, with a laugh, and a clap of her hands. "Sprightly Rob has grown tame since he has been well off! There's no harm in it."

"No, there's no harm in it, I know," returned Rob, with the same distrustful glance at the packer's and the bottle-maker's, and the church; "but blabbing, if it's only about the number of buttons on my master's coat, won't do. I tell you it won't do with him. A cove had better drown himself. He says so. I shouldn't have so much as told you that his name was, if you hadn't known it. Talk about somebody else."

As Rob took another cautious survey of the yard, the old woman made a secret motion to her daughter. It was momentary, but the daughter, with a slight look of intelligence, withdrew her eyes from the boy's face, and sat folded in her cloak as before.

"Rob, lovey!" said the old woman, beckoning him to the other end of the bench. "You were always a pet and favourite of mine. Now, weren't you? Don't you know you were?"

"Yes, Misses Brown," replied the Grinder, with a very bad grace.

"And you could leave me!" said the old woman, flinging her arms about his neck. "You could go away, and grow almost out of knowledge, and never come to tell your poor old friend how fortunate you were, proud lad! Oho Oho!"

"Oh here's a dreadful go for a cove that's got a master wide awake in the neighbourhood!" exclaimed the wretched Grinder. "To be howled over like this here!"

"Won't you come and see me, Robby!" cried Mrs. Brown. "Oho, won't you ever come and see me?"

"Yes, I tell you! Yes, I will!" returned the Grinder.

"That's my own Rob! That's my lovey!" said Mrs. Brown, drying the tears upon her shrivelled face, and giving him a tender squeeze.

"At the old place, Rob?"

"Yes," replied the Grinder.

"Soon, Robby dear?" cried Mrs. Brown; "and often?"

"Yes. Yes. Yes," replied Rob. "I will indeed, upon my soul and body."

"And then," said Mrs. Brown, with her arms uplifted towards the sky, and her head thrown back and shaking, "if he's true to his word, I'll never come a-near him, though I know where he is, and never breathe a syllable about him! Never!"

This ejaculation seemed a drop of comfort to the miserable Grinder, who shook Mrs. Brown by the hand upon it, and implored her, with tears in his eyes, to leave a cove and not destroy his prospects. Mrs. Brown, with another fond embrace, assented; but in the act of following her daughter, turned back, with her finger stealthily raised, and asked in a hoarse whisper for some money.

"A shilling, dear!" she said, with her eager, avaricious face, "or sixpence! For old acquaintance sake. I'm so poor. And my handsome gal"—looking over her shoulder—"she's my gal, Rob—half starves me."

But as the reluctant Grinder put it in her hand, her daughter, coming quietly back, caught the hand in hers, and twisted out the coin.

"What," she said, "mother! always money! money from the first, and to the last. Do you mind so little what I said but now? Here. Take it!"

The old woman uttered a moan as the money was restored, but without in any other way opposing its restoration, hobbled at her daughter's side out of the yard, and along the bye street upon which it opened. The astonished and dismayed Rob staring after them, saw that they stopped, and fell to earnest conversation very soon; and more than once observed a darkly threatening action of the younger woman's hand (obviously having reference to some one of whom they spoke), and a crooning feeble imitation of it on the part of Mrs. Brown, that made him earnestly hope he might not be the subject of their discourse.

With the present consolation that they were gone, and with the prospective comfort that Mrs. Brown could not live for ever, and was not likely to live long to trouble him, the Grinder, not otherwise regretting his misdeeds than as they were attended with such disagreeable incidental consequences, composed his ruffled features to a more serene expression by thinking of the admirable manner in which he had disposed of Captain Cuttle (a reflection that seldom failed to put him in a flow of spirits), and went to the Dombey Counting House to receive his master's orders.

There, his master, so subtle and vigilant of eye, that Rob quaked before him, more than half expecting to be taxed with Mrs. Brown, gave him

the usual morning's box of papers for Mr. Dombey, and a note for Mrs. Dombey: merely nodding his head as an enjoiner to be careful, and to use dispatch—a mysterious admonition, fraught in the Grinder's imagination with dismal warnings and threats; and more powerful with him than any words.

Alone again, in his own room, Mr. Carker applied himself to work, and worked all day. He saw many visitors; overlooked a number of documents; went in and out, to and from, sundry places of mercantile resort; and indulged in no more abstraction until the day's business was done. But, when the usual clearance of papers from his table was made at last, he fell into his thoughtful mood once more.

He was standing in his accustomed place and attitude, with his eyes intently fixed upon the ground, when his brother entered to bring back some letters that had been taken out in the course of the day. He put them quietly on the table, and was going immediately, when Mr. Carker the manager, whose eyes had rested on him, on his entrance, as if they had all this time had him for the subject of their contemplation, instead of the office-floor, said:

“Well, John Carker, and what brings *you* here?”

His brother pointed to the letters, and was again withdrawing.

“I wonder,” said the Manager, “that you can come and go, without inquiring how our master is.”

“We had word this morning, in the counting-house, that Mr. Dombey was doing well,” replied his brother.

“You are such a meek fellow,” said the Manager, with a smile, “—but you have grown so, in the course of years—that if any harm came to him, you'd be miserable, I dare swear now.”

“I should be truly sorry, James,” returned the other.

“He would be sorry!” said the Manager, pointing at him, as if there were some other person present to whom he was appealing. “He would be truly sorry! This brother of mine! This junior of the place, this slighted piece of lumber, pushed aside with his face to the wall, like a rotten picture, and left so, for Heaven knows how many years; *he's* all gratitude and respect, and devotion too, he would have me believe!”

“I would have you believe nothing, James,” returned the other. “Be as just to me as you would to any other man below you. You ask a question, and I answer it.”

“And have you nothing, Spaniel,” said the Manager, with unusual irascibility, “to complain of in him? No proud treatment to resent, no insolence, no foolery of state, no exaction of any sort! What the devil! are you man or mouse?”

“It would be strange if any two persons could be together for so many years, especially as superior and inferior, without each having something to complain of in the other—as he thought, at all events,” replied John Carker. “But apart from my history here——”

“His history here!” exclaimed the Manager. “Why, there it is. The very fact that makes him an extreme case, puts him out of the whole chapter! Well?”

“Apart from that, which, as you hint, gives me a reason to be thankful that I alone (happily for all the rest) possess, surely there is no one in the house who would not say and feel at least as much. You do not

think that any body here, would be indifferent to a mischance or misfortune happening to the head of the House, or anything than truly sorry for it?"

"You have good reason to be bound to him too!" said the Manager, contemptuously. "Why, don't you believe that you are kept here, as a cheap example, and a famous instance of the clemency of Dombey and Son, redounding to the credit of the illustrious House?"

"No," replied his brother, mildly, "I have long believed that I am kept here for more kind and disinterested reasons."

"But you were going," said the Manager, with the snarl of a tiger-cat, "to recite some Christian precept, I observed."

"Nay, James," returned the other, "though the tie of brotherhood between us has been long broken and thrown away——"

"Who broke it, good Sir?" said the Manager.

"I, by my misconduct. I do not charge it upon you."

The Manager replied, with that mute action of his bristling mouth, "Oh, you don't charge it upon me!" and bade him go on.

"I say, though there is not that tie between us, do not, I entreat, assail me with unnecessary taunts, or misinterpret what I say, or would say. I was only going to suggest to you that it would be a mistake to suppose that it is only you, who have been selected here, above all others, for advancement, confidence, and distinction (selected, in the beginning, I know, for your great ability and trustfulness), and who communicate more freely with Mr. Dombey than any one, and stand, it may be said, on equal terms with him, and have been favoured and enriched by him—that it would be a mistake to suppose that it is only you who are tender of his welfare and reputation. There is no one in the House, from yourself down to the lowest, I sincerely believe, who does not participate in that feeling."

"You lie!" said the Manager, red with sudden anger. "You're a hypocrite, John Carker, and you lie!"

"James!" cried the other, flushing in his turn. "What do you mean by these insulting words? Why do you so basely use them to me, unprovoked?"

"I tell you," said the Manager, "that your hypocrisy and meekness—that all the hypocrisy and meekness of this place—is not worth *that* to me," snapping his thumb and finger, "and that I see through it as if it were air! There is not a man employed here, standing between myself and the lowest in place (of whom you are very considerate, and with reason, for he is not far off), who wouldn't be glad at heart to see his master humbled: who does not hate him, secretly: who does not wish him evil rather than good: and who would not turn upon him, if he had the power and boldness. The nearer to his favour, the nearer to his insolence; the closer to him, the farther from him. That's the creed here!"

"I don't know," said his brother, whose roused feelings had soon yielded to surprise, "who may have abused your ear with such representations; or why you have chosen to try me, rather than another. But that you have been trying me, and tampering with me, I am now sure. You have a different manner and a different aspect from any that I ever saw in you. I will only say to you, once more, you are deceived."

"I know I am," said the Manager. "I have told you so."

"Not by me," returned his brother. "By your informant, if you have one. If not, by your own thoughts and suspicions."

"I have no suspicions," said the Manager. "Mine are certainties. You pusillanimous, abject, cringing dogs! All making the same show, all canting the same story, all whining the same professions, all harbouring the same transparent secret."

His brother withdrew, without saying more, and shut the door as he concluded. Mr. Carker the manager drew a chair close before the fire, and fell to beating the coals softly with the poker.

"The faint-hearted, fawning knaves," he muttered, with his two shining rows of teeth laid bare. "There's not one among them, who wouldn't feign to be so shocked and outraged —! Bah! There's not one among them, but if he had at once the power, and the wit and daring to use it, would scatter Dombey's pride and lay it low, as ruthlessly as I rake out these ashes."

As he broke them up and strewed them in the grate, he looked on with a thoughtful smile, at what he was doing. "Without the same queen beckoner too!" he added presently; "and there is pride there, not to be forgotten—witness our own acquaintance!" With that he fell into a deeper reverie, and sat pondering over the blackening grate, until he rose up like a man who had been absorbed in a book, and looking round him took his hat and gloves, went to where his horse was waiting, mounted, and rode away through the lighted streets; for it was evening.

He rode near Mr. Dombey's house; and falling into a walk as he approached it, looked up at the windows. The window where he had once seen Florence sitting with her dog, attracted his attention first, though there was no light in it; but he smiled as he carried his eyes up the tall front of the house, and seemed to leave that object superciliously behind.

"Time was," he said, "when it was well to watch even your rising little star, and know in what quarter there were clouds, to shadow you if needful. But a planet has arisen, and you are lost in its light."

He turned the white-legged horse, round the street-corner, and sought one shining window from among those at the back of the house. Associated with it was a certain stately presence, a gloved hand, the remembrance how the feathers of a beautiful bird's wing had been showered down upon the floor, and how the light white down upon a robe had stirred and rustled, as in the rising of a distant storm. These were the things he carried with him as he turned away again, and rode through the darkening and deserted Parks at a quick rate.

In fatal truth, these were associated with a woman, a proud woman, who hated him, but who by slow and sure degrees had been led on by his craft, and her pride and resentment, to endure his company, and little by little to receive him as one who had the privilege to talk to her of her own defiant disregard of her own husband, and her abandonment of high consideration for herself. They were associated with a woman who hated him deeply, and who knew him, and who mistrusted him because she knew him, and because he knew her; but who fed her fierce resentment by suffering him to draw nearer and yet nearer to her every day, in spite of the hate she cherished for him. In spite of it! For that very reason; since in its depths, too far down for her threatening eye to pierce, though she could see into them dimly, lay the dark retaliation, whose faintest

shadow seen once and shuddered at, and never seen again, would have been sufficient stain upon her soul.

Did the phantom of such a woman flit about him on his ride; true to the reality, and obvious to him?

Yes. He saw her in his mind, exactly as she was. She bore him company with her pride, resentment, hatred, all as plain to him as her beauty; with nothing plainer to him than her hatred of him. He saw her sometimes haughty and repellent at his side, and sometimes down among his horse's feet, fallen and in the dust. But he always saw her as she was, without disguise, and watched her on the dangerous way that she was going.

And when his ride was over, and he was newly dressed, and came into the light of her bright room with his bent head, soft voice, and soothing smile, he saw her yet as plainly. He even suspected the mystery of the gloved hand, and held it all the longer in his own for that suspicion. Upon the dangerous way that she was going, he was, still; and not a footprint did she mark upon it, but he set his own there, straight.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE THUNDERBOLT.

THE barrier between Mr. Dombey and his wife, was not weakened by time. Ill-assorted couple, unhappy in themselves and in each other, bound together by no tie but the manacle that joined their fettered hands, and straining that so harshly, in their shrinking asunder, that it wore and chafed to the bone, Time, consoler of affliction and softener of anger, could do nothing to help them. Their pride, however different in kind and object, was equal in degree; and, in their flinty opposition, struck out fire between them which might smoulder or might blaze, as circumstances were, but burned up everything within their mutual reach, and made their marriage way a road of ashes.

Let us be just to him. In the monstrous delusion of his life, swelling with every grain of sand that shifted in its glass, he urged her on, he little thought to what, or considered how; but still his feeling towards her, such as it was, remained as at first. She had the grand demerit of unaccountably putting herself in opposition to the recognition of his vast importance, and to the acknowledgment of her complete submission to it, and so far it was necessary to correct and reduce her; but otherwise he still considered her, in his cold way, a lady capable of doing honour, if she would, to his choice and name, and of reflecting credit on his proprietorship.

Now, she, with all her might of passionate and proud resentment, bent her dark glance from day to day, and hour to hour—from that night in her own chamber, when she had sat gazing at the shadows on the wall, to the deeper night fast coming—upon one figure directing a crowd of humiliations and exasperations against her; and that figure, still her husband's.

Was Mr. Dombey's master-vice, that ruled him so inexorably, an

unnatural characteristic? It might be worth while, sometimes, to inquire what Nature is, and how men work to change her, and whether, in the enforced distortions so produced, it is not natural to be unnatural. Coop any son or daughter of our mighty mother within narrow range, and bind the prisoner to one idea, and foster it by servile worship of it on the part of the few timid or designing people standing round, and what is Nature to the willing captive who has never risen up upon the wings of a free mind—drooping and useless soon—to see her in her comprehensive truth!

Alas! are there so few things in the world about us, most unnatural, and yet most natural in being so! Hear the magistrate or judge admonish the unnatural outcasts of society; unnatural in brutal habits, unnatural in want of decency, unnatural in losing and confounding all distinctions between good and evil; unnatural in ignorance, in vice, in recklessness, in contumacy, in mind, in looks, in everything. But follow the good clergyman or doctor, who, with his life imperilled at every breath he draws, goes down into their dens, lying within the echoes of our carriage wheels and daily tread upon the pavement stones. Look round upon the world of odious sights—millions of immortal creatures have no other world on earth—at the lightest mention of which humanity revolts, and dainty delicacy living in the next street, stops her ears, and lisps “I don’t believe it!” Breathe the polluted air, foul with every impurity that is poisonous to health and life; and have every sense, conferred upon our race for its delight and happiness, offended, sickened and disgusted, and made a channel by which misery and death alone can enter. Vainly attempt to think of any simple plant, or flower, or wholesome weed, that, set in this fetid bed, could have its natural growth, or put its little leaves forth to the sun as God designed it. And then, calling up some ghastly child, with stunted form and wicked face, hold forth on its unnatural sinfulness, and lament its being, so early, far away from Heaven—but think a little of its having been conceived, and born, and bred, in Hell!

Those who study the physical sciences, and bring them to bear upon the health of Man, tell us that if the noxious particles that rise from vitiated air, were palpable to the sight, we should see them lowering in a dense black cloud above such haunts, and rolling slowly on to corrupt the better portions of a town. But if the moral pestilence that rises with them, and, in the eternal laws of outraged Nature, is inseparable from them, could be made discernible too, how terrible the revelation! Then should we see depravity, impiety, drunkenness, theft, murder, and a long train of nameless sins against the natural affections and repulsions of mankind, overhanging the devoted spots, and creeping on, to blight the innocent and spread contagion among the pure. Then should we see how the same poisoned fountains that flow into our hospitals and lazar-houses, inundate the jails, and make the convict-ships swim deep, and roll across the seas, and over-run vast continents with crime. Then should we stand appalled to know, that where we generate disease to strike our children down and entail itself on unborn generations, there also we breed, by the same certain process infancy that knows no innocence, youth without modesty or shame, maturity that is mature in nothing but in suffering and guilt, blasted old age that is a scandal on the form we bear. Unnatural humanity! When we shall gather grapes from thorns, and figs from

thistles; when fields of grain shall spring up from the offal in the by ways of our wicked cities, and roses bloom in the fat churchyards that they cherish; then we may look for natural humanity, and find it growing from such seed.

Oh for a good spirit who would take the house-tops off, with a more potent and benignant hand than the lame demon in the tale, and show a Christian people what dark shapes issue from amidst their homes, to swell the retinue of the Destroying Angel as he moves forth among them! For only one night's view of the pale phantoms rising from the scenes of our too-long neglect; and, from the thick and sullen air where Vice and Fever propagate together, raining the tremendous social retributions which are ever pouring down, and ever coming thicker! Bright and blest the morning that should rise on such a night: for men, delayed no more by stumbling-blocks of their own making, which are but specks of dust upon the path between them and eternity, would then apply themselves, like creatures of one common origin, owning one duty to the Father of one family, and tending to one common end, to make the world a better place!

Not the less bright and blest would that day be for rousing some who never have looked out upon the world of human life around them, to a knowledge of their own relation to it, and for making them acquainted with a perversion of nature in their own contracted sympathies and estimates; as great, and yet as natural in its development when once begun, as the lowest degradation known.

But no such day had ever dawned on Mr. Dombey, or his wife; and the course of each was taken.

Through six months that ensued upon his accident, they held the same relations one towards the other. A marble rock could not have stood more obdurately in his way than she; and no chilled spring, lying uncheered by any ray of light in the depths of a deep cave, could be more sullen or more cold than he.

The hope that had fluttered within her when the promise of her new home dawned, was quite gone from the heart of Florence now. That home was nearly two years old; and even the patient trust that was in her, could not survive the daily blight of such experience. If she had any lingering fancy in the nature of hope left, that Edith and her father might be happier together, in some distant time, she had none, now, that her father would ever love her. The little interval in which she had imagined that she saw some small relenting in him, was forgotten in the long remembrance of his coldness since and before, or only remembered as a sorrowful delusion.

Florence loved him still, but, by degrees, had come to love him rather as some dear one who had been, or who might have been, than as the hard reality before her eyes. Something of the softened sadness with which she loved the memory of little Paul, or of her mother, seemed to enter now into her thoughts of him, and to make them, as it were, a dear remembrance. Whether it was that he was dead to her, and that partly for this reason, partly for his share in those old objects of her affection, and partly for the long association of him with hopes that were withered and tendernesses he had frozen, she could not have told; but the father whom she loved began to be a vague and dreamy idea to her:

hardly more substantially connected with her real life, than the image she would sometimes conjure up, of her dear brother yet alive, and growing to be a man, who would protect and cherish her.

The change, if it may be called one, had stolen on her like the change from childhood to womanhood, and had come with it. Florence was almost seventeen, when, in her lonely musings, she was conscious of these thoughts.

She was often alone now, for the old association between her and her mamma was greatly changed. At the time of her father's accident, and when he was lying in his room down-stairs, Florence had first observed that Edith avoided her. Wounded and shocked, and yet unable to reconcile this with her affection when they did meet, she sought her in her own room at night, once more.

"Mamma," said Florence, stealing softly to her side, "have I offended you?"

Edith answered "No."

"I must have done something," said Florence. "Tell me what it is. You have changed your manner to me, dear Mamma. I cannot say how instantly I feel the least change; for I love you with my whole heart."

"As I do you," said Edith. "Ah, Florence, believe me never more than now!"

"Why do you go away from me so often, and keep away?" asked Florence. "And why do you sometimes look so strangely on me, dear Mamma? You do so, do you not?"

Edith signified assent with her dark eyes.

"Why," returned Florence imploringly. "Tell me why, that I may know how to please you better; and tell me this shall not be so any more."

"My Florence," answered Edith, taking the hand that embraced her neck, and looking into the eyes that looked into hers so lovingly, as Florence knelt upon the ground before her; "why it is, I cannot tell you. It is neither for me to say, nor you to hear; but that it is, and that it must be, I know. Should I do it if I did not?"

"Are *we* to be estranged, Mamma?" asked Florence, gazing at her like one frightened.

Edith's silent lips formed "Yes."

Florence looked at her with increasing fear and wonder, until she could see her no more through the blinding tears that ran down her face.

"Florence! my life!" said Edith, hurriedly, "listen to me. I cannot bear to see this grief. Be calmer. You see that I am composed, and is it nothing to me?"

She resumed her steady voice and manner as she said the latter words, and added presently:

"Not wholly estranged. Partially: and only that, in appearance, Florence, for in my own breast I am still the same to you, and ever will be. But what I do is not done for myself."

"Is it for me, Mamma?" asked Florence.

"It is enough," said Edith, after a pause, "to know what it is; why, matters little. Dear Florence, it is better—it is necessary—it must be—that our association should be less frequent. The confidence there has been between us must be broken off."

"When?" cried Florence. "Oh, Mamma, when?"

"Now," said Edith.

"For all time to come?" asked Florence.

"I do not say that," answered Edith. "I do not know that. Nor will I say that companionship between us, is, at the best, an ill-assorted and unholy union, of which I might have known no good could come. My way here has been through paths that you will never tread, and my way henceforth may lie—God knows—I do not see it—"

Her voice died away into silence; and she sat, looking at Florence, and almost shrinking from her, with the same strange dread and wild avoidance that Florence had noticed once before. The same dark pride and rage succeeded, sweeping over her form and features like an angry chord across the strings of a wild harp. But no softness or humility ensued on that. She did not lay her head down now, and weep, and say that she had no hope but in Florence. She held it up as if she were a beautiful Medusa, looking on him, face to face, to strike him dead. Yes, and she would have done it, if she had had the charm.

"Mamma," said Florence anxiously, "there is a change in you, in more than what you say to me, which alarms me. Let me stay with you a little."

"No," said Edith, "no, dearest. I am best left alone now, and I do best to keep apart from you, of all else. Ask me no questions, but believe that what I am when I seem fickle or capricious to you, I am not of my own will, or for myself. Believe, though we are stranger to each other than we have been, that I am unchanged to you within. Forgive me for having ever darkened your dark home—I am a shadow on it, I know well—and let us never speak of this again."

"Mamma," sobbed Florence, "we are not to part?"

"We do this that we may not part," said Edith. "Ask no more. Go Florence! My love and my remorse go with you!"

She embraced her, and dismissed her; and as Florence passed out of her room, Edith looked on the retiring figure, as if her good angel went out in that form, and left her to the haughty and indignant passions that now claimed her for their own, and set their seal upon her brow.

From that hour, Florence and she were, as they had been, no more. For days together, they would seldom meet, except at table, and when Mr. Dombey was present. Then Edith, imperious, inflexible, and silent, never looked at her. Whenever Mr. Carker was of the party, as he often was, during the progress of Mr. Dombey's recovery, and afterwards, Edith held herself more removed from her, and was more distant towards her, than at other times. Yet she and Florence never encountered, when there was no one by, but she would embrace her as affectionately as of old, though not with the same relenting of her proud aspect; and often, when she had been out late, she would steal up to Florence's room, as she had been used to do, in the dark, and whisper "Good Night," on her pillow. When unconscious, in her slumber, of such visits, Florence would sometimes awake, as from a dream of those words, softly spoken, and would seem to feel the touch of lips upon her face. But less and less often as the months went on.

And now the void in Florence's own heart began again, indeed, to make a solitude around her. As the image of the father whom she loved had insensibly become a mere abstraction, so Edith, following the

fate of all the rest about whom her affections had entwined themselves, was fleeting, fading, growing paler in the distance, every day. Little by little, she receded from Florence, like the retiring ghost of what she had been; little by little, the chasm between them widened and seemed deeper; little by little, all the power of earnestness and tenderness she had shown, was frozen up in the bold, angry hardihood with which she stood, upon the brink of a deep precipice unseen by Florence, daring to look down.

There was but one consideration to set against the heavy loss of Edith, and though it was slight comfort to her burdened heart, she tried to think it some relief. No longer divided between her affection and duty to the two, Florence could love both and do no injustice to either. As shadows of her fond imagination, she could give them equal place in her own bosom, and wrong them with no doubts.

So she tried to do. At times, and often too, wondering speculations on the cause of this change in Edith, would obtrude themselves upon her mind and frighten her; but in the calm of its abandonment once more to silent grief and loneliness, it was not a curious mind. Florence had only to remember that her star of promise was clouded in the general gloom that hung upon the house, and to weep and be resigned.

Thus living, in a dream wherein the overflowing love of her young heart expended itself on airy forms, and in a real world where she had experienced little but the rolling back of that strong tide upon itself, Florence grew to be seventeen. Timid and retiring as her solitary life had made her, it had not embittered her sweet temper, or her earnest nature. A child in innocent simplicity; a woman in her modest self-reliance, and her deep intensity of feeling; both child and woman seemed at once expressed in her fair face and fragile delicacy of shape, and gracefully to mingle there;—as if the spring should be unwilling to depart when summer came, and sought to blend the earlier beauties of the flowers with their bloom. But in her thrilling voice, in her calm eyes, sometimes in a strange ethereal light that seemed to rest upon her head, and always in a certain pensive air upon her beauty, there was an expression, such as had been seen in the dead boy; and the council in the Servants' Hall whispered so among themselves, and shook their heads, and ate and drank the more, in a closer bond of good-fellowship.

This observant body had plenty to say of Mr. and Mrs. Dombey, and of Mr. Carker, who appeared to be a mediator between them, and who came and went as if he were trying to make peace, but never could. They all deplored the uncomfortable state of affairs, and all agreed that Mrs. Pipchin (whose unpopularity was not to be surpassed) had some hand in it; but, upon the whole, it was agreeable to have so good a subject for a rallying point, and they made a great deal of it, and enjoyed themselves very much.

The general visitors who came to the house, and those among whom Mr. and Mrs. Dombey visited, thought it a pretty equal match, as to haughtiness, at all events, and thought nothing more about it. The young lady with the back did not appear for some time after Mrs. Skewton's death; observing to some particular friends, with her usual engaging little scream, that she couldn't separate the family from a notion of tombstones, and horrors of that sort; but when she did come, she saw nothing wrong, except Mr. Dombey's wearing a bunch of gold seals to

his watch, which shocked her very much, as an exploded superstition. This youthful fascinator considered a daughter-in-law objectionable in principle; otherwise, she had nothing to say against Florence, but that she sadly wanted "style"—which might mean back, perhaps. Many, who only came to the house on state occasions, hardly knew who Florence was, and said, going home, "Indeed! was *that* Miss Dombey, in the corner? Very pretty, but a little delicate and thoughtful in appearance?"

None the less so, certainly, for her life of the last six months, Florence took her seat at the dinner-table, on the day before the second anniversary of her father's marriage to Edith (Mrs. Skewton had been lying stricken with paralysis when the first came round), with an uneasiness, amounting to dread. She had no other warrant for it, than the occasion, the expression of her father's face, in the hasty glance she caught of it, and the presence of Mr. Carker, which, always unpleasant to her, was more so on this day, than she had ever felt it before.

Edith was richly dressed, for she and Mr. Dombey were engaged in the evening to some large assembly, and the dinner-hour that day was late. She did not appear until they were seated at table, when Mr. Carker rose and led her to her chair. Beautiful and lustrous as she was, there was that in her face and air which seemed to separate her hopelessly from Florence, and from every one, for ever more. And yet, for an instant, Florence saw a beam of kindness in her eyes, when they were turned on her, that made the distance to which she had withdrawn herself, a greater cause of sorrow and regret than ever.

There was very little said at dinner. Florence heard her father speak to Mr. Carker sometimes on business matters, and heard him softly reply, but she paid little attention to what they said, and only wished the dinner at an end. When the dessert was placed upon the table, and they were left alone, with no servant in attendance, Mr. Dombey, who had been several times clearing his throat in a manner that augured no good, said:

"Mrs. Dombey, you know, I suppose, that I have instructed the house-keeper that there will be some company to dinner here to-morrow."

"I do not dine at home," she answered.

"Not a large party," pursued Mr. Dombey, with an indifferent assumption of not having heard her; "merely some twelve or fourteen. My sister, Major Bagstock, and some others whom you know but slightly."

"I do not dine at home," she repeated.

"However doubtful reason I may have, Mrs. Dombey," said Mr. Dombey, still going majestically on, as if she had not spoken, "to hold the occasion in very pleasant remembrance just now, there are appearances in these things which must be maintained before the world. If you have no respect for yourself, Mrs. Dombey—"

"I have none," she said.

"Madam," cried Mr. Dombey, striking his hand upon the table, "hear me if you please. I say if you have no respect for yourself—"

"And I say I have none," she answered.

He looked at her; but the face she showed him in return would not have changed, if death itself had looked.

"Carker," said Mr. Dombey, turning more quietly to that gentleman, "as you have been my medium of communication with Mrs. Dombey on former occasions, and as I choose to preserve the decencies of life, so far as

I am individually concerned, I will trouble you to have the goodness to inform Mrs. Dombey that if she has no respect for herself, I have some respect for *myself*, and therefore insist on my arrangements for to-morrow."

"Tell your sovereign master, Sir," said Edith, "that I will take leave to speak to him on this subject by-and-bye, and that I will speak to him alone."

"Mr. Carker, Madam," said her husband, "being in possession of the reason which obliges me to refuse you that privilege, shall be absolved from the delivery of any such message." He saw her eyes move, while he spoke, and followed them with his own.

"Your daughter is present, Sir," said Edith.

"My daughter will remain present," said Mr. Dombey.

Florence, who had risen, sat down again, hiding her face in her hands, and trembling.

"My daughter, Madam"—began Mr. Dombey.

But Edith stopped him, in a voice which, although not raised in the least, was so clear, emphatic, and distinct, that it might have been heard in a whirlwind.

"I tell you I will speak to you alone," she said. "If you are not mad, heed what I say."

"I have authority to speak to you, Madam," returned her husband, "when and where I please; and it is my pleasure to speak here and now."

She rose up as if to leave the room; but sat down again, and looking at him with all outward composure, said, in the same voice:

"You shall!"

"I must tell you first, that there is a threatening appearance in your manner, Madam," said Mr. Dombey, "which does not become you."

She laughed. The shaken diamonds in her hair started and trembled. There are fables of precious stones that would turn pale, their wearer being in danger. Had these been such, their imprisoned rays of light would have taken flight that moment, and they would have been as dull as lead.

Carker listened, with his eyes cast down.

"As to my daughter, Madam," said Mr. Dombey, resuming the thread of his discourse, "it is by no means inconsistent with her duty to me, that she should know what conduct to avoid. At present you are a very strong example to her of this kind, and I hope she may profit by it."

"I would not stop you now," returned his wife, immoveable in eye, and voice, and attitude; "I would not rise and go away, and save you the utterance of one word, if the room were burning."

Mr. Dombey moved his head, as if in a sarcastic acknowledgment of the attention, and resumed. But not with so much self-possession as before; for Edith's quick uneasiness in reference to Florence, and Edith's indifference to him and his censure, chafed and galled him like a stiffening wound.

"Mrs. Dombey," said he, "it may not be inconsistent with my daughter's improvement to know how very much to be lamented, and how necessary to be corrected, a stubborn disposition is, especially when it is indulged in—unthankfully indulged in, I will add—after the gratification of ambition and interest. Both of which, I believe, had some share in inducing you to occupy your present station at this board."

"No! I would not rise, and go away, and save you the utterance of one word," she repeated, exactly as before, "if the room were burning."

"It may be natural enough, Mrs. Dombey," he pursued, "that you should be uneasy in the presence of any auditors of these disagreeable truths; though why—" he could not hide his real feeling here, or keep his eyes from glancing gloomily at Florence—"why any one can give them greater force and point than myself, whom they so nearly concern, I do not pretend to understand. It may be natural enough that you should object to hear, in any body's presence, that there is a rebellious principle within you which you cannot curb too soon; which you must curb, Mrs. Dombey; and which, I regret to say, I remember to have seen manifested—with some doubt and displeasure, on more than one occasion before our marriage—towards your deceased mother. But you have the remedy in your own hands. I by no means forgot, when I began, that my daughter was present, Mrs. Dombey. I beg *you* will not forget, to-morrow, that there are several persons present; and that, with some regard to appearances, you will receive your company in a becoming manner."

"So it is not enough," said Edith, "that you know what has passed between yourself and me; it is not enough that you can look here," pointing at Carker, who still listened, with his eyes cast down, "and be reminded of the affronts you have put upon me; it is not enough that you can look here," pointing to Florence with a hand that slightly trembled for the first and only time, "and think of what you have done, and of the ingenious agony, daily, hourly, constant, you have made me feel in doing it; it is not enough that this day, of all others in the year, is memorable to me for a struggle (well-deserved, but not conceivable by such as you) in which I wish I had died! You add to all this, do you, the last crowning meanness of making *her* a witness of the depth to which I have fallen; when you know that you have made me sacrifice to her peace, the only gentle feeling and interest of my life; when you know that for her sake, I would now if I could—but I *can not*, my soul recoils from you too much—submit myself wholly to your will, and be the meekest vassal that you have!"

This was not the way to minister to Mr. Dombey's greatness. The old feeling was roused by what she said, into a stronger and fiercer existence than it had ever had. Again, his neglected child, at this rough passage of his life, put forth by even this rebellious woman, as powerful where he was powerless, and everything where he was nothing!

He turned on Florence, as if it were she who had spoken, and bade her leave the room. Florence with her covered face obeyed, trembling and weeping as she went.

"I understand, Madam," said Mr. Dombey, with an angry flush of triumph, "the spirit of opposition that turned your affections in that channel, but they have been met, Mrs. Dombey; they have been met, and turned back!"

"The worse for you!" she answered, with her voice and manner still unchanged. "Aye!" for he turned sharply when she said so, "what is the worse for me, is twenty million times the worse for you. Heed that, if you heed nothing-else."

The arch of diamonds spanning her dark hair, flashed and glittered like a starry bridge. There was no warning in them, or they would have

turned as dull and dim as tarnished honour. Carker still sat and listened, with his eyes cast down.

"Mrs. Dombey," said Mr. Dombey, resuming as much as he could of his arrogant composure, "you will not conciliate me, or turn me from any purpose, by this course of conduct."

"It is the only true although it is a faint expression of what is within me," she replied. "But if I thought it would conciliate you, I would repress it, if it were repressible by any human effort. I will do nothing that you ask."

"I am not accustomed to ask, Mrs. Dombey," he observed; "I direct."

"I will hold no place in your house to-morrow, or on any recurrence of to-morrow. I will be exhibited to no one, as the refractory slave you purchased, such a time. If I kept my marriage-day, I would keep it as a day of shame. Self-respect! appearances before the world! what are these to me? You have done all you can to make them nothing to me, and they are nothing."

"Carker," said Mr. Dombey, speaking with knitted brows, and after a moment's consideration, "Mrs. Dombey is so forgetful of herself and me in all this, and places me in a position so unsuited to my character, that I must bring this state of matters to a close."

"Release me, then," said Edith, immovable in voice, in look, and bearing, as she had been throughout, "from the chain by which I am bound. Let me go."

"Madam?" exclaimed Mr. Dombey.

"Loose me. Set me free!"

"Madam?" he repeated, "Mrs. Dombey?"

"Tell him," said Edith, addressing her proud face to Carker, "that I wish for a separation between us. That there had better be one. That I recommend it to him. Tell him it may take place on his own terms—his wealth is nothing to me—but that it cannot be too soon."

"Good Heaven, Mrs. Dombey!" said her husband, with supreme amazement, "do you imagine it possible that I could ever listen to such a proposition? Do you know who I am, Madam? Do you know what I represent? Did you ever hear of Dombey and Son? People to say that Mr. Dombey—Mr. Dombey!—was separated from his wife! Common people to talk of Mr. Dombey and his domestic affairs! Do you seriously think, Mrs. Dombey, that I would permit my name to be handed about in such connexion? Pooh pooh, Madam! Fie for shame! You're absurd." Mr. Dombey absolutely laughed.

But not as she did. She had better have been dead than laugh as she did, in reply, with her intent look fixed upon him. He had better have been dead, than sitting there, in his magnificence, to hear her.

"No, Mrs. Dombey," he resumed, "No, Madam. There is no possibility of separation between you and me, and therefore I the more advise you to be awakened to a sense of duty. And, Carker, as I was about to say to you—"

Mr. Carker, who had sat and listened all this time, now raised his eyes, in which there was a bright, unusual light.

—"As I was about to say to you," resumed Mr. Dombey, "I must beg you, now that matters have come to this, to inform Mrs. Dombey, that it is not the rule of my life to allow myself to be thwarted by anybody—anybody, Carker—or to suffer anybody to be paraded as a stronger motive

for obedience in those who owe obedience to me than I am myself. The mention that has been made of my daughter, and the use that is made of my daughter, in opposition to me, are unnatural. Whether my daughter is in actual concert with Mrs. Dombey, I do not know, and do not care; but after what Mrs. Dombey has said to-day, and my daughter has heard to-day, I beg you to make known to Mrs. Dombey, that if she continues to make this house the scene of contention it has become, I shall consider my daughter responsible in some degree, on that lady's own avowal, and shall visit her with my severe displeasure. Mrs. Dombey has asked 'whether it is not enough,' that she has done this and that. You will please to answer no, it is not enough."

"A moment!" cried Carker, interposing, "permit me! painful as my position is, at the best, and unusually painful in seeming to entertain a different opinion from you," addressing Mr Dombey, "I must ask, had you not better re-consider the question of a separation. I know how incompatible it appears with your high public position, and I know how determined you are when you give Mrs. Dombey to understand"—the light in his eyes fell upon her as he separated his words each from each, with the distinctness of so many bells—"that nothing but death can ever part you. Nothing else. But when you consider that Mrs. Dombey, by living in this house, and making it as you have said, a scene of contention, not only has her part in that contention, but compromises Miss Dombey every day (for I know how determined you are), will you not relieve her from a continual irritation of spirit, and a continual sense of being unjust to another, almost intolerable? Does this not seem like—I do not say it is—sacrificing Mrs. Dombey to the preservation of your pre-eminent and unassailable position?"

Again the light in his eyes fell upon her, as she stood looking at her husband: now with an extraordinary and awful smile upon her face.

"Carker," returned Mr. Dombey, with a supercilious frown, and in a tone that was intended to be final, "you mistake your position in offering advice to me on such a point, and you mistake me (I am surprised to find) in the character of your advice. I have no more to say."

"Perhaps," said Carker, with an unusual and indefinable taunt in his air, "*you* mistook my position, when you honoured me with the negotiations in which I have been engaged here"—with a motion of his hand towards Mrs. Dombey.

"Not at all, Sir, not at all," returned the other, haughtily. "You were employed——"

"Being an inferior person, for the humiliation of Mrs. Dombey. I forgot. Oh, yes, it was expressly understood!" said Carker. "I beg your pardon!"

As he bent his head to Mr. Dombey, with an air of deference that accorded ill with his words, though they were humbly spoken, he moved it round towards her, and kept his watching eyes that way.

She had better have turned hideous and dropped dead, than have stood up with such a smile upon her face, in such a fallen spirit's majesty of scorn and beauty. She lifted her hand to the tiara of bright jewels radiant on her head, and, plucking it off with a force that dragged and strained her rich black hair with heedless cruelty, and brought it tumbling wildly on her shoulders, cast the gems upon the ground. From each arm, she unclasped a diamond bracelet, flung it down, and trod upon the

glittering heap. Without a word, without a shadow on the fire of her bright eye, without abatement of her awful smile, she looked on Mr. Dombey to the last, in moving to the door; and left him.

Florence had heard enough before quitting the room, to know that Edith loved her yet; that she had suffered for her sake; and that she had kept her sacrifices quiet, lest they should trouble her peace. She did not want to speak to her of this—she could not, remembering to whom she was opposed—but she wished, in one silent and affectionate embrace, to assure her that she felt it all, and thanked her.

Her father went out alone, that evening, and Florence issuing from her own chamber soon afterwards, went about the house in search of Edith, but unavailingly. She was in her own rooms, where Florence had long ceased to go, and did not dare to venture now, lest she should unconsciously engender new trouble. Still Florence hoping to meet her before going to bed, changed from room to room, and wandered through the house so splendid and so dreary, without remaining anywhere.

She was crossing a gallery of communication that opened at some little distance on the staircase, and was only lighted on great occasions, when she saw, through the opening, which was an arch, the figure of a man coming down some few stairs opposite. Instinctively apprehensive of her father, whom she supposed it was, she stopped, in the dark, gazing through the arch into the light. But it was Mr. Carker coming down alone, and looking over the railing into the hall. No bell was rung to announce his departure, and no servant was in attendance. He went down quietly, opened the door for himself, glided out, and shut it softly after him.

Her invincible repugnance to this man, and perhaps the stealthy act of watching any one, which, even under such innocent circumstances, is in a manner guilty and oppressive, made Florence shake from head to foot. Her blood seemed to run cold. As soon as she could—for at first she felt an insurmountable dread of moving—she went quickly to her own room and locked her door; but even then, shut in with her dog beside her, felt a chill sensation of horror, as if there were danger brooding somewhere near her.

It invaded her dreams and disturbed the whole night. Rising in the morning, unrefreshed, and with a heavy recollection of the domestic unhappiness of the preceding day, she sought Edith again, in all the rooms, and did so, from time to time, all the morning. But she remained in her own chamber, and Florence saw nothing of her. Learning, however, that the projected dinner at home was put off, Florence thought it likely that she would go out in the evening to fulfil the engagement she had spoken of: and resolved to try and meet her, then, upon the staircase.

When the evening had set in, she heard, from the room in which she sat on purpose, a footstep on the stairs that she thought to be Edith's. Hurrying out, and up towards her room, Florence met her immediately, coming down alone.

What was Florence's affright and wonder when, at sight of her, with her tearful face and outstretched arms, Edith recoiled and shrieked!

"Don't come near me!" she cried. "Keep away! Let me go by!"

"Mamma!" said Florence.

"Don't call me by that name! Don't speak to me! Don't look at me!—Florence!" shrinking back, as Florence moved a step towards her, "don't touch me!"

As Florence stood transfixed before the haggard face and staring eyes, she noted, as in a dream, that Edith spread her hands over them, and shuddering through all her form, and crouching down against the wall, crawled by her like some lower animal, sprang up, and fled away.

Florence dropped upon the stairs in a swoon; and was found there by Mrs. Pipchin, she supposed. She knew nothing more, until she found herself lying on her own bed, with Mrs. Pipchin and some servants standing round her.

"Where is Mamma?" was her first question.

"Gone out to dinner," said Mrs. Pipchin.

"And Papa?"

"Mr. Dombey's in his own room, Miss Dombey," said Mrs. Pipchin, "and the best thing you can do, is to take off your things and go to bed this minute." This was the sagacious woman's remedy for all complaints, particularly lowness of spirits, and inability to sleep; for which offences, many young victims in the days of the Brighton Castle had been committed to bed at ten o'clock in the morning.

Without promising obedience, but on the plea of desiring to be very quiet, Florence disengaged herself, as soon as she could, from the ministrations of Mrs. Pipchin and her attendants. Left alone, she thought of what had happened on the staircase, at first in doubt of its reality; then with tears; then with an indescribable and terrible alarm, like that she had felt the night before.

She determined not to go to bed until Edith returned, and if she could not speak to her, at least to be sure that she was safe at home. What indistinct and shadowy dread moved Florence to this resolution, she did not know, and did not dare to think. She only knew that until Edith came back, there was no repose for her aching head or throbbing heart.

The evening deepened into night; midnight came; no Edith.

Florence could not read, or rest a moment. She paced her own room, opened the door and paced the staircase-gallery outside, looked out of window on the night, listened to the wind blowing and the rain falling, sat down and watched the faces in the fire, got up and watched the moon flying like a storm-driven ship through the sea of clouds.

All the house was gone to bed, except two servants who were waiting the return of their mistress, down stairs.

One o'clock. The carriages that rumbled in the distance, turned away, or stopped short, or went past; the silence gradually deepened, and was more and more rarely broken, save by a rush of wind or sweep of rain. Two o'clock. No Edith.

Florence, more agitated, paced her room; and paced the gallery outside; and looked out at the night, blurred and wavy with the rain drops on the glass, and the tears in her own eyes; and looked up at the hurry in the sky, so different from the repose below, and yet so tranquil and solitary. Three o'clock! There was a terror in every ash that dropped out of the fire. No Edith yet.

More and more agitated, Florence paced her room, and paced the gallery, and looked out at the moon with a new fancy of her likeness to a pale fugitive hurrying away and hiding her guilty face. Four struck! Five! No Edith yet.

But now there was some cautious stir in the house; and Florence found that Mrs. Pipchin had been awakened by one of those who sat up; had

risen and had gone down to her father's door. Stealing lower down the stairs and observing what passed, she saw her father come out in his morning gown, and start when he was told his wife had not come home. He dispatched a messenger to the stables to inquire whether the coachman was there; and while the man was gone, dressed himself very hurriedly.

The man came back, in great haste, bringing the coachman with him, who said he had been at home and in bed, since ten o'clock. He had driven his mistress to her old house in Brook-street, where she had been met by Mr. Carker—

Florence stood upon the very spot where she had seen him coming down. Again she shivered with the nameless terror of that sight, and had hardly steadiness enough to hear and understand what followed. —Who had told him, the man went on to say, that his mistress would not want the carriage to go home in; and had dismissed him.

She saw her father turn white in the face, and heard him ask in a quick, trembling, voice, for Mrs. Dombey's maid. The whole house was roused; for she was there, in a moment, very pale too, and speaking incoherently.

She said she had dressed her mistress early—full two hours before she went out—and had been told, as she often was, that she would not be wanted at night. She had just come from her mistress's rooms, but—

“But what! what was it?” Florence heard her father demand like a madman.

“But the inner dressing-room was locked and the key gone.”

Her father seized a candle that was flaming on the ground—some one had put it down there, and forgotten it—and came running upstairs with such fury, that Florence, in her fear, had hardly time to fly before him. She heard him striking in the door, as she ran on, with her hands wildly spread, and her hair streaming, and her face like a distracted person's, back to her own room.

When the door yielded, and he rushed in, what did he see there? No one knew. But thrown down in a costly mass upon the ground, was every ornament she had had, since she had been his wife; every dress she had worn; and everything she had possessed. This was the room in which he had seen, in yonder mirror, the proud face discard him. This was the room in which he had wondered, idly, how these things would look when he should see them next!

Heaping them back into the drawers, and locking them up in a rage of haste, he saw some papers on the table. The deed of settlement he had executed on their marriage, and a letter. He read that she was gone. He read that he was dishonoured. He read that she had fled, upon her shameful wedding-day, with the man whom he had chosen for her humiliation; and he tore out of the room, and out of the house, with a frantic idea of finding her yet, at the place to which she had been taken, and beating all trace of beauty out of the triumphant face with his bare hand.

Florence, not knowing what she did, put on a shawl and bonnet, in a dream of running through the streets until she found Edith, and then clasping her in her arms, to save and bring her back. But when she hurried out upon the staircase, and saw the frightened servants going up and down with lights, and whispering together, and falling away from her father as he passed down, she awoke to a sense of her own powerlessness; and hiding in one of the great rooms that had been made gorgeous for *this*, felt as if her heart would burst with grief.

Compassion for her father was the first distinct emotion that made head against the flood of sorrow which overwhelmed her. Her constant nature turned to him in his distress, as fervently and faithfully, as if, in his prosperity, he had been the embodiment of that idea which had gradually become so faint and dim. Although she did not know, otherwise than through the suggestions of a shapeless fear, the full extent of his calamity, he stood before her, wronged and deserted; and again her yearning love impelled her to his side.

He was not long away; for Florence was yet weeping in the great room and nourishing these thoughts, when she heard him come back. He ordered the servants to set about their ordinary occupations, and went into his own apartment, where he trod so heavily that she could hear him walking up and down from end to end.

Yielding, at once, to the impulse of her affection, timid at all other times, but bold in its truth to him in his adversity, and undaunted by past repulse, Florence, dressed as she was, hurried down stairs. As she set her light foot in the hall, he came out of his room. She hastened towards him unchecked, with her arms stretched out, and crying "Oh dear, dear Papa!" as if she would have clasped him round the neck.

And so she would have done. But in his frenzy, he lifted up his cruel arm and struck her, crosswise, with that heaviness, that she tottered on the marble floor; and as he dealt the blow, he told her what Edith was, and bade her follow her, since they had always been in league.

She did not sink down at his feet; she did not shut out the sight of him with her trembling hands; she did not weep; she did not utter one word of reproach. But she looked at him, and a cry of desolation issued from her heart. For as she looked, she saw him murdering that fond idea to which she had held in spite of him. She saw his cruelty, neglect, and hatred, dominant above it, and stamping it down. She saw she had no father upon earth, and ran out, orphaned, from his house.

Ran out of his house. A moment, and her hand was on the lock, the cry was on her lips, his face was there, made paler by the yellow candles hastily put down and guttering away, and by the daylight coming in above the door. Another moment, and the close darkness of the shut-up house (forgotten to be opened, though it was long since day) yielded to the unexpected glare and freedom of the morning; and Florence, with her head bent down to hide her agony of tears, was in the streets.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE FLIGHT OF FLORENCE.

IN the wildness of her sorrow, shame, and terror, the forlorn girl hurried through the sunshine of a bright morning, as if it were the darkness of a winter night. Wringing her hands and weeping bitterly, insensible to everything but the deep wound in her breast, stunned by the loss of all she loved, left like the sole survivor on a lonely shore from the wreck of a great vessel, she fled without a thought, without a hope, without a purpose, but to fly somewhere—anywhere.

The cheerful vista of the long street, burnished by the morning light, the sight of the blue sky and airy clouds, the vigorous freshness of the day, so flushed and rosy in its conquest of the night, awakened no responsive

feelings in her so hurt bosom. Somewhere, anywhere, to hide her head! somewhere, anywhere, for refuge, never more to look upon the p'ace from which she fled!

But there were people going to and fro; there were opening shops, and servants at the doors of houses; there was the rising clash and roar of the day's struggle. Florence saw surprise and curiosity in the faces flitting past her; saw long shadows coming back upon the pavement; and heard voices that were strange to her asking her where she went, and what the matter was; and though these frightened her the more at first, and made her hurry on the faster, they did her the good service of recalling her in some degree to herself, and reminding her of the necessity of greater composure.

Where to go? Still somewhere, anywhere! still going on; but where! She thought of the only other time she had been lost in the wide wilderness of London—though not lost as now—and went that way. To the home of Walter's uncle.

Checking her sobs, and drying her swollen eyes, and endeavouring to calm the agitation of her manner, so as to avoid attracting notice, Florence, resolving to keep to the more quiet streets as long as she could, was going on more quietly herself, when a familiar little shadow darted past upon the sunny pavement, stopped short, wheeled about, came close to her, made off again, bounded round and round her, and Diogenes, panting for breath, and yet making the street ring with his glad bark, was at her feet.

"Oh, Di! oh, dear, true, faithful Di, how did you come here! How could I ever leave you, Di, who would never leave me!"

Florence bent down on the pavement, and laid his rough, old, loving, foolish head against her breast, and they got up together, and went on together; Di more off the ground than on it, endeavouring to kiss his mistress flying, tumbling over and getting up again without the least concern, dashing at big dogs in a jocose defiance of his species, terrifying with touches of his nose young housemaids who were cleaning doorsteps, and continually stopping, in the midst of a thousand extravagances, to look back at Florence, and bark until all the dogs within hearing answered, and all the dogs who could come out, came out to stare at him.

With this last adherent, Florence hurried away in the advancing morning, and the strengthening sunshine, to the city. The roar soon grew more loud, the passengers more numerous, the shops more busy, until she was carried onward in a stream of life setting that way, and flowing, indifferently, past marts and mansions, prisons, churches, market-places, wealth, poverty, good, and evil, like the broad river, side by side with it, awakened from its dreams of rushes, willows, and green moss, and rolling on, turbid and troubled, among the works and cares of men, to the deep sea.

At length the quarters of the little Midshipman arose in view. Nearer yet, and the little Midshipman himself was seen upon his post, intent as ever, on his observations. Nearer yet, and the door stood open, inviting her to enter. Florence, who had again quickened her pace, as she approached the end of her journey, ran across the road (closely followed by Diogenes, whom the bustle had somewhat confused), ran in, and sank upon the threshold of the well-remembered little parlour.

The Captain, in his glazed hat, was standing over the fire, making his morning's cocoa, with that elegant trifle, his watch, upon the chimney-piece, for easy reference during the progress of the cookery. Hearing a foot-step and the rustle of a dress, the Captain turned with a palpitating remem-

brance of the dreadful Mrs. Mac Stinger, at the instant when Florence made a motion with her hand towards him, reeled, and fell upon the floor.

The Captain, pale as Florence, pale in the very knobs upon his face, raised her like a baby, and laid her on the same old sofa upon which she had slumbered long ago.

"It's Heart-Delight!" said the Captain, looking intently in her face. "It's the sweet creature grow'd a woman!"

Captain Cuttle was so respectful of her, and had such a reverence for her, in this new character, that he would not have held her in his arms, while she was unconscious, for a thousand pounds.

"My Heart's Delight!" said the Captain, withdrawing to a little distance, with the greatest alarm and sympathy depicted on his countenance. "If you can hail Ned Cuttle with a finger, do it!"

But Florence did not stir.

"My Heart's Delight!" said the trembling Captain. "For the sake of Wal'r drowned in the briny deep, turn to, and histe up something or another, if able!"

Finding her insensible to this impressive adjuration also, Captain Cuttle snatched from his breakfast-table, a basin of cold water, and sprinkled some upon her face. Yielding to the urgency of the case, the Captain then, using his immense hand with extraordinary gentleness, relieved her of her bonnet, moistened her lips and forehead, put back her hair, covered her feet with his own coat which he pulled off for the purpose, patted her hand—so small in his, that he was struck with wonder when he touched it—and seeing that her eyelids quivered, and that her lips began to move, continued these restorative applications with a better heart.

"Cheerily," said the Captain. "Cheerily! Stand by, my pretty one, stand by! There! You're better now. Steady's the word, and steady it is. Keep her so! Drink a little drop o' this here," said the Captain. "There you are! What cheer now, my pretty, what cheer now?"

At this stage of her recovery, Captain Cuttle, with an imperfect association of a Watch with a Physician's treatment of a patient, took his own down from the mantel-shelf, and holding it out on his hook, and taking Florence's hand in his, looked steadily from one to the other, as expecting the dial to do something.

"What cheer, my pretty?" said the Captain. "What cheer now? You've done her some good my lad, I believe," said the Captain, under his breath, and throwing an approving glance upon his watch. "Put you back half-an-hour every morning, and about another quarter towards the arternoon, and you're a watch as can be ekalled by few and excelled by none. What cheer, my lady lass!"

"Captain Cuttle! Is it you!" exclaimed Florence, raising herself a little.

"Yes, yes, my lady lass," said the Captain, hastily deciding in his own mind upon the superior elegance of that form of address, as the most courtly he could think of.

"Is Walter's uncle here?" asked Florence.

"Here, pretty!" returned the Captain. "He an't been here this many a long day. He an't been heerd on, since he sheered off arter poor Wal'r. But," said the Captain, as a quotation, "Though lost to sight, to memory dear, and England, Home, and Beauty!"

"Do you live here?" asked Florence.

"Yes, my lady lass," returned the Captain.

"Oh Captain Cuttle!" cried Florence, putting her hands together, and speaking wildly. "Save me! keep me here! Let no one know where I am! I'll tell you what has happened by-and-by, when I can. I have no one in the world to go to. Do not send me away!"

"Send *you* away, my lady lass!" exclaimed the Captain. "*You*, my Heart's Delight! Stay a bit! We'll put up this here dead-light, and take a double turn on the key!"

With these words, the Captain, using his one hand and his hook with the greatest dexterity, got out the shutter of the door, put it up, made it all fast, and locked the door itself.

When he came back to the side of Florence, she took his hand, and kissed it. The helplessness of the action, the appeal it made to him, the confidence it expressed, the unspeakable sorrow in her face, the pain of mind she had too plainly suffered, and was suffering then, his knowledge of her past history, her present lonely, worn, and unprotected appearance, all so rushed upon the good Captain together, that he fairly overflowed with compassion and gentleness.

"My lady lass," said the Captain, polishing the bridge of his nose with his arm until it shone like burnished copper, "don't you say a word to Ed'ard Cuttle, until such times as you finds yourself a riding smooth and easy; which won't be to-day, nor yet to-morrow. And as to giving of you up, or reporting where you are, yes verily, and by God's help, so I won't, Church catechism, make a note on!"

This the Captain said, reference and all, in one breath, and with much solemnity; taking off his hat at "yes verily," and putting it on again, when he had quite concluded.

Florence could do but one thing more to thank him, and to show him how she trusted in him; and she did it. Clinging to this rough creature as the last asylum of her bleeding heart, she laid her head upon his honest shoulder, and clasped him round his neck, and would have kneeled down to bless him, but that he divined her purpose, and held her up like a true man.

"Steady!" said the Captain. "Steady! You're too weak to stand, you see, my pretty, and must lie down here again. There, there!" To see the Captain lift her on the sofa, and cover her with his coat, would have been worth a hundred state sights. "And now," said the Captain, "you must take some breakfast, lady lass, and the dog shall have some too. And arter that, you shall go aloft to old Sol Gills's room, and fall asleep there, like a angel."

Captain Cuttle patted Diogenes when he made allusion to him, and Diogenes met that overture graciously, half-way. During the administration of the restoratives he had clearly been in two minds whether to fly at the Captain or to offer him his friendship; and he had expressed that conflict of feeling by alternate waggings of his tail, and displays of his teeth, with now and then a growl or so. But by this time, his doubts were all removed. It was plain that he considered the Captain one of the most amiable of men, and a man whom it was an honour to a dog to know.

In evidence of these convictions, Diogenes attended on the Captain while he made some tea and toast, and showed a lively interest in his housekeeping. But it was in vain for the kind Captain to make such

preparations for Florence, who sorely tried to do some honour to them, but could touch nothing, and could only weep, and weep again.

"Well, well!" said the compassionate Captain, "after turning in, my Heart's Delight, you'll get more way upon you. Now, I'll serve out your allowance, my lad." To Diogenes. "And you shall keep guard on your mistress aloft."

Diogenes, however, although he had been eyeing his intended breakfast with a watering mouth and glistening eyes, instead of falling to, ravenously, when it was put before him, pricked up his ears, darted to the shop-door, and barked there furiously: burrowing with his head at the bottom, as if he were bent on mining his way out.

"Can there be anybody there!" asked Florence, in alarm.

"No, my lady lass," returned the Captain. "Who'd stay there, without making any noise! Keep up a good heart, pretty. It's only people going by."

But for all that, Diogenes barked and barked, and burrowed and burrowed, with pertinacious fury; and whenever he stopped to listen, appeared to receive some new conviction into his mind, for he set to, barking and burrowing again, a dozen times. Even when he was persuaded to return to his breakfast, he came jogging back to it, with a very doubtful air; and was off again, in another paroxysm, before touching a morsel.

"If there should be some one listening and watching," whispered Florence. "Some one who saw me come—who followed me, perhaps."

"It an't the young woman, lady lass, is it?" said the Captain, taken with a bright idea.

"Susan?" said Florence, shaking her head. "Ah no! Susan has been gone from me a long time."

"Not deserted, I hope?" said the Captain. "Don't say that that that young woman's run, my pretty!"

"Oh, no, no!" cried Florence. "She is one of the truest hearts in the world!"

The Captain was greatly relieved by this reply, and expressed his satisfaction by taking off his hard glazed hat, and dabbing his head all over with his handkerchief, rolled up like a ball, observing several times, with infinite complacency, and with a beaming countenance, that he know'd it.

"So you're quiet now, are you, brother?" said the Captain to Diogenes. "There warn't nobody there, my lady lass, bless you!"

Diogenes was not so sure of that. The door still had an attraction for him, at intervals; and he went snuffing about it, and growling to himself, unable to forget the subject. This incident, coupled with the Captain's observation of Florence's fatigue and faintness, decided him to prepare Sol Gills's chamber as a place of retirement for her, immediately. He therefore hastily betook himself to the top of the house, and made the best arrangement of it that his imagination and his means suggested.

It was very clean already; and the Captain, being an orderly man, and accustomed to make things ship-shape, converted the bed into a couch, by covering it all over with a clean white drapery. By a similar contrivance, the Captain converted the little dressing-table into a species of altar, on which he set forth two silver teaspoons, a flower-pot, a telescope, his celebrated watch, a pocket-comb, and a song-book, as a small collection

of rarities, that made a choice appearance. Having darkened the window, and straightened the pieces of carpet on the floor, the Captain surveyed these preparations with great delight, and descended to the little parlour again, to bring Florence to her bower.

Nothing would induce the Captain to believe that it was possible for Florence to walk up stairs. If he could have got the idea into his head, he would have considered it an outrageous breach of hospitality to allow her to do so. Florence was too weak to dispute the point, and the Captain carried her up out of hand, laid her down, and covered her with a great watch-coat.

"My lady lass!" said the Captain, "you're as safe here as if you was at the top of St. Paul's Cathedral, with the ladder cast off. Sleep is what you want, afore all other things, and may you be able to show yourself smart with that there balsam for the still small voice of a wovnded mind! When there's anything you want, my Heart's Delight, as this here humble house or town can offer, pass the word to Ed'ard Cuttle, as 'll stand off and on outside that door, and that there man will wibrate with joy." The Captain concluded by kissing the hand that Florence stretched out to him, with the chivalry of any old knight-errant, and walking on tiptoe out of the room.

Descending to the little parlour, Captain Cuttle, after holding a hasty council with himself, decided to open the shop-door for a few minutes, and satisfy himself that now, at all events, there was no one loitering about it. Accordingly he set it open, and stood upon the threshold, keeping a bright look-out, and sweeping the whole street with his spectacles.

"How de do, Captain Gills?" said a voice beside him. The Captain, looking down, found that he had been boarded by Mr. Toots while sweeping the horizon.

"How are you, my lad?" replied the Captain.

"Well, I'm pretty well, thank'ee, Captain Gills," said Mr. Toots. "You know I'm never quite what I could wish to be, now. I don't expect that I ever shall be any more."

Mr. Toots never approached any nearer than this to the great theme of his life, when in conversation with Captain Cuttle, on account of the agreement between them.

"Captain Gills," said Mr. Toots, "if I could have the pleasure of a word with you, it's—it's rather particular."

"Why, you see my lad," replied the Captain, leading the way into the parlour, "I an't what you may call exactly free this morning; and therefore if you can clap on a bit, I should take it kindly."

"Certainly Captain Gills," replied Mr. Toots, who seldom had any notion of the Captain's meaning. "To clap on, is exactly what I could wish to do. Naturally."

"If so be, my lad," returned the Captain. "Do it!"

The Captain was so impressed by the possession of his tremendous secret—by the fact of Miss Dombey being at that moment under his roof, while the innocent and unconscious Toots sat opposite to him—that a perspiration broke out on his forehead, and he found it impossible, while slowly drying the same, glazed hat in hand, to keep his eyes off Mr. Toots's face. Mr. Toots, who himself appeared to have some secret reasons for being in a nervous state, was so unspeakably disconcerted by

the Captain's stare, that after looking at him vacantly for some time in silence, and shifting uneasily on his chair, he said :

"I beg your pardon, Captain Gills, but you don't happen to see anything particular in me, do you?"

"No, my lad," returned the Captain. "No."

"Because you know," said Mr. Toots with a chuckle, "I know I'm wasting away. You needn't at all mind alluding to that. I—I should like it. Burgess and Co. have altered my measure, I'm in that state of thinness. It's a gratification to me. I—I'm glad of it. I—I'd a great deal rather go into a decline, if I could. I'm a mere brute you know, grazing upon the surface of the earth, Captain Gills."

The more Mr. Toots went on in this way, the more the Captain was weighed down by his secret, and stared at him. What with this cause of uneasiness, and his desire to get rid of Mr. Toots, the Captain was in such a scared and strange condition, indeed, that if he had been in conversation with a ghost, he could hardly have evinced greater discomposure.

"But I was going to say, Captain Gills," said Mr. Toots. "Happening to be this way early this morning—to tell you the truth, I was coming to breakfast with you. As to sleep, you know, I never sleep now. I might be a Watchman, except that I don't get any pay, and he's got nothing on his mind."

"Carry on, my lad!" said the Captain, in an admonitory voice.

"Certainly, Captain Gills," said Mr. Toots. "Perfectly true! Happening to be this way, early this morning (an hour or so ago), and finding the door shut—"

"What! were *you* waiting there, brother?" demanded the Captain.

"Not at all, Captain Gills," returned Mr. Toots. "I didn't stop a moment. I thought you were out. But the person said—by the bye, you *don't* keep a dog, *do* you, Captain Gills?"

The Captain shook his head.

"To be sure," said Mr. Toots, "that's exactly what I said. I knew you didn't. There *is* a dog, Captain Gills, connected with—but excuse me. That's forbidden ground."

The Captain stared at Mr. Toots until he seemed to swell to twice his natural size; and again the perspiration broke out on the Captain's forehead, when he thought of Diogenes taking it into his head to come down and make a third in the parlour.

"The person said," continued Mr. Toots, "that he had heard a dog barking in the shop: which I knew couldn't be, and I told him so. But he was as positive as if he had seen the dog."

"What person, my lad!" inquired the Captain.

"Why, you see there it is, Captain Gills," said Mr. Toots, with a perceptible increase in the nervousness of his manner. "It's not for me to say what may have taken place, or what may not have taken place. Indeed, I don't know. I get mixed up with all sorts of things that I don't quite understand, and I think there's something rather weak in my—in my head, in short."

The Captain nodded his own, as a mark of assent.

"But the person said, as we were walking away," continued Mr. Toots, "that you knew what, under existing circumstances, *might* occur—he said 'might,' very strongly—and that if you were requested to prepare yourself, you would, no doubt, come prepared."

"Person, my lad!" the Captain repeated.

"I don't know what person, I'm sure, Captain Gills," replied Mr. Toots, "I haven't the least idea. But coming to the door, I found him waiting there; and he said was I coming back again, and I said yes; and he said did I know you, and I said, yes, I had the pleasure of your acquaintance—you had given me the pleasure of your acquaintance, after some persuasion; and he said, if that was the case, would I say to you what I *have* said, about existing circumstances and coming prepared, and as soon as ever I saw you, would I ask you to step round the corner, if it was only for one minute, on most important business, to Mr. Brogley's the Broker's. Now, I tell you what, Captain Gills—whatever it is, I am convinced it's very important; and if you like to step round, now, I'll wait here 'till you come back."

The Captain, divided between his fear of compromising Florence in some way by not going, and his horror of leaving Mr. Toots in possession of the house with a chance of finding out the secret, was a spectacle of mental disturbance that even Mr. Toots could not be blind to. But that young gentleman, considering his nautical friend as merely in a state of preparation for the interview he was going to have, was quite satisfied, and did not review his own discreet conduct without chuckles.

At length the Captain decided, as the lesser of two evils, to run round to Brogley's the Broker's: previously locking the door that communicated with the upper part of the house, and putting the key in his pocket. "If so be," said the Captain to Mr. Toots, with not a little shame and hesitation, "as you'll excuse my doing of it, brother."

"Captain Gills," returned Mr. Toots, "whatever you do, is satisfactory to me."

The Captain thanked him heartily, and promising to come back in less than five minutes, went out in quest of the person who had intrusted Mr. Toots with this mysterious message. Poor Mr. Toots, left to himself, lay down upon the sofa, little thinking who had reclined there last, and, gazing up at the skylight and resigning himself to visions of Miss Dombey, lost all heed of time and place.

It was as well that he did so; for although the Captain was not gone long, he was gone much longer than he had proposed. When he came back, he was very pale indeed, and greatly agitated, and even looked as if he had been shedding tears. He seemed to have lost the faculty of speech, until he had been to the cupboard and taken a dram of rum from the case-bottle, when he fetched a deep breath, and sat down in a chair with his hand before his face.

"Captain Gills," said Mr. Toots, kindly, "I hope and trust there's nothing wrong?"

"Thank'ee my lad, not a bit," said the Captain. "Quite contrary."

"You have the appearance of being overcome, Captain Gills," observed Mr. Toots.

"Why my lad, I *am* took aback," the Captain admitted. "I am."

"Is there anything I can do, Captain Gills?" inquired Mr. Toots. "If there is, make use of me."

The Captain removed his hand from his face, looked at him with a remarkable expression of pity and tenderness, and took him by the hand, and shook it hard.

"No thank'ee," said the Captain. "Nothing. Only I'll take it as a favour

if you'll part company for the present. I believe, brother," wringing his hand again, "that, after Wal'r, and on a different model, you're as good a lad as ever stepped."

"Upon my word and honour Captain Gills," returned Mr. Toots, giving the Captain's hand a preliminary slap before shaking it again, "it's delightful to me to possess your good opinion. Thank'ee."

"And bear a hand and cheer up," said the Captain, patting him on the back. "What! There's more than one sweet creetur in the world!"

"Not to me, Captain Gills," replied Mr. Toots gravely. "Not to me, I assure you. The state of my feelings towards Miss Dombey is of that unspeakable description, that my heart is a desert island, and she lives in it alone. I'm getting more used up every day, and I'm proud to be so. If you could see my legs when I take my boots off, you'd form some idea of what unrequited affection is. I have been prescribed bark, but I don't take it, for I don't wish to have any tone whatever given to my constitution. I'd rather not. This, however, is forbidden ground. Captain Gills, good b'ye!"

Captain Cuttle cordially reciprocating the warmth of Mr. Toots's farewell, locked the door behind him, and shaking his head with the same remarkable expression of pity and tenderness as he had regarded him with before, went up to see if Florence wanted him.

There was an entire change in the Captain's face as he went up stairs. He wiped his eyes with his handkerchief, and he polished the bridge of his nose with his sleeve as he had done already that morning, but his face was absolutely changed. Now, he might have been thought supremely happy; now, he might have been thought sad; but the kind of gravity that sat upon his features was quite new to them, and was as great an improvement to them as if they had undergone some sublimating process.

He knocked softly, with his hook, at Florence's door, twice or thrice; but, receiving no answer, ventured first to peep in, and then to enter: emboldened to take the latter step, perhaps, by the familiar recognition of Diogenes, who, stretched upon the ground by the side of her couch, wagged his tail, and winked his eyes at the Captain, without being at the trouble of getting up.

She was sleeping heavily, and moaning in her sleep; and Captain Cuttle, with a perfect awe of her youth, and beauty, and her sorrow, raised her head, and adjusted the coat that covered her, where it had fallen off, and darkened the window a little more that she might sleep on, and crept out again, and took his post of watch upon the stairs. All this, with a touch and tread, as light as Florence's own.

Long may it remain in this mixed world a point not easy of decision, which is the more beautiful evidence of the Almighty's goodness—the delicate fingers that are formed for sensitiveness and sympathy of touch, and made to minister to pain and grief, or the rough hard Captain Cuttle hand, that the heart teaches, guides, and softens in a moment!

Florence slept upon her couch, forgetful of her homelessness and orphanage, and Captain Cuttle watched upon the stairs. A louder sob or moan than usual, brought him, sometimes to her door; but by degrees she slept more peacefully, and the Captain's watch was undisturbed.

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5 ft. 1 in. by 7 ft. 0		£2 12 6	£5 5 0		7 ft. 1 in. by 5 ft. 3		+£4 6 6	£8 0 0		8 ft. 7 in. by 5 ft. 3		£5 15 6	£9 9 0	
6	4 5	1 11 6	4 0 0		5 1 4 2		2 5 0	4 16 0		6 4 4 5		3 3 0	5 15 6	
2	4 4	1 5 6	3 5 6		3 0 2 8		1 0 0	2 14 0		5 10 3 2		2 0 0	4 14 6	
2	3 2	0 15 6	2 12 6		2 2 1 8		0 10 6	2 3 6		4 3 2 10		1 11 6	3 13 6	
2	2 8	0 12 6	2 8 0							3 0 2 0		0 15 6	2 12 6	

Environs of London.					London.				
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36	6 ft. 0 in. by 4 ft. 6 in.	£2 12 6	£5 15 6		6 ft. 0 in. by 4 ft. 0		£4 4 0	£5 16 6	
4 0	3 0	1 10 0	3 10 0		5 0 5 0		2 12 6	5 2 6	
30 3 0	3 0	1 1 0	3 0 0		4 2 2 9		1 4 0	3 5 0	
2 6	2 4	0 16 0	2 12 6		3 6 2 6		0 15 6	3 0 0	
6 2 6	2 6	0 13 6	2 9 6		3 4 3 0		0 12 6	2 17 0	
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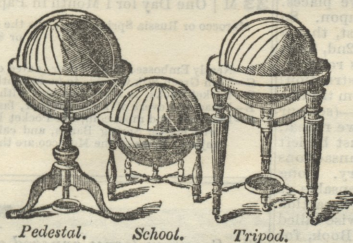
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18	8 8 0	13 13 0	17 17 0
15	6 6 0	10 10 0	12 12 0
12	4 4 0	6 6 6	8 8 0
10	3 13 6	6 6 0	7 17 6
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6	1 2 0	1 4 0	0 0 0



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† Imitation Russia, ditto, 6s. —Cloth, 1s. 6d. —Ditto, with Clasp, 2s.		

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		B	C	D	E	L	M
	6 inches by 3 $\frac{3}{4}$.	Cloth.	Silk.	Tuck.	Loop.	Mo.	or
12	Half a week, with Sunday	3 0 3	6 4	6 5	0 1	0 1	
13	Do. excluding do.	2 6	3 0	4 0	4 6	1 1	
Loose Protecting Covers, cloth, 1s.; with clasp, 1s. 6d.							

	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 3 $\frac{1}{2}$.	Price Bound in			Pocket Book		
		B	C	D	E	L	M
14	Half a week, with Sunday	3 0	3 6	4 6	5 0	1 0	
14M	One Day for 1 Month	0 8	1 0	1 6	..	..
15	3 a week, excluding Sunday	2 6	3 0	4 0	4 6	1 1	
1s.	An entire week, with Sunday	1 0	1 4	2 0	2 6	1 1	
1s.	enlarged, or Eighteenpenny, do.	1 6	1 10	2 6	3 0	1 1	
Loose Protecting Covers, cloth, 1s.; Ditto, with clasp, 1s. 6d.							
* The Set of 12 in Case separate, or in Roan Tuck together, 7s.							

	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 3 $\frac{1}{2}$.	Price Bound in			Pocket Book		
		A	B	C	D	L	M
16	One Day, for 8 weeks	0 6	..	1 0	..	..
17	An entire week	0 6	..	1 0	..	..
17D	Half a week, the right hand page } ruled, the left unruled	1 0	1 4	1 4	2 0	..	
18	Half a week	1 8	2 0	2 0	2 6	..	
Morocco or Russia Spring Cases for the above of the very best London Manufacture, wearing 6 or 8 years, 8s. & 9s.							

	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches by 2 $\frac{1}{2}$.	Price Bound in			Pocket Book		
		A	B	C	D	L	M
19	One Day, for 8 weeks	0 6	..	1 0	..	..
20	Half a week	1 0	1 4	1 4	2 0	..	
21	A week	0 6	..	1 0	1 6	..	
21D	Half a week, right page ruled, } left unruled	1 0	1 4	1 3	2 0	..	
21M	1 Day for 1 Month in Paper, 4d.	The Set of 12 in Case, 3s.					
Morocco or Russia Spring Cases for the above of very best London make, wearing 6 years, 6s.							

	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 3.	Price Bound in			Pocket Book		
		A	B	C	D	L	M
22	Half a week	1 4	1 8	1 8	2 6	..	
23	An entire week	0 6	..	1 0	..	..
23D	Half a week, the right hand page } ruled, and left unruled	1 0	1 4	1 4	2 0	..	
23M	One Day for 1 Month in Paper, 5d.	Set of 12 in Case, 4s.					
Morocco or Russia Spring Cases for the above, of very best London Manufacture, wearing 6 or 8 years, 7s. & 8s.							

B—Neatly Embossed Cloth Cover, dated on back and beginning.
C—Thin Green Silk Covers, to go into other Cases, as D and E.
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NOTE.

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November [11th Month] ~~~ 15 MONDAY [319-46] ~~~

1847

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-- 17 WEDNESDAY [321-44] --

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**Covers for Do.**, ruled and printed, per hundred, 4s.

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1840

September [9th Month]

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 mp Duties—Law and Commercial  
 th Days of the Royal Family and their descendants

Sovereigns of Europe  
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|                                                         | Butcher..... |            |            |
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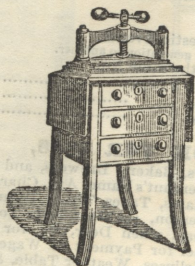
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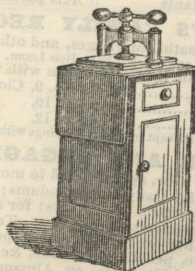
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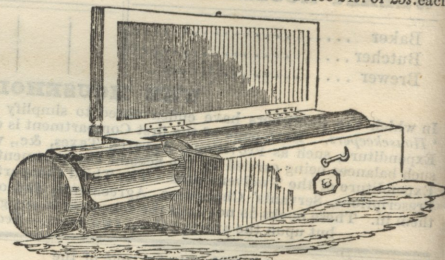
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**M**OREOVER he said unto me, Son of Man, eat that that thou findest; eat and take two

No. 4.

**M**OREOVER he said unto me, Son of Man, eat that that thou whatsoever Adam called ever

No. 5.

**M**OREOVER he said unto me, Son of Man, eat that that whatsoever Adam called every li

No. 6.

**M**OST Gracious God, we humbly beseech thee, as for this Kingdom in And although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before

No. 7.

**M**OST Gracious God, we humbly beseech thee, as for this Kingdom in And although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins, before

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