CHEVELEY.

VOL. I.

"I speak
Of what I know, and what I feel within."

WORDSWORTH.

"Quare tunc formandi mores (inquit Erasmus) cum mollis adhuc artas; tunc optimis assuescendum cum ad quidvis cerum est ingenium."

"Le marriage est une chose tres serieuse; On ne peut pas trop penser—heureux ceux qui en pense toute leurs vie!"

CHEVELEY;

OR,

THE MAN OF HONOUR.

BY

LADY LYTTON BULWER

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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1839.

TO

NO ONE NOBODY, Esq.,

OF NO HALL, NOWHERE.

Dear Sir,—In dedicating these volumes to you, I acquit myself of a debt of gratitude to the only man whose integrity I have found unimpeachable, and whose friendship I have proved unvarying. Among the most deserving of my own sex I have, in many instances, found sincere and unchanging affection, united with those highest and rarest virtues, which, from adorning, reconcile us to human nature, though truth compels me to acknowledge that I have known others whose deep-rooted selfishness, puerile vanity, and vacillating weakness of character proved them to be "nature's worst anomalies"—masculine women!

In enumerating the catalogue of your virtues, you cannot tax me with that servility of flattery which you are the only man in the world who would disdain. Since every one is aware it has even passed into a proverb, that Nobody is perfection.' In your literary career you have neither evinced nor experienced envy; but then it is acknowledged on all sides that your

gains excel that of Shakspeare, Milton, Byron, Bacon, Locke, Scott, and Moore; your learning exceeds that of Bayle, and your science that of Newton. In patriotism you go beyond the heroes of ancient Rome, and you are the only person whose politics would bear to be analyzed by the most chymical scrutiny. Yet here you have shared the lot of humanity and have been the victim of calumny; as it is only a short time ago that your friends, the Whigs, accused you of anticipating Lord Durham's speech, and sending it to the Times. The world, however, did not attach the slightest credence to the accusation; yet, with unceasing fidelity, you, and you only, continue to believe the Whigs honest! Your domestic virtues, if possible, exceed your public ones; you are an exemplary husband, and such a father! and with a generosity truly unparalleled, take upon yourself all the blame of all the mischief done in my house. Generally speaking, Folly's cap and bells are to be found as often, if not oftener, on the hoary head of age, as on the Hyperian curls of youth; but you are an exception, for you are the only man whom "flattery fools not" or interest does not warp; ay, even the small paltry interest of a dinner, a speech, a paragraph in a newspaper, or a tabouret in a demoralized and demoralizing coterie. "Such divinity doth hedge" the vices of men, that no man cares to expose or interfere with those of another; the protecting laws for infamy which them-

selves have made, they must not, of course, infringe, for, as Claudian truly says,

> "Patere legem quam ipse tulisti,
> Incommune jubes siquid censes ve tenendum,
> Primus jussa subi, tunc observantior arqui,
> Fit populus, nec fere vetat cùm viderit ipsum
> Autorem parere sibi."

Therefore is it that whatever the injuries, outrages, and persecutions of we women may be, men invariably, whether from cowardice, coldness, craft, caution, self-interest, or selfishness, shrink from all interference in our legitimate ill-treatment; and, mark my words, dear sir, Sergeant Talfourd's Custody of Infants' Bill will never pass, for he is only likely to have your assistance, and with regard to our sex, men are members of nature's inquisition, whose profligacy can only flourish and be protected by keeping the instruments of torture in their own hands.

As far back as 732, the cavalry of the Arabians, like that of their ancestors, the Parthians, was extremely formidable, and the Franks (not M. P.'s), whose armies were composed solely of infantry, found it difficult to resist the attacks of so versatile an enemy, or even to derive any permanent advantage from success. So it is with us women; our enemy is so versatile, consisting of law, science, and might, that we can only fight after the Parthian fashion, throw down our arrows, and fly; all our efforts for justice or redress

must be unavailing, till, as a sex, we feel for and defend ourselves. Abstract and unorganized efforts never have and never will achieve a victory; to our individual struggles men may still answer like the fox in the fable, when the cat boasted her superior skill:

"Tu prétends être fort habile,
En sais tu tant que moi? J'ai cents ruses au sac,
Non dit l'autre: je n'ai qu'un tour dans mon lussac;
Mais je soutiens qu'il en vaut mille."

And their one trick, worth one thousand, is power.

Knowing, dear sir, that you are always more busy than any one else, I will not trespass longer on your valuable time than to assure you that I am, and ever shall be,

Your devoted admirer
And much obliged servant,
THE AUTHOR.

CHEVELEY;

OR,

THE MAN OF HONOUR.

CHAPTER I.

"With all its sinful doings, I must say
That Italy's a pleasant place to me,
Who love to see the sun shine every day,
And vines (not nail'd to walls) from tree to tree,
Festoon'd much like the back scene of a play,
Or melodrama, which people flock to see,
When the first act is ended by a dance
In vineyards copied from the south of France."

BYRON.

FOR such as believe that love is and ought to be omnipotent, the following "tale" can have but little attraction; and, on the other hand, to those, the unmercifully virtuous, who deem that to "feel tempted is to sin," and who, in their notions of the perfectable capacities of human nature, go beyond Pythagoras and Plato, it will have still less: for to them, the many-languaged voice of the passions is the unknown tongue of St. Paul, requiring interpretation; they are, indeed, "righteous over much," yet wanting all

"The fair humanities of old religion."

Oh! how many uncanonized martyrs there are in every-day domestic life, hourly warring both with the flesh and the spirit (and literally taking up their cross daily); and this must ever be the case as long as men continue to enforce the laws of God grammatically, thereby assuming a wide difference between the masculine and feminine, which is nowhere to be found in the text! "C'est une triste métier que celle de femme," says the French proverb, and it says truly. In

society, the worst-conducted women generally fare the best, because their provocations to misconduct are often most humanely and charitably allowed; while the really virtuous almost invariably find coolness and insensibility, or want of temptation, the only merits awarded to them. But it is in England alone that there is a dark and Jesuitical hypocrisy in the systematically unjust conduct of men towards women; and those gentlemen who write the most liberally and lachrymosely about the errors of female education, which tends to stultify their intellect, warp their judgment, weaken the moral tone of their natures, and in every way unfit them to be the friends and companions of men, are the very first practically to labour for this state of things, which they affect to deprecate. As most husbands appear to think, that if their wives have a second idea, the world cannot be large enough for them both, any more than two suns can shine in one hemisphere. But the manner of evincing this opinion is even more offensive than the opinion itself, as they never cease to "affiché" the veto that women have no right even to mental free will, and are as much surprised at their daring to express an opinion different to that they have been commanded to entertain, as if the ground on which they walked were suddenly to exclaim, "Don't trample on me so hardly!" Then come the ex parte judgments of how few things ought to annoy or please others, a matter perfectly impossible to be decided upon but by self; so true is the assertion of Epictetus, "that men are more tormented by the opinion of things than by the things themselves."

To those who require in print the extremes of virtue and vice, which are not in human nature, I repeat that these volumes can have little attraction; but to such as are aware that our nature, like our fate, is of "a mingled yarn of good and evil," there may be something in them not wholly uninteresting.

Heir to a marquisate and immense wealth, his father dying when he was little more than five years old, and his mother before he was twenty, Augustus Mowbray was the spoiled child of nature and fortune; consequently, at the age of eight-and-twenty (the period when this history commences), he had begun to consider mankind as divided into two great classes, the boring and the bored: the first being formed by those who

write and talk, and the latter by those who read and listen, "blasé sur tout." His creed was taken from that pithy line in the "Rejected Addresses," which asserts that "naught is everything, and everything is naught." This truth, which he felt every moment of his life, strange to say, only impelled him the more violently to be eternally in search of something: the unknown future was always to him "that bless'd Canaan that should come at last," and locomotion he deemed the only method by which it could be attained.

To Italy once more, then, he determined to wend his way, in his Sisyphus task of toiling after happiness. As a burned child dreads the fire, so most persons dread a story, the scene of which is laid abroad, as they almost invariably find themselves, like Marius amid the ruins of Carthage, overwhelmed with towers, turrets, temples, statues, palaces, prisons, aqueducts, and fountains; but in these pages they will have nothing of this sort either to fear or to hope; and let those who are not already sated with descriptions of "the sweet South," read Mrs. Starke, believe Childe Harold, and dream of Corinne.

Horace Walpole complains of having "lived post" all his life; poor man—that was nothing! Mowbray had lived steam! and, consequently, had had no time to like, much less to love anything; yet there was a similarity in their fates. Horace had one happy moment, which he describes by saying "Tanton" (the dog Madame du Defand sent him), "Tanton and I jumped into a bed as hot as an oven." Now Mowbray's happy moment was, when he jumped into a britschka with his friend Saville, as easy as Collinge's axletree and under-springs could make it, and found himself on his road to Italy for the fourth time, literally in search of a pursuit!

"In England," said he, "there is no opening. Love is like everything else in our nation of shopkeepers, wholly commercial in politics: one is a mere Dogberry, eternally looking back upon all the political Shakspeares who have stolen one's best ideas (alias speeches); and as for society, one is tired of stalking from room to room, night after night, like a resuscitated

> "'Sir Plume, of amber snuffbox justly vain,
> And the nice conduct of a dandied cane.'"

In short, in England one has the "far niente" without the "dolce;" and it was of the latter he went in quest,

in the very worst state of our national malady, "domophobia." From Paris to Geneva, the travellers contrived to sleep nearly the whole way; thus prudently providing against the time when moschetoes and other Italian miseries would "murder sleep." They had slept through a most splendid and terrific storm in the Jura Mountains, when they were disagreeably awakened by a sudden stoppage, and the audible "sacrés" of their scapin of a courier, Luigi Andare. "Canaille que vous êtes," cried the indignant Colossus of Roads, "Je parlerais moi même à monseigneur et dame, vous avez beau parler, qu'est ce que ça me fait moi, si monseigneur était le pape il ne pourrait pas faire des chevaux J'espere?"

The cause of this dilemma was, that Prince Borghese having taken up twenty horses, there was none left for them; but Andare, nothing daunted, after first casting a mingled look of vengeance and contempt on the phlegmatic maître de poste (who stood philosophically looking on, with a hand in each pocket), approached the prince's carriage, cap in hand, and so eloquently represented to him the *propriety* of sparing his master one horse from each of his highness's carriages, that, with a bow to them and a bene-bene to him, the triumphant Luigi, with one hand, pointed to have the horses taken off, while he shook the other menacingly doubled at the maître de poste. Then ensued a vituperative patois, long and loud, between these worthies, that echoed above the thunder through the mountains. "What the deuse do they say?" asked Saville.

"Why," said Mowbray, taking upon him the office of interpreter, "there are some threats about eternal disgrace and throat-cutting; but whether yours, mine, Andare's, or the maître de poste's, is to be the victimized thorax, I cannot take upon me precisely to say."

"Down, Prince! down, sir!" said Mowbray to a large black bloodhound, who, for the purpose of better barking at the oratorical maître de poste, had just leaped up and tried to insinuate himself as Bodkin between the two friends.

How I do pity dogs condemned to travel, especially large ones, like the "Black Prince" in question! Poor things, they seem, with their drooping ears, melancholy eyes, and cramped paws, to go a step beyond Madame de Staël in their estimation of locomotive delights, and think that travelling is not "le plus triste de tous les

plaisirs," but "plus triste de tous les peines." The gentlemen in the rumble having condescendingly united their efforts with those of Andare, the five contributed horses were soon put to, and our travellers once more "en route." Perhaps it would have been difficult to have brought together two more opposite characters in effect than Mowbray and Saville, though their elementary qualities were much the same. The only difference consisted in the former having greater enthusiasm of character, the latter greater enthusiasm of manner. Saville could not descant upon a tree, a picture, or a cloud, without speaking as if his whole being were wrapped up in the subject; while Mowbray, on the contrary, who was capable of feeling the effects of each much more deeply, would converse lightly, nay, almost coldly and critically, about them. Saville would write the most passionate love-letters, but the chivalric romance of Mowbray's nature could make sacrifices which Saville could not even comprehend; yet were they both generous, both high-minded, both clever. Hence the cement of their friendship; for it is a mistake, and an egregious one, to suppose that we like our opposites. We do not like our opposites—how should we? Since sympathy is the great tie between all human beings, as is usual with superficial observers, who generally contrive to mistake the effect for the cause, this popular fallacy has grown into a proverb. The truth is, we all like different results produced from the same sources; just as the world is fertilized by differently directed rills, that all flow from one parent stream: but who ever heard of a generous and liberal nature feeling a strong affection for a miserly and sordid one? though a person who was merely constitutionally lavish, would feel not only affection, but the greatest admiration for a person who might in his personal expenditure appear parsimonious, in order to have in reality the power of gratifying a generosity founded on principle. Wits, indeed, might love their fellow-wits the better, were their field of action not always to be the same. Still, in order to appreciate wit, a person must himself possess it. Who would care to be a Voltaire, if all the world were to be "des Pere Adam," Orpheus being the only personage on record who had the enviable power of charming brutes? What do persons mean by an agreeable companion? Certainly not one who monopolizes

the whole conversation, but as certainly one who can converse. And what does a brave person despise so much as a coward? An ill-tempered person may indeed like, "par preference," a good-tempered one, who hears and bears with him; but did this goodness of temper merely proceed from an apathetic coldness, which nothing could move, the odds are, they would detest them, and would rather they met on equal terms in single combat twenty times a day. For one great proof of sympathy being the electric conductor of human affections, look at the members of all professions, and their standard of greatness is measured by what they themselves pursue. A music master will talk with tears in his eyes of Mozart or Rossini, and exclaim, "those, indeed, are truly great men!" Talleyrand (if he could feel) would have felt the same towards Machiavel. Madame Michaud no doubt places Taglioni somewhere in the calendar between St. Catharine and Santa Teresa; and I'll venture to assert that no rigid governess passed the grand climacteric, bent upon teazing her pupils to skeletons, and therefore piquing herself upon her inflexible justice, but worships the name of Aristides, and never looks upon a shell without a shudder of indignation. So much for the theory of people liking their opposites!

I only know one instance in which this is the case, and I believe it is by no means an uncommon one: I allude to the weakness of ugly men generally preferring handsome women to their own softened images. The great reason why men have no sympathy with women is, that the essential selfishness of their own natures prevents their comprehending the anti-selfishness of the other sex; and while they are eternally demanding as their right, sympathy from them, even for their vices, they laugh at many of their feelings, merely because they cannot understand them; in short, that excellent proverb, "Love me, love my dog," is the alpha and omega of the doctrine of sympathy.

Little worth mentioning occurred to the travellers till they reached the watchmaking city of Geneva; for it is useless to tell of the bad supper they got at Genlis (almost as bad as the sentiment and morality of its namesake, the quack comtesse), or of the good wine they got at Morez. Weary and cold, they entered Geneva of a fine September morning—before Mont Blanc

had thrown off her "misty shroud," or Monta Rosa blushed into light—too sleepy to heed even the legendary murmuring of the gentle lake, or the "blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone;" turned away from every inn within that most dirty and unbeauteous town; and driven by necessity in the shape of two faded and ill-tempered postillions, they at length reached Secheron, and soon found themselves in two of Monsieur de Jeans most clean and comfortable beds; not thinking of the past, and not dreaming of the future.

CHAPTER II.

"E'en as the tenderness that hour instils,
When summer's day declines along the hills;
So feels the fulness of the heart and eyes,
When all of genius that can perish—dies."
LORD BYRON'S *Monody on the death of Sheridan.*

"And is there then no earthly place,
Where we may rest in dream Elysian,
Without some cursed, round English face
Popping up near to break the vision?"
MOORE.

IT was about four o'clock P.M., when Mowbray, from his bedroom windows, espied Saville in deep conference at the end of the garden with the triton of the lake, who was busily unmooring the boat and pointing to the opposite shore. He put on his hat, and soon stood beside him.

"My dear fellow," said he, "I suppose you are going over to Lord Byron's house; and as I perceive you are getting up a sensation, I will promise not to interrupt you, only let me go with you."

Saville laughed, and they sprang into the boat together: by mutual consent they seemed to drink in the quiet beauty of the scene, for neither of them spoke till they reached the other side; when, from the confused directions of the boy who had rowed them, it seemed doubtful whether, at the end of their ramble, they should find themselves at Shelley's or Lord Byron's house.

However, trusting to their stars, and preceded by

Prince, they began ascending the steep narrow lane that leads into the little village; they at length got to the wilderness of vineyards that bursts upon one previous to the turn which leads to the house; that house which seems almost emblematic of the fortunes of its once-gifted tenant—all that relates to its domestic and homeward state, so chill and desolate. The rusty iron gates, the grass-grown court, the dried-up fountain, the two leafless trees, and the long-echoing and melancholy-sounding bell; this is the homeside of the house only seen by the few!

The very air feels chill and looks dark, while the side next the lake is imbosomed in fertile terraces; the house itself standing upon an eminence, as if marked out as a focus for the gaze of the wide world of beauty it looks down upon, while an eternal sunlight seems to throw a halo and gild into brightness everything in and around it.

The present owner, an English gentleman of the name of Willis, though at home, very obligingly permitted the friends to go over it. On the left-hand side of the hall is a little study opening on a terrace, where the poet used to write, and from which Lake Leman looks its best; farther on is a large and comfortable drawing-room, which has two different views of the lake; outside this room, in the centre of the hall, is a staircase which leads to the bedrooms, which are divided by a little gallery, lined with pictures, or, rather, old portraits, some of them curious enough. On the right of this gallery is the room Lord Byron used to sleep in, with its little tent-bed, and its one window, looking out upon the vineyards and the lake: in one corner of this room stands an old walnut-tree escritoire, on two of the drawers of which, written on white paper, in his own hand, are the following labels—"Bills"—"Lady Byron's Letters."

"Now, really," said Mowbray, "though one is apt to laugh at people who run miles to look on those who have seen 'Sir Walter's head, Lord Byron's hat,' and all that sort of thing, yet I confess that I cannot look round this little room, and upon these spots of ink, which I dare say he dashed impatiently out of his pen as he put 'the letters' into the drawer, without a weakness that brings my heart into my eyes; for one feels a part of one's own being annihilated when one thinks

that a mighty spirit has passed from the earth for ever, while such frail memorials of it as these remain long after to remind us of it!"

"This from *you*, Mowbray, of all people in the world! Why, I did not know you were such an enthusiastic admirer of Lord Byron's."

"Of the *man*, perhaps not; but of the *genius*, yes; though I am not sure he was worse than his peers in that respect. I have long had a pet theory concerning authors; I doubt very much if the outside of a beautiful face is more different from the bone and arteries that compose it within, than are books from their authors; indeed, so strongly am I imbued with this idea, that I sometimes fancy Dr. Johnson must have been in reality an atheist, and Tom Paine a fanatic!"

Just at this moment Prince, who was sitting in the middle of the room with his ears erect, blinking his eyes at a sunbeam, crouched his head for a moment, and then lifting up his face, gave three of those shrill, melancholy howls, with which dogs sometimes startle the superstitious. What could it be? Was it the shade of Byron, like that of Theseus on Marathon, which had passed and "smote without a blow!" The poor animal seemed evidently uncomfortable, and walking to the door, scratched and listened at it till his master let him out. They cast "one long, lingering look" at the little deserted chamber, and descended once more into the grass-grown court. They had scarcely drawn the rusty iron gate after them, albeit in no merry mood, when, lo! puffing and panting up the lane, one of those ubiquitous rubicund Anglo visions burst upon them, which let no wayworn traveller in a foreign land hope to escape. It was no less a personage than one of their outlawed compatriots, Major Nonplus, taking his *appetitenal* walk before dinner, and looking, in his red Belcher cravat, Flamingo face, and scarlet waistcoat, for all the world like an ambulating carbuncle trying to extinguish the setting sun.

Major Nonplus was one of those clever, managing mortals, who, with little money or credit, always contrived to keep more carriages, horses, and houses than any one else; he was also one of those innumerable "best-natured creatures in the world," always bent upon *making everybody comfortable*, and therefore succeeding in making everybody miserable. Had a dowager

manœuvred so as her daughter should sit next a duke's elder son, or a snobbish "millionaire" of a county member at dinner, Major Nonplus instantly started up and divided them on the gallant and facetious plea, that he could not possibly sit next to Mrs. Nonplus (to whose tender mercies he had been purposely consigned). Was he admitted to a morning visit by some Johnny Raw of a footman (for in all houses where he had appeared twice, a preventive .porter was stationed, who knew him to be contraband), and saw two friends confidentially conversing, he invariably out-stayed the first comer, thinking that the host or hostess would enjoy an *agreeable* "tête-à-tête" with *him* "*when the coast was clear!*" Did he encounter two lovers in a shady walk, he instantly joined them, "fearing the young people might be dull." Did the mother of five "pelican daughters" (all unmarried) happen to observe with a sigh, that she had never been at Clifton but once, when her youngest darling Jemima had the scarlet fever, the major instantly observed, with that chronological memory so dreadfully prevalent among common people,

"Ah, I perfectly remember it was there I first had the pleasure of meeting you: let me see—that was in the autumn of ninety-eight, and Miss Jemima was then a little urchin of four or five years old, and a remarkably clever, forward little thing she was too; any one would have taken her for seven or eight. True, I assure you —I never flatter!"

Did he encounter an acquaintance in a packet, whose wife some three years before might have eloped from him, the major would instantly, before the assembled audience on the quarter-deck, grasp his hand, and calling him by his name, assure him, though he had never written to him since poor Mrs. So-and-So's *mishap*, that he most sincerely pitied him! Did he venture to bet on a rubber, when congratulated upon his good luck in winning by the person he had betted upon, he would reply with an amiable candour that baffles all description: "My dear fellow, I owe it all to you; I saw you revoke when your adversary's queen was out, and then I knew the game must be yours, and so I betted upon you."

The major, though no logician, was rich in proverbs, which he called to his assistance upon all occasions; and one he practically illustrated in his costume, viz.,

that "familiarity breeds contempt;" for which reason there was always a species of Scotch divorce subsisting between his waistcoat and trousers, and between the latter and his Wellington boots; though, to be sure, as "coming events cast their shadows before" in the shape of great rotundity of form, these garments had not altogether the merit of prescience in the respectful distance they kept from each other. There was one very remarkable circumstance attending Major Nonplus, which was, that no one ever yet met him, that he had not either just come into a legacy of £70,000, or just been defrauded out of a similar sum: the former solved the enigma of a house in Park-lane and a stud at Melton, while the latter as satisfactorily accounted for a cottage in the Tyrol. But whether the aforesaid £70,000 was among the fashionable arrivals or departures in the major's fate, it made little difference in his hospitality, which, however, was always in the future tense; and though *sure* of an invitation to his house, at whichever side of the channel the invited found himself, yet he could only hail it, as the witches hailed Macbeth on his Thane of Cawdorship, "*that is to be.*" Among his other delightful attributes, he seemed to have realized Sir Boyle Roach's idea of a bird, and possess the power of being "in two places at once;" for no sooner had A left him, "taking tea and toast upon the wall of China," than B would write word he had encountered him

"'Mid the blacks of Carolina."

This ambulating lottery-office now advanced, looking as blank as the loss of £70,000 could make him; but extending two stumpy fingers of each hand to Saville and Mowbray, exclaimed,

"Bless me! delighted to see you. Heard how that rascal Price Hatton has behaved to me! By George! sir, done me out of £70,000! Obliged to cut and run; left poor Mrs. Nonplus buried alive in the Tyrol (where, by-the-by, you *must* come and see us in the spring; *not now*, for it's damp, misty, and disagreeable), and I've just come to Geneva to see what's going on. Things have come to a pretty pass, when a man goes to Geneva for news; but when one goes upon *tick*, can't come to a better place, eh? ha! ha! ha! Ah! been to see Lord Byron's house, I suppose? Nothing very *tasty*

about it; saw the cabinet, with the label about Lady B.'s letters; curious, isn't it? Understand he used to talk about her sometimes."

"Indeed!" said Saville and Mowbray, in a breath. "What used he to say of her."

"Oh! that he hoped they should never meet again. Interesting anecdote, isn't it? Thought it might please her to know that he sometimes spoke of her ('cause it showed that he thought of her), and was going to write and tell her this *little anecdote;* but as Mrs. Nonplus justly observed, people *are* so *odd*, and one never gets thanked for doing a good-natured thing; so I thought I had better not."

"I quite agree with you," said Mowbray, laughing. "I dare say she never would have had the *gratitude* to thank you for so *great a piece of kindness*."

"Very likely not," said the innocent major. "Been to see Ferney yet?"

"No; we only came last night."

"Oh! well, that's all right. *I* can put you in the way of these things, you see: hire a 'char-à-banc' to-morrow; don't go in your carriage; nobody does it here (ahem! for a very good reason). I'd lend you one of mine, but Mrs. Nonplus has got the chariot, the girls have taken the britschka, and Tom—you know my son Tom—at school when you saw him—now a great strapping fellow in the Rifles—well, Tom's got the phaeton. So you see I'm reduced to the *marrowbone* stage. *I'll* go with you, and that will save you from that old bore of a gardener, who says he remembers Rousseau—no, Voltaire, isn't it?—and all that sort of thing; and I'll *explain away as long* as you like; besides, I suppose you've got Mrs. Starke; for *all* the English abroad are *Starke mad*—ha! ha! ha! not bad, is it?"

"We are going to Chamouni to-morrow, thank you," gasped Mowbray, trying to struggle with the boring adhesiveness of the major.

"Oh! well, any oth—"

"I fear," interrupted Saville, perceiving he was about to volunteer his services to an *any day* period, "I fear we shall be late for dinner."

"Bless me! I hope not," said the major, pulling his warming-pan of a watch out of his gulf of a fob; "for I am engaged to dine with Signor Bartiloni, the owner of the pretty villa at the other side of the water."

"I am sorry to hear it," said Mowbray; "for perhaps you would have dined with us."

"Oh! my dear fellow, I'd much rather do that, now you mention it. I can see Bartiloni any day; but you're on the wing; so, if you'll allow me, I'll just row over and tell them not to expect me, and I'll be with you in the twinkling of an eye; but don't wait a moment for me; and just mention *my* name, and tell Dejean to let you have some of that creaming Burgundy of his, of the vintage of '21; it's the right thing, I assure you; and his sherry is very fair; but you'll find the Madeira better; and I should advise you to stick to *that*."

And so saying, the major vanished, leaving the friends in perfect despair at his non-anticipated acceptance of their invitation.

"I hope, my dear Mowbray, this will be a lesson to you never to trust to Major Nonplus's being engaged twelve deep; for you see his friendship for you is such, that he is ready to jilt any one for the pleasure of your society."

Mowbray laughed; and on reaching the boat, addressed some inquiries to the boy, touching the unhappy Signor Bartiloni, whom they were about to deprive of the major's company. The first information they reaped was, that he was at the time being in Paris, and was not expected home for a month; at which they exchanged looks and smiles. On arriving at the inn, they found their guest domiciled before them, making the tour of a tub of ice, and equally dividing his attentions between three long-necked spinster-like-looking bottles and two of more matronly dimensions.

"Ah! you see I'm to the minute; thought it better to order the wine for you; save you the trouble; besides, Dejean daren't hum me; know every bin in his cellar! Pray," continued the major, seating himself at the table, and arranging his napkin carefully around his chin, under the "surveillance" of his ample white cravat, after the fashion of his royal highness of ——, "pray, are you aware that the De Cliffords are at Milan?"

"By themselves?" asked Saville, hastily, "or—or—"

"Oh no, the whole party; the Dow looking more grim than ever, Lady de Clifford more beautiful than ever, and Miss Neville, the pretty Fanny, more fascinating than ever."

"Fanny, Miss Neville, with them?" said Saville, and his face flushed to a deep crimson.

"Why, God bless me!" said the major, "that fire is too much for you: change places with me, my dear fellow; I'm an old soldier; can stand fire, you know; ha! ha! ha!"

"Is not Lord de Clifford rather an odd person?" asked Mowbray, intuitively pitying his poor friend in the *gauche* fangs of the major.

"Oh, monstrous odd; he had been puzzling his brain upon a calculating machine (having his amiable mother, I suppose, for a model), when, lo! just as he had nearly completed it, out comes Mr. Babbage's, and obliges him to relinquish the science of numbers for the art of tormenting, which he has practised upon poor Lady de Clifford ever since. And when a man forms the laudable project of worrying his wife, he cannot have a more able coadjutor than a mother-in-law of the dowager's calibre; do you think he can, Mowbray? ha! ha! ha! And I don't know how it is, poor dear Fanny, who used to make all sorts of fun out of her pompous brother-in-law, and his lugubrious dam, is quite changed of late. There is no fun now left at all in her; they say she had a love affair last year, that all went wrong, and that she's never been right since; but I don't believe it, for she looks as pretty as ever; and young ladies in love ought, according to the most approved rules, always to look ill and miserable. And then poor Lady de Clifford, too; they say *she* is perfectly wretched; but I don't believe *that either*, for she *looks* so happy, and always seems the gayest person in a room. But there is no understanding women, they have such a confounded way of concealing their feelings. I recollect hearing that when the report came that I was killed at Waterloo, Mrs. Nonplus was at a ball, and they say she heard the *heart-rending* intelligence with as much composure as if her carriage had been announced. Wonderful, isn't it? Now, 'pon my soul, that's true; can hardly believe it, can you? But Mrs. Nonplus is a woman of an uncommon strong mind!"

Mowbray laughed outright, and then exclaimed, in a mock heroic tone,

> "Brutus, unmoved, heard how his Portia fell—
> Had Jack's wife died, he'd have behaved as well."

"Ah, Brutus—yes, I understand—Roman virtue, and all that sort of thing. But Mrs. N. *is* quite Roman, I assure you—Roman nose—very fond of Roman punch,

and mends broken china with Roman cement, which shows she has it in her, you know; but, Lord bless me! this hermitage is quite sympathetic, for while I am growing warm about my wife, it is becoming equally so. Better ring for another bottle, my dear fellow."

The rosy god at length subdued the major into silence, and with the assistance of two waiters, he was conveyed up stairs to bed, hiccoughing out peremptory orders to be called in time to accompany his friends to Ferney in the morning.

"I wish to Heaven," said Saville, throwing up the window, and drawing his chair to it as soon as the major had been removed, "I wish to Heaven I were like you, Mowbray!"

"A propos de quoi, mon cher?"

"Why, *à propos* to your being like the man Prometheus made, and having no relations, at least none that have the power of advising, tormenting, and preventing you on all occasions."

"And so I am to be envied," said Mowbray, laughing, "for being 'lord of myself, that heritage of wo.' I can assure you that independent isolation is by no means the happy state you be-fathered and be-uncled young gentlemen may imagine it. I often wish that I had a miserly father, a fidgety mother, or even an old maiden aunt, who doled me out her money à la Shylock, taking at least a pound of flesh for every one of gold, and mortgaging my time and patience by her *exigence* every hour in the day, provided I had but any human being to care when I went and when I came. You know how I have slaved to try and fall in love, but in vain; I have had so many rivals in my horses, houses, carriages, and estates, that I have felt jealous of myself, to say nothing of not being particularly addicted to young ladies in such a profound state of moral and intellectual innocence, that the former renders them quite unable to form a preference for one man above another, except through the medium of a rent-roll or the red-book, while the latter leaves them perfectly ignorant of the marked distinction nature has made between turnips and carrots!"

"Yes, but on the other hand, how delightful when one does chance to meet a young lady, Mowbray, who does know the difference between carrots and turnips, and who would venture to explore the perilous sea of

marriage, without either the chart of the red-book or the compass of a rent-roll; to have an uncle, from whom one 'expects everything' and hopes nothing, at one side objecting, a father at the other forbidding, and a whole tribe of aunts prophecying and preaching you into an atrophy."

"In short, this being interpreted, means that Mr. Harry Saville, a young gentleman who is to have the reversion of £10,000 a year, is extremely ill used by his relations, in not being unmolestedly allowed to marry Miss Fanny Neville, a young lady with—the reversion of nothing."

"Well, Mowbray, they are at Milan, so pray wait till you see her before you laugh at me; not that I ever expect any sympathy from such an adamantine personage as you, who, beyond a Pigmalion passion for a statue or a flirtation with a Domenichino, know nothing of 'L'etoffe de la nature que l'imagination à brodeé.'"

"Thank you," said Mowbray, laughing, as he lit his hand-candle, "I shall take your quotation from Voltaire as a hint to go to bed, that we may be up in time to-morrow to see Ferney before we escape from Geneva and Nonplus."

The next morning a brilliant sun lighted the two friends on their way to Ferney. The vexation of spirit occasioned by the roughness of the road, had an adequate "pendant" in the vanity, the egregious, the small, the paltry vanity that meets the visiter in every turn of that far-famed spot. After driving through the very shabby entrance, you find yourself in a small hall, wherein is a large picture, designed by Voltaire himself, and executed by some wretched Swiss Dick Tinto of that era. In the foreground stands the poet brandishing the Henriade, which he is presenting to Apollo, who, nevertheless, appears to look on it with much the same expression with which a parish overseer rejects a petition for an additional eighteen-pence a week. In the background is the Temple of Memory, towards which Fame appears posting with a good substantial pair of wings, at the rate of seven miles an hour. The Muses and Graces (who are evidently incog.) surround Voltaire, and bear off his bust to the Temple of Memory, while his own thoughts, viz., the heroes and heroines of the Henriade, are standing astonished at his wonderful talents. The authors who wrote against him are falling

into the infernal regions, while Envy and her progeny are expiring at his feet; and, in order that nothing may be lost, Calas and his family are also dragged into this modest tableau. Leaving this focus of egotism and vanity, the rest of the house presents in detail these two great elements of its quondam owner; the drawing-room being ornamented with a bust of Voltaire; in his bedroom are portraits of his friends, Frederic the Great of Prussia, Le Kain, Catharine the Second of Russia, Madame de Chastelet; then again comes a portrait of Voltaire, flanked by one of Milton and Sir Isaac Newton. There is also the vase that contained his heart, before its removal to Paris, upon which is an inscription that could not have been more modest had he written it himself:

"Mon esprit est par tout, et mon cœur est ici."

The whole house reminds one of the anecdote of his sending a bunch of violets to Madame de Chastelet, when she expected at least an "aigrette" of diamonds. How the truth of her answer strikes one: "Mon ami laissez ces niaiseries tu n'étiez pas fait pour être naturel; tu es audessus de çela!" At every turn you are presented with copies of verses in praise of Voltaire, which you may buy for five franks; and the old gardener, who still remembers him, while he presents you with one of the most elaborate of these eulogiums, at the same time informs you that he had the most dreadful temper that ever was, and that they were all terribly afraid of him. Certainly, the French have more sentiment and less feeling than any people in the world: had Tullia been a French woman, she might equally have driven over the dead body of her father; but, then, what an elegy she would have written upon the event! and with what tears would she have read it out to a sympathizing and admiring audience!

Just as they were about to get into the carriage, the aforesaid old gardener inquired if they had seen Voltaire's nightcap.

"Oui, oui," said Mowbray, laughing; "j'ai tout vu."

"J'ai vu le soleil et la lune
Qui faisoient des discours en l'air,
J'ai vu le terrible Neptune
Sortir tout frisé de la mer!"

"Diable! mais monsieur à beaucoup vu," said the old man, his hair standing on end as he bowed them into the carriage.

From Ferney they proceeded to Coppet. Poor Madame de Staël! in a fit of monomania she talks of the "moral air of England!" but there really is a moral atmosphere and well-regulated look about Coppet, at least compared to Ferney. At all events, it has a "soignée" English appearance, which always gives one a good opinion of the owner of a Continental house, when one has been surfeited with dirt, disorder, and the fine arts. After driving through a long, straight, ugly gravel-walk road, the nice old house, with its four round, quaint-looking towers, grouped like oldfashioned sentry-boxes, appears; the hall is not particularly good, but the staircase is broad and handsome; opposite the hall-door is the library, a nice long room with pillars, and oldfashioned wire bookcases lined with green silk. The windows look out upon a pretty garden, bounded by the lake: at the upper end of the library is a large tapestried bedchamber, formerly occupied by Madame Récamier. At the lower, a door opening into the "salle à manger;" over the chimney-piece in the library is a full-length portrait of Neckar, on the right of which is another of Madame Neckar, and on the left one of William Schlegel; it is a heavy, stupid face. There is withal an egaré look about it, just the sort of astonishment his features must have expressed when he found that he had inspired love in such a woman as Madame de Staël; while the look of thought the painter has endeavoured to *knead* into his face only makes him appear to be in the act of racking his brains for misstatements for her "Germany." Up stairs, the rooms are large and good, and accurately clean, with such a decided air of English comfort about them, that one wonders how it was ever got through "*the customs.*" Next to Madame de Staël's bedroom is the dressing-room she used to write in of a morning; the chair, the table, the inkstand, just as she left it; the windows looking out upon the lake, and Clarens, the beautiful Clarens in the distance!

"Ah," said Saville, sitting down in *the* chair and throwing open the window, "it is evidently *here* that she must have first dreamed 'Corinne,' however she may have realized it in Italy."

"Yes," laughed Mowbray, "and William Schlegel

(*vide* the picture) must have been the original of that leaden lover, Lord Nelville."

"Oh, you sacrilegious dog! to speak so profanely of any of the personages mentioned in that rubric of love."

"'Peccavi,'" said Mowbray; "but recollect, that though *you* are no doubt by this time fit for canonization, *I* am not yet even a convert to the true faith; but as you seem inclined to spend the rest of your life in that chair, dreaming of your Corinne, or perhaps in the hope of becoming inspired, I must leave you, as I want to see the rest of the house."

Saville followed slowly on; in the drawing-room was Gerard's picture of Madame de Staël; the turban and attitude evidently after the manner of Domenichino's Sibyl in the Capitol, but oh! what a difference in the face! though the eyes are certainly remarkably fine, and there is as much beauty in the countenance as expression can give when it plays the rebel, and sets features totally at defiance.

"I *could* have been in love with that woman, too," said Mowbray, in answer to his own thoughts, as he looked with folded arms earnestly at the picture. "What splendid eyes! and what exquisitely beautiful arms! I always admired beautiful arms—one sees them so seldom."

"This could not be said of hers," said Saville, laughing; "for, as tradition hath it, she displayed them on all occasions; and even with posterity she appears determined (forgive the pun) to carry it 'vi et armis;' but that eternal palm-branch in her hand, I wonder why she should retain that, even in her picture."

"Because, in her generation, she yielded the palm to none; and now, Master Harry, you have pun for pun. But what a sweet, gentle, feminine picture that is of the Duchesse de Broglie! the word lovely seems made on purpose to be applied to it."

"It is indeed very lovely," said Saville, "and I dare say she was the original of Lucille; there is something very English in the whole contour."

"Now, as you love me, Hal, never undertake to praise me, if you laud after that fashion. English-looking! that is an epithet which never can be eulogistic, except as applied to boards, beds, beefsteaks, and bottled porter; but to apply it to the gentler sex! Harry, Harry, it is the last, the very last insult which injury should

provoke a man to offer to a woman. What think you they keep French abigails for, employ French milliners, adopt French morals, and endure as many privations and abominations in Continental tours, as a retreating army in an Egyptian campaign, if it is to be called English-looking at last! 'Go to and mend thy manners.'"

On each side of the mantelpiece were miniatures, into one of which poor Monsieur Rocard had slunk; into the other Monsieur Auguste, with a great deal of French beauty about him (that is to say, "coiffée à la coup de vent"), and that sort of half Agamemnon, half Antinous look, which all the Monsieur Augustes possess, that have ever been or that ever will be transmitted to posterity, through the medium of ivory or canvass. Out of the drawing-room is a very nice, comfortable billiard-room, with busts round it; and though the house had not been inhabited for some time, it had a peculiarly inhabited look.

"Coppet!" said Mowbray, as they descended the stairs, "thy mistress is no more; then why dost thou seem so cheerful, since thou 'ne'er will look upon her like again?'"

That night the friends slept at Mellerie; to their shame be it confessed, they thought not once of Jean Jacques, or even of his tertian ague Julie, and St. Preux, till the hostess announced that no trout could be got for supper.

"'Comment il n'y à pas de truite! à Mellerie?'" cried Saville; and then, slapping his forehead like a despairing lover, exclaimed, "'L'eau est profonde, La Roch est escarpée, et je suis au desespoir; parcequ'il n'y à pas de truite pour le souper! mais comme tous mes espérances sont de truites pour aujourd'hui, je les aurez pour le déjeûner demain.'"

"I think," said Mowbray, laughing at this rhapsody. and still more at the landlady's astounded face, and Andare's horrified one, at this profane quotation from the Heloise—"I think you had better go to bed, or else you will pun yourself into a fever."

"Or sup full of horrors if I remain," said Saville, as he glanced at the first "entrée," a nondescript-looking bird, very like a roasted gondola ingulfed in a sea of "beur noir."

CHAPTER III.

"A qui cette belle maison et ces vastes
Champs? demandait le roi en bassant,
Le store de la voiture?"

"A monseigneur le Marquis de Carabas,
Sire repondit les moissonniers, comme le
Chat bottée leurs avoit commander
De dire"

Histoire Célébre du Chat Bottée.

"I won't describe; description is my forte,
But every fool describes in these bright days
His wonderous journey to some foreign court,
And spawns his quartos, and demands your praise.
Death to his publisher, to him 'tis sport;
While Nature, tortured twenty thousand ways,
Resigns herself with exemplary patience
To guide-books, rhymes, tours, sketches, illustrations."

LORD BYRON.

EVERY one who has passed the Simplon (and who is there that has not?) knows as well as I can tell them, that, let them turn to which side they will on the sunny margin of that terrestrial paradise, the Lago Maggiore, and inquire who is the happy owner of some fairy casino, from Isola Madre and Isola Bella onward, will be sure to receive the eternal answer that it belongs to Prince Borromeo, who is most categorically the Marquis de Carabas of "that ilk." How gloriously, how primevally beautiful, is just this one favoured spot! how "flat, stale, and unprofitable" the plains of Lombardy beyond! and how infernal look the red lights, that glare out the way, previous to reaching the ferry at Cesto Calendo, where the poor blind fiddler, with his songs of "Bella Italia" and "La Placida Campagna," seems, Orpheus-like, to move the sticks and stones of the heavily-laden ferry, and make the passage over less miserable than it otherwise would be!

But, in Italy, let no one fear a lack of discomfort; no, no! at every "poste" they will be sure of the eternal dogana, the large, dirty, miserable inn, and the pitched battle between the courier and the maestro della posta, about the "tariffe:" add to this, the having

nothing to eat, while one's self is eaten alive, will always ensure to an Englishman his national privilege of grumbling, which, being his greatest luxury, is also, luckily, the only one that is not "contrabandista," and therefore gets through the custom-house duty free.

The day that Saville and Mowbray reached Milan was one of those bright, balmy, thoroughly Italian days, that make one feel very much as one fancies a chrysalis must feel when it is turning into a butterfly, and expanding into a new and happier existence; but while Mowbray was looking to the right and to the left as they passed the Corso, and joyfully recognising old acquaintances in every tree, Saville was as eagerly looking into every carriage, and thinking every moment an hour till they alighted at the Albergo Reale. Verily, his toilette was not of the longest, and yet the most fastidious eye could not have detected any deficiency in it when, half an hour after their arrival, he might have been seen striding along "à pas de giant" towards the palazza: but, alas! "the course of true love never did," nor ever will, "run smooth." To his inquiry of whether Lord de Clifford was at home, the negative reply he received did not send an icebolt to his heart; but when the same answer was returned about Lady de Clifford and her sister, and, finally, when he was informed that they were gone to Lodi, were not expected back till dinner-time, and that they all dined that day at the Contessa A.'s, poor Saville looked as if, instead of this simple and very natural piece of intelligence, the porter had informed him that a price was set upon his head, and in an hour from thence it would be separated from his body.

Slowly and languidly he retraced his steps to the hotel; and after throwing open every window in the room, ringing the bell, till he broke it, for his man Gifford, and being extremely angry at hearing he was out, though, on leaving home, he himself had told him he might go out, as he should not want him till dinner, he resorted to that usual "pis aller" of disappointed lovers, pacing to and fro, as if in the hope of walking away from himself. He was still pursuing this unselfish but somewhat impracticable journey, when Mowbray returned to dinner.

"What, noble knight of La Mancha!" said the latter, smiling, "has thy dulcinea persisted in stringing pearls,

and turning a deaf ear to thy suit, that thou thus wearest the blanched livery of wo?"

"Pshaw!" muttered Saville, peevishly turning upon his heel. "Really, Mowbray, your persiflage is unbearable; it is always so deusedly ill-timed."

"Not so this 'purée à la bisque,'" said Mowbray, as the soup made its appearance; "for I never was more hungry in my life."

"You're always hungry," retorted Saville: "I thought we were not to dine till seven?"

"And it is now half past," said Mowbray, holding up his watch.

They sat down to table in silence. It is needless to say that Saville found the soup too salt and too thin; in short, that everything that fell to his share was peculiarly and unpardonably bad; and that he more than once expressed his surprise how Mowbray could drink glass after glass of that infernal stuff, which was much more like vinegar and water than white Hermitage. Heaven only knows when his animadversions would have ceased, had not a billet been presented to him by one of the waiters, who added,

"Monsieur le valet de chambre de Madame la Comtesse attende votre reponse."

The note was from Madame de A——, begging Saville and his friend to come to her box at La Scala that evening, where they would meet Lord and Lady de Clifford and Miss Neville; the comtesse politely adding, that she longed to make the acquaintance of so distinguished a person as Mr. Mowbray.

Saville, in replying to this simple invitation, had to write four different notes before he could return a suitable affirmative; for he had put so many "chères" and so much gratitude in the first four, that even he perceived the absurdity of them; and at length, despairing of achieving his task creditably, he pushed the inkstand over to Mowbray, saying, with an imploring voice, "My dear fellow, do just write a proper answer, will you?"

"To what? and to whom?" inquired Mowbray.

"Oh, ah—true; I forgot," said Saville. "Madame de A—— has written to ask us to go to La Scala this evening, and she wants to know you; so do just say, as if I said it for you, how 'charmée' you will be 'de faire la connaissance d'une personne aussi charmante, et aussi aimable que Madame de A——,' and that we will obey her summons."

Mowbray took the pen and did as he was desired. No sooner was the note despatched, than, as if by the wand of a magician, everything on the table seemed to be changed from execrable to excellent. Even the wine, before condemned as vinegar and water, was now pronounced to be far better than was generally to be met with at hotels; and Gifford, in placing a timbal of maccaroni before his master, apologized humbly and fearfully for its not being "au ju," as he assured him he had ordered it.

"Oh, never mind," said the all-accommodating Saville; "I think I like it better 'en timbal.'"

Mowbray burst out laughing. "What are you laughing at?" asked Saville, good-humouredly.

"Why," said Mowbray, "at the Sybarite who ten minutes ago was writhing at his crumpled rose-leaf, being, by the few magical words contained in this billet, converted into the stoic, whom it is not in the power of adverse fate to annoy."

The only point upon which Saville now appeared to be at all querulously inclined, was upon Mowbray not evincing equal impatience with himself to be at the opera. At length half past nine came, and Saville declared it must be near eleven, and he would not wait a moment longer. When they arrived at La Scala, they found Madame de A——'s box empty; and as neither she nor her party came till full an hour afterward, they had the satisfaction of seeing (and trying not to hear) "Il Barbiere" cruelly shorn of all its graces; for it was since the reign of La divina Malibran at Milan, when thin audiences are condemned to fat voiceless Romeos, tame Almavivas, and ungraceful Rosinas.

"I am really very much obliged to you, Saville, for procuring me such a treat," said Mowbray.

"Oh, never mind," returned his companion; "she—I mean they, will be here presently." As he spoke, the door opened, and two of Madame de A.'s servants entered, and snuffing the candles, and arranging the cushions and pillows on the sofa, announced that the contessa and her party were coming. A few minutes after, Madame de A., Lady de Clifford, and her sister, made their appearance. Madame de A. was a middle-sized blonde, rather "embonpoint," and a very pretty woman, at that time of life when a lady never talks of other people's ages or her own, and never uses the word

"passée," either relatively or comparatively, joined to the most perfect manners. She had that great charm which Italian women so rarely, so very rarely possess —"a most sweet voice." There was in her manner a kindness and cordiality, which, when united with perfect good-breeding, enhances the effect of the latter just as much as a warm background throws out and gives a tone to the most finished picture.

Her greetings with Saville over, she gracefully and flatteringly made the acquaintance of his friend, who, on Saville's account, had been narrowly scrutinizing Miss Neville, and few faces could better bear minute investigation. Above the middle size, she had all the dignity of height without its awkwardness; her features were small and beautifully chiselled; her eyes of the darkest hazel; her head and throat were statue-like, and her hair of that rich satiny, nameless brown, like a hazelnut. There was a playful expression lurking in her deep eyes, and at the corners of her saucy, pouting mouth, which her friends would have called "laughter-loving," and her enemies satirical; her conversation would have confirmed both friends and enemies in their opinion; and her spirits were so "brilliant and light," that they might have been oppressive to others if her manner had not been the gentlest, and her voice the softest that ever was. So that, with all her playfulness, she gave one the idea of a gazelle chained within bounds by eider-down fetters; and her merry laugh, that rang out like a peal of silver bells, did not destroy the illusion. As she shook hands with Saville, Mowbray watched the heightened colour of her cheek, the tears that filled her eyes, and the happy agitation of her manner, and almost envied him his bondage, as much as Saville had envied him his liberty at Geneva; nor was this feeling lessened, when, on Saville's presenting him to Fanny, she intuitively put out her hand to him, and then looked so provokingly beautiful as she stammered out an apology about Mr. Saville being such an old friend of hers, that she fancied his friends must also be hers.

"If Miss Neville will but continue to think so," said Mowbray, "much as I have always owed to Saville's friendship, I shall now be more his debtor than ever."

Among Fanny Neville's numerous perfections was that of never giggling herself out of a compliment. So

that, in the present instance, she neither simpered nor blushed, but said playfully to Mowbray,

"Well, then, Mr. Mowbray, you must let me begin our friendship by laying you under an obligation to me, that of introducing you to my sister. Lady de Clifford, Mr. Mowbray."

"I see," said Mowbray, bowing, "you have maliciously determined that the obligation shall be eternal."

Lady de Clifford was taller than her sister; her beauty was altogether of a different kind: her head, and the manner in which it was placed upon her shoulders, was quite as classical as Fanny's; but then the contour was more that of Juno than of Psyche. Her features, too, were small, yet perfect; a little, a very little less Greek than her sister's, but more piquant, with a nose that I can only describe by calling it epigrammatic; it could not have belonged to a fool, or even to a dull person. There was something queenlike about her, but then it was her air only; for though dazzling was the word every one felt inclined to apply to her appearance, yet she had quite as much prettiness as beauty; that is, she had all the feminine delicacy and fascination of a merely pretty woman, with all the dignity and splendour of a perfectly beautiful one. In short, prettiness might be said to be the detail of her features, and beauty their effect. Her eyes were "darkly, deeply, beautifully blue," and the long dark fringes that shadowed them gave a Murillo-like softness to her cheek when she looked down; her complexion would have been too brilliant had it not changed almost as often as the rose clouds in an Italian sky; for it varied as though each passing thought reflected its shadow upon her face; her mouth and teeth would have baffled the imagination of a painter or the description of a poet; and her smile was bright,

> "Like any fair lake that the breeze is upon,
> When it breaks into dimples and laughs in the sun."

To the greatest strength of character she united the mildest disposition, and withal was what her sex so rarely are, "though witty, wise." Few women could boast her solid and almost universal information, yet was there nothing of the "précieuse" about her; no attempt at display, no contempt for the ignorance of others; in short, good sense did for her manners what

religion did for her character—blended, purified, and harmonized each separate or opposing quality, without the mainsprings ever ruggedly or obtrusively appearing to taunt others with their lack of them. Mowbray had been so preoccupied with Fanny, that he had not at first remarked Lady de Clifford; but, now that his attention was especially called to her, he felt himself gazing at her almost rudely, for never before had he seen anything that he thought so wondrously beautiful; and a minute or two elapsed in taking the chair Madame de A. offered him between Lady de Clifford and herself, before he recollected himself sufficiently to speak to either of them. At length, pitying Fanny and Saville, who by no means appeared to enjoy the dead silence that had ensued, he commenced playing the agreeable (which none could do more successfully) to his two fair companions. He listened to Madame de A., but he was perfectly "entraine" by everything Lady de Clifford said; every word appeared to him epigrammatic; and yet, had he been asked to instance a single good thing she said, he could not have done it. But certain it is, that some persons have the art of giving to the merest commonplaces an interest and a novelty of expression, that others might despair of imparting to the most original ideas; and this art she possessed in no ordinary degree. It is astonishing how the wish to please ensures success; about the only wish, alas! that does ensure its own fulfilment, and therefore I marvel that it is not a more universal one. This wish, in the present instance, was Mowbray's, and its success was proportionate to its sincerity: he even suddenly remembered that he had once had a great friendship for a person whose existence he had for some time most unaccountably forgotten—a stupid young man, a Mr. Pierpoint, who had been a brother paper-spoiler with him some seven years ago, at the embassy at Vienna, a cousin of Lady de Clifford's. The virtues, talents, and amiable qualities of this young gentleman, he now began to recapitulate, or, rather, to manufacture, to his fair cousin.

"Poor George!" said Lady de Clifford, smiling, "I am sure he never had so warm an admirer before. How grateful he ought to be to you, Mr. Mowbray."

Mowbray, who felt conscious that George Pierpoint in reality possessed but the one merit he had just dis-

covered, namely, that of being cousin to Lady de Clifford, felt a slight sense of the ridiculous, "et pour se tirer d'affaire," thought he had better continue the catalogue of their mutual friends; and therefore mentioned another diplomatic effigy, Mr. Grimstone, a brother of Lord de Clifford's.

Lady de Clifford did more than smile at Mowbray's anecdotes of him; but in the midst of their mirth the door opened, and the Comte de A. and Lord de Clifford entered. There is no need of describing the poor comte; indeed, it would be no easy task, as he amounted to what all Italian and French husbands do—a mere cipher. Lord de Clifford was a perpendicular, stately personage, aspiring towards seven feet: he gave one the idea of never even in sleep having been guilty of an easy position: the vulgar term of "he looks as if he had swallowed a poker," was completely exemplified in his appearance. He had straight, stiff, and obstinate (very obstinate) brown hair, very small, light gray eyes; a nose so aquiline, that if it had appeared on paper, instead of on a human face, it would have been pronounced a caricature; his upper lip was straight, and of that inordinate length which may be taken as the affidavit of the face to the obstinacy of the owner's character. It is, after this, perhaps, unnecessary to add that he always wore a blue coat and gilt buttons of an evening, with a huge and very white stiff cravat, that looked cut out of stone; after the Tam O'Shanter order of sculpture.

Nature seemed to have given him a sort of rag-bag of a mind, made up of the strangest and most incongruous odds and ends possible, with a clumsy kind of arrogance of all-work to arrange it, that was continually adding to its confusion; his information, such as it was (though he aimed at the universal), might be compared to the "Penny Cyclopædia" printed upside down; and the curious and gigantic pomposity with which he dealt out the smallest and most commonplace fact, reminded one of an elephant, with mighty effort, bowing out its trunk to pick up a pin's head or a piece of thread. Among his mass of information, geology, of course, had not been neglected; and having heard at school or elsewhere that, did the world lose but the smallest atom of its gravity, it would be at an end, he always seemed impressed with the idea that he was the important atom

on which its existence depended; and also was of opinion that so great a man should be governed by the same principles as the universe, and therefore took care never to lose an atom of his own gravity; for which reason, strange to say, he was never known to catch the infection when others were laughing at him. In politics he was an ultra-Liberal (it gives more scope for declamation); in private life (as is the general pendant to public liberality) he was a tyrannical autocrat, a Caligula in his clemency, and a Draco in his displeasure; whatever appertained to him was always the best and most faultless in the world; all, excepting his wife; she was not of his own immediate stock; merely a graft, which accounted for all her faults; that, among the rest, of his never being able (incessantly as he impressed it on her) to get her to feel and appreciate her wonderful good fortune in being wedded to him, which was the more extraordinary, as she had left the nursery at her mother's commands to marry him; not but that Lady de Clifford was, in thought, word, and deed, what any other man would have considered perfection for a wife; but then, for such superhuman merits as his, what could be good enough? Still it might have puzzled even him to find a real fault in her; for had she to her other rare qualities added the rarest of all, that of being able to adore him, she could not have anticipated, and prevented, and studied every wish of his, with more scrupulous devotion and delicacy than she did. This his selfishness could not help feeling, though his heart or his memory never recollected it, or he could not have subjugated her so completely to the surveillance, interference, and petty tyranny of every member of his family as he did. But then they were his family, and, consequently, must know better about everything, from the dressing of a child to the drowning of a puppy, than any wife could possibly do. Not that he did not, imbruted as he was, see his wife's superiority; for no one could, when occasion required, make more use of her talents; but then he liked to try and make his family, the world, and especially herself, believe that she was as ignorant and inferior as, according to his opinions, every woman ought to be. After Lord de Clifford had made one of his stiffest bows to Mowbray, and as stiffly shaken Saville by the hand, he inflicted himself upon poor Madame de A., making commonplace obser-

vations upon the opera, in bad French and worse Italian, till even she was wearied out of her good-breeding into exclaiming, "Mais, mon Dieu! milord parlais Anglais, et je tacherai de vous comprendre." Meanwhile, Mowbray and Lady de Clifford had resumed their conversation, and the name of Grimstone reaching his ear, accompanied by a slight laugh, he turned to his sposa, and inquired, with an angry frown, and a sneering smile that made an awkward attempt to neutralize it,

"Are you speaking of my brother?"

Lady De Clifford crimsoned to her very temples, and in the greatest confusion stammered out, "No—yes—that is, Mr. Mowbray was talking about my giddy cousin, George Pierpoint, and your brother whom he also met at Vienna."

Mowbray was at a loss to conceive what the necessity of this evident embarrassment and equivocation could be, as he had merely been recording Mr. Herbert Grimstone's awful importance whenever a courier was going out, and it was necessary to make up a bag, whether of ladies' letters and commissions, or of circular negatives from the "corps diplomatique" to their English duns; but certain it was she had equivocated in the most undeniable manner; for at the moment, and, indeed, for some time before, there had been no mention of Pierpoint's name. Then why denounce him to her husband as being *the* subject of their conversation? It was strange, it was passing strange! Could one so gifted, so amiable as she appeared (and on whose countenance candour itself seemed to have set her seal), could she be guilty of art, of subterfuge, nay, almost of positive want of truth? It would be impossible to describe the painful revulsion that took place in Mowbray's feelings as he asked himself these questions. "Fool!" said he, as he felt his cheek flushing and his pulse beating quickly, "and what is it to me if she *is* all that's artful, all that's bad? And yet, why, oh! why are we thus to be eternally disappointed in all earthly things? why, when we no sooner find flowers more fair, more fresh, more bright than others, must we at the same time discover that 'the trail of the serpent is over them all?'"

There is no knowing how long he might have moralized within himself, had not his revery been broken in upon by the silver voice of Lady de Clifford asking

him to reach her shawl, as the ballet was over: that voice, so low, so soft, so touching, seemed to his heated imagination like that of an angel pronouncing a pitying absolution upon his sin, in having for a moment doubted its divinity. He folded the shawl almost reverentially, and, in placing it on her shoulders, he did it as gently as though one rough movement would have been sacrilege; nor did he venture to offer his arm till he perceived there was no one else left to do so; and then quickly and silently they followed the rest of the party down stairs: he placed his fair charge in the carriage without even saying "good-night;" nor was he roused to a sense of this omission, till the sonorous pomposity of Lord de Clifford's voice, asking him to accompany Saville to dinner at his house on the following day, enabled him to accept the invitation and make his adieus at the same time. No sooner was he seated in his own carriage, than Saville turned round and joyously exclaimed,

"Well, Mowbray, what do you think of her? Did I say too much?"

"Think of her!" said Mowbray; "what can any one think but that she is an angel, as far as outward appearance goes—but—but—"

"But what?" interrupted Saville; "for Heaven's sake, Mowbray, what do you mean?"

Mowbray, ashamed to find that he had not been answering his friend's question, but recurring to Lady de Clifford's evasion, felt heartily ashamed both of his selfishness and his suspicion, and turned off the disqualifying *but* that had so alarmed poor Saville into—

"But I was going to say, Harry, when you interrupted me, that I think it a pity you should put yourself in the way of so much temptation, unless there is some chance of your father's consent."

"Oh! as to that," said Saville, who was too happy to be critical upon the probabilities of the latter being Mowbray's original, "*but* as to that, you know, by my uncle Cecil's will, I am to inherit what he left me at seven-and-twenty; that I shall be in two years, and abroad we can do very well on two thousand a year; only the worst of it is, two years is a devil of a time to wait."

Mowbray drank more hock and soda-water that night than would have quenched the thirst of twenty fevers;

and Saville declared it was too hot to think of bed those three hours, and talked incessantly of Fanny; Mowbray to all appearance listened most attentively; never once interrupting him, and only nodding assent to every perfection he accused her of. When at length they retired for the night, sleep seemed as far from them as ever. Saville was too happy, and in too much anticipation of happiness, to sleep; and Mowbray had such an innate love of truth, that he kept turning and twisting Lady de Clifford's dereliction from it in every possible and impossible form, till the cathedral clock tolled five; when, turning round, and flinging the pillow from him, he lulled himself to sleep with his opera interrogation, "and what is it to me if she *is* all that's artful and all that's bad?"

CHAPTER IV.

"Let no man on his first falling in with the devil, evince towards him a forbearing civility, lest, like unto a maiden's importunate lover, he construe it into a secret yearning himward. For the devil, like his pupil man, is a vain devil; and it taketh much to disconcert him with himself, or despair him of success; therefore, at the onset, say thou, 'Get thee behind me, Satan,' lest from encouragement no bigger than a midge's egg, he (like all low knaves courting the acquaintanceship of their superiors) in a short time get too fast hold on thee, for all thy strength to shuffle him off, and so he end by riding rough-shod over thy soul."—FRANCIS FLOWERDALE.

IT was late the next morning before Mowbray came down to breakfast, and he found that Saville had been gone out some time to the palazza. His first impulse was to follow him thither; but, on reflection, he thought it would appear obtrusive, and, moreover, the great desire he felt to do so convinced him (as he walked up and down the room in a state of wavering deliberation) that it would be better he did not. "No, no," said he, snatching up his hat; "as I am to dine there, that is enough." Yet, thought he, I should like to see if it is possible that she can look as well of a morning as she does at night; and if she does or does not, what is that to me? Nothing, absolutely nothing! and the short bitter laugh that followed the mental answer he had

given to his own thoughts, left Mowbray persuaded that he had bullied himself into a state of most noble and heroic indifference about Lady de Clifford, and indeed everything else in the world; and clearing the stairs "à trois pas," he walked slowly on towards the cathedral. "By-the-by," thought he, "I may as well go and pay my old friend San Carlos, of Bozzomeo, a visit, and see if time has robbed him of any more features." He entered the church, and walked on till he met a sacristan to conduct him down to the golden and gorgeous chapel that contains the saint's mortal remains; but on removing the outer case of the crystal coffin, the body appeared just the same as it had done some ten years before, the nose being the only feature that had taken its solitary departure. "And even the most beautiful will come to this, only much sooner!" said Mowbray aloud, in English, and he sighed as he said it: his sigh was more than echoed by one so low, deep, and sepulchral, that he would have almost fancied it had proceeded from the coffin before him, had not the words "é vero—vero," accompanied the sigh, as if in assent to his soliloquy. He turned in every direction to ascertain from whence the sigh and the words had proceeded, but could perceive no one; the sacristan smiled, and shrugging his shoulders, said, "O signor, questa qualca povero diavolo che fato la sua penitenza;" but Mowbray only became more puzzled to imagine how a poor Italian sinner performing his penance could understand English sufficiently to reply to his remark. In ascending the staircase that led into the body of the church, he looked all about, but could see no one save a stray woman here and there, with her high Spanish-looking comb and long black or white veil, saying her beads, but at too great a distance to have responded to his exclamation at the tomb of San Carlos; to be sure, there were confessionals in all directions, and the sighs or ejaculations of their tenants might easily have descended through the grating into the chapel. Still it was a strange coincidence, and Mowbray could not help pondering upon it as he walked through the sunny and French-looking streets of Milan. There is something French, too, in the air of the Milanese themselves; and then the "passages, cafés, and restaurants" of every street look so Parisian as to make one fancy that, after the carnage and desolation of Lodi, Pavia, and Binasco,

the French, by way of atonement (and they no doubt would consider it an ample one for any aggression), must have inoculated Milan with Paris.

After Mowbray had sauntered about for an hour or two with most murderous designs upon time (who, by-the-by, of all tyrants is the most difficult to assassinate), the thought struck him that every one in all probability would be at the Corso, and why should he not be there too?

Accordingly, inquiring the shortest way to the Albergo Reale, he ordered his horse, and galloped thither with as much velocity as Napoleon may have been supposed to have done when he went to plant his adventurous cannon at the Bridge of Lodi.

What a happy, gay-looking place that said Corso is, with its nice English-looking equipages! the horses suited to the carriages, and the carriages to the horses, and the servants to both, without one iota of the shabby and fanciful discrepances that generally distinguish a continental turnout!

As Mowbray, who had now slackened his pace, was riding leisurely along, his horse was a little startled by Prince setting off full speed, and barking with delight.

"What is the matter with the dog?" asked Mowbray, turning to the groom.

"He sees Mr. Saville, sir, out yander," was the reply.

"Where?" asked Mowbray.

"By them 'ere trees, sir, at the *fur side*, riding with a lady and gentleman."

Again the flanks of Mowbray's horse had the full benefit of his spurs, and in a few minutes he had joined the party, which proved to be Miss Neville, Lord de Clifford, and Saville.

"Is that your dog, Mr. Mowbray?" asked Fanny; "what a beautiful creature! Julia must see it; she dotes on dogs."

"She has a vast deal too many dogs already," growled Lord de Clifford, "and there is no use in encouraging her propensity for them."

"Lady de Clifford is not here, is she?" inquired Mowbray.

"Yes; I believe she's driving with my mother; at least I desired her to come here; so I conclude that she has," said the noble lord, drawing up with his most husbandly and authoritative air.

The words "*I desired* her to come here," tingled strangely in Mowbray's ear. "Good heavens!" thought he, "does he play the despot even in such trifles?" A feeling of sickening disgust stole over him, which, strange to say, was accompanied with a determination to insinuate himself as much as possible into Lord de Clifford's good graces, by showing that sort of deferential homage to his pomposity which he seemed to demand from every one. So he contented himself with replying:

"Oh! then of course she *is* here." The "lurking devil" he detected at the corner of Fanny's eye might have endangered his gravity, had he not taken refuge in admiring Lord de Clifford's mare.

"A beautiful creature that of yours," said Mowbray.

"Yes, she is; I had great difficulty in getting her; her dam was out of Austerlitz, the celebrated charger of Marechal B.; and the sire to Austerlitz was grandson to Sultan, the Arabian that Napoleon rode at the battle of Marengo."

"Oh! cheval illustre d'un âne peu renomé," said Fanny, in a stage whisper.

"Here is Lady de Clifford," said her amiable husband, as he rode up to the carriage, and addressed the following endearing interrogatory to her.

"Why, what the d—l has kept you so late?"

"Julia's Italian master was late, and I did not like to leave her at home, so I waited for her," said Lady de Clifford.

"Lady de Clifford of course knows best; but I thought it a pity," interposed the dowager, who strikingly resembled a withered crab-apple, gifted with a parrot's beak and tongue, "for a walk would have been much better for the child, and we should not have lost the finest part of the day. Pretty dear, hold up your head."

"Oh! but, papa," said the child, "I begged of mamma to stay for me, so that it is all my fault."

"You should learn, Julia," replied the affectionate father, "when *I* give an order to obey it."

"Yes, I know that," said the child, hanging down her head; and then brushing away the tears that stood in her eyes, she threw her arms round her mother's neck, and said, "Dear mamma, I'm so sorry I asked you to stay for me, but I will never do so again."

During this little scene Mowbray had full time to as-

certain to his perfect satisfaction that Lady de Clifford, if possible, looked more beautiful of a morning than at night; but he had no sooner arrived at this desirable conclusion, than the current of his thoughts was interrupted by Lord de Clifford's begging to introduce him to his mother. Mowbray bowed, and that was all he could do, for there are persons to whom it is quite impossible to say anything, and her ladyship was one of them; but pitying what she considered his diffidence, she kindly undertook "de faire les frais" of the conversation; and so, beating down from the opposite seat of the carriage two little Blenheim dogs of her daughter-in-law's, began it by saying she was "*vaustly*" fond of dogs in general.

"I dare say, Mr. Mowbray, you are quite shocked at seeing so many dogs; it quite spoils one's drive, makes the carriage look like a dog omnibus, disarranges one's dress, and destroys one's comfort. Those two Blenheims are horridly snappish; Zoe, the greyhound, is rather more good-humoured, but so frightfully frolicksome, she keeps one's nerves in a continual flutter; it is a thousand pities Lady de Clifford has such a mania for dogs. Look at that creature's tail, how it's going! positively perpetual motion."

When her ladyship had concluded this eloquent piece of alliteration, Mowbray ventured to take Lady de Clifford's part, by confessing his own fondness for dogs. "Indeed," said he, "I have a dog that I am so proud of, that I should have introduced him to you; but, after your philippic against the present company, I dare not."

"Oh! dear," said the amiable lady, "I have no objection to dogs in their proper place; quite the contrary."

I have remarked that this assertion about liking dogs in their proper place, old maids and servant-maids seem to consider as the test of a moral and well-regulated mind.

"Is that your dog?" asked Lady de Clifford, pointing to Prince, who sat panting with his tongue out and his ears up by the side of his master's horse. "What a dear dog! do make him put his paws up on the carriage."

"Prince! Prince! come here, sir!" and Prince took Waller's advice to Sacharissa, that is, "came forth, and suffered himself to be admired."

"Very fine beast, indeed," said the dowager, patronisingly.

"Oh! zoo nice dog," said Lady de Clifford, kissing its head.

"Oh! you lucky dog," said Mowbray, as he pushed him down.

Lord de Clifford began to lower, and issued a proclamation that, after they had taken another turn, it would be time to go home and dress for dinner. Mowbray and Saville took the hint, and saying "au revoir," galloped away.

When Saville and Mowbray arrived at Lord de Clifford's, they found the Comte and Contessa A., Comte C., a Mr. and Mrs. Seymour, and a young French dandy, a Monsieur de Rivoli, who did not seem to have made up his mind which he should be most vain of, himself or his English; though, of course, had it come to a ballot, he would have given a casting vote for himself, as he *was* French.

"Dinner, directly," said Lord de Clifford, in that loud, ill-bred voice, which gives the last arrival fully to understand how late they are.

"Do you know the Comte C.?" inquired he, turning to Mowbray.

"Yes, I had the pleasure of meeting him in England."

"Ah! how you do, my dear fellow?" said the comte, extending his hand.

"I see," said Mowbray, "you pay us the compliment of keeping up your English."

"Oh! we are all English at Milan: you know we have an Anglo mania," said the comte, who really spoke English remarkably well for an Italian.

"What ver great heat he is to-day," observed Monsieur de Rivoli to Lady de Clifford, with the intention of outshining Comte C.; and then, turning to Fanny, for fear she should be jealous of his devoting himself to her sister, for a Frenchman not only possesses an amiable fear of inflicting pain on the "beau sexe," but imagines himself a sort of Achilles' spear, which can alone heal the wounds it inflicts, said to her,

"But, what has arrive to you, Miss Neville, dat I no see you on de Corso to-day?"

"Rather let me ask you that question," replied Fanny, laughing; "for I was there for two hours."

"But, no! he is not possibel, and I no see you. Ah!"

continued he, grasping the side curls of his hair, "it is my bad habitude, 'de rever, comment dites vous cela?' of de reflection."

There is no knowing how many sad consequences Monsieur de Rivoli might have instanced of the effects of his habit of deep thinking, had not dinner been announced.

Comte C. gave his arm to Lady de Clifford, Saville secured Fanny, and as Mowbray fell to the share of Mrs. Seymour, and Lord de Clifford, "en régle," took out Madame de A., Monsieur de Rivoli was interrupted in the paternal petting he was bestowing upon his mustaches, to find that the Fates had decreed for him their likeness, the dowager Lady de Clifford; and he had only time "mentally to exclaim," as the heroes and heroines of the Minerva press have it, "Ah! la pauvre petite Fanni, c'est facheux par exemple ce contretems!" ere he felt the dowager's skinny arm closely linked in his.

At dinner, Mowbray found himself next to Lady de Clifford; and he fancied, as the light shone full on her face, that her eyes looked red, as if she had been crying.

"I fear you are not well?" said he, in a low voice, which appeared more anxious than the occasion required.

"I am quite well," said she, smiling; "only a slight headache from the heat."

"Saville," said Lord de Clifford, "try that Johannesberg; it is some my brother sent me. I think," continued he to Mowbray, "you knew my brother at Vienna?"

"Yes," said the latter, "we had many merry days there together."

Lord de Clifford looked surprised—as surprised at his coupling the word merry with his brother's name, as if he had asserted that he had passed many merry days at the *Morgue*.

"I remember," recommenced Mowbray, "that he was always in a great state of mind whenever—"

"Mr. Mowbray," said Lady de Clifford, interrupting him with such "impressment" as showed that she evidently wished to deter him from saying whatever he was going to say about her brother-in-law, "Mr. Mowbray, do you know that Madame A. is going to give a 'bal costumée,' and all the dresses are to be from the

different epochs of Italian history; and we are to have all the Italian painters and poets, so that we have been studying Sismondi for the last week; and I think of going as Johanna, Queen of Naples, dressed after the picture of her; and I want Fanny to go as Laura, and Mr. Saville must make the best Petrarch he can." As she finished this rapid recital, she laughed almost hysterically.

Mowbray was so lost in thought, that he scarcely heard anything but her last words, and was a minute or two before he could make any reply. Good heavens! thought he, that eternal man! what can her objection be to his name being mentioned at least to her husband! I would give anything on earth to fathom this mystery; and yet what is it to me? This question recalled him to the necessity of making some answer to what Lady de Clifford had been saying, and repeating with a mechanical and abstracted air,

"Johanna, Queen of Naples! and is Lord de Clifford going as Prince Andrew?" and, as he asked this, Mowbray sent his quick penetrating eyes into her very soul. She appeared offended at the question, and colouring slightly, said rather haughtily,

"It is not necessary to keep the unities at a fancy ball; and as most women have no characters at all, I do not feel bound 'faute de mieux,' to take upon me Johanna's, although *I* am inclined to believe Petrarch and Boccaccio, especially the latter, that it was a very excellent one."

How awkward the sense of having wounded the feelings of another makes one! It is the conviction of how contemptible we must appear in their eyes, that prevents us readily placing ourselves in a better light. Mowbray would have given the world to have unsaid what he had said, or to have atoned for it; but he felt both equally impossible. In this embarrassment, some street music began playing the Duke de Reichstadt's waltz. Lady de Clifford, feeling for his confusion, turned to him with one of her most open and sunny smiles, and said,

"I am so fond of that waltz! Is it not pretty?"

"Pretty!" said Mowbray, thinking of and looking at her; "it is beautiful, perfectly beautiful; it is angelic!"

"Come," said she, laughing, "you are determined

not to offend me by not agreeing with me, or sufficiently admiring what I admire."

Mowbray was now plunged into fresh confusion at the idea of how absurd and exaggerated his answer must have appeared to her, and never felt more grateful in his life than when Monsieur de Rivoli brought the eyes and attention of every one upon him, by exclaiming aloud, "Ah, le pauvre Duc de Reichsdat!" and then launching out into a hyperbolical eulogium on his father. The fact is, the little man could make nothing of her dowagership, and thought himself completely lost in being "accroché" to her, and therefore determined that the rest of the party should no longer be losers by his monopoly of what she did not appear to benefit by, namely, his delightful conversation; and as a Frenchman is never at a loss for a great man to associate himself with, he instantly put himself "*en scène*" with Napoleon.

"Yes," said Lord de Clifford, with as great emphasis as if it had been the first time the discovery and the assertion had been made, "Yes, he certainly was a great, a very great man."

"I cannot conceive," said Mrs. Seymour, "how Marie Louise, after having been united to such a man, could have a lover, and that, too, before his death, and while he was in exile."

"Ah, bah, bah!" exclaimed Monsieur de Rivoli: "Croyez vous madame que parce q'une femme a épousée un grand homme qu'elle doit perdre son temps!"

At the conclusion of the universal laugh that followed this noble defence of the ex-empress, Lady de Clifford rose to go into the drawing-room; and as she passed her husband, Mowbray saw his eyes glare sternly and angrily upon his wife; nor was his surprise diminished when he heard him say to her, "I think, madam, it is not very decorous of my wife to laugh at such indelicate jests."

"Good heavens!" thought Mowbray, "how can she keep her temper with such a tyrannical brute?" He looked at her with a feeling of compassion that was quite painful; but the only expression he saw on her countenance was one of mingled wounded pride and endurance; there was no resentment, open or suppressed.

When Monsieur de Rivoli had "debarasséed" himself of the dowager, by depositing her in a "bergere,"

and when he had passed half an hour "en faissant l'aimable" to Madame de A., and telling her how she ought to manage her "bal costumé," he began tumbling over all the books on the table, and took up an English edition of the "Sorrows of Werter."

"Ah, ha! my old friend Verter," said he; and, slapping his forehead, continued, "je me souviens du temps quand je ne faisait le moindre démarche sans mes pistolets dans une poche et Verter, dans l'autre. Mais ce printemps de la vie cet eté de l'âme est passée la sagesse à mit fin au bonneur comme elle fait toujours!"

"It is," said Lord de Clifford, pompously, "a masterpiece, like everything Goëthe ever wrote!" and he looked round for admiration and gratitude for having enlightened his audience; but suppressed laughter was all that greeted him; and Saville, good-naturedly wishing to take the sins of the whole party on his own shoulders, ventured boldly on a hearty laugh, and a stout dissent from his lordship's oracular opinion.

"Why, as to that," said he, "it certainly has the merit of originality, and the good fortune to be in no danger of ever being copied; it might fairly be entitled 'Goëthe's Fornerina.' It is a regular bread and butter epic; the unities are all kept in bread and butter; the weapons of love and destruction are still bread and butter; his friendship, his philanthropy, is all carried on through the medium of these mighty implements. To wit," continued Saville, opening the book: "in writing to his friend, he says, 'but not to keep you in suspense, I will detail what happened as I ate my bread and butter!' Again, at page 18, describing the peasant's children, and informing his friend of his overflowing benevolence in giving each of them a 'cruetzer' every Sunday, he gives a still farther instance of his generosity by adding, 'and at night they partake of my bread and butter!' Now, considering how fondly and faithfully he appears to have been attached to bread and butter, this was indeed true generosity. Again, who is there that does not remember the pathetic and beautiful description of his first interview with Charlotte, at page 21? This contains more and most bread and butter of all. 'For,' says he, 'she had a brown loaf in her hand, and was cutting slices of bread and butter, which she distributed in a graceful and affectionate manner to the children, according to their age and appetite.' And finally, in the last fatal scene that closes

all, after he had kissed the pistols which Charlotte had dusted, we are told that he only drank one glass of wine (though he had ordered a pint) and ate one slice of bread and butter ere he committed the rash act! Is not this, my friends, a true epic? and ought it not to be called the 'Bread and Buttersey?'"

Every one laughed much at Saville's harangue, except Lord de Clifford, who, drawing himself up pompously, said, "Ridicule is not argument."

"Fanny, love," said poor Lady de Clifford, seeing that a storm was brewing upon her sposo's brow, "do sing something."

"I have no voice to-night," said Fanny; "and really cannot."

"Do, dearest!" whispered Saville, imploringly.

"Ah, mademoiselle, je vous en prie pour me plaire," said Monsieur de Rivoli, with his hands up.

"Pour vous plaire," said Fanny, laughing: "je férais des impossibilités—si cetait possible—mais—"

"Vraiment," said Madame de A., "vous resemblez beaucoup au Comte d'Erfeuil qui disait à Corinne, Belle Corinne parlez Français; vous en êtes vraiment digne."

"Eh bien oui," said the Frenchman, not choosing to stand in the ridiculous position Madame de A.'s application had placed him: "Cela veut dire que Mademoiselle Neville resemble à Corinne."

"For my part," said the dowager, sotto voce, "I do not think any singing worth so much asking for."

"Very just observation, my dear madam," said her son; "I am quite of your opinion;" and then added, "Come, Fanny, cannot you go and sing at once without all this fuss?"

"I do not choose to sing to-night," said Fanny, shortly.

"Well," said her sister, going good-humouredly to the piano, as she saw something must be done to keep off the impending storm on her husband's brow, "I will be revenged upon you, for I'll sing a song that somebody wrote a short time ago. Mr. Saville, have the goodness to reach me that little book of manuscript music."

"Julia! Julia! pray!" said Fanny, stretching out her hand for the book: but her sister had played the prelude, and Saville held the book fast, while Lady de Clifford sang the following

SONG.

As light o'er the waters breaking,
So my spirit's gladden'd by thee;
Thou art my dream, and when waking,
Life is but one long thought of thee.

What is joy but to be near thee?
And grief but to know thee away?
And music—oh! 'tis to hear thee,
For my heart is the lute thou dost play.

Like Æol's harp, when forsaken
By the breeze to which its soul clings,
No other spell can awaken
The sound of its desolate strings:

So no other voice, love, but thine
From my heart's soft echoes e'er stole;
Its tones, like deep passion flowers, twine
Around every thought of my soul.

Oh! love, must thy buds ever fade,
Unless they be water'd with tears?
Is thine immortality made
Alone by thy sighs and thy fears?

If so, then in poison still steep
The arrows girded about thee:
With thee it is dearer to weep,
Than to be happy without thee!

"And did Fanny write that?" said Saville, in a low voice to her sister, when she had ceased singing.

Lady de Clifford nodded assent.

"Don't believe her," said Fanny, blushing, as she snatched the book away from Saville.

"What a divine voice!" thought Mowbray; "and how lovely she looks when she is singing! It gives one the idea of the spirit of music having hid itself in the ambush of a rose, and sending out every note perfumed by its leaves."

That night Mowbray resolved he would leave Milan the next day; and well for him would it have been if he had kept to that resolution; but, for a month after, he was a daily visiter at the palazza. It is true, it was at the especial invitation of its master—oh! the sophistry of the human heart, when it tries, but in vain, to deceive itself! Then comes the alchymy of false reasoning, that turns its blackest dross to that seeming gold, which ends in its own destruction, when we find that

we have wasted life, hope, salvation, on a dream; a wild, a troubled, an infatuated dream. Mowbray would not own, even to himself, that he loved Lady de Clifford; for he thought that would be almost as much an infringement upon her purity as though he had dared to tell her so. Fool! is not the heart its own author? and cannot it read its own meaning, whatever be the misprints we try to put upon it? There was a new existence for him: for the first time he lived in the present; the past he could not think of, the future he would not; all nature was changed; the air had a balm, the sky a brightness, and the commonest occurrence an interest, which, for him, they had never had before; for she breathed that air, and she saw that sky, and each little incident that occurred to him related more or less to her; and if at times he saw more plainly than at others the precipice on which he stood, he would hoodwink himself with the reflection that she would never be injured; therefore, what matter how he suffered? Besides, he asked, wished, dreamed no greater happiness than to see, to hear her; and as long as she never knew the happiness her presence gave him, where could the harm be? No human being knew it or ever should know it; and surely it was not because she was all that was beautiful, all that was good, that she was to be the only person whom he was not to feel a friendship for. "False philosophy and vain reasoning, all!" Let that man beware how he forms a friendship for a married woman, whose first feeling towards her is admiration, and his next compassion!

CHAPTER V.

"J'avais près de vingt ans, mon père voulait me marier; et c'est ici que toute la fatalité de mon sort va se deployer."—CORINNE.

WHEN Lady de Clifford was little more than seventeen, her father happened to win £1000 on the St. Leger, from Lord de Clifford; and though he had no great liking for the man, he had a certain respect for his fortune; as he justly considered that the father of

three daughters, however beautiful they were, ought not to be fastidious about the agreeability or amiability of any man who had a rent-roll of £8000 a year. Accordingly, before he left Doncaster, he gave him a pressing invitation to come and see him when he returned to town in the ensuing spring.

Mr. Neville was an old aboriginal Whig, who persevered in a spencer, a liveried groom, and top-boots, to the last; and lived quite as much in *the* window at Brooks's as he did at his house in Berkeley Square, where a profuse but shabby expenditure (which constitute the true Whig ménage), year after year, involved him more deeply; but of this he thought little, as long as his house was the focus of agreeability. But your true Whig of the old stock, who has drank with Sheridan, debated with Fox, and written sonnets to the Duchess of Devonshire, is somewhat skeptical as to the agreeability, talents, patriotism, or beauty of any other class, clique, or coterie in the world, and therefore pertinaciously adheres to the L.'s, R.'s, S.'s, H.'s, and M.'s, as the only people worth listening to or looking at in the world: thus following the Egyptian fashion of honouring the mummy when the man is no more. Mr. Neville's house was an epitome of himself: the faded carpets, the shabby chints curtains, the small glasses, the gilt-wood be-balled and bechained candelabras, the small faded buff ottomans, with their black glazed calico à la Grecq borders, the narrow dim grates, with their still dimmer fire-irons and fenders; the small pillory-looking white and gilt armchairs; the Procrustes bed of sofa's; the unpowdered and drab-coated servants, with their nankeen smallclothes, expensive silk stockings, and ill-made shoes; the buff waistcoated, and pepper-and-salt trousered butler; the red curtained dining-room, with its red morocco chairs and its dark unpolished tables, all looked just as they had done some five-and-thirty years before, when Pitt taxed and Napoleon fought. In private as well as in political life, he invariably had recourse to the grand Whig principle of expediency and half measures. His cook was a bad man and an habitual drunkard, but an imcomparable cook; so he kept him on, compromising the matter by giving him a "carte blanche" for drinking *after* dinner. He was the most bland and kindest husband and father in the world, as far as *words* went, and left nothing un-

done to promote the happiness of his wife or his children, except putting himself out of the way; consequently, whenever the former asked him for money, his invariable answer was, "My dear love, I really don't know where to turn for a hundred pounds in the world just now; but pray get whatever you want at Howell's and Maradan's, and they can send me in the bills at Christmas; and for Heaven's sake, mind that you and the girls don't deprive yourselves of anything." In like manner he allowed his sons to draw upon him; so no wonder that the credit side of his banker's book always presented an alarming aspect, and that poor Mr. Neville was truly an embarrassed man! It was one day coming out of Hammersley's, in no very happy frame of mind, that he again met Lord de Clifford: he asked him if he would dine with him, and go to the play with Mrs. Neville and the girls in the evening. The invitation was accepted, and at dinner he appeared much struck with the beauty of Julia Neville. Her mother perceived it, and, though her original intention had been that she should not come out for two years (Whigesses always make their "début" later than other girls), she now changed her plan, and determined that Julia should go to Almack's on the following Wednesday, with which determination she took care carelessly to acquaint Lord de Clifford in the course of the evening; and accordingly, on the following Wednesday, precisely (for everything he did was precise) at half past eleven, his stiff figure was hitched in the doorway, ready to pounce upon poor Julia, whom he condescended to ask to dance; and after stalking through a quadrille with her, he deposited her again with her mother. Surely, thought Julia, a galloppe or mazurka must be quite beyond such a cast-iron-looking personage! She was right, and therefore, for the rest of the evening, enjoyed herself; but as he took care to inform Mrs. Neville how very much he disapproved of both the last-mentioned dances, it was the last time she ever allowed her daughter to dance them.

It is needless to detail the persecution of entreaties, tears, and persuasion (the hardest persecution of all to resist from those we love) poor Julia underwent; till at length, weary and broken-hearted, she gave herself up at the altar as the victim of Lord de Clifford. Young as she was, she had more character and strength of

mind than most women of double her age; and, therefore, prudently and amiably determined to study every whim of her strange and unloveable husband, in the vain hope of conciliating and changing him in time; for she did not yet know the nature she had to deal with. On their marriage, they went down to a place of his in Yorkshire; and Julia's first and most severe blow was perceiving that her "stern lord" added to his other follies that common error of all fools, namely, considering skepticism as the shortest and surest road to philosophy; but with an overwrought and culpable delicacy, which only her extreme youth and the abundant generosity of her nature could excuse, not daring to advise, she thought that, by submitting to his opinions, and never obtruding her own, she might in time gain an influence over him; for which reason, fearing that remarks might be made in her favour to his prejudice, she seldom or ever went to the village church, as he chose totally to absent himself from it. Luckily for her, the false delicacy of this conduct was utterly lost upon him, and he soon began tauntingly to upbraid her with her want of piety, adding, with a hoarse grunting sound that he intended for a laugh, "Religion was made on purpose for women and children."

Her next trial was to find that, instead of receiving any attention from Lord de Clifford's family, which, as a bride, at least, she might have anticipated, she, on the contrary, was enjoined by her husband to bow down to them in all things. One day he would issue an order that she should not say this nor do that, as his brother did not approve of it; another time she was forbidden to wear a particular cap or colour, as his mother did not like it. All this she bore with miraculous temper and sweetness, still trying by every means in her power to please her unpleasable spouse and his family, to whom *he* seemed to consider her equally wedded and bound. Lord de Clifford had a favourite horse, towards whom, like many more of his compatriots, he evinced much more tenderness and attention than towards his wife. One day, after they had been married about three months, Julia went and fed the animal herself, thinking it would please her husband; and then going into the library, where he was sitting, surrounded by "learned lumber," which he was in vain trying to get into his head, said,

"Oh, George, I have been feeding Selim, and he looked so handsome, and rubbed his head against me!"

"Lady de Clifford," said he, frowning, and laying down the book he was reading, "I beg you will leave off calling me those familiar names. I permitted it at first, in the nonsense of the honey-moon, as it is vulgarly called; but, upon reflection, I am convinced that they do away with that solemnity of respect which a wife ought to evince towards a husband; and as for feeding Selim, I must say that I think it is very undignified for *my* wife to be going into stables and places among grooms and helpers, and must beg that it does not happen again."

Poor Julia could not believe that even he was in earnest in forbidding her to call him "George;" and thinking this must be his début at a jest, actually burst out laughing, but she was soon undeceived; for Lord de Clifford, flinging down the book he held, and clinching his hand at her, said, with his eyes kindling, like lava burned white, "By G—d, if you dare laugh at me, madam, I will fell you to the earth!"

She left the room; a violent flood of tears relieved her, as she knelt down, and cast her burden upon Him who alone could bear it for her, and she met her tyrant at dinner without one word or look of reproach. At length she became a mother, a circumstance which but added to her miseries, for even the nursery was not exempted from the laws and regulations of Lord de Clifford; moreover, if ever she passed an hour together with her child, he was sure to send for her, saying, when she appeared,

"There is nothing now thought of but that child, while your duty towards me is totally neglected, madam. I desire you may not fool away all your time in that d—d nursery."

Then his mother was to be courted and consulted upon all occasions, not from affection, but because she was rich, and had much in her power; but, though humbly solicited, she declined being godmother to the child, averring, that she never liked taking any sort of responsibility upon herself, and that whatever she might do hereafter must entirely depend upon circumstances; nor could she, for six years, be induced to take the slightest notice of her daughter-in-law, though she condescended to interfere in the most minute of her domestic arrange-

ments through the medium of her son, and by incessant fault-finding, keep her in due subordination; as she wisely concluded (falling into the common error of judging others by herself) that Lady de Clifford could not be possessed of so much beauty and so many accomplishments without being proportionately arrogant and self-sufficient, and therefore requiring a counterpoise: for which reason she generously established herself as that counterpoise, and a most disagreeable and effectual one she was. Julia had been married about eight years, the last two of which had been spent on the Continent, whither they had been led; for in her husband's ear

"Some demon whispered—'Visto, have a taste.'"

"Virtu" was therefore his present mania, and his wife was thankful that anything took him from tormenting her, and still more so that he had allowed her sister to come abroad with her; an indulgence he might not have granted, had he not deemed that, by so doing, he should extend his empire to a slave the more. It was at this juncture that Mowbray came to Milan; he soon discovered Lord de Clifford's foible of wishing to appear a man of science, letters, taste, and universal information; and therefore, adopting the plan of the witty and clever Lady M. with regard to her dolt of a lord, who had never in his life been guilty of thinking a good thing, much less of saying one, when Lord de Clifford had been particularly ponderous, used always to preface some brilliant or wise remark at dinner with, "I think it was you, Lord de Clifford, who told me this morning such and such a thing;" or, "I think it was you who so justly observed so and so;" or, "as you very wittily remarked a while ago;" by which scheme, he so completely ingratiated himself with his pompous tool, that he issued a standing order to his wife to be particularly civil to Mr. Mowbray, as he was a young man of infinite judgment and discernment. From this commenced a new epoch in Lady de Clifford's life: though time and experience had annihilated the hope of ever softening her husband towards her, it had not subdued her habit of endurance. Many and bitter were the tears that this outward restraint cost her; but from the time of her acquaintance with Mowbray, it cost her less to bear the unkindness of her husband, for, in fact, she dwelt on it

less; a void seemed filled, she knew not how, in her heart; she never felt the tears gush to her eyes, as formerly, when she looked at the happy faces of Fanny or Saville, or heard their little tender speeches to each other. She liked Mowbray—nay, she longed for his appearance of a day; but she set all this down to the score of gratitude—he was so kind, so gentle, so attentive to her; he remembered her most trifling wishes, nay, more, he anticipated them: how good, how condescending this was of one who was the "enfan gaté" of London! Poor Lady de Clifford! a woman may be so brutalized and subdued by ill-treatment from the one who should be the last in the world to be guilty of such inhumanity towards her, as to become grateful for the civility of a sweep in moving out of her way in the street; and at this pass had Julia arrived; for one of her servants could not, in the routine of their business, put a chair out of her way, but that she felt indebted to them as though they had conferred an obligation upon her. How much more, then, did she feel the incessant, the delicate, the devoted attention of a man like Mowbray, whose tones were gentle in speaking to any woman, but when addressing her became perfect music? Once, and only once, she asked herself if she did not like him too much; but she blushed crimson at the thought, and seemed to think the prudery of her imagination had insulted the purity of her heart by the question. Thus poor Lady de Clifford was hastening to the same precipice as Mowbray, though by a very different channel; for while, taking innocence for her guide, she was led into danger from the ignorance of her steersman of the invisible shoals and quicksands that abound in the perilous sea of passion, he was steering headlong to destruction, with knowledge of the world for his chart, false hope for his rudder, and his own wayward and ungoverned heart for a compass.

CHAPTER VI.

"*Child.* Hey diddle, diddle,
The cat and the fiddle—
Mother. Thee ought not to say that, Mary; for, Hey diddle, diddle, has no meaning.
Child. The cat and the fiddle,
The cow jump'd over the moon—
Mother. Stop! thee may say the cat and the fiddle, if thee pleases; but do not say the cow jumped over the moon—say the cow jumped under the moon: for thee should know that a cow cannot jump over the moon, though it may jump under the moon.
Child. The little dog laugh'd to see the sport—
Mother. What, Mary! a dog laugh! Thee should not say so; for thee knows a dog cannot laugh: thee might say the little dog barked, if thee pleases.
Child. While the dish ran after the spoon.
Mother. Mary! Mary! how can a dish run? Does thee not know that a dish has no legs to run with? Thee should have said, the dish and the spoon."—*Utilitarian Philosophy for Nurseries and Noodles.*

One morning, as Lord de Clifford was preparing to sally out to meet an Armenian, from whom he was to purchase some pseudo Etruscan manuscripts, a single hieroglyphic of which he could not decipher, his little girl was sitting playing with her doll, and lecturing Zoe for her mercurial propensities, as, one after another, she purloined first the doll's shoe, and then its necklace, and decamped to the other end of the room to play with them; and little Julia, having often felt the beneficial effects of moral poetry upon herself, began repeating to Zoe the ancient, though somewhat prejudiced and illiberal, madrigal of

"Taffy was a Welshman, and Taffy was a thief;"

when her stately sire interrupted her with, "Julia, you are much too old to have your head crammed with all those ignorant vulgarities; and, with a little application, you would find it quite as easy to learn something useful. For instance, Taffi was not a Welshman, but an Italian poet, born at Genoa, in the year—"

"Oh! yes, I know all that, papa," said the little girl, interrupting in her turn; "at least, he was an Italian

painter, born at Florence in 1213; and he and Cimabue brought the taste for Mosaic into Italy. Mrs. Mangnall's question-book has that in it; but the Italian's name is spelt T-a-f-f-i; and, indeed, papa, my Taffy was a Welshman, and he really did steal a bone of beef, as I was going to tell Zoe, and his name is spelt with a y; and I don't believe he was any relation at all to Taffi the Italian, though I don't know what time my Taffy was born; as Mrs. Mangnall's book don't say, which I am surprised at."

"Lady de Clifford," cried her enraged husband, "that child has become insufferably pert and forward, and you had better check it in time, or take the consequences, madam."

So saying, he left the room, slamming the door violently after him.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Fanny, who had been drawing at the other end of the room. "La pruova d'un opera seria!"

"Hush! hush! Fanny, for Heaven's sake! he will hear you," said her sister; "besides, you should not, before Julia."

"Ma foi!" said Fanny, throwing herself back in her chair, and wiping the tears from her eyes, which she had fairly laughed into them: "Ce qui fait le malheur des uns, fait le bonheur des autres, c'etait impayable. Come here, darling," continued she to little Julia, and taking the child's head in both her hands, said, kissing her forehead "con amore"—"Ju, you were a very naughty girl to interrupt your papa so, just now, when he was *instructing* you, and so, to punish you, I'm going to send you of a message. Go up stairs, and tell Luton to send me down that box of pencils I got from England the other day; and then go and ask Mademoiselle d'Antoville if she will have the goodness to lend me that print she has of Attila."

"Ah! but that's no punishment at all," said the child; "for I like doing anything for you, aunt Fanny," and away she ran.

"Now I hope you perceive, my dear Julia," said the incorrigible Fanny, bursting into a fresh fit of laughter, "the error you have been guilty of in allowing Ju to learn her A B C too fast. However, what is done cannot be helped; but I hope, for the future, you will manage better. Let me see—she is now seven; so, if

we can but contrive to make her forget the best part of what she has learned, and prevent her knowing more at fourteen than she ought to know now, she may then have the happiness of becoming a suitable companion for her father; and who knows but that, in time, she may even retrograde to a level with his extraordinary mind?"

"Ah! Fanny! Fanny!" said her sister, shaking her head, "it is no laughing matter."

"No, indeed, I don't think it is," said Fanny; "but, as Lord Byron says,

> "'Strange though it seem, yet with extremest grief
> Is link'd a mirth that doth not bring relief!'

And I can only say, as poor Mademoiselle d'Antoville said to me the other day" (and here Fanny put her hands into the pockets of her apron, bent her head forward, and her brows into a thoughtful frown, and changed her voice and face so completely into that of Mademoiselle d'Antoville, that even Lady de Clifford's gravity gave way as she repeated)—"I can only say, as Mademoiselle d'Antoville said to me the other day, 'Milord à tant de science! tant de profondeur! que quand il débite sur le châpitre de l'education; jamais, jamais je ne puis lui comprendre!"

"Poor Mademoiselle d'Antoville," said Lady de Clifford; "I do not half like her as an instructress, now Julia is growing older; there is too much of the old novel style of French governess about her. She seems too thoroughly imbued with what may be termed the apocalypse of the old regime in France, namely, 'Qu'on peu tout dire et tout faire, pourvu qu'on le fait et le dit poliment;' and my fear is, that in time she may convert, or rather pervert, Julia to the same creed."

"Exactly so," said Fanny; "but you know it is not every one that is Œdipus enough to discover that 'Milord à tant de science et tant de profondeur, &c., &c., &c.; et quand il-y'a des sots à triple étage.' There must be flatterers to clamber up to the heights of their folly; and you may depend upon it, that my illustrious brother-in-law finds too many charms in the conversation of Mademoiselle d'Antoville (who can alone appreciate his wonderful talents!) to part with her for your sake, or Julia's either; except, indeed, that in time he may find an equivalent in Mr. Mowbray, who seems to

have borrowed D'Antoville's powers of listening, and all her craft, and more than all her talent, in conveying to him an idea of his own great and paramount superiority in all things. However, 'blessed be—be the peace-makers,' say I, and I'm sure we have all led a much happier life for the last two months, since Mr. Mowbray has kindly taken upon himself the arduous office of inflating the balloon of Lord de Clifford's vanity; and I feel so grateful to him, that I have serious thoughts of working him a waistcoat, as a slight tribute of esteem and respect—as the corporations have it, when they give dinners and snuffboxes to ministers and patriots out of place!"

Lady de Clifford had got as far as "Fy, fy, Fanny!" in a lecture to her laughter-loving sister, when the door opened, and Mowbray and Saville were announced.

"We were just talking about you, Mr. Mowbray," said Fanny.

"About me!" said Mowbray, glancing quickly at Lady de Clifford's blushing and confused face: "and how came I to be so honoured?"

"I was wondering," replied Fanny, "whether there were any prizes for patience at Harrow; and, if so, how many you gained in a week."

"You speak in riddles, my fair sibyl," said Mowbray; "pray expound them."

"All in good time," laughed Fanny; "I will bring you my books when they are ready, that is, if you will promise to purchase them 'coute qu'il coute,' at the first offer."

"I promise," said Mowbray, lifting up his hand with mock solemnity; and then turning to Lady de Clifford, added, "Perhaps you will tell me what Miss Neville means?"

"That would be difficult," said Lady de Clifford, smiling, "for I do not believe she knows herself."

At this moment little Julia returned, and, seeing Mowbray, ran up to him. "Oh! Mr. Mowbray," said she, "I am *so* glad to see you! How is Prince? and where is he? I have got a story to read to him; for do you know, the other day, when I was at dinner, he came in, and I went into the next room for something I had forgotten, and I left Prince, telling him to be sure and not eat up *all* my dinner, and he promised, as plain as a dog could promise, with his big brown, honest-looking eyes,

that he would not; but though I was only gone two minutes, when I came back all my beccaficas were gone, and he had just got his paw in the maccaroni! and now I'll get the story I am going to read him."

At any other time Lady de Clifford would have begged Julia to postpone the perusal of it till Prince was there to hear it; but as Fanny and Saville were now engaged in a low tête-à-tête at the other end of the room, she was glad of any circumstance that would prevent her and Mowbray being reduced to the same alternative, especially as he stood leaning on the mantelpiece in one of those fits of abstraction that had so often taken possession of him lately, when all around appeared lost to him, while his eyes seemed as if they had been given to him for no other purpose than to rivet them upon her.

"Well, get the book, Cara," said her mother, with one of those April smiles that only are called in to struggle with a tear, "and let us see how you mean to reform Prince's morals."

The little girl took a small case of books off the table, and seating herself at her mother's feet, said, "Now, mamma, you need not listen so much, but *you*, Mr. Mowbray, must be *very* attentive, because it is for the good of *your* dog. The story is called,

"'LE CHIEN DE LIVERPOOL.

"'Un fermier de Liverpool, avait un chien plein de courage, d'intelligence, et d'autre belles qualités, mais qui avait un défaut que rien ne peut excuser: même dans les chiens: il manquait de probité.' Now, do you understand what that means, Mr. Mowbray?" continued she, pushing him with her little foot; "do you hear me? 'le chien du fermier manquait de probité;' do you understand?"

"Yes," said Mowbray, biting his lip and withdrawing his eyes from Lady de Clifford; "it means that he was not fit to be trusted; what a miserable dog he must have been!" and then, as if all security consisted in sound, he cried out at the top of his voice across the room, "Saville, do you recollect whether it was tomorrow or Wednesday that De Clifford fixed upon for going to Como? for *that* was what I came here with you to find out."

Oh! human nature, where begin and where end thy

wayward mysteries? Lady de Clifford, who a moment before would have given anything that Mowbray had not come that morning, now felt that sharp pain dart through her heart which wounded pride and sudden disappointment coming together invariably occasion. "Surely," thought she, "he need not take such pains to announce that his *only* motive in coming here was to ascertain Lord de Clifford's will and pleasure! It is, to say the least of it, unkind—I mean, rude; nay, almost impertinent of him!"

"Really," said Saville, in reply to Mowbray's question, "I don't know, but I think it was to-morrow the party was to take place." And again turning to Fanny, he dropped his voice into the low, whispering tone from which his friend's interrogatory had roused him.

"Do you know?" inquired Mowbray of Lady de Clifford, feeling that it was necessary to say something, and not knowing very well what to say.

"I really do not," said she, coldly, "as this is the first time I have heard of the arrangement; but as it is to be a duo, I suppose Lord de Clifford will let you know in time; at present, he is out for the day, I believe."

"A duo!" said Mowbray, looking as seriously alarmed as if he had been in quarantine, and a black spot had suddenly appeared on his arm. "Good Heavens! No; you—I mean, I thought—I understood—that we were all going—"

"Oh! perhaps so," replied Lady de Clifford, "but I have heard nothing about it; however," continued she, looking across the court, "there is Lord de Clifford going up the steps to Julia's schoolroom. Fanny, as you are near the window, just tell Dorio, whom I see standing in the yard, to tell his master that Mr. Mowbray wants to speak to him."

"Pray do not trouble yourself, Miss Neville," said Mowbray, springing forward; "any other time will do as well."

But Fanny, whose head was already out of the window, giving her sister's message to Dorio, did not hear him. An awkward pause now ensued, at least it would have been such to Mowbray, if he had not suddenly discovered that Tiney's nose was very hot, and declared that the dog could not be well.

"Poor Ti.," said he, kissing her head and stroking her long silken ears, "I'm sure she is ill. I wish, Lady

de Clifford, you would let me have her for a week: I have a groom who is a famous dog-doctor; he shall prescribe for her, and I'll administer all the medicines myself; and, above all, I'll promise to love and to pet her as much as you do."

"Oh! *that* would be impossible," said she, laughing. "Besides," chimed in Julia, "Prince might eat her up at a mouthful, as he did my beccaficas; and I'm sure Zoe teases her quite enough as it is, poor dog!"

Lord de Clifford not making his appearance, and no message having been returned to the one sent, Lady de Clifford now rang to inquire the reason of it; the servant in waiting was despatched to Dorio, and returned with the answer that Lord de Clifford was not yet come home.

"Not come home! that is impossible. Send Dorio here." Dorio came and made the same reply: the whole party looked at each other with unfeigned astonishment, and asked almost simultaneously, "Who, then, was it that went up the opposite steps a quarter of an hour ago, when you stood by the lion at the foot of them?"

"C'était l'homme d'affaire de Mademoiselle d'Antoville," replied the immoveable Dorio, twitching the ring in his right ear. "That fellow," said Saville, as he shut the door, "must have been for a long time primo buffo at the San Carlino, to tell a lie with such consummate genius and such inimitable composure."

The carriage was now announced, and the two friends were obliged, "malgré eux," to take their departure. Mowbray, however, contrived to make himself happy by carrying off Tiney, and a bunch of violets that Lady de Clifford had dropped; and Saville whispered in Fanny's ear, "Am I to dine here to-day, dearest?" "Why, as that is a matter of business," said she, laughing, "you must ask 'l'homme d'affaire de Mademoiselle d'Antoville!'"

CHAPTER VII.

"You have a head, and so has a pin."
Nursery Compliment.

"We glide o'er these gentle waters
As through ether skims the dove;
Yet, fairest of beauty's daughters,
I may not breathe my love;
But while the happy breezes play,
And kiss, and whisper round thee,
Dearest, ah! will they not betray
The mysteries they have found thee
For their wild breath is but my sighs,
Which are but fond thoughts of thee,
That escape to gain the skies,
Where they may aye immortal be!"
MS.

"L'aria e la terre a l'acqua son d'amor piene."
PETRARCA.

LORD DE CLIFFORD, who, among his other talents, had a wonderful turn for petty economy, had been for the last six weeks *deeply absorbed* in Professor Autenrieth's plan for making bread out of deal boards; he had actually got as far as the sawdust, and procured a quantity of marsh-mallow roots. Such *abstruse* and *scientific* labours required relaxation; and Mademoiselle d'Antoville, who had not found the least difficulty in persuading him that he distanced Sir Humphrey Davy in science, Tycho Brae in astronomical lore, and Bayle in general knowledge, found it equally easy to convince him that the exercise of such a monopoly of talents might be fatal, if unrelieved by the "otium cum dignitate" that should accompany them; consequently the excursion to Como was proposed by her, as one of a series to take place for that purpose. Saville drove Fanny in his phaeton, the Seymours (who were of the party) good-naturedly gave Monsieur de Rivoli a seat in their carriage, while Lady de Clifford's was occupied by herself, her sposo, Mowbray, and Mademoiselle d'Antoville, who devoted herself to *appreciating* Lord de Clifford. They had not got above half way, before

mademoiselle began to purse up her mouth, close her drab-coloured eyes, and incline her head faintingly towards his shoulder, at which Lady de Clifford offered her "vinaigrette," intending to request she would change places with her, as she feared that sitting with her back to the horses might have occasioned her indisposition; but before she had time to utter one word, her husband seized her extended hand, and dragging her rudely from her seat, placed his grammatical inamorata in it, exclaiming, "Do you not see she is ill from sitting backward?"

"I was just going to offer Mademoiselle d'Antoville my seat," said poor Lady de Clifford, trying to suppress the tears that had come into her eyes.

"Oh, you are always going," sneered her amiable lord.

Mowbray, who could hardly contain his indignation at this scene, caught himself mechanically changing his place to the one beside her, which her husband had vacated to watch over Mademoiselle d'Antoville; and, throwing a shawl over her, he pressed her hand in both of his as he said, "Good heavens! I hope you won't suffer from sitting here; the wind is so much more keen than at the other side."

Julia's face crimsoned as she withdrew her hand; her heart was too full for utterance; but Mowbray thought he had never, for the greatest service he had conferred on another, been so amply repaid, as when her eyes for one moment met his, as she drew the shawl he had given more closely about her. Meanwhile mademoiselle, after labouring a few minutes like a steam-engine, thought fit to open her eyes, and raising her head from Lord de Clifford's shoulder, where it had *unconsciously* rested, murmured, or, rather, shrieked, in a "Théâtre François' tone," "Ah, ç'est toi?" to which he responded, with undeniable truth and brevity, "Oui, ç'est moi!" The fair sufferer's next thought was for her dress; and carefully arranging her shawl and bonnet, which had not been in the least deranged during her *feint*, she exclaimed, "Ah, mon Dieu! comme je me suis abimé!" Then suddenly recollecting, that although she was Lord de Clifford's Aspasia, she was also his wife's governess, she turned to the latter to apologize for having turned her out of her place, and to beg she would retake it.

"Oh, d—n it! she'll do very well where she is," said her kind and affectionate spouse, before she had time to decline mademoiselle's proffered politeness.

When they reached the little inn at Como, they found the rest of the party had arrived before them, and had ordered the boats and luncheon, to which latter they were doing full justice—all, except poor Monsieur de Rivoli, who was warring with the moschetoes, and trying to make the same bargain with them that Polyphemus did with Ulysses; namely, that they would devour him the last. At length, even his "occupation was gone," and they all descended to embark upon certainly the most lovely lake in the world. Oh, the deep beauty of its silent waters, glassing on their diamond surface the fair and gemlike beauties of its sunlit margins! The wind had gone down; not a breath seemed to kiss the leaves or dimple the tide, which lay like a sleeping child beneath; it was one of those hushed and balmy days, that give a luxury to the happy by shedding over them a melancholy that is purely imaginative; that melancholy which gives a poetry to every feeling, because it springs from no harsh *reality;* while, to the miserable, such days seem as if Nature had returned, like a long-absent friend, to sooth and atone to them for the unkindness of Fate. The lighthearted and properous can never worship Nature with the incense of the heart—*gratitude;* for to them, the softest air, the brightest skies, the sweetest flowers, are but so many minor adjuncts in the gorgeous pageant of their destiny; but to the crushed heart, the burning brain, the warped and withered mind, the moral Cain who has been the fratricide of his own welfare, every look, and breath, and tone of *hers* comes like a good Samaritan; healing what others smote, fostering what others deserted, rescuing what others endangered, e'en the wayward and erring spirit of man, and at length leading it "through nature up to nature's God." Alas! alas! why is it that so many of us must be rejected of earth ere we can think of heaven? Why is it that religion is so often only resorted to as an elixir for worldly disappointments? why is it that we follow the example of the heathen Agrippa, who, when Augustus refused to accept of the dedication of the Pantheon, then, and not till then, consecrated it to all the gods of Olympus?

What a pantheon is the human heart! rejected by one, only to be filled with innumerable still vainer idols,

and at last, perhaps, in its best stage, mistaking the gorgeous and poetical pomps, the Catholicism of the passions, for the pure and undefiled Christianity of the soul! But the reason of this mistake is clear: "They will tarry by the roadside, hearing tales of the fountain, instead of repairing straight to the fountain itself, there to drink of its waters." If even the metaphysics of Aristotle are so mystified; if the peripatetic doctrines are so perverted through their commentators (including Cicero, the cleverest of them), how much more must Christianity have suffered from the same source! inasmuch as it being of a divine, and, consequently, of more simple origin, it is more easily perverted through human and complex means; and the most dangerous perversions of all are the perversions of those natures which have an innate craving after right; for then begins the self-deluding sophistry which tries to germe a wrong act with a good motive. At this state had Mowbray arrived: he had repeated to himself so often that it was only common humanity to pay Lady de Clifford every possible attention, neglected and ill-treated by her husband as she was, that, instead of trying, as he had at first done, to check his feelings of compassion towards her, he made a point of yielding to, and encouraging them on all occasions; and, after the scene in the carriage, he thought it incumbent upon him to take as much care of her as possible for the rest of the day; indeed, she had fallen to his share; Fanny and Saville having, of course, paired off; and Monsieur de Rivoli determining, what little time he could spare from smoothing the rugged path of his mustaches, and humming snatches of "Sulmargine," "Le Suisse au bord du lac," "O Pescator," the "Biondina," and other appropriate tunes, as they call "Non nobis Domini" when it is played at a lord-mayor's feast, to devote himself to eradicating from Mrs. Seymour's mind certain ignorant prejudices, which her speech about Marie Louise gave him reason to fear she entertained.

Mr. Seymour, like a true Englishman, had fastened upon Count C., and had dragged him back to Boodles and the House of Commons; while Lord de Clifford, after having first placed one of his wife's shawls under Mademoiselle d'Antoville's feet, was explaining to her (preparatory to their landing) all about Pliny the elder and Pliny the younger; while she, though expressing

wonder and gratitude for his information, was in reality wishing that, like the former, he had perished in the destruction of Pompeii, and then he could not have prosed her to death as he was doing.

Little Julia had been left at home with her grandmother, who, for once, had had the mercy not to inflict her company on them.

"Permettez?" said Monsieur de Rivoli, as they landed, offering his arm to Mrs. Seymour, who proposed that they should go over the grounds before they went into the villa.

"Car je ne voi pas," added she, laughingly pointing to her husband's tall figure, as he lingered in the boat, with one of the poor count's buttons still in his custody, which stood a fair chance of being Schedule A'd. "Je ne voi pas pourquoi je devoit perdre mon temp parceque j'ai épousée un grand homme!"

"Ah! dat is ver true; I'm glad you have come to my fancy at last," said her companion, pressing her arm, and gently smoothing his off whisker. "'Mais voyez donc,'" continued he, looking at Lord de Clifford and his charge, as they entered the house. "'Comme ce grand bête De Clifford est entrainée par cette loup garou de D'Antoville qui n'est pas même française, car elle naquit à Berne je le sçai moi.'"

"It is really extraordinary," said Mrs. Seymour, "and Lady de Clifford so very handsome."

"'C'est vrai, mais; c'est sa femme!'" said Monsieur de Rivoli, with a "probatum est" shrug; for there *was* a Madame de Rivoli extant, though seldom heard of and never seen.

Mrs. Seymour laughed, and they strolled on under the colonnade by the margin of the lake, her "ciceroni" thinking how lucky *she* was that, every one having gone in a different direction, they were left to a "tête-à-tête."

"I wonder if I could get a glass of water?" said Lady de Clifford, after she and Mowbray had walked on for some time in one of those awkward fits of silence which both wished, yet dreaded to break, and which had occurred so frequently of late.

"Certainly," said Mowbray, "and the very best water in the world; for the spring is as cold and as clear as when its quondam owner first wrote its panegyric some eighteen hundred years ago; but I fear you will

find the ascent of those old, narrow, broken steps very steep and fatiguing."

"Not in the least," said Julia, "for in this country one is so used to difficulties, that I think one could climb a rope-ladder to the moon."

"Then pray lean on me," said Mowbray, giving his arm, which he had not offered before; and then another pause ensued, till they had reached the end of those almost interminable steps, and stood beside the bright, cold, diamond spring, where an old woman filled a glass from it and presented it to Lady de Clifford. She drank half of it, and gave back the glass to the crone; she was on the point of throwing the remainder of the water away, in order to refill the glass for Mowbray, who, perceiving her intention, snatched it, and drank off the contents, which having done, he paid the woman, and told her she might go. Then came another pause, which he felt ought to be broken; luckily, he recollected the curiosity he had often felt to ascertain the cause of Julia's evident embarrassment whenever he had mentioned Herbert Grimstone's name, and her constant endeavours to avoid the subject; he thought, now that no third person was present, it would be a good opportunity of ascertaining whether his dislike was connected solely with her husband's presence, or whether it arose from any mere personal aversion of her own; and having heard Lord de Clifford say that he expected him shortly at Milan, he thought the best way of broaching the subject would be to ask her when he was coming.

"Do you not expect Grimstone here shortly?" inquired he, fixing his eyes on her as he spoke.

"Yes, in a few days; and, now you mention him," continued Lady de Clifford, blushing deeply at her own weakness in wishing to vindicate herself to Mowbray, "I have a request—that is, I mean you must have thought it very strange, that whenever you have mentioned him before Lord de Clifford, I have changed the subject; but the reason was, that you have always coupled his name with a sort of laugh against him, and —and—"

"And," interrupted Mowbray, more vehemently than good-breeding warranted, "*you* are so fond of your fortunate and *meritorious* brother-in-law, that you cannot bear to hear him laughed at?"

"Far from it; I, of all people, have no reason to be

fond of him; but Lord de Clifford is always angry—that is, annoyed, if any one laughs at him, and therefore I try to prevent it."

"What goodness! what delicacy! what angelic sweetness! what undeserved amiability on your part!" said Mowbray, thrown off his guard, and hurried by admiration of a character he began to think faultless, into an expression of feelings he had never meant to give utterance to.

"Indeed," said Julia, crimsoning to her temples, while her eyes filled with tears at what she felt to be "praise undeserved," "it is not goodness, it is not amiability, it is not what *you* think it, and what it ought to be, a wish solely to please my *husband;* but it is that he would be angry with *me;* that he has *forbidden* me ever to join in any jest against his brother."

If Mowbray had before admired her for her supposed highwrought goodness, he now still more admired the unflinching integrity which made her humble herself into disclaiming all free-will in a right line of conduct, rather than for a moment purchase admiration by the base coin of deceit and hypocrisy; but the words "my husband" grated disagreeably on his ear; she had never before used them; they sounded like a knell to warn him off his perilous and unhallowed course. Hitherto everything she had affixed the word "*my*" before he had loved for her sake; the tempter had now turned traitor, and stood forth to warn and to denounce. It might have done both in vain, so strong was his impulse, as he looked at Julia's pale and agitated face, to fling himself at her feet, and there pour out all the burning, maddening feelings that were battling at his heart; but the reflection, or, rather, the conviction, that by so doing he would seal his own eternal banishment, restrained him.

So true is it what Madame de Staël says, that "perhaps it is what we shall do to-morrow that will decide our fate; perhaps even yesterday we said some word that nothing can recall!"

Mowbray *felt* this, though there were too many conflicts struggling within him to *think* it; but, as far as the passions are concerned, is not *feeling* always the stenography of *thought?* He therefore determined to say nothing of her, but replied with as disembarrassed an air as he could assume,

"Then I am sure his overweening fraternal affection is but ill requited, for I have heard Grimstone not only laugh at, but abuse him in no measured terms."

"I don't know that it is so much affection as pride," said Julia, "that makes Lord de Clifford not allow a word to be said against his brother, as they certainly cannot be said to be fond of each other; indeed, brought up as they have been, it is impossible they should. Left at an early age to the sole guidance of a not overwise mother, with much wealth in her power, her constant endeavour has been, not to gain their affection and respect from principle and merit on her own part, but to secure their *attention*, and enforce their submission, from the sordid and selfish motive of anticipated gain. Consequently, when the elder offends her, she invariably doubles her show of kindness and promises to the younger; so that the well-being of the one is unavoidably made a source of discontent and fear to the other; and as this terrible system was begun in childhood, when every little gift or indulgence that was granted to the reigning favourite was sealed with a stipulation that it was to be a profound secret from the less fortunate brother, it is no wonder that those three essential ingredients in every relationship of life, frankness, confidence, and sincerity, should be wanting between them. Indeed, on the part of Herbert, I think his union with his brother is solely a political one: he wants in himself that singleness of motive and firmness of purpose which invests even erroneous principles and bad measures with an artificial respectability, the respectability of consistency. Consequently, whatever point he steers for, having no intrinsic resources, he will always be obliged to be towed to it by the exertions of another, which will be the sole motive of his adherence to any one."

"You seem to know him well, at all events," replied Mowbray; "for within the last ten years I have seen him an Ultra-tory, next an 'in medio tutissimus ibus' Whig, and now he is a pioneering 'hic et ubique' Radical. However, to do him justice, he is the most *promising* young man of his age, for his promises and professions are boundless; but if you only wanted him to walk across the street, he would fail you. These sort of professors are in the moral world what Bahrbella-ma, the waterless sea of the Libyan desert, is in the

geological one, which has all the *appearance* of a large ocean without containing a single drop of water; they want nothing but *reality* to satisfy one."

"You are severe upon him."

"Nay, for severe, read true; I know of nothing to his credit, and therefore can say nothing."

"You forget his *debts*," said Julia, smiling.

"True," replied Mowbray, "in which point I resemble him, for no one appears so completely forgetful of them as himself. But a truce to the puppy, for it is time to think of a far nobler animal—Tiney, who, I am happy to tell you, passed a good night, ate a good breakfast, and has got a nose as cold as the North Pole."

"Thank you, Doctor Mowbray; then I suppose she may return to her disconsolate parent to-morrow."

"Not so; a relapse might be fatal, and I cannot part with her yet.'

"How I wish," said Julia, stooping to pluck a water-lily that grew inside the spring by which they still lingered, "that I had sent some of those large, lotus-like, Rhine water-lilies to England!"

"Would that all your wishes could come so easily within the sphere of my power!" said Mowbray. "An old German friend of mine, Madame de Heidleberg, sent me some three years ago, which are now flourishing at Hilton, and I will order some to be sent down to Grimstone the next time I write to England." He then repeated, in a low voice,

"I send the lilies given to me;
Though long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must wither'd be,
But yet reject them not as such.
For I *will* cherish them as dear,
Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here,
When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And knowst them gather'd by the Rhine,
And offer'd from my heart to thine!"

Julia blushed; but determining, from the pointed manner in which these words were uttered, *not* to take them to herself, said, "How beautiful the whole of that canto of Childe Harold is!" and then went on reciting the next stanza.

"The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round:
The haughtiest breast its wish might bound
Through life to dwell delighted here;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To nature and to me more dear."

Here she paused, recollecting the concluding lines.

"Pray go on," said Mowbray, riveting his eyes upon her.

"I forget the rest," stammered Julia.

Her companion took up the "refrain," as she turned away to hide her confusion.

"Could *thy* dear eyes in following mine,
Still sweeten more these banks—"

"Not of Rhine!" murmured he with a low voice, almost imperceptibly pressing the arm linked in his, which was hastily withdrawn under the pretext of gathering some of the wild verbinum, which grows in such profusion on that enchanted ground.

"I wonder," said Julia, "where they can have all gone to? We had better go and look for them, and, indeed, I am tired, so we will go into the house." They descended as they had ascended the steps, in perfect silence. On reaching the house, they found the whole party, except Lord de Clifford and Mademoiselle d'Antoville, assembled in the large barnlike saloon, making themselves very merry at the expense of the daubs of pictures that decorate its walls. Monsieur de Rivoli was engaged in copying one of them (Diana and Endymion) on the back of his hat, and bestowing the physiognomy of the absentee pair upon them; so that the goddess appeared in her infernal character of Hecate, while the profile of the sleeping shepherd made no bad imitation of the crescent on the brow of his inamorata; the moonbeam kiss he had managed to portray by a knitting-needle emanating from the hay-coloured hair of the D'Antoville Diana, and terminating in the mouth of Endymion. Fanny, who was enchanted with the likenesses, begged to have the original, of which she promised to make some faithful copies.

"Let me see," said Julia, putting out her hand for the paper.

"No, no," said Fanny, "you are not to be trusted. There," continued she, placing it in her bosom:

"Deep in my soul that tender secret dwells,
Lonely and lost to sight for evermore;
Save when some laugh to mine responsive swells,
Then trembles into silence as before.'"

"Look here," said Mrs. Seymour, taking an old mandolin from the window-seat, "I have found a treasure. I wonder if any one can play upon it. Can you? or you? or you? or you?" holding it to every one till she came to Count C., who, confessing that he did play upon it "a little," was instantly besieged for a song. When he had succeeded in tuning the crazy old instrument, he good-humouredly sang Aurelio Bertola's

"Gli occhi azzurri e gli occhi neri."

"Bene! bene!" echoed from every side.

And Saville repeated the last four lines, as he looked into Fanny's bright, laughing, hazel eyes:

"Il primato in questi o in quelli
Non disdende dal colore;
Ma quegli occhi son più belle
Che rispondono più al core."

Lord de Clifford and Mademoiselle d'Antoville now made their appearance in a most deplorable condition; the latter drenched to her waist, her drapery clinging like a second Andromeda about her, and her hair dishevelled according to the most orthodox standard of heroic misfortune. His lordship appeared to have been an equal sufferer, being almost as wet, and minus a hat; so that he had been fain to twist a shawl of mademoiselle's round his head "à la Turc," which gave him a compound look of fun and ferocity that was irresistible to every one but Lady de Clifford, who dared not join in the laugh that accompanied the queries addressed to the disconsolate pair, as to the how, when, and where of their misfortunes. Mademoiselle d'Antoville (for a French woman, however "pale et defaite," is never speechless) undertook to enlighten them.

"Nous, nous promenons, milord et moi on de bord of de rivere, just talk of la petite Julie, when, all at once, j'ai faite un faux pas" ("Sans doute," muttered Monsieur de Rivoli; "et je parais que c'en est pas le premier"), "and I am tumble into de vatere, and but for le courage of milord, I was sure I am to be drowned!"

"Well," said Saville, who always stepped forward as risible mediator for the whole party, "the only difference between you and me is the difference that Daniel de Foe said existed between James the First and Charles the First; namely, that yours was a *wet* martyrdom, and mine has been a *dry* one; for I have been dying of thirst these two hours."

Every one was now at liberty to laugh—even Julia—which was a great relief to her.

"Did you tumble" (she chose the word as the most undignified she could think of)—"did you tumble into the water, too, then?" asked Fanny, as she walked round her mildewed brother-in-law, with her glass up, minutely examining the damage he had sustained by "flood and field."

"No, Miss Neville, I did not tumble into the water; gentlemen never tumble."

"They sometimes fall, then," interrupted Fanny, "like statues from their pedestals, or thunderbolts from the clouds."

"I merely stretched out my hand to rescue Mademoiselle d'Antoville, who had had the misfortune to slip from the margin; and in rescuing her, I lost my hat and got dreadfully splashed."

"Dreadfully indeed," said Fanny, "for it has a strong family likeness to an immersion and a tumble."

"You will oblige me, Miss Neville, by not using that vulgar word, coupled with any circumstance relating to me."

Fanny was about to reply, when an imploring look from her sister checked her. The old woman was then invoked, who procured a quantity of straw, sticks, and fern, and as soon as the inhospitable old chimney could be coaxed into letting them burn, mademoiselle and her "preux chevalier" contrived to dry their weeping garments; after which, a long discussion ensued between Monsieur de Rivoli and Lord de Clifford as to whether it was likely to rain or not: the former maintaining the wind was in the north, therefore it could not rain; the latter protesting that it was in the south, and, consequently, that it must rain; appealing to Mowbray as umpire, who Jesuitically answered in the words of Pliny: "'In totum venti omnes a septentrione siccio-res quam a meridie.'" *

* Lib. 2d, cap. 47.

"Ah, yes, var true," said Monsieur de Rivoli; "but you must first prove dat de wind he is in de sout; now I say he is in de nort. What you say, Ma'mselle d'Antoville? you dat know everyting," added he, ironically.

"Sans doute je suis de votre avis," retorted the lady, bitterly; "car je ne dispute pas les vents, avec un *Girouette*."

Lord de Clifford indulged in a horse laugh at mademoiselle's wit and the discomfiture of his antagonist. The boats were then ordered, and the party returned in the same order they came. On reaching Milan, they found the amiable dowager not in the most agreeable humour at having been kept waiting dinner; her hair was more frizzed over her eyes than usual, and she surrounded every one with a perfect "chevaux de frise" of vulgar ceremonies, two invariable signs that all was not right. She met them on the landing-place, and after having cried, "à haute voix," "Now, dinner directly!" said, in a voice more of anger than anxiety, "Dear me! what could have *kep* you, eh, my dear?" taking her son's hand, and totally disregarding everybody else. "It was vastly imprudent of you staying so late; I have been quite frightened about you, and *these here* stupid Italian people could not give any account of you."

Fanny, who delighted in drawing her out, and used to take her off to her face without her ladyship's being a bit the wiser, now stepped forward, and said, "Oh, all sorts of disasters have *kep* us: first, Mademoiselle d'Antoville fainted 'en route;' next she fell into the water; Lord de Clifford had to get her out."

"Bless me! you surely did not go into the water, my dear, I hope?" said his tender mother, again taking his hand.

"Oh, no," replied Fanny, "he stood on 'terra firma,' only stretching out his hand to rescue mademoiselle."

"Hem! vastly good of you, I'm sure, my dear, and does great credit to your head and *hort*;" and then turning to the heroine of the tale, she extended a hand to her, anxiously expressing a hope that she had not suffered from her accident, and assuring her that there was nobody that Lord de Clifford had a greater respect and regard for.

Now all this was said before Julia, and this amiable and judicious mother was perfectly aware of the species of regard her son entertained for mademoiselle; but she

pretended not to be so, and that did just as well; besides, thanks to a most Gorgon cast of countenance, she had always preserved an immaculate character for personal propriety; and, therefore, who dare impugn her morality? And just now she was in want of her son's services, in adjusting rather an oblique transaction between herself and one of her tenants, the justice of the case hanging on the farmer's side. Therefore she would not for the world displease him to whom she was alternately tyrant and slave, as their relative positions might require; and this it was that made the moral opthalmia necessary which she now thought fit to assume as to the D'Antoville business.

She even carried her dreadful hypocrisy to such a pitch, that she would frequently say to Julia, "You see, Lady de Clifford, that though George is not one of those sort of fondling, kissing fathers, he is so properly anxious about the little *gurl*" (for she seldom adopted the familiarity of calling her Julia), "that he passes a great deal of his time with Mademoiselle d'Antoville, to see that the method she pursues is the right one."

Upon all which occasions, resentment, contempt, and disgust had a hard struggle in poor Lady de Clifford's mind; but against the fearful odds of a whole family, and such a family, what could she do? What she did do; bear it till her heart was near breaking. While the dowager was still busy condoling with and complimenting Mademoiselle d'Antoville, Julia, who unremittingly pursued the "noiseless tenour of her way," stole up stairs and told Dorio to put his master's things to the fire. Finding he did not follow, she went down in a quarter of an hour to tell him that he had better change his things. She found him closeted "tête-à-tête" with his mother in the anteroom. The latter instantly rose on her entrance, and coming forward with one of her apologetic speeches and vulpine smiles, said,

"I was talking to George, Lady de Clifford, about *this here* disagreeable business of the Rushworth Farm, and old Jenkins's impertinent letter; you see I treat you quite '*eng fomille*,'" detaining George.

Julia merely bowed in reply to this elegant harangue, and turning to her husband, said,

"I am afraid you will get cold, remaining in those damp clothes, and all your others are ready aired up stairs."

A sneer and a frown were the only reply of her tender and wellbred lord. Then commenced his mother's entreaties:

"Now, do, my dear, pray do, change your things! it is so dangerous to sit in damp clothes; besides, it is not gallant towards the ladies to dine in these." Neither the maternal tenderness nor the facetious politeness of these entreaties produced any other result than a

"D—n it! don't teaze me, ma'am; I'm tired, and my clothes are *not* damp."

In order to drown these gracious sounds, she turned to Julia with another low smile, and hoped that she would excuse the *great* anxiety of a mother for her son's health; which anxiety, however, had never manifested itself during the debate upon Jenkins and the Rushworth farm; or, indeed, till poor Julia had come to tell him his things were at the fire; but with some fortunate individuals, *words*, like civility, cost nothing and purchase everything.

The rest of the party having dressed and assembled in the drawing-room, dinner was announced, the privileged master of the house taking his seat in his soiled and crumpled morning-dress, without either comment or apology to any of his guests.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Man proposes, but God disposes.
Many can *pack* the cards that cannot play them."

"Ut sementem feceris ita metes."

Old Proverb.

Lord de Clifford's mother had been an heiress, of remarkably plain person, forbidding manners, and irrascible temper, who had "withered on the virgin thorne" till six-and-twenty, when she thought it would be a pity to "die and leave the world no copy," and so condescended to bestow her hand upon Colonel Grimstone, who, after having ran himself completely out by divers excesses, made up his mind, at the end of five years, to

the "pis aller" of taking her for better or for worse; and found her, as the Irishman said, much worse than he took her for; for between her and the broad lands which had been his bait, stood her father, who was so unaccommodating as not to die till twelve years after their marriage, so that the poor colonel, who only survived that event six years, quitted the world without his errand, as some hinted, from the daily dose of this ungilded pill.

He was a frank, open, profligate, and somewhat tyrannical man; but then, conjugal tyranny had been a sort of heirloom in his family for eight hundred years; so that "Tyrus," an originial family name, had, in the course of years, been corrupted into the popular currency of "Tyrant;" a title that every male branch of the Grimstones rather gloried in than otherwise, it being among the very few of their well-merited honours. The colonel, who also rejoiced in it, only suited the action to the word at home, for abroad he was the very pink of good fellows, a sort of whipper-in to all the fun and frolic about town; for in those days, when vice had no masquerades, people did not, as now, "travaille trop pour la Gazette;" but then, to be sure, there were no Sunday newspapers, to make it necessary for every profligate to wish to pass for a Platonist, and make the world believe,

"Qu'il s'éveille, qu'il se lève, qu'il s'habille et qu'il sort,
Qu'il rentre, qu'il dine, qu'il soupe, qu'il se couche et qu'il dort."

"Et voila tout." No! a man's vices then were a part of the apanage of his rank in life; so that many were compelled to make a great display on very small means.

Colonel Grimstone was a personal friend of Charles James Fox: he had packed the jury for him in his action for debt against Horne Tooke; nay, he had done more; he had trembled for his personal safety, when Burke, in his celebrated speech on the impeachment of Warren Hastings, said, while Sheridan stood on one side of him and Fox on the other, that "Vice incapacitates a man from all public duty; it withers the powers of his understanding, and makes his mind paralytic." He thought the insult so personal, that his illustrious friends must have taken notice of it; but, to his great

relief, he found them, at the close of the debate, as heedless and free from paralysis as ever.

But let it not be supposed that pleasure alone was his pursuit; no, he combined the "utile dulce," and proved his patriotism by raising a regiment, which he sent out to Egypt to be cut to pieces, while he remained at home, to see their hard-earned banners done due honours to in Whitehall: and although the Prince of Wales had presented the colours to the regiment, and honoured the gallant colonel with his company at a "dejunée" afterward, still he was not tempted to pay his royal highness the compliment of adopting his motto of "Ich Dien" in his own proper person.

It was at this epoch of his life, in the full tide of his military glory, that he "led to the hymeneal altar the amiable and accomplished Miss Elizabeth Barbara Langton;" but whether it was that the lady was fonder of war than he was, or whether their unhappiness arose from

"Some stranger cause yet unexplored,"

it is certain that their ménage was by no means Utopian, as it lacked that flitch-of-bacon unanimity of opinion so desirable in wedded life, and which can never be achieved unless wives are content to live as they must die, intestate. No sooner had Miss Langton become Mrs. Grimstone, than she found out that she was the most devoted daughter in the world, and could not live without her mother, for whom, to do her justice, she had the greatest possible respect; as that exemplary parent, who had been many years separated from her husband, had, from inconceivable economy, out of a very limited income, contrived to amass a large fortune; all of which she promised to leave to whichever of her daughter's future progeny she should like best. This good lady was what is called a woman of spirit, and such characters are seldom guilty of either cunning or hypocrisy, as they invariably prefer carrying things by storm, to gaining them by stratagem; and though in reality not a whit less void of sense than her daughter, her bluntness gave a sort of *Brummagem* energy to her character, which often led people into the error of thinking her a clever woman, and gave her absolute dominion over the weak, vacillating, low cunning imbecility of her daughter's mind, who never

could perform the simplest act without labelling it with a false motive, for insincere people are always cowards; consequently, if she only wished a door or a window opened or shut, she was sure to premise that she did so solely for the sake of another. This species of gratuitous dissimulation became insupportably wearisome to her husband, who at length actually dreaded taking a second cup of tea, or putting on a greatcoat, if she asked him to do so, lest, in complying, he should be entrapped into the, to him, unpardonable weakness of gratifying some covert wish of his wife's, at the same time that he would have to submit to the humiliation of being apparently the obliged person. To speak truly, he had as many faults as most men; but even those in which he was deficient, he was sure to be supplied with by the penetration and spirit of his mother-in-law.

Previous to their marriage, his wife had stipulated that she was to pass every season in London: he had faithfully performed the compact for three years; but when the fourth came, he was laid up with the gout, had spent a great deal of money in improvements at Grimstone, and, in short, found many other cogent reasons for remaining in the country; all of which plunged his lady wife into an undispellable fit of sulks, till her spirited mother declared that such tyranny could not and should not be borne. So, accordingly, she and her daughter took their departure "sans cérémonie" the next morning for London, and took a house in Grosvenor Square, where they unmolestedly went to *drums* and dinners for six months.

The poor colonel, as soon as he had recovered from the first shock of this dreadful innovation upon the marital authority of the Grimstones, began to think what deities he should set up in place of the *Lares* and *Penates* which had used him so scurvily: and he luckily recollected that there was a dormant Irish peerage in the family, which he might as well revive, as the only chance he had now left of lording it over his wife; and he bestirred himself so expeditiously, that in less than eight months the patent was made out, and he became "Viscount de Clifford, of the county of Roscommon, and Baron Portmarnham, of Portmarnham Castle;" but he did not long survive his budding honours, for the following year he was gathered to his fathers, where nothing remained to him of all his pomp

but a splendid mausoleum in the family vault, and an epitaph which (thanks to his widow's *love of truth*) did not tell so many falsehoods as most posthumous panegyrics do. Released from her bondage, Lady de Clifford devoted herself to spoiling her children, quarrelling with her neighbours, and turning away her servants; but lest the former should prove too arduous a task for her own individual and unassisted labours, her mother kindly undertook to facilitate it, by taking her favourite Master Herbert under her own especial care, and training him up to expect the eighty thousand pounds she meant to leave him; so that, by the time he was fourteen, she had indulged him into a sort of domestic Alexander Selkirk, who fancied himself "monarch of all he surveyed" at school. When other boys were content with cherries and strawberries, he was fed upon peaches and pineapples, which he seemed to consider his "Jure divino," and therefore never shared either with his brother or his playfellows. Money was supplied to him on an equally liberal scale, which produced the good effect of making him extravagant to the most boundless excess, which, as it naturally increased his selfishness, prevented his ever deviating in his most unguarded moments into anything bordering upon generosity, though he had been often known to purchase some bauble that he had taken a fancy to from his companions at *treble* its value, in order that there might be no delay to his becoming the possessor, and afterward boast how he had assisted the seller when he was in distress; a fact he was confirmed in by his mother's and grandmother's invariable assertion upon beholding all such purchases, and hearing the sum he paid for them: "Indeed, my dear Herbert, you are far *too generous!*" Meanwhile his brother, under maternal auspices, was undergoing a different but equally judicious mode of treatment. Mrs. Langton, in her usual *spirited* manner, had declared her decided aversion for him, and her daughter had too much filial affection ever to differ from her *openly;* consequently, with her "protegé" she was compelled to have recourse to a species of contraband spoiling, gauged by falsehood and deceit, that engendered in him the selfishness of covetousness and avarice, to quite as great an extent as the selfishness of profusion had been fostered in his brother.

Lady de Clifford's sole object was to make up to him

for his grandmother's partiality to Herbert; consequently, whatever the latter got, she was sure to give him too, but always accompanied with the strict injunction that it was to be kept a profound secret from his brother and grandmother. All this naturally made him cold, stern, crafty, and ambiguous, and careful never to allow a glimmering of his designs to appear before their execution, so that he never was seduced into honesty or betrayed into candour; two circumstances that gave him a fearful advantage over every one he had any dealings with. His grandmother's ceaseless invectives gave him a morbid resentment of censure, while, on the other hand, his mother's eternal praises of everything he said and everything he did gave him an equally morbid and insatiable craving for flattery, which choked up both his intellect and his feelings. Pride, one of the noblest attributes of our nature if properly directed, was in him the "overgrown rank weed" of vulgar externals, inflated by egotism into the omnipresence of himself, and never extending beyond "a local habitation and a name."

His mother was eternally dinning into his ears that the Grimstone estate (which his father had left much mortgaged, and which she had thrown into chancery) would, by the time he was of age, be one of the finest properties in England; and that to it she would add, at her death, her own place of Blichingly, in ———shire, containing a fine old castle and an unencumbered property, in a ring-fence of thirty miles in circumference.

But, alas! all is not gold that glitters. Upon his coming of age, the mortgage on the Grimstone estate remained almost entirely unpaid off, and the property anything but improved from its long slumber in chancery; so that the young heir commenced life as his father had ended it, by being an embarrassed man. To be sure, there was still Blichingly in perspective—but then his mother still lived; it was in her sole power and under her sole control; and there were such things as caprices and contingencies in the world, and, worst of all, there was now a *bare* chance of its being, like Macedonia at the death of Alexander, divided among many: for Herbert Grimstone had, at the end of five years, ran through every shilling of the eighty thousand pounds his grandmother had left him; and with that genius for finance which had ever distinguished him,

he had contrived to get ten thousand pounds in debt besides; add to which, Lady de Clifford had accumulated two valuable acquaintances in the Isle of Thanet—a Mr. and Mrs. Tymmons.

The male Tymmons was an attorney, and ingratiated himself into her ladyship's good graces by giving her sundry remnants of his legal abilities at the cheapest possible rate; while the female specimen made herself extremely useful in the secret service line of buying bargains, procuring chronicles of the kitchen, and a catalogue raisonée of the conversation in the servants' hall; to say nothing of being the triple substitute of society, companion, and counsellor. As her patroness, having quarrelled with her whole neighbourhood in ——shire, and closed her park gates against the hounds, had no troublesome visiters, and as she seldom confided her secrets to her sons, Mrs. Tymmons' sympathizing bosom became a safe repository for such important mysteries, as whether John the footman talked too often to Mary the housemaid, or whether the bay mare was to be turned out to grass, or the black horse to be sent to Tattersall's; whether Lord de Clifford was to be sent half a buck, and Herbert only a haunch, or vice versâ; or, last, though not least, whether Anne had told Martha, who had told Jane, who had told Sarah, who had told Mrs. Mince the housekeeper, who had told Mrs. Frump, her ladyship's maid, that Thomas had said to James at dinner, that the beer at Blichingly was much weaker than what the servants had at Lord Cramwell's; for which reason the aforesaid Thomas was instantly to be discharged, and Mrs. Tymmons despatched upon a Diogenes' mission in search of an honest man, which a man capable of preferring one concoction of malt and hops to another certainly could not be called, at least when the beverage so preferred was not brewed at Blichingly.

Besides, the Tymmons being justly proud of knowing a viscountess, and especially one with so much in her power, was the very triton of the Toadys; and, by her incessant deference and adulation, served to remind her illustrious friend of her superior station; otherwise, from the constancy and minuteness of her domestic details, her ideas stood a fair chance of never extending beyond a kitchen-maid or a cabbage-stalk, as her phraseology had already become that of the kitchen.

But the most formidable of all these rival votaries in Lord de Clifford's eyes was Herbert; for he had not only to get his mother to pay his debts, but also to play a bold stroke for Blichingly, which still, however, stood provokingly forward in the vista of his elder brother's prospects.

At this critical epoch he became acquainted with Julia Neville; and having taken a fancy to her, determined, even at the risk of losing Blichingly, to marry her. Here was noble, disinterested generosity! which, to her shame be it said, Julia never felt half grateful enough for, though her husband reminded her of it incessantly. His mother was for a long time unappeasable, as she thought she had a right to insist upon his marrying a person with money; however, to do him justice, as soon as his fancy was over, he made every atonement in his power to his mother's outraged authority, by humbling and subjugating his wife to all her vulgar insolence and caprices as much as possible, and turning away his own servants at her instigation, as often as she did hers, especially if they happened to be favourites with Julia.

This amiable and exemplary lady, whom her sons voted a pattern of piety because she went to church occasionally, could repeat the creed out of book, used the word religion very often, and subscribed once to the Bible Society, never saw her daughter-in-law for five years, though she was in the habit of calling at her door, while she sent for her son to visit her in the carriage; and probably she might have gone to her grave without doing so, had she not been once dangerously ill and both her sons abroad; whereupon Julia wrote, and sent to know if there was anything she could do for her. So that, three months after, chaperoned by her son, she paid a visit; but fearing this might be too great an honour for his wife, Lord de Clifford ushered her into the room where Julia sat by saying, "My mother has come to see the house!"

From that day, the little remnant of peace Julia had had was at an end; for, though the dowager was sickeningly civil, ceremonious, and flattering to her face, yet never did she enter her house but what she was sure to hear from her husband the same day such speeches as the following: "As my mother says, how I am thrown away upon you!" or, "As my mother says, how extreme-

ly shabby the furniture looks, though new last year!" and, "How foolish you must be to keep such bad servants! What a difference between this carpet and hers in Bruton-street, which has been down these ten years! But then my mother is not a fine lady."

"And perhaps she don't receive so often as we do; or maybe you don't smoke in her drawing-rooms?" said Julia; but she was soon silenced by an authoritative

"Hold your tongue, madam! none of your impertinence!"

At their marriage Lord de Clifford had only settled £5000 upon his wife, upon the plea of his present embarrassments, and his intention of doing more should he ever become the possessor of Blichingly; but, three years afterward, one of the trustees to her marriage-settlement having died, and Mr. Herbert Grimstone being the only surviving one, Lord de Clifford soon worked upon his wife's compassion, by descriptions of his pecuniary distress, to relinquish that munificent sum, to which arrangement the trustee consented, without even appealing to her to know if such was her wish.

The frequency of Lord de Clifford's elections was ruinous in the extreme, and displeased his mother greatly, or rather the line of politics he had adopted; for she being, as she always styled herself, "a landed proprietor," thought it incumbent on her to be a Tory, and therefore looked upon her son's political principles as waifs upon her manor, which she had a perfect right to pound within her own pale of restriction whenever it was in her power to erect a barrier to their career; consequently, no electioneering funds were to be expected from her. On the contrary, she always made a point, on those occasions, of withdrawing the allowance she made him in consideration of the mortgage on the Grimstone estate; and then followed, "fast and fierce," reproaches of his ingratitude in going contrary to the wishes of her who had brought him up so tenderly and so carefully.

She forgot that when she took him to Eton he did not like the *Keateon* physiognomy, and so declared to Eton he would not go. Nor did he, for his kind parent sent him to Harrow instead. At a later period, upon his private tutor finding fault with something he had done, he quietly and coolly knocked him down! Then came his maternal guardian angel and took him away, saying she

was sure Mr. Lilburn (the tutor) must have insulted him grossly, and she should expose him everywhere.

Now causes will produce effects, and no wonder the twig so bent proved rather unmanageable afterward; but knowing, as she did, that an English peerage was Lord de Clifford's "thought by day and dream by night," she was puzzled beyond measure to divine why he should labour so indefatigably to subvert the powers that be, and desecrate all existing institutions; for she was ignorant of that almost universally known truth, that there is no hypocrisy like political hypocrisy; no tyrant like a Democrat; and no placeman like a patriot.

Your true Liberal deals with the people as Charles the Twelfth did with the Russians: under the guise of protection and redress, he uses all his dexterity and adroitness to turn their own arms against them, and instruct him how to become their conqueror; when too late, they find their mistake in exchanging the harmless inertness of a King Log for the active destructiveness of a King Stork.

Now Herbert Grimstone, on the contrary, had always been a stanch Tory as long as there had been a close borough in existence; but no sooner had they fallen victims to the alphabetical pestilence of schedules "A" and "B," than his political steps began to limp about upon the crutches of liberal Whiggism; steering timidly and totteringly between the monosyllabic Scylla and Charybdis of "ay" and "no," and resolutely shutting his ears against the syren voices of principle or consistency. Demosthenes said of the Pythian oracle that it philippized; and from the moment the Reform Bill began to thrive, Herbert Grimstone liberalized; but when it and the Catholic question were both carried, and "a second Daniel came to judgment," suffocating the British Senate into silence with "flowers of the earth," and dazzling them into blindness with gems of the sea, then, and not till then, Herbert Grimstone radicalized.

And who could blame him? His grandmother's £80,000 were gone; his friend Lord Shuffleton's rotten borough was gone; his own credit was gone; so that he had no alternative but St. Stephen's or the King's Bench.

> "And, oh, the choice! what patriot can doubt
> Of seats with ratting, or of jails without?"

The worst of it is, that every advantage is bought with a price in this "best of all possible worlds:" the change that had come over the spirit of his politics was another hold loosened on his chance of Blichingly. Something must be done to propitiate his mother, without offending his brother, as he was a great friend and supporter of Lord Denham's, who was the cynosure of their political hemisphere. So he took to making his mother presents, begging of her to choose his pocket handkerchiefs; eating bad dinners at five o'clock with her once a month, and calling her *mamma*.

This did very well to fill up the interstices of her good graces, but still there was a grand "coup" wanting to produce something decisive; and he had not been a diplomatist for eight years without knowing that nothing had so good a chance of clinching an advantage, as assuming a great appearance of conciliatory generosity and sacrifice, when any of the other negotiating powers had been guilty of defalcation from the constituted authorities.

His brother had married against his mother's consent, *ergo*, he should be on the point of doing the same; but, from his overpowering sense of filial duty and affection, should, on the very threshold of happiness, relinquish his dearest hopes.

Accordingly, one day after dinner, at the end of a three weeks' acquaintance, he proposed for an admiral's daughter of the name of Erdley. Though penniless and a little deformed, with a slight cast in one eye, she was a very amiable girl, and had never been guilty of any folly but that of liking Herbert Grimstone. However, luckily, her heart was not made of that sort of brittle devotion that breaks at desertion. Lady de Clifford was duly applied to for her consent, and as duly refused it. Again and again she was entreated, but in vain. Herbert wrote an affecting letter to his adored Caroline, saying, that however he might and should suffer, he would die sooner than subject the pride of one he loved better than life to the humiliation of entering a family where she would not be appreciated!

That night he left London for Paris, accompanied by Mademoiselle Celestine, a French actress; wrote to his mother from thence for six weeks on black-edged paper; went every night to Frescati's; dined every day at the Rocher or the Café de Paris (except when he dined

out), and at the end of six months returned to London, and assured "his dearest mamma" that, much as it had cost him, he felt far happier in having obliged her, than he could possibly have done by gratifying his own wishes.

This certainly was a great point gained, and his purse had no longer that consumptive appearance which Paris invariably occasions; but "all that's bright must fade." One luckless morning he forgot an appointment he had made with his mother to be in Bruton-street by twelve o'clock, to pass sentence upon a groom she was about to hire, and went to the levee instead. The newspapers betrayed his secret; so that, when he called the next day, he was not admitted.

The same fate awaited him for five months, with the agreeable addition of having his allowance stopped, thereby showing,

"What mighty contests rise from trivial things."

This was the time for Lord de Clifford to step forward with his delicate attentions, and regain the ground he had lost. He had determined upon going abroad, wishing to escape from the vexatious consequences resulting from an event he had long ardently wished for, namely, the birth of a son; but, alas! the little unfortunate was not destined to appropriate to itself the honours of his house, as its mother was a poor girl of seventeen, in the village of Blichingly, of the name of Mary Lee. From the moment the Dowager Lady de Clifford had been made acquainted with the circumstance, she had, with her usual maternal affection, done everything in her power to assist her son in ridding himself of his poor victim's importunities, by calling her "a vile, forward hussy;" threatening her with the parish authorities, and ejecting her father from a little farm he rented; but, unfortunately, these well-meant exertions only tended to ensure a contrary effect from that which they were designed to produce: for the poor girl, who had submitted without a murmur to every privation and reproach, no sooner found that her child was likely to become a sacrifice, than she redoubled her appeals to its unnatural father, which he humanely determined to put an end to by retreating beyond the reach of her importunities.

Neither was his exemplary mother without her own

individual sorrows at this juncture; for having had a living fall vacant some months before, she had refused it to a very worthy clergyman in the neighbourhood, thinking he was too much of a gentleman to be as completely under her control as she thought desirable, and so gave it accordingly to a miserably poor relation of Mr. Tymmons's, rejoicing in the euphoneous cognomen of Hoskins. This presentation had, *primâ facie*, the appearance of a great charity towards Hoskins, but his patroness was too shrewd a person to act without a motive. The fact was, the tithe being worth about £100 a year, she meant him to accept a modus of £35; but, unfortunately, he being, too, like herself, of a mean, sordid, grasping disposition, totally devoid of gratitude, answered this proposition by instantly bringing an action against her in the Ecclesiastical Court for simony, which he followed up by every species of vulgar, personal annoyance he could invent, so that her son found her more inclined than he could have anticipated to accompany him to Italy, which, as may be supposed, was an additional martyrdom to poor Julia.

CHAPTER IX.

"Membranis intus positis delere licebit
Quod non edideris: nescit vox missa reverti."
Q. HORATIE FLACCI, *Epistola ad Pisones.*

"Moulded by her—her son to manhood grown,
She now can claim his vices as her own."

"The oath in any way or form you please,
I stand resolved to take it."
MASSINGER'S *Duke of Milan.*

A GERMAN writer has observed, that "Luther knew very well what he was about when he threw the inkstand at Satan's head, for there is nothing that the devil hates like ink." In this, at least, Lord de Clifford's maternal progenitor resembled his Satanic majesty, for nothing on earth she so much dreaded, and, consequently, hated, as the idea of anonymous letters about her being disseminated, or of being made the subject of a paragraph in a newspaper. Poor lady! she was re-

ally to be pitied, for she had all her life been inverting Plato's maxim, "That, in seeking other's good, we find our own;" as, in seeking other's harm, she invariably found hers.

She had sought to save the Rev. Nathaniel Peter Hoskins trouble, by condensing his tithe of £100 per annum into £35, and a simonious suit decided against her in the Ecclesiastical Court had been the result. She had wished to make farmer Jenkins drain the hedges and rethatch the barn at Rushworth farm, solely for his own comfort (but wholly at his own expense); whereupon he had the impertinence to employ an attorney, who clearly proved that, according to the terms of the lease, the repairs of draining, thatching, &c., devolved entirely upon her ladyship, and were entirely compulsory obligations, which brought forth the before alluded to insolent letter from farmer Jenkins, wherein he threatened to publish the whole transaction, with episodes, in the ——shire "Courant," if she did not instantly desire Mr. Grindall, her steward, to have the aforesaid draining and thatching put in hand.

By the same packet had also come an obsequious and admonitory letter from the faithful Tymmons, putting her on her guard as to the machinations of his "never-to-be-sufficiently-deprecated, ungrateful, and degenerate kinsman, the Rev. Nathaniel Peter Hoskins, "who had not only warmly espoused the cause of Mary Lee, in his pastoral capacity of guardian to the parish morals, but had actually joined the thatching and draining cabal of the Jenkinists. But," continued Mr. Tymmons, in his able and eloquent epistle, in which he appeared deeply to have studied Aristotle's receipt for good writing, namely, "to speak like the common people, and think like the wise"—"but bad as these here two hitches is, they ain't without a remedy neither; for, as I was a saying to Mr. Grindall last night, when we was a drinking your ladyship's health in a glass of the very best Blichingly ale I ever tasted—and, thanks to your goodness, my lady, I've tasted many—that there is Bring-'em-down-Dick, as we calls Richard Brindal, the under-keeper, as was discharged for poaching Christmas twelvemonth, might be got to marry the girl, and say the child is his, if so be my lord would come down with a matter of £200, which, in my humble opinion (but with all due deference to your lady-

ship, who, of course, always knows best), it would be well worth his lordship's while to do; as Mister Hoskins—I mean that eternal disgrace, that flaw in our family—is actually drawing up a pamphlet on the subject, which the vulgar wretch says he shall keep under his lee till the next Triverton election; and then, if my lord stands, or even Mr. Herbert, it will be a smasher. But I beg your ladyship's pardon for repeating this here venomous viciousness; nothing but a wish to place your ladyship on your ladyship's guard, so as that you may circumvent the villain, and enable my lord to rise above it bright and resplendent, as I have often seen the sun do from the Thames just above Eel Pie Island, could induce me to offend your ladyship's eyes with such words.

"I was at Blichingly last evening; the Swedish turnips have taken well, but Mr. Grindall thinks the Norfolk wheat too coarse, and the geese won't eat the stubble. Sorry to say, two bucks and a doe were found shot at the east end of the park yesterday, and the black swan has killed one of the white ones. Hoskins had the effrontery to ask John Oaks, the new undergardener, for a few grains of the Russian parsley-seed last week, which he very properly refused, telling him he'd see him d—d first; upon which Hoskins swore he was drunk, and had him fined five shillings.

"I trouble your ladyship with this little anecdote of John Oaks, knowing that that justice which invariably leads your ladyship to punish vice, equally leads you to reward virtue.

"Mrs. Tymmons begs her humble, dutiful respects to your ladyship, whom we both sincerely hope is quite well, as well as my lord and little miss, who, we hear, is the very born image of your ladyship. Beauty is all very well, but beauty won't last for ever: so that she may have the beauties of your ladyship's mind as well, is the humble hope of your ladyship's

"Faithful, grateful, and
"Obliged servant to
"Command till death,
"Anthony Algernon Tymmons."

This budget induced Lady de Clifford to summon her son to a cabinet council, which she opened in a manner that Machiavel might have envied, and Prince Talley-

rand despaired of equalling. The mother and son knew each other too well, whatever might be the imminent danger of their respective dilemmas, ever to commit the candid imbecility of asking a favour when they had the power of making it appear that they were conferring an obligation; and as both perfectly coincided in the French philosopher's opinion, that "words were given to us to conceal our thoughts," they invariably used theirs accordingly.

"Well, ma'am," said the latter, as he slammed the door after him, flung himself into a chair with his hat on, yawned sonorously, and placed his feet upon the table, "I suppose you have sent to me about this Rushworth Farm business. I really don't see what the d—l you can do; I suppose you'll have to knock under at last: so you had better make a virtue of necessity, to stop Jenkins's mouth, and say that, on looking over the lease, you find Grindall (for don't commit yourself) was mistaken, and therefore you will order the repairs to be made, and are sorry there should have been so long a delay."

"Oh! my dear," said the affectionate mother, "it is very little consequence about the Rushworth Farm. I sent for you upon another business—about that 'ere tiresome Mary Lee. She is threatening to expose everything; and then your character might suffer."

"My character!" shouted Lord de Clifford, in a voice almost inarticulate with rage, as he started on his feet and stamped at his terrified parent, who stood trembling like an amateur wizard—a Tycho in the black art, that had raised a demon she had neither the power to exorcise nor control; "my character, madam! who dare impeach it? It is as undeserving of censure as it is superior to and beyond it. Is that name which has been unsullied for a thousand years, and which has derived additional lustre since it has centred in me—is it, I say, to be tarnished by a village calumny, filtered through the ravings of a lowborn peasant, who ought to feel it her only source of pride that I had ever looked at her?"

"Very true, my dear," responded the virtuous and sensible matron; "but you see this here Hoskins is such a wretch: he's a drawing up some horrid pamphlet, which he threatens to publish at the next Triverton election should either you or Herbert stand; and at these elections people are so scurrilous and treacher-

ous, there is no knowing what may be said; and I thought if Hoskins—"

"There it is," interrupted her son, as he paced the room, with his hands behind his back, and his hat slouched over his eyes; "you *would* give the living to that blackguard, when I wanted you to give it to young Dinely, which would have obliged Herbert, as Lord Shuffleton had always been so kind to him; and Dinely's a capital fellow—thinks of nothing but his hounds and a good bottle of claret—and as he is sure of being a bishop before he dies, he would have let you make ducks and drakes of the tithes."

"Indeed, my dear, it is shocking to think how one suffers for a good action in this world: so charitable as it was of me to give the living to that 'ere Hoskins, when Mr. Moreton applied for it, and every one speaks so well of him! But I can't say I like those popular people; I think they must be so artful; besides, he's rather methodistical and particular. But let us think what can be done about this here terrible pamphlet."

"Done! why, I'll write to Clarridge, the d—d Triverton printer, and tell him I'll prosecute him if he dares publish anything of the sort."

"Oh! my dear, you are much too open and unsuspicious; that would never do; because, in the first place, that would commit you more; and, in the next place, Hoskins could get it published elsewhere; but—"

"But what, ma'am? Then I'll break every bone in that rascally Hoskins's skin."

"I'm sure, my dear, your just indignation is not to be wondered at, and does *vaust* credit to your head and *hort;* but you always was so *vaustly sperited* and high-minded; but it don't do with those sort of people; you should always compass them with a net before you attack them with a spear; that is, never attack them before you are quite sure that they have no means either of defence or escape."

"There is some sense in that, ma'am. But what do you want me to do, then?"

"Why, my dear, it strikes me" (for this candid and veracious lady would not even give her faithful friend and counsellor, Mr. Tymmons, the credit of his plot), "it strikes me that you had better give some man a couple of hundred pounds to marry the girl, and so get rid of her; but first make him promise to say that the child is

his; and then you can write a letter to Clarridge, the editor of the 'Courant,' assuring him you know nothing of Mary Lee, but, hearing she was miserably poor, have given her that money as a dower, which circumstance he can put in the county paper, and it will sound uncommonly generous on your part; and Grindall shall have my orders to send him half a buck before he receives your letter, which will prepare him to justify you to every one."

"That's all very fine, ma'am; but, d—n it! who's to be got to marry the girl?"

"Why, I was thinking, my dear, that that 'ere Brindal, that I turned away for poaching some time ago, would do anything for £200."

"Yes, and a pretty way I should commit myself by exacting a promise of secrecy from such a fellow as that, who, for a quarter of the sum, in a case of necessity, would betray everything!"

"My dear, you are naturally so irritated at the villanous threats of that wretch Hoskins, that you do not take time to understand me. I never meant that you should compromise yourself by having any dealings with Brindal; but I thought I could give Mr. Tymmons (of whose honesty and secrecy I have every reason to have the highest opinion) a hint to negotiate the business; and when he had got him publicly to own the child, then give him the money, which would be better and safer than giving it to the girl, as that might look suspicious; and in giving it to Brindal, Mr. Tymmons could say that I had discovered that he was not guilty of the fault for which I had discharged him, and therefore that you, as well as myself, wished to make him every reparation in our power. Besides, my dear, doing it in this way would have another advantage; the circumstance would do *vaustly* well to put into a paragraph, as a set-off to one of those eternal flourishes about the blankets and coals Lord Sudbury gives to the poor of Triverton every Christmas."

"Well, my dear ma'am," said the obedient son, affectionately taking his mother's hand, "I think you have arranged everything very diplomatically, so I shall leave it entirely to you."

"Ah, my dear! depend upon it, there is no friend like a mother, and this it was that made me so much against your marriage. I saw how you was throwing yourself

away—but there's no putting old heads on young shoulders."

"I can only lament, my dear ma'am," said the affectionate son, gallantly kissing the hand he still held, "that, being blessed with such a mother, I have not always followed the advice which was dictated by her superior sense."

"Well, my dear, let by-gones be by-gones; I'll write to Mr. Tymmons, if you'll just write a line to Clarridge."

Lord de Clifford sat down and endited the following epistle:

"DEAR SIR,

"You may probably have heard some time ago of a man of the name of Richard Brindal, an under gamekeeper of my mother's, being discharged from her service for poaching: she has since discovered that he was wrongfully accused by a rival keeper, and she is therefore anxious (with that justice and generosity which have ever distinguished her) to make him every reparation in her power; for which reason, hearing he is about to be married to a young woman of the name of Lee, in the village of Blichingly, she has given him £100, and begged of me to add another hundred to it, which I have much pleasure in doing. I should feel much obliged by your making these facts public, through the medium of your valuable paper; not from any desire of proclaiming my mother's generosity (for that is a proceeding from which I know she would shrink), but solely from the desire of vindicating and re-establishing the character of the poor man. I understand Brindal has had a liaison with the girl he is about to marry; the child which was the result of it, Mr. Hoskins, with his usual impotent, unchristian-like, but for that reason perfectly clerical malice, has thought fit to tax me with being the father of; an accusation which I hope I need not assure you, on the honour of a gentleman, is perfectly false, and this you have my authority to state, should the calumny gain ground. Hoping Mrs. Clarridge and your young people are quite well,

"Believe me, dear sir,

"Very faithfully yours,

"DE CLIFFORD."

"There, ma'am, will that do?" said Lord de Clifford,

pushing over this precious "morceau" to his mother, who, after she had perused it, said,

"Nothing can be better, my dear; but you do write so *vaustly* well! There is only one thing: do you think it quite prudent to call Hoskins's conduct 'perfectly clerical?' I'm sure I speak disinterestedly, for his conduct has been enough to disgust one with all religion; but it might be brought against you at one of those horrid elections; and you know, my dear, that I am a stanch Tory, for I really think we landed proprietors ought to support church and state."

"Fudge! my dear ma'am; what the d—l have the church and the parsons to do with the state? All that is such d—d nonsense!"

"Perhaps not the parsons, my dear (and I'm sure no one has more cause to dislike them than I have), but certainly church and state always have gone, always do, and always will go together. You know, my dear, we have the thirty-nine Articles, the Magna Charta, and the Habeas Corpus Act for that. But we are forgetting things of more consequence; you did not mention the venison in your letter to Clarridge."

"I thought it better not; for, should he show the letter, it might look like bribery."

"Very just observation, my dear; I did not think of that." And now came the pith and marrow of this long conference, namely, her ladyship's *own* business, which, to make it appear of the least possible importance, she put off to the last moment. "Oh, by-the-by, George," said she, just as her son was about to seal his letter, "be so good as to add a postscript, begging Clarridge will contradict in every possible way any stories about Jenkins and the Rushworth Farm; say it was all a mistake of Grindall's; that I had it rectified the moment it came to my knowledge. I'm sure none but landed proprietors can know the trouble of landed property," concluded her ladyship, with a deep sigh, as though she were personally labouring under the weight of all her own acres. This veracious protocol having been added to the before-mentioned truths, the bell was rang, and the letter duly despatched. Lord de Clifford having arranged all his own business entirely to his satisfaction, was preparing to leave the room, when his amiable parent said,

"Stop a minute, my dear, I want to speak to you.

I've been thinking your establishment is a great deal more expensive than it need be; not that I would on any account deprive *you* of any comfort, but really I must say that 'ere Beryl, Lady de Clifford's maid, has a great deal too much wages. I understand she gets four-and-twenty guineas a year; now I only give Frump sixteen—there's eight guineas saved at once."

"Yes, my dear ma'am, but Beryl is a very good hair-dresser and milliner, I believe."

"Pack of stuff! I really think Miss Neville's maid might wait upon her sister; I'm sure she never had a maid to herself before she married; but those sort of people always give themselves the most airs; besides, it is a very bad plan to let servants live too long with one, for they begin to fancy one cannot do without them. That 'ere Beryl, from living so long with Lady de Clifford, is grown quite disrespectful. Only fancy her saying to the servants that she loves her mistress as well as if she was her sister! So vaustly free and impertinent! I'm sure no servant has ever presumed to speak in that way of me; and then she tells Frump that she keeps all Lady de Clifford's keys, and buys everything for her, which, I am sure, is enough to spoil any servant in the world. I never let Frump buy me anything except a pair of gloves once, for which she charged me half a crown, and I should have discharged her instantly, only I wanted her to find out something about a cook I had at the time, for it was such evident cheatery, as I never paid but eighteenpence for my gloves; and since Mrs. Tymmons took me to Sewell and Crosse's, I only pay a shilling; and as for keys, I'm sure I could not sleep if I thought Frump had a single key of mine in her possession."

"Why, to tell you the truth, my dear ma'am," said Lord de Clifford, rather alarmed at this insight into his wife's extravagance, "it is not so much for Lady de Clifford's accommodation that I allow her to keep Beryl, but the fact is, travelling, she is a perfect treasure to me. Neither Dorio nor Carlton can ever remember anything, and she never forgets a single thing; then she has found out a way of packing my things without rumpling them, which neither of those two dolts can do; she makes me capital tobacco-bags, that don't come open at the top, and much nicer 'sachets' than I can buy; and I never had a nightcap I could wear till she made them;

and so cheap, for I only pay her ten shillings for what I used to pay Ludlem a pound, and much better velvet too. In short, she is more my valet than either Carlton or Dorio. I think she has an impertinent manner, though, as her excuse for keeping me waiting a quarter of an hour the other day was, that she must attend to Lady de Clifford first; for which reason I shall discharge her when I get to England."

"Oh! my dear, I was not aware that she was of the least use to you; if I had, I'm sure I should have been the last person to wish you to part with her. Indeed, if you had not told me of her impertinent speech the other day, I should have given her a new gown to make her more attentive to you. You'll forgive my mentioning the circumstance, but I thought it was extravagant in Lady de Clifford to give her such wages."

"Oh! my dear ma'am, I'm sure I'm very grateful to you, and I see the justice of all you have said."

So saying, this amiable mother and son separated till dinner; the former to calculate how she could manage to reduce Frump's board wages, the latter to enjoy the intellectual feast of Mademoiselle d'Antoville's powers of listening.

CHAPTER X.

"My heart is mad; why not my brain? Oh, witch!
That flaming Hymen now would quench his torch,
Or Hate between thy fool and thee would set
Double divorce for ever! Shall I go?
I *cannot* quit her: but, like men who mock
The voice of thunder, tarry until—I die!
Shall I not go? I will not, though the tongues
Of chiding virtue rail me straight to stone.
Here will I stand, a statue fix'd and firm,
Before the fiery altar of my love,
Both worshipper and martyr!"

BARRY CORNWALL.

"YES, I will leave this place," said Mowbray, one morning, about a fortnight after the party to Como; "it is madness—is it not something worse?—of me to remain. What can it, what must it all end in? My eter-

nal wretchedness certainly, if she is what I think, what I feel, ay, and what I know her to be! What a fate is mine! Why should the only human being in the world that can make life desirable to me, be the only one that I must not, at least that I ought not, to think of? Why was I born? Why cannot I fathom the dark mystery of my own existence? Of what jarring atoms am I composed! The crude and half-formed germes of good within me seem as if the sun which was to vivify and expand them had never shone till now. Oh! mystery of mysteries! can that which softens and improves my whole nature be in itself wrong? Can crime, whose fruits are so bitter, bear such fair blossoms? Can sin, whose 'wages are death,' be the only thing which has taught me to live? or is my curse to be a *oneness*, both of fate and feeling? All nature owns a fair variety; light has its shade, heat its alternate cold, spring its showers, summer its suns, toil its rest; but I know no change: the unfathomed essence of one feeling absorbs all others; and with this feeling my heart aches and burns, and maddens like a lidless eye beneath a scorching sun! I have played the fool's game, and gambled with my fate; all is gone—all lost—all sacrificed to this one master-passion, and I am left without any of the small change of sensations and pursuits which enable others to support existence!"

So argued, or, rather, raved Mowbray, till his hand was actually on the bell to order preparations to be made for his immediate departure. In the Herculean labour of pulling an Italian bell, the bunch of withered violets that Lady de Clifford had dropped some time before, fell from his bosom, where they had been deposited ever since the day he had possessed himself of them. The sight of them changed the whole current of his intentions: he returned to his former sophistry, "that, in continuing his intercourse with Julia, no one would be injured but himself!" Therefore, with that Curtuis-like devotion which a man always evinces to secure the gratification of his own selfishness, as soon as the bell was answered, instead of asking for his courier, he called for some Seltzer water, and ordered his horses, which, when they came round, conveyed him to the palazzo.

But what were Mowbray's conflicts to Julia's? He only struggled against the sorrow of his love—she had to shrink from the sin of hers: he looked to the penal-

ties resulting from that love here—she to the punishment that awaited it hereafter. She had all her woman's purity to magnify and blacken her fault; he had all his man's sophistry of custom to lessen and lighten his: his love, refine, restrain it as he might, was still but that whirlwind of impulse, passion, and selfishness, which a man's love always is; while hers was a sort of monomania of the heart, differing from that of the brain in this, that while that of the head consists in imagining ourselves to be something which we are not, that of the heart employs all its delusions upon another.

But, exclusive of this ill-fated attachment, which Lady de Clifford would not own even to herself, she had quite enough to make her wretched: for an eloquent writer has remarked, that "When a woman of genius is endued with real sensibility, her sorrow is multiplied by her faculties themselves: she makes discoveries in her afflictions, as in the rest of nature, and the miseries of her heart become inexhaustible; the more ideas she has, the more she feels it."

Frank, generous, and affectionate, she met with nothing in her husband's family but deceit, meanness, and coldness. Like all intellectual women, she was of a social disposition, and half her life was condemned to solitude and silence. Clever men have a thousand ways of making their talents available; science, politics, law, war, literature, all are open to them; therefore, with them, "self-love and social" are not necessarily the same: but a woman has but one sphere wherein to enjoy her talents—society. It may be urged that literature is equally open to them as to the other sex: not so; for, generally speaking, women have either fathers, brothers, or husbands, who would shrink from having an authoress for a daughter, sister, or wife; and the reason is obvious: it arises from a fear that they might either disgrace or distinguish themselves, two results equally distasteful to the pride of man.

No one could possibly have less desire "de briller" than Lady de Clifford; yet it was not pleasant to her pride to be commanded into silence at home, in order to make way for the platitudes of her mother and brother-in-law, or to be frowned into it abroad, for fear of occasioning a colloquial eclipse of her husband. Still, had she continued to live under his absolute monarchy, her sense of duty would have enabled her to support

with cheerfulness many of the rigours of his matrimonial code; but she had now to endure all the hydra oppressions of a triumvirate, for Mr. Herbert Grimstone had joined his amiable relatives at Milan, and had resumed his share (by no means an inconsiderable one) in the domestic legislation of his brother's family.

In person he was as diminutive as Lord de Clifford was tall; his hair was dark and thin, though he had a habit of extending his hand to encompass the half dozen capillary ornaments that graced each temple, as widely as though he had been about to grasp a world; his eyes were small, and of that sinister and one-expressioned kind which read others, while they say nothing themselves; his nose was aquiline; his face long, narrow, and pitted with smallpox; but Marmontel has described him perfectly in his portrait of the Marquis de Lisban. "Heureusement," for I could not do it half so well, "c'étoit une de ces figures froide qui vous disent: me voilà; c'étoit une de ces vanités gauches qui manquent sans cesse leur coup. Il se piquoit de tout, et n'étoit bon à rien; il prenoit la parole, demandoit silence, suspendoit l'attention, et disoit une platitude; il rioit avant de conter, et personne ne rioit de ses contes: il visoit souvent à être fin, et il tournoit si bien ce qu'il vouloit dire, qu'il ne savoit plus ce qu'il disoit. Quand il ennuyoit les femmes, il croyoit les rendre rêveuses: quands elles s'amusoient de ses ridicules, il prenoit cela pour des agaceries."

Towards his superiors (and, morally speaking, they would have been nearly every one with whom he came in contact) he evinced the most ubiquitous servility, which, to do him justice, he extended to the meanest individual the moment he found they were capable of being of the slightest use to him: indeed, in some instances, his philanthrophy deserved the greatest credit for the vivid interest he took in persons of whose very existence he had appeared ignorant five minutes before.

When Mowbray reached the palazzo, he found the party divided "à l'Anglois;" that is to say, the men at one end of the room, talking to each other, as being alone capable of understanding and appreciating the wonders of masculine intellect! and the women at the other end, suitably employed, raising mimic parterres on German candas. Herbert Grimstone was sitting on a tabouret, with one of his feet in one of his hands, and

his hat on; a privilege the Grimstones seemed to dispute with the Kinsale family, as they invariably retained theirs in the presence of the royalty of nature, namely, the softer sex. Lord de Clifford and Mr. Seymour were disputing upon the merits of Lord Bolingbroke, while ever and anon Herbert Grimstone chimed an assent to some observation of his brother's, when he could spare any attention from looking over an octavo volume he had just spawned about Timbuctoo. Innumerable were the mistakes of the printer; but the greatest mistake was having printed it at all.

"Man is an imitative animal," says Buffon (so are monkeys, for that matter); but Herbert Grimstone was the most imitative of his imitative race; his very vices were not original, while even his person was but a base copy of humanity.

Unfortunately for him, or, rather, for the world, he had a cousin, one of the greatest geniuses the age had produced, and who was as successful as he was distinguished as an author. Herbert had for some years, while abroad, contented himself with the "dolce far niente" of usurping his cousin's well-deserved fame; in Germany that fame was at its height; consequently, the name of Grimstone became a sort of "passe par tout;" and on one occasion, as Herbert was proceeding up the Rhine, a young student, reading his name chrysographed on a red morocco despatch-box, deferentially advanced, cap in hand, begging to know whether he had the honour of addressing a relation of the great Grimstones; to which Herbert modestly replied that he was the great Grimstone! Great was the poor student's delight! he did not know how to make enough of the two hours that intervened previous to their landing; and, when they separated, they did so mutually pleased; Herbert, inflated with all the homage due to his cousin, which had been paid by mistake, or, rather, through the medium of a falsehood to his vanity; and the student charmed with the affability and condescension of so great a man; though, as he afterward confessed, his conversation was very inferior to his books; but then people cannot do everything, consequently the greatest genius cannot "talk a book;" besides, he further consoled himself with the idea that his father had once had the inexpressible felicity of travelling with Herr Jerusalem, the original of Goëthe's Werter, and found him

so little remarkable, nay, so almost deficient, that, had he not blown his brains out, or, rather, had not the author of "Faust" recorded the event, no one would have ever known that he had any.

When Herbert returned to England, unfortunately for his hitherto successfully-pursued plan, he found his cousin's identity a matter of too much certainty to allow him to benefit any longer by its apocryphal appropriation; he therefore sagaciously deemed, that by blotting four or five hundred sheets of paper, and publishing them when blotted, he should "in proprâ personâ" become an author; and once that, the confusion between him and his cousin would be a natural result; and when either his absurdities or obscenities were arraigned, it was easy among the uninitiated to say, "C'est Marc-Aurèle qui parle c'en est pas moi;" and vice versâ, when any good things were to be claimed; his name procured him some severe castigations in reviews that would not otherwise have noticed him, every lash of which his vanity attributed to envy on the part of hired labourers in the fields of literature.

His work on Timbuctoo, entitled "An Inquiry into the past, present, and future state of the world in general, and Timbuctoo in particular," was meant to be statistical, philological, physiological, philomathic, and political! In short, a condensation of all the "logics" and all the "ologies;" but, unfortunately, tautology and acryology were the only ones thoroughly exemplified; throughout he had mistaken freethinking for philosophy, grossness for wit, mutilation for analytic, and laxity for liberality.

As we have before stated, he was employed in looking over this encyclopedia of his own absurdity when Mowbray entered. Mowbray was *the* man about town, therefore Herbert's reception of him was a happy mixture of cordiality and cringe, for which he might have taken out a patent, as no one else ever possessed it in so eminent and perfectionized a degree.

"You are just come in time," said Lord de Clifford, "to be umpire between me and Seymour, on the virtues and talents of Lord Bolingbroke. Seymour does not give him credit for that universality of talent which I must say I think he evinced upon all occasions."

"I confess," said Mowbray, "I am of Seymour's opinion; I have always looked upon Lord Bolingbroke

as the very prince of charlatans, and think 'the all-pretending' would have been a much juster definition of him than 'the all-accomplished St. John;' even Swift complains of his affectation of the man of business, and his equal affectation of the man of pleasure. He was a mosaic of fop-stoic statesmen and literature; there was an eternal straining after effect, and nothing real about him, not even his skepticism; and his meanness in depreciating the indisputable learning of Bayle, that he might, with all the pedantry of a Scaliger, crib from him, has always appeared to me unpardonable."

"Do you not admire his 'Letters in Exile,' then?" ventured Herbert Grimstone.

"I cannot say that I do; they are so overlaid with laboured classical quotations, that the Cincinnatus tone he wishes to affect is utterly destroyed."

"You will at least allow," said Saville, "that he was a zealous and an active friend; for, during the three days of his administration, he made a point of obtaining from the queen the thousand pounds for Swift, which Lord Oxford had, with all his professions to the dean, failed in procuring."

"I allow that Lord Bolingbroke's hatred of Lord Oxford was so intense, that the desire of doing what he had done, and 'se faisant valoir,' thereupon had more to do with this kind act than friendship for Swift."

"I cannot think so," said Lord de Clifford; "for how constant he was in his kindness to, and correspondence with, Swift to the last!"

"Yes, and the greatest piece of want of feeling and bad taste he ever evinced, was in one of his letters on the death of Stella, at least only a little month after it, where he says to the dean, 'My wife sends you some fans just arrived from Lilliput, which you will dispose of to the present Stella, whosoever she may be.' Now, considering that, badly and unpardonably as he had behaved to her, she was the only woman Swift had ever really loved (for his flirtation with Miss Van Nomrigh was mere vanity and convenience), this was coarse and unfeeling, to say the least of it; but persons are apt to make a great mistake when they gauge other's sincerity by their own."

"Oh, hang it!" said Lord de Clifford, "a great man is not to have his good feeling questioned from a slip of a pen about a d—d woman."

"Thank you, in the name of the whole sex," said Mrs. Seymour, who, with Mademoiselle de A. and the rest of the ladies, had joined the coterie since Mowbray's arrival.

"I don't know that," said Saville; "I have a vulgar prejudice in favour of a man's extending a deferential worship and consequent respect to the whole sex, or I don't think he can behave well to one."

"Ah! 'vous prêcher pour votre paroisse,'" laughed Madame de A.

"And you are my diocesan," whispered Saville to Fanny.

"Nolo episco peri," said she, smiling, "for I shall not allow of any such polytheistic doctrines as you have professed."

"You know very well," said he, "that you have long converted me to pure deism, and that all the worship that I have given to many I now pour out to one. What more do you want, tyrant?"

"To get rid of your nonsense, and hear what your sensible friend is saying," said Fanny, as she laughingly placed herself on the sofa beside Mowbray, who was summing up his evidence against Lord Bolingbroke as being such a bad husband. "Lord Chatham," continued he, "expresses his surprise, on going to see Lord Bolingbroke when an old man at Battersea, to find him pedantic, fretful, and angry with his wife; but I am not the least surprised; there was no longer a motive for display; he was too old to recollect that Lord Chatham might perhaps record the latter fact, or else, doubtless, he would never have put it in his power to do so."

"D—d nonsense," said Lord de Clifford, as he took his hat and walked out of the room.

Herbert Grimstone, who had been trying in vain for the last half hour to get up a flirtation with Mrs. Seymour, soon followed his brother's example, for Saville and Mowbray were growing dreadfully agreeable, and he had a constitutional dislike to agreeable people, for the same reason that some persons dislike flowers in a room, because they consume too much of the oxygen necessary for their own respiration, and attention being the oxygen of vanity. Herbert Grimstone always suffered from the malaria of agreeability; so, cramming a newspaper into his pocket, then stretching both his arms above his head, and yawning, he turned to Mrs.

Seymour with an ironical smile, and an air which he meant to be that of a De Grammont, and said,

"I think I deserve credit for my self-denial, in being able to leave so much wit and so much beauty."

"At least," replied his tormentor, "you deserve credit for your honesty in not, amid such a profusion, taking away a particle of either!" From that moment Mrs. Seymour did what is the easiest thing in the world for a pretty and a clever woman to do, namely, lost a dangler and gained an enemy; but in this instance she had the bad taste to prefer the latter to the former.

Madame de A. had been very busy preparing for her masquerade, which was to take place at Venice early in the ensuing week; and as she had determined upon having a game of piquet played with living cards, Fanny had been exerting all her inventive powers in designing dresses for the court cards that would not prevent their moving about. "Only fancy my having been so busy," said she, "about those card dresses, that I have never opened that packet of books which came from England this morning. I wish some of you idle men would have the charity to read out to us poor industrious damsels; *do*, Mr. Mowbray, for I have been told by a particular friend of yours that you read remarkably well."

"So I do," said Mowbray, laughing; "but I assure you my particular friend reads infinitely better."

"A very just observation," said Saville, in the Dowager Lady de Clifford's voice, "and does credit to your *head* and *hort*."

Every one laughed at Saville's quotation and his admirable mimicry.

"When you have done being so *vaustly* civil to each other," said Fanny, pursuing the same theme, "perhaps one of you will have the goodness to open that packet and see what's in it."

"There, my dear fellow, do you do it," said Saville, pushing over the huge parcel to Mowbray; "it will be a charity to employ you, and prevent you pulling all those poor innocent magnolias to pieces, which never did you the slightest harm."

"That's not true," said Mowbray, "for they have given me a terrible headache."

Julia raised her eyes from her work: "Pray try some eau de Cologne," said she, giving him a "flacon" out of her workbasket. He soon felt most miraculously re-

lieved, and pronounced it the best eau de Cologne he had ever met with.

"Well, what books are these?" inquired Fanny, seeing that Mowbray was reading all the titlepages to himself.

"Every sort you can possibly desire: memoirs, diaries, biography, novels, essays, magazines, poems, 'ad infinitum;' which will you have?"

"Oh, not poetry, certainly!" said every one unanimously, "unless it is Moore's, Mrs. Heman's, or L. E. L.'s."

"You are wrong," said Mowbray, "for I have opened upon some exceedingly pretty poetry, though written by a person whose name I nor you never heard before, a Mr. Charles Mackea."

"The name is not euphonius, at all events," said Saville.

"No, but the verses are."

It has been remarked, that when we are under the influence of any particular passion or circumstances, we rarely open a book which does not seem addressed directly to our situation. This had been the case with Mowbray in opening the little volume in question; besides, it was a favourite subterfuge of his, to make the words of others speak for him; thoughts he dared not breathe to her, thoughts which he dared not own, even to himself, came with apparent guilelessness from another. How much subtile, honeyed, yet deadly poison, had he by this means distilled into Julia's ear; how much danger had stolen through that low, deep, soft, wooing voice into the very lifesprings of its victim! Like the plague-blast passing over the flowery vale of the Arno, which was rendered more destructive by the very sweets it acquired.* No wonder, then, that, on such occasions, there was a deep pathos in the tones of Mowbray's at all times touching and beautiful voice, which drew forth unqualified admiration from his auditors, and led poor Julia into the error of thinking that, in her admiration of him, she was only indulging a general, and not a particular feeling.

"Well," said Fanny, "if it is not very long, we will

* When the plague raged at Florence in the thirteenth century, those who retired to Fiesole for safety fell victims to a worse species of infection, from the pestilence gaining additional venom by the atmosphere being so impregnated with the perfume of flowers.

allow you to read the poem you have volunteered to stand sponsor for."

Mowbray was too anxious to express some of the thoughts contained in it to wait for another command; and having drawn his chair closer to the table, or, in other words, closer to Julia's, he began the following very beautiful

"PRAYER OF ADAM ALONE IN PARADISE.

"O Father, hear!
Thou knowst my secret thought.
Thou knowst with love and fear
I bend before thy mighty throne,
And before thee I hold myself as naught.
Alas! I'm in the world *alone!*
All desolate upon the earth;
And when my spirit hears the tone,
The soft song of the birds in mirth,
When the young nightingales
Their tender voices blend,
When from the flowery vales
Their hymns of love ascend;
O, then *I feel there is a void for me!*
A bliss too little in this world so fair;
To thee, O Father, do I flee:
To thee for solace breathe the prayer.
And when the rosy morn
Smiles on the dewy trees,
When music's voice is borne
Far on the gentle breeze;
When o'er the bowers I stray,
The fairest fruits to bring,
And on thy shrine to lay
A fervent offering;
Father of many spheres!
When bending thus before thy throne,
My spirit weeps with silent tears,
To think that I must pray *alone!*
And when at evening's twilight dim,
When troubled slumber shuts mine eye,
And when the gentle seraphim
Bend from their bright homes in the sky;
When angels walk the quiet earth,
To glory in creation's birth,
Then, Father, in my dreams I see
A gentle being o'er me bent,
Radiant with love, and like to me,
But of a softer lineament;
I strive to clasp her to my heart,
That we may live and be but one—
Ah, wherefore, lovely beam, depart?
Why must I wake and find thee gone?

Almighty, in thy wisdom high,
Thou saidst that when I sin I *die*;
And once my spirit could not see
How that which *is*, could cease to be.
Death was a vague, unfathom'd thing,
On which the thought forbore to dwell;
But love has oped its secret spring,
And *now* I know it well!
To die must be *to live alone*,
Unloved, uncherish'd, and unknown,
Without the sweet one of my dreams,
To cull the fragrant flowers with me,
To wander by the morning's beams,
And raise the hymn of thanks to *thee*.
But Father of the earth,
Lord of the boundless sphere!
If 'tis thy high unchanging will
That I should linger here,
If 'tis thy will that I should rove
Alone o'er Eden's smiling bowers,
Grant that the young birds' song of love
And the breeze sporting 'mong the flowers
May to my spirit cease to be
A music and a mystery!
Grant that my soul no more may feel
The soft sounds breathing everywhere;
That nature's voice may cease to hymn
Love's universal prayer!
For all around, in earth or sea,
And the blue heaven's immensity,
Whisper it forth in many a tone,
And tell me I am all alone."

"Beautiful!" said Fanny; "beautiful!" echoed every one except Julia; but she had made a great many false stitches in a rosebud she was embroidering; she left the room to get some more silk, and when she returned Mowbray was gone.

CHAPTER XI.

"Oh! undeveloped land,
Where to [illegible]
[illegible] would to flee,
What mighty hand shall break each band
That keeps my soul from thee?
In vain I pine, and sigh
To trace thy dells and streams,
They gleam but by the spectral sky
That lights my shifting dreams."
* * * * * * *

From the German of LUDWIG TIEK.

"If the bright lake lay stilly
When whirlwinds arose to deform,
If the life of the lily
Were charm'd against the storm,
Thou mightst, though human,
Have smiled through the saddest of years—
Thou mightst, though woman,
Have lived unacquainted with tears!"
From the German of JOHANN THEODOR DRECHSLER.

THERE is but one real actual present on earth, but one period in which we feel our own identity independent of our imagination, and that is the time we pass with the one we love; the mere sense of existence is then an all-sufficient happiness, and this sense it is which alone can rivet or create for us that vague thing, the present. The reason is obvious: then, and then only, the boundless void of the human heart is filled; then alone we want nothing beyond what we have; and this it is that constitutes the actual, the present. So all-pervading is this feeling, that, in the presence of a beloved object, we dread even thinking our own thoughts, lest the illusion, the spell of consciousness, which is then in itself happiness, should be broken; lest the wild and swift-winged present should be startled into flight, never to return.

This mysterious presence alone has the power of bringing all our widely-ranged feelings, thoughts, and passions into one focus; quit it but a moment, and then do our jarring atoms again separate, to war within us like chaotic spirits struggling for pre-eminence; memory turning us back, hope leading us forward, jealousy

maddening, fear chaining, suspense taunting, despair paralyzing us; all lashing us over the shoals and quicksands of our own individuality, from the far but pleasant seas of the past, into the unknown and unfathomable ones of the future. But the present—where is it? gone! fallen, like a star from its sphere; and we ask our hearts, but ask in vain, "Will it ever return? will [illegible] there ever again be a present for us?"

It was now the beginning of September, and Lord de Clifford had decided upon leaving Milan for Rome by the end of the month: they were to take Venice in their way, on account of Madame de A.'s ball. It seemed to Julia as if this ball was to be the last place where she would meet, where she would be with, Mowbray. Twenty times a day her lips repeated, "I hope it may; it is better that it should;" and then a chill ran through her veins, and a faintness stole over her, that seemed like the prelude to dissolution. It is one of the greatest punishments of illicit love, that it compels us to make a penthouse of our own hearts, for the two most corroding of human feelings, shame and sorrow. In all other afflictions we can claim and receive that greatest of earthly anodynes, sympathy; but unlawful love is a parricide, that stales the heart which gave it birth: it occasions a sort of personal civil war between our conscience and our affections; and, like all other civil wars, it generally ends in the destruction of our best interests.

In order to banish the ever-recurring remembrance of Mowbray, Julia had tried, but tried in vain, to elicit a word, a look, however transient, of kindness from her husband: if he had shown, or even affected to show, the slightest interest in her, she felt she could resolutely have banished every unworthy feeling from her heart. But no; he preferred every one's, or any one's society to hers: they had not a thought, a feeling in common. She felt herself a sort of human spider, whose destiny it was to extract poison from everything. She had all the disadvantages, without any of the advantages, of marriage; for to the most humiliating neglect, Lord de Clifford contrived to unite the most harassing and degrading surveillance; as his wife, he thought no one could pay her sufficient respect; but to herself individually, when he could separate her identity from her position, which he did with regard to his own fam-

ily, no contempt was too offensive: the boundless laxity of his principles with regard to the privileges of his own sex, led him not only into a total disregard of her feelings, but into a disregard for all the conveniences of society: provided it gave him pleasure, he thought it his wife's duty(!) to feel a rebound of delight at seeing him make love to another woman before her face; and, as is always the case with men who frame such a liberal code for themselves, his ideas of female propriety were narrow and arbitrary, in an inverse ratio.

Their child was no cement between them, for its father looked upon it in no other light than that of an additional expense in his establishment. But there are no feelings so hardening and demoralizing as egotism and selfishness; and Lord de Clifford had both pre-eminently. Egotism is indeed the theory of selfishness; and selfishness, the practice of that theory, about the only one, unfortunately, which human nature is infallible in carrying into action.

The night before they were to leave Milan, Julia had, with a weakness that is human (but for that reason not the more pardonable), made a collection of all the gloves and ribands she had worn on the days and evenings she had passed with Mowbray, and all

> "Those token-flowers, which tell
> What words can never speak so well,"

which he had given her. She was ashamed and afraid that her maid should either see or suspect this transaction, and had therefore sealed them up herself, and was going to deposite them in her jewel-box in her dressing-room, when, at the head of the stairs, she met Beryl, looking as only ladies' maids can look when they are "big with the fate of" hats, caps, blondes, and velvets, and the progress of their packing has been impeded by some unlucky "contretems."

"I'm sorry to say, my lady," said the irrate Abigail, "that, as usual, Mr. Herbert is with my lord in your dressing-room, smoking away, and spoiling everything. I only just went down to supper (after Mr. Carlton had been up for me twice), and left the Imperial, with all your court dresses in it, wide open, and the cap-case, with your Huguenot chip hat, and the two new Moabite turbans, from Herbault's, all at sixes and sevens, not meaning to be away ten minutes; nor was I, for I never

take a second glass of their nasty sour wine; and when I came up, I found my lord and Mr. Grimstone in full possession. I wish I'd had the sense to lock the door!"

"Never mind, Beryl; I'll go to Lord de Clifford's dressing-room."

"Oh, but there's no fire there, my lady, and you'll be perished. The chimney smokes so, one can't light a fire; that's the reason they're in your room. I've no patience with them," muttered Beryl, as she took the light out of Lady de Clifford's hand, and preceded her to little Julia's room.

"I've no patience with them; I call it quite undelicate like, always muddling and molly-coddling in a lady's dressing-room! But things *is* always ten times worse whenever Mr. Herbert's here."

"Thank you, Beryl, you may go," said Lady de Clifford, as she flung herself into a "bergere" by her child's bedside; "I don't want you any more to-night."

"But, dear me, how ill you look, my lady! Pray let me get you something—a little sal volatile, or some arquebesand."

"No, nothing, thank you, Beryl; it's only a headache. I shall be better in the morning."

"I wish they were all at the bottom of the sea, so I do!" said Beryl to herself as she closed the door, "for teasing of her as they do. But it's all along of that wicked old woman—I know it is. But it will come home to her yet in some way or other, or my name is not Beryl; if it was only her conduct about poor Mary Lee."

When Julia was alone, she burst into a paroxysm of tears as she knelt down to kiss her sleeping child. "Poor little thing!" said she, "have I not you to love me and to love? and what more love ought I to want? Thank God, that you are a girl, too! You will never neglect or desert me; you are my child! I have, then, something belonging to me; something to care for me, dearer even than Fanny. Happy Fanny! innocent Fanny! how you would blush for your unworthy sister, could you see into her frail and erring heart! Oh! Father," continued she, passionately clasping her hands and raising her streaming eyes to heaven, "pass away from me this great, this deadly sin; fill my heart with love of Thee only, and send down upon me thy grace,

which has alone power to combat and to conquer the evil one within me!" The large hot tears that fell fast from Julia's eyes on the calm and velvet cheek of her sleeping child, caused the latter to stir; in doing so, she opened and stretched out one of her little hands towards her mother. Child-like, she had gone to bed with a present Mowbray had given her, of a little Venetian chain and enamel watch. The design of the watch was two little angels' heads, with wings of brilliants and purple enamel, with the motto of "They will watch over you," encircling in a glory the angels' heads. She had clasped this trinket closely, but in opening her little hand it fell on her mother's bosom. The unhappy are always superstitious—for the same reason that a drowning wretch catches at a straw. Julia's eyes fell upon the words, "They will watch over you." To her excited feelings they seemed like a blessed and immediate answer to her prayer; and the prayer of thanks her heart now offered up was more fervent even than that of supplication which the same heart had uttered a few minutes before. Among the many privileges granted to us by an all-wise and merciful Creator, that of prayer is unquestionably the greatest. Amid the floodgates of light opened to us in the scheme of our redemption, the commandment to pray is indisputably the brightest; for it is the passport the soul receives from above, without which it could have no chance of returning thither. Of the efficacy of prayer, none can doubt who have ever, through its medium, "cast their burden upon Him" who alone can lighten it; of its necessity all must be convinced, from the ejaculations of the most hardened and unbelieving: for no sooner do the waters of affliction close over their souls, than their first impulse is to call upon and appeal to their God. Like the drowning Peter, they cry, "Help, Lord, or I perish!" and till the divine assistance is held out to them, the storm rages, and destruction seems inevitable; but, like the frail disciple, they no sooner ask than they obtain. The very act of prayer in itself calms and mitigates the bitterest trials, for we feel that we are returning them to him who sent them; and if they are not suited to us, they will be removed, and if they are, he will enable us to bear them. What is so likely to restore the soul to that lost divinity, which the greatest of pagan philoso-

phers so beautifully supposed it once to have possessed, as prayer, which is, in other words, an intercourse with God? Even if we had not the truths of revelation to commend it to us, we should still have the most pure and truthlike structure of philosophy to lure us to it; for, in the words of Schlegel, Plato imagined that, "from an original and infinitely more lofty and intellectual state of existence, there remains to man a dark remembrance of divinity and perfection; and, further, that this inborn and implanted recollection of the Godlike remains ever dark and mysterious: for man is surrounded by the sensible world, which, being in itself changeable and imperfect, encircles him with images of imperfection, changeableness, and error, and thus cast perpetual obscurity over that light which is within him." And what is there so likely to lead the immortal link of our natures back to the severed chain of its divinity, as a constant communion with its eternal source? Gratitude should make the happy pray—alas! how seldom does it do so! But prayer is the only safety-valve of sorrow; the heart would break without it. If, then, prosperity and this world's good so chills and hardens the heart in its heavenward course, happy are they whose afflictions strike on their souls, like the rod of Moses on the rock, to make the living waters of their salvation gush forth. Julia rose up a happier, and, as she hoped, a better person; but, alas for human virtue! between its firmest resolves and the most trifling circumstances that surround it, it resembles the traveller in the fable of the "Sun and the Wind:" what force could never do, the merest trifle often achieves. Lady de Clifford had just made a solemn determination that she would not even think of Mowbray; she had taken her candle for the purpose of retiring to rest, and sleeping upon so good a resolution, when she heard her husband's voice calling to her at the end of the gallery.

"Oh," said he, as soon as she had opened the door, "I wish you'd just write a line to Mowbray, and say we can take him to Venice to-morrow if he likes; there will be plenty of room, as my mother has her own carriage, and Fanny is going with Mrs. Seymour; and you may as well write a note to that poor devil De Rivoli, and say Herbert can take him."

Write to Monsieur De Rivoli! that was easy enough;

but write to Mowbray! Julia trembled like an aspen leaf. What would he think? What could he think but the truth, that she had obeyed her husband's orders? "How silly I am!" said she; "it is my own consciousness that makes it so formidable. Of course, he will scarcely look at the note, and won't know who it is written by; at least, I mean he'll forget it the next moment." This Julia felt was not true, and she blushed at her childish folly in trying to deceive herself. Three times she dipped the pen into the ink before she could make a beginning; and the third time she dropped the ink upon her hand. Macbeth could scarcely have felt more frightened at the drops of blood. At length she began, "Lord de Clifford has begged of me to say—" but that did not do; she felt there ought to be a commonplace beginning, so she thus recommenced:

"Dear Mr. Mowbray, Lord de Clifford has begged me to say that he can take you to Venice to-morrow, for Madame De A.'s ball on Thursday; we leave this at one o'clock.

"Dear Mr. Mowbray, truly yours,
"JULIA DE CLIFFORD."

"Palazzo, Monday night."

When she had concluded this difficult epistle, the words looked like icicles to her; then again the "dear" and the "yours" looked too much, which occasioned another ten minutes' deliberation. The next precaution was to hunt for a plain seal; that done, the bell was at length rung, and the note despatched; but not till Beryl had been recalled to wait while one was written to poor Monsieur de Rivoli, who would have found it difficult to believe that any woman in existence could have been guilty of the bad taste of so totally forgetting him. When Julia's note reached the Alliergo Reale, Mowbray had been in bed some time; but there is an extraordinary intuition about servants, which always makes them better acquainted with their master's and mistress's affairs than they are even themselves. Consequently, when Lady de Clifford's note was put into the hands of Mowbray's valet, without any fear of his master's indignation for disturbing his slumbers, he instantly repaired with it to his bedside; not, however, before he had bestowed a hearty malediction upon those tiresome envelopes, "which prevent one finding out a

single word in a letter till the seal is broken," and a "wonder that the gentlefolks should use them, now they was got so common."

"What's the matter, Sanford?" said Mowbray, starting up, awakened by the opening of the door.

"Beg your pardon; nothing, sir, only a note from Lady de Clifford" (for on such occasions servants invariably announce the author of the credentials they present, however they contrive to find it out so accurately as they do); "only a note from Lady de Clifford; and I did not know whether it required an answer."

"Quite right," said Mowbray, snatching it off the salver, as if he thought it had been contaminated by laying there so long. "Bring me the pen and ink, and a blotting book, and wait in the next room till I call."

As soon as he was alone, he tore open the seal, but for full five minutes the words swam before his eyes, so he could not distinguish one from another. What a mysterious feeling is that which we experience upon beholding, for the first time, the writing of the person we love addressed to ourselves! However commonplace the subject and the words may be, yet to us they have a meaning and a mystery the same words never had before and never will have again: they are looked upon again and again in every possible direction; we try to discover if our own names are written more clearly or more tremblingly than the rest, and in either case our hearts are satisfied with the omen. Even the paper is scrutinized to its very edges, as though we had never seen a sheet of paper before, or if that sheet of paper must, of necessity, be different and superior to any that had been previously made, like characters traced in milk, which are weak and invisible, till exposed to the heat of the fire: each time we gaze on this mysterious paper, the warmth of our imagination brings out a force and a meaning that was imperceptible before; then every word is kissed as passionately as if it were the lips that could have uttered them. So long a time had elapsed while Mowbray was thus employed, that Sanford reappeared unbidden, having had recourse to that expedient of all his order, "Did you ring, sir?" At length Mowbray despatched the following answer:

"Will you, my dear Lady de Clifford, return De Clifford my best thanks for his kind offer of conveying me

to Venice, of which (if I shall not crowd you) I shall be too happy to avail myself.

"Ever believe me,

"My dear Lady de Clifford,

"Most faithfully yours,

"AUGUSTUS MOWBRAY."

A few days before, anticipating at least a temporary separation from Julia, Mowbray had had a seal engraved with the following motto:

"L'absence est la mort,
Mais la memoire c'est
L'immortalité!"

With this seal he now sealed his note, and then passed the rest of the night in reading and re-reading Lady de Clifford's little perfumed billet. What sweet links are perfumes and music in the chain of memory! how vividly do particular airs and odours recall to us particular persons, especially the latter! Who is there that has ever loved, who has not felt the truth of Ben Jonson's beautiful conceit of—

"I sent thee late a rosie wreath,
Not so much honouring thee,
As giving it a hope that there
It could not wither'd bee.
But thou thereon didst only breathe,
And sent'st it back to mee:
Since when it growes, and smells, I sweare,
Not of itselfe, but thee!"

Beryl brought Lady de Clifford's chocolate at least an hour earlier on the following morning, and with it Mowbray's and Monsieur de Rivoli's answer; half an hour after which, she knocked at the door of the bath-room, with a message from Lord de Clifford, to know what answer Mowbray and Monsieur de Rivoli had sent.

"Oh, they both come," said Julia. "Dear me, what have I done with Mr. Mowbray's note? I have mislaid it!" It was lucky for her that Beryl was employed in placing a pair of slippers on a "prie dieu," and throwing a "peignoir" on the back of it, or she must have perceived the crimson denial Lady de Clifford's cheeks gave to her words: "but here is the other," continued she, handing over Monsieur de Rivoli's parallelogramish epis-

tle, with its huge Cham-of-Tartary-looking seal, the contents of which was in the following characteristic words:

"Ma chère Lady de Clifford,

"Hereux de vous plaire, je suis toujours à vos ordres.

"Votre toute dévouée,

"CHARLES DE RIVOLI."

Little Julia had begged of her mother to let her (as she expressed it) go and wish the poor cathedral good-by before they left Milan. Accordingly, as soon as she was dressed, they set out for it, leaving word, when the carriages were ready, to pick them up there. They had been for the last time to the top of the belfry, and were descending, when they met Mowbray and Monsieur de Rivoli, who, having been to the palazzo, had been told that Lady de Clifford had gone to the cathedral; and dreading that, if they went in, they should be condemned to one of Herbert Grimstone's quintessence of self-conversations (for, as Pope and Swift said of Gay, he "always laboured under a painful intenseness about his own affairs"), or else break in upon some of the Dowager Lady de Clifford's complicated travelling preliminaries, they decided upon not "walking in and sitting down," as they had been requested to do, but going "ex cathedra" to meet Lady de Clifford.

"I am so sorry," said she, "that you should have had the trouble of coming here."

"Nothing can be a trouble," said Mowbray, "which obtains for one the happiness of seeing you."

"'E vero vero!'" said a voice with a sigh; the same voice and the same sigh that had so mysteriously responded to a remark of Mowbray's two months before, when he stood at the tomb of St. Carlos of Borromeo.

"How extraordinary," said he, "that that voice should always answer me, and in the very same words, too, whenever I come here! and still more that those words should be always 'à-propos!'"

"Ha! ha!" laughed Monsieur de Rivoli; "it is de Italian echo of de old Lady de Clifford's varee just observation, 'voila tout mon cher!'"

"Oh! what a darling little bird," cried little Julia, pointing to one that sat in the nook of the stairs, "and what bright eyes it has!"

"E vero vero!" repeated the bird, as it flew upon the child's shoulder.

"I am delighted that the mystery is solved," said Mowbray, "for I was growing quite superstitious and unhappy; but," added he, securing the bird, "you are now a prisoner from this day; not that I would rob you of your liberty without giving you a still greater blessing. Lady de Clifford, will you take care of this poor little starling?"

Julia took the bird, and placed it in her bosom till she could get a cage for it.

"Ah, quel doux esclavage, çela val bien la liberté!" said Monsieur de Rivoli.

"E vero vero," again echoed the bird.

"Ah! I have to tank you for your aimable poulet of dis morning, Lady de Clifford."

Julia laughed, and seeing that Mowbray looked at Monsieur de Rivoli rather indignantly for the term he had made use of, she said,

"I wonder what the origin of the word poulet was, as applied to a note!"

"C'étoient autrefois en Italie," said Monsieur de Rivoli, "les vendeurs de poulets, qui portoient les billets-doux aux femmes; ils glissoient le billet sous l'aile du plus gros, et la dame averti ne manquoit pas de le prendre; mais ce ménage ayent été découvert; le prémier messager d'amour qui fut pris, fut puni par l'estrapade avec des poulets vivants attachés aux pieds. Depuis ce temps, poulet est synonyme à billet-doux."*

"So that, in fact," said Mowbray, "there has always been *fowl* play towards the Marito's."

"Ah, quel ca'embour atroce, c'est vraiment digne de Saville," said Monsieur de Rivoli, and he set off with little Julia, who had found her way into the street, in full chase after a butterfly. Mowbray and Lady de Clifford followed slowly after; neither of them speaking, till the latter, seeing the carriages approaching, and her husband and brother-in-law in the first one, conscious-

* The above derivation is to be found in M. le Mercier's very agreeable work, abounding in philosophical acumen and just views, entitled, "Tableau de Paris," published at Amsterdam, 1783. The author adds, like a true Frenchman, "Les commis ambulants de la petite poste, en porte et rapportent sans cesse; mais une cire fragile et respecté tient sous le voil ces secrets amoureux, le mari prudent n'ouore jamais les billets adressés à sa femme!"

ness made her speak. So, turning to Mowbray, she said, "Which part of Italy do you like the best?"

He raised his eyes from the ground, and looking full in Julia's, said, in a low voice, "Madame de Sevigné says, in one of her letters to her daughter, 'Toute içi brille encore des souvenirs de vous!'" And then added in a louder and more disembarrassed voice, just as Lord de Clifford's dormeuse drove up, and Herbert Grimstone jumped out, "*I* like Milan the best." Close in the rear followed the Dowager Lady de Clifford's travelling vehicle, which greatly resembled a small, black, square packing-case upon wheels; on the top of which was strapped a round black leather muff-box; and on the top of that, a large parrot's cage; thereby presenting a most Pelléon-upon-Ossa-like appearance; in the small coal-scuttle-looking rumble sat Mrs. Trump, in a brown beaver bonnet and green veil; a neat Manchester cotton gown, and shawl to match, with a further shelter of a rough, brown, mangy-looking bearskin boa: at her side roosted Mr. Croaker, her ladyship's butler; whom, like Madame Duval, with Monsieuer du Bois in "Evelina," she "never went nowhere without it." Inside sat her ladyship, in a bottle-green cloth habit, studded with flat green cloth ipecacuana lozenge-looking buttons; but the reverse of the Alps, who have summer at their base and winter at their summit, her ladyship terminated in a light lavender-coloured silk bonnet and a green veil.

"Well, my dears," said she, stretching her head out of the window and addressing her two sons, "how do you mean to go?" As she spoke, Mamselle d'Antoville (who sat beside her, in vain trying to quiet a little corpulent, asthmatic, one-eyed pug, whom "slumber soothed not, pleasure could not please!") cast a look at Lord de Clifford, as much as to say, "For goodness' sake get me out of this?" Whereupon Herbert fraternally stepped forward and said, bowing, and gallantly taking his mother's hand—

"My dear mamma, if you will kindly give me a seat in your carriage, I should prefer going with you."

"My dear, I should be very glad; but a—momselle, and you—see my carriage is so small."

"Oh, mi ladi, I would not for de world prevent Mr. Grimstone to come in; I am greatly oblige for your kindness to take me so far."

"A close carriage makes mademoiselle ill, I know,"

said Lord de Clifford, stepping forward and assisting his dulcinea to descend.

"In that case," said her ladyship, in her blandest tone, "I should be vaustly sorry that momselle should remain, however I may regret the loss of her company."

As soon as mademoiselle had safely alighted, Herbert prepared to take her place; whereupon his amiable parent, with all the tender anxiety of a mother, fearing (as he was only three-and-thirty) that he would not be able to get in with no other assistance than that of his own servant, who stood at the door, cried out, "Croaker! Croaker! be so good as to help Mr. Herbert; Frump! Frump! how can you be so vaustly stupid; why don't you get down; don't you see Mr. Herbert a going to get into the carriage." While her ladyship was making these maternal arrangements, Lord de Clifford had handed Mademoiselle d'Antoville into his phaeton, and seated himself beside her; consequently, it only remained for his wife to take possession of the britschka, with her child, Mowbray, and M. de Rivoli, which she accordingly did. The parrot, getting impatient of delay, now began to exert its lungs, and cry,

"Make haste! make haste! you are so vaustly stupid."

"What a devilish clever bird that is of yours, my dear mamma," said Herbert Grimstone, almost deafened with its scream.

"Very just observation," responded the parrot.

"I declare it's downright witty," said Herbert, with a forced laugh. But the parrot did not like to be laughed at, so it began to scream louder than before.

"Croaker! Croaker!" in her turn screamed the dowager; "bring down the cage, and put it into Lady de Clifford's carriage. The fact is," said she, turning towards Julia, "I brought it, Lady de Clifford, thinking it might be an agreeable addition to the little *gurl*; pretty dear! Polly's very pretty, isn't she!"

"I hate it," said the child; "pray don't send it here:" but her words were lost in the sound of her grandmother's chariot wheels, while Monsieur de Rivoli's voice was heard above them, and even above the cracking of all the postillions' whips, exclaiming, "Mais diable! vous avez des drolles idées de l'agréable vous!"

CHAPTER XII.

"A young author was reading a tragedy to Monsieur Piron, who soon discovered that he was a great plagiarist. The poet, perceiving Piron very often pull off his hat at the end of a line, asked him the reason. 'I cannot pass a very old acquaintance,' replied the critic, 'without that civility.'"

"Friends and comrades of mine,"
He exclaim'd, "as a sign,
While I slept has come o'er me a dream all divine.
It has warn'd me how far from the vessels we lie,
And that some one should go for fresh force to apply."
DR. MAGINN'S *Homeric Ballads*.—No. 4.—THE CLOAK.

THE next evening found the whole party assembled in the little "cabaret" at Fusina, grumblingly awaiting the arrival of the gondolas to convey them to Venice, and the gentlemen unanimously consigning their respective couriers to the tender mercies of the nether powers, for not being there with the boats before them.

The ladies, as is generally the case, were more resigned to their fate. Mowbray had stuffed his travelling-cap into a broken window, to guard Julia from cold; while Saville, with equal solicitude, had converted his cloak into tapestry for a broken door, to prevent an invasion of the winds, lest Fanny should share the fate of Olithyas, and be run away with by Boreas. Mademoiselle d'Antoville sat in a window-seat, recruiting her spirits with "le moindre supçon d'eau de vie." Beside her sat Lord de Clifford, like Jupiter in Olympus, surrounded by clouds—of smoke, which he was puffing from a meerschaum, emblazoned with the loves of Charlotte and Werter. Little Julia had formed a "parti quarrée" with Prince, Zoe, and Titania. Monsieur de Rivoli was trying to obtain a satisfactory glance of as much of his own face as was recognisable in a three-inch triangular piece of looking-glass, which gleamed from a brown paper frame, that formed a modest "bas-relief" to the whitewashed wall. Herbert Grimstone was stretched upon some carpet bags at his mother's feet (deep in the study of his own work upon Timbuctoo); that amiable lady having taken the precaution to

convert Mrs. Frump's Manchester shawl into a chair-cushion, thereby effectually guarding herself from the dangerous results of any sedentary damp or cold which she might otherwise have been exposed to. Her next precaution was to tuck up her habit, and so reveal a neat white dimity petticoat, and a very judicious pair of cotton stockings and black leather shoes, which, with the feet they contained, were deposited in Frump's lap, who had received orders to take up her "lodging on the cold ground," and exemplify the ups and downs of life by a gentle friction of her ladyship's ankles.

At a respectful but convenient distance, stood very perpendicularly, with his back against the wall, that enduring individual, Croaker; his mistress's clogs and the parrot's cage in one hand, while with the other he pressed to his manly breast Snap, her ladyship's canine favourite, around whose neck, with a benevolence which, as she herself would have said, "did credit to her head and hort," she tied a scarlet worsted comfortable, that formed an enlivening contrast to the drab density of the animal's natural complexion; notwithstanding which, it was blinking and shivering in all the naturalities of a demislumber, its nose pushed into the protecting bosom of Croaker, who generally acted as dry-nurse when Frump was otherwise engaged.

Mrs. Seymour, having no "particulier," had seated herself on a table just above Herbert Grimstone, and was now, in her turn, beginning to complain of the bore of being kept waiting so long.

"I wish I had something to do!" said she, "for it is by no means pleasant to be kept here all night, conjugating the verb."

"Would you like to read?" said Herbert Grimstone, kindly offering her his own interesting work on Timbuctoo.

"Thank you," said she, declining the proffered volume, "for reminding me that absence of evil is good."

Herbert bit his lip, and accidentally, on purpose, let the, in every sense of the word, *heavy* book fall upon Mrs. Seymour's pretty little foot, that was swinging like the pendulum of a clock backward and forward.

"Well, that is one way of making your book go down, at all events," said Fanny, as she ran to rub Mrs. Seymour's foot.

"To say nothing of making one feel what he writes," laughed Mrs. Seymour, in the midst of the pain.

"Ah, I now see de reason le pauvre petit has look so sorry de whole route," whispered Monsieur de Rivoli to Mrs. Seymour.

"Pourquoi?" said she.

"Why, do you not recollect, une foi quand Voltaire à pris l'air triste, and his friends not know for what Madame du Châtelet say to dem, 'Vous ne le devineriez pas; pourquoi Monsieur de Voltaire est si triste, mais je le sais. Depuis trois semaines, on ne s'entretient dans Paris que de l'exécution de ce fameux voleur, mort avec tant de fermeté; cela ennui M. de Voltaire, à qui l'on ne parle plus de sa tragédie; il est jaloux du roué!'* and we have talk of nothing but de 'bal costumée,' and never once mention le petit Herbert's malheureux Timbuctoo!"

Herbert, hearing his own name accompanied with a suppressed laugh, bent forward, and inquired, in his most piano voice, if Monsieur de Rivoli had been speaking of him. To do the French justice, they never like to hurt people's feelings, and, therefore, what we term insincerity is in their character nothing more than a practical illustration of their own clever caricatures, entitled, "ce qu'on dit et ce qu'on pense;" so he, without the least hesitation, replied,

"I was only saying, my dear fellow, dat you were like Voltaire."

"How so?" asked Herbert, with a mixed expression of pleasure and resentment; for his vanity led him to believe that nothing but his extraordinary talents could induce any one to class him with Voltaire, while his ears put a much truer but less flattering construction upon the laugh he had heard.

"Parceque," replied Monsieur de Rivoli, pointing to the dowager (whose head was luckily turned the other way, as she was in the act of rummaging in a large black bag for one of Mr. Tymmons's bill of costs, which

* Before the first French revolution, the word "roué" was applied to all notorious characters, such as thieves, pickpockets, vagabonds, and murderers; and not confined to the sense in which it is now used, as applied to a libertine, though the word was used in that sense also, with the true French addition and distinction of the word "aimable," "un roué aimable," meaning a libertine par excellence, in contradistinction to a simple vagabond.

she had selected as an agreeable companion in a post-chaise), "parceque vous etes devant l'age qui vous fit naître!"

"Devilish good, indeed!" said Herbert, who, in his eagerness to grasp at the shadow of a compliment, totally lost the substance of the irony; "but you *are* so witty, my dear fellow."

> "Les prêtres ne sont point ce qu'un vain peuple pense;
> Notre crédulité fait toute leur science,"

muttered Monsieur de Rivoli, as he turned away to hide the smile he could not suppress, and which was communicated like electric fluid to the mouths of every one present, except those of Herbert, his mother, and brother. Next to his own matchless work on "Timbuctoo," Herbert Grimstone's favourite topic was modern French literature. There were two reasons for this partiality: first, the obscene trash and inconceivable horrors that are hourly nightmared in French garrets, and assume a "local habitation and a name" from the Parisian press, unaffactedly charmed him, not only from the matter they contained being perfectly suited to his calibre of morality, but because the intellect they evinced acted as a sort of soothing sirup to the painful and feverish dentition of his vanity: in reading them, he felt that he too was a genius; that he too could write! Therefore, instead of flinging down the book with the pettish and "nil admirare" exclamation of "this fellow" or "this woman is deusedly overrated," which invariably followed his turning over the leaves of any of the standard writers of his own country, he always felt inclined, after the perusal of the pink and yellow covered, gnome-inspired trash, so lauded by "la jeune fame," to become, in his own person, an additional "ignus fatuus" on the charnel altars of modern French literature; but his chief reason arose from the pleasure and superiority he felt in talking before ladies of what they could possibly know nothing about; for, thank Heaven, except through the warning pages of the "Quarterly Review," the very titles of these books are unknown to our countrywomen; a circumstance which, doubtless, gave rise to a rather severe philippic against their ignorance, in Herbert Grimstone's valuable work on "Timbuctoo," where, discussing the state of the universe at large, past, present, and future, he naturally and patriotically makes a sort

of semicolon stop at England, and there takes occasion to lament that the uneducated ignorance of English ladies (!) prevented their having any conversational powers.

Nationally speaking, none can pretend to assert that they have either the wit of a De Sevigné or the philosophy of a De Staël, to give that depth to their thoughts and that brilliancy to their words which raises conversation to a science; the science, "par excellence," in which our Gallic neighbours so pre-eminently excel. Neither are English women, it must be confessed, so "au fait," or, rather, so "au courant," to every billet the march of intellect daily makes, whether on countries or on individuals; but other reasons may be assigned for this, more correct than either ignorance or incapacity. It is one of the most incontrovertible axioms in political economy, that the greater the demand for an article is, the greater the means of its supply become.

We have only to extend this principle to human intellect (with regard to which it holds equally good), and the enigma of English women's deficiencies in conversational powers is solved at once. On the tree of knowledge, as cultivated in England, women are taught to look upon politics, science, statistics, and mathematics as so many grafts of forbidden fruit; and hence the eternal, not very gallant query of the other sex, of "What can women know about such things?" for English men seem to think, that the nearest approach to perfection in a wife is to be found alone in those women who are the best possible imitations of automatons; and that ignorance is not only the most incomplete guard to virtue, but that it is also the best safety-valve for vice. In England, there is an inverse ratio of false pretences; for no young gentleman, fresh from college, who, after having gained the greasy suffrages of the great unwashed of some metropolitan borough through his dulcifluous anathemas against all existing laws, ever laboured more indefatigably to appear Cicero, Lycurgus, and Aristides, all in one, than does an English woman of common sense to appear as ignorant, and, consequently, as inoffensive as the most fastidious censor of female attributes could wish.

Englishmen politely banish rational conversation in female society, as being beyond the comprehension of their pro-tempore companions; and as, twenty years

ago, the generality of grown persons invariably spoke to children as if they thought them fools, and so often *made* them that which they had supposed, the same effect from the same cause (despite the march of intellect) may sometimes be produced upon adults now. I have often remarked, too, that if a woman ventures to evince any "esprit de corps," and, in defence of the depreciated intellect of her sex, triumphantly brings to her defence the names of an Edgeworth, a De Staël, a More, a Carter, a D'Acier, a Montague, a Bailey, a Martineau, a Gore, &c., &c., some supercilious pendant of the other sex instantly tries to silence her by a contemptuous smile, and an "All very clever, certainly! but women want that profoundity which must ever prevent their attaining any eminence in science!" * and, for the present, the name of Somerville is declared, with just and heartfelt pride, not only as having equalled, but distanced the lords of the creation in their own course; and, oh! triumph of triumphs! while astonishing and benefiting the world by discoveries in science which even the more clear and subtile powers of masculine intellect had hitherto failed to make, this gifted and extraordinary lady (if report speaks truly) contrives to fulfil, unerringly and unceasingly, every duty and every amenity that comes within the narrower but not less important precincts of a woman's sphere, quite as well and as meekly as though she had been the most ignorant and illiterate of her sex. But at the mention of this illustrious name, the skeptical coxcomb, being changed into the defeated bully, dexterously changes the conversation: the reason is obvious —as Berenice was the only woman in Greece allowed to witness the Olympic games, so Mrs. Somerville is the only woman in Europe who has dared (and who, in daring, has succeeded) to penetrate into the mysterious arena of science hitherto monopolized by the other sex; and, consequently, like her Athenian prototype, they are determined to punish her by alluding to the singular intrusion as little as possible; but I, for one, sincerely hope that their impotent spite will not deter her from pursuing her glorious privilege.

It may be urged that Mrs. Somerville is "the exception that proves the rule:" in reply to which, I would ask, how many ignoramuses go to a Bacon, a Newton,

and a Locke! though, being men, they have had equal advantages of education with the illustrious trio just named. In France, on the contrary, "les femmes se mêle de tout;" and I firmly believe that the Salique law only exists because Frenchmen prefer being governed by a republic of women, instead of delegating sovereign power to *one*. From Moliere's old woman up to a Roland or a De Staël, they are made umpires in literature, politics, and the fine arts; and if France has produced more heroic women than England, it is not because they have naturally nobler natures than English women, but because patriotism is not with them, as with us, exclusively inculcated as a masculine virtue, or set apart as one of man's many unshared privileges.

Women in France are allowed to feel as great an interest, because they have as great a stake, in their native country, as the sons of the soil. Nothing can more completely exemplify the genius of the two nations, as regards the estimation in which women are held, as the zoological distinction of "females," under which the greatest ladies in the land are classed with us: while, in France, the very fishwomen are "les dames de la hale." A French scavenger is as polite and as much "au petit soin" to an apple-woman, as a French duke would be to a duchess; for the apple-woman is still a "dame" for him: whereas, see the same apple-woman in England, and the odds are, the first man she meets will purposely jostle against her, and when he has succeeded in rolling her and her fruit into the kennel, will indulge in a horselaugh at her misfortunes.

The lower class of English women wait upon their lords and masters, and perform for them offices of manual labour which would convince a South Sea savage how remiss his squaw was in the wifely virtues of industry and endurance. It is true that the upper class of wives are, of necessity, exempt from *this* species of humiliation; but it is also true, that their degradation and subjection only assumes a different form and manner: inferiority is still the unmistakeable badge of the order. With us, the luxurious expenditure of a man is "de rigueure," while the mere necessaries of a woman are furnished by accidental and fortunate superfluities. The extravagance of fathers and sons is always to be atoned for by the economy, privations, and self-denials of mothers and daughters.

English women have but one privilege: they may devote their lives to the education, welfare, and care of their children, without ever being able to obtain one single conventional or legal right over them, while the father, be his vices what they may, or his neglect ever so unnatural, still possesses, by our wise and moral laws, the whole and sole control over the unfortunate little beings who may be destined to feel all the disadvantages of his power, without reaping any of the benefits of his protection.

They manage these things, if not better, at least more gallantly in France: even the "ménage au quatrieme," conducted on three hundred a year, still finds madame enveloped in a Cashmere, and while a point lace veil adorns her bonnet, "lest the winds of heaven should visit her face too roughly." Not only at Long Champ, but for the ordinary "demarchés" to St. Cloud, Fontainbleau, &c., a remise is always at her command, while her considerate spouse is content, as far as his own costume goes, to make "boue de Paris" the prevailing colour. That marital arrangements should ever reach this perfectionized state in England, is a Utopian vision, far beyond the dreams of hope; even a "juste milieu," it is to be feared, with us can never exist, for in a country where there is such a superfluity of clubs, there must, of necessity, be a deficit of Cashmeres!

But to return: Herbert Grimstone had had the satisfaction of descanting upon a series of works unknown to every lady present; for which reason Monsieur de Rivoli (the person whom he had especially addressed himself to), with the good-breeding of his country, had made several ineffectual efforts to turn the conversation, and had even been sufficiently "rococo" to assert boldly that he did not think Victor Hugo so great a genius as Racine, or that there was any danger of George Sand's un-pedestalling the Cotins, Sevignés, Daciers, and gespinasses of the olden time. So, finding the pulse of the audience favourable to Monsieur de Rivoli's side, he kindly resolved to meet them on their own narrow ground, poor things! and talk to them of such minor stars as Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël! Therefore, politely addressing his sister-in-law across the room, he said, with a pitiful smile,

"I think, my dear Julia, you like nothing but religious books, which I assure you the French are by no means

incapable of writing: for instance, what can be more high-wrought, indeed almost canting, than "Corinne," "Mathilde," and "Atala?"

Fanny and Mrs. Seymour laughed outright at Mr. Herbert Grimstone's ideas of religious books, and Julia very nearly did the same as she replied, "I cannot agree with you in thinking any of those religious books; and the religious aphorisms and exclamations—for I know not what else to call them—which are scattered through them, are rather offensive than otherwise; what I mean is, the sentiments of religion are brought into such profane contact with some of the worst actions of human passion, that, in reading them, one experiences the same revolting sensation that one might be supposed to feel if one saw 'Romeo and Juliet' acted at one end of a cathedral, while the bishop was preaching on the Atonement at the other. Indeed, the only time Madame de Staël's genius ceases to be omnipresent, and, as far as the heart omniscient is, goes, when she leaves the Parthenon for the simple but mysterious altars of Christianity; and then I always think with that most charming woman, 'Mrs. Blackwood,' that

> "'"Tis a pity when charming women
> Talk of things which they don't understand.'

With Chateaubriand it is otherwise; his is a more soul-thought theology; still I cannot say I like those mosaics of love and religion, like the 'Atala,' where love is the 'pietro dura,' and religion the cement which first serves to unite, and eventually to separate them."

Julia was proceeding, when a frown from her husband, expressive of astonishment at her daring so boldly to assert her opinions, and disapprobation at her presuming to differ from his brother, effectually stopped her.

"Oh! I understand," said Herbert, with a smile more of contempt and less of compassion than his former one: "you like the whole thing to be about religion; some people do. Now here is a pamphlet, which has made a great noise in France," said he, drawing the Abbé de Lamennais' "Paroles d'un Croyant" out of his pocket, "and is, I should think, just the sort of thing you would like."

"I have read it, and do not like it at all," said Julia, coldly.

"What is it, my dear?" inquired the Dowager Lady de Clifford.

"Why, my dear mamma," said Herbert, knitting his brows thoughtfully, and assuming a solemn tone of voice, "it is a very admirable work on religion, by a very distinguished French abbé. It is called 'The Words of a Believer.' I've had it in my pocket ever since the day I bought it."

"I'm sure, my dear, it does great credit to your head and *hort* to carry such good books about you; and every one must admire you for it *vaustly*."

"My dear mamma," said this dutiful son, kissing his exemplary parent's hand, in the performance of which filial evolution he considerably endangered Frumps's frictionary equilibrium, and nearly reduced her to a horizontal position; "my dear mamma, if *you* do, *that* is quite sufficient for *me*."

"Really," said Mrs. Seymour to Monsieur de Rivoli, "that little animal is quite too disgusting, and I have a great mind to tell him so."

"Bah! bah! lesser lui donc son costume de famille ça lui sien, c'est sous cette livrée qu'il dois, parler, sans rien dire, déraisonner agréablement sur tout, et étaler les graces de sa profonde ignorance!"

"I believe you are right," said Mrs. Seymour. "But what on earth is that?" continued she, looking towards the window, to which the whole party now crowded, to behold a sight somewhat out of the common.

Half a dozen gondolas were rapidly approaching to the landing-place, the foremost of which had some unusual decorations, consisting of a rocking-horse strapped outside on the top of it; an umbrella, in proud rotundity, was spread before the entrance; a red carpet-bag obtruded from one window, while over the other hung a ham and two dried tongues, divided by a tin teakettle and a pair of beefsteak tongs. This culinary-looking flotilla at length anchored; and from it issued two figures, the first in size and colour not unlike a hippopotamus, having on a dark, shapeless, India-rubber coat, a black boa coiled several times round its throat, an India-rubber travelling-cap, shaped like a melon with a slice cut out of it, and ears comfortably tied under the chin. The blue goggles that gleamed from the upper part of the wearer's face made no bad representation of the antediluvian animal's eyes.

Under the arm of "the stout gentleman," for such it turned out to be, was a small portfolio, and in his hand was a blue card-board hatbox, ornamented with pink bordering.

No sooner had he landed, than, lo! another mass of human flesh emerged from the gondola; but, though of equal magnitude, its exterior was very different. A blanket-coat, with dark horn buttons the size of half-crowns, enveloped "the last man," which, when "turned aside" by the passing gale, displayed a pair of Russia ducks, evidently of the most republican principles, as they scorned the legitimate restraint of straps, and, consequently, had departed far from the allegiance due to a pair of Wellington boots, which must have been made out of some singularly unfortunate dog's, as it was easy to see that they had never had their *Day* (and Martin!) A red belcher graced the throat of this individual; and a black, broadish-brimmed hat (that looked very much like a person that had been up all night, inasmuch as that it was greatly in want of a *nap*) crowned this portly personage. His ample cheeks flowed, as it were, over the red belcher, in perfect incognito, under favour of the same colours: in his right hand he held a papier machée snuffbox, with a fox-hunt on it; and in his left the last Galignani.

"Why, by all that's ubiquitous, there's Nonplus!" cried Saville. He had scarcely uttered this assertion, when the latch was raised and the major entered, towing the other "stout gentleman" after him.

"Your most obedient, ladies and gentlemen," said the former, removing the aforesaid sleepless Golgotha from his head. "Thought I'd wing you to a minute! Those couriers of yours wanted to be here two hours ago, and I would not let them; no use paying the gondolas all that while; old soldier—no humbugging me!"

"For which reason," said Saville, "you thought fit to hum us: for we have been here these last two hours, collecting appetites that I'm very sure no alluro in Venice can satisfy."

"Ah, Saville, my boy, how do?" said the major, for the first time espying him, and extending two of his stumpy, freckled, sausage-looking fingers; "but I want," continued he, totally disregarding the veracity of Saville's reproaches, "I want to accommodate all my friends, if I can. Now there's this good gentleman,

Monsieur Barbouiller—Monsieur Barbouiller, my Lord and my Lady de Clifford: 'le feu,' Lady de Clifford" (pointing to the dowager); "'sa petit fils'" (aiming another finger at Herbert); "Madame Seymour, 'toute le monde,'" concluded the major, making a sort of circular bob of the head. "Tout le monde, Monsieur Barbouiller, homme d'affaires—de lettres, I mean—no offence, monsieur, for the 'homme d'affaires' has letters of credit, you know, so I'm not sure that he hasn't the best of it; for the £. *s. d.* are worth all the other letters in the alphabet, to my mind. Well, what was I going to say? All these introductions have put it out of my head. Oh—ah—this good gentleman here, Monsieur Barbouiller, is in a great hurry to get to Padua; so, having fished out from your couriers that Seymour was going there, I seized him, just as he was sitting down to his solitary cutlet, after a twenty-four hours' fast (for he has been travelling night and day), feeling assured Seymour would give him a place in his carriage, to save time, and also be good enough to convey a few English delicacies to my friend Tompkins, and a few toys to the children, as he writes me word that Padua produces nothing but learned men, skeletons, and surgical instruments, none of which can be conveniently turned into food, you know. But where is Seymour all this while?"

"At Padua," replied Mrs. Seymour, with a gravity that put an end to every one else's, "where he has been since ten o'clock this morning."

The major gave one long shrill whistle, and then deposited his tongue in the corner of his right cheek, where it remained silent for two minutes. The ill-fated Monsieur Barbouiller shrugged his shoulders, raised his eyebrows considerably above the rampart of his purple goggles, and uttered in a gentle tone, between a sigh and a tear, "Mon pauvre poulet à la Tartar! pourquoi vous ai-je quitter?"

Poor Monsieur Barbouiller, maugre his lilach goggles, had, like all Frenchmen, that innate tact which prevented him ever being "de trop" when people had paired off; so, casting a disconsolate glance round the room, he perceived that the Dowager Lady de Clifford was alone, unprovided with an escort; and, with the look of a martyr and the step of a hero, gallantly made three strides forward, and led on the forlorn hope of his po-

liteness by throwing himself into the breach between her and Croaker, and offering her his arm.

Now it so happened that her ladyship (as a gentleman of my acquaintance once wittily observed of a similarly gifted individual) had an amazing talent for resisting languages; consequently French, Italian, and German, in their relative positions to her conversational powers, stood on the same side as Hebrew, Greek, and Algebra; therefore, having taken possession of the proffered limb, and, in her usual business-like manner, given a receipt for the same in the dulcet sounds of "mercy, monseer!" she escaped from further colloquy with the unfortunate reviewer by discharging a volley of "pretty dears!" at her pug and parrot. But Herbert Grimstone, who always sniffed out a reviewer with bloodhound keenness, joined him on the other side; and placing his left hand gracefully in his bosom (a favourite attitude of his), and brandishing Timbuctoo in his right, he entered graciously, or, rather, obsequiously, into conversation with the doomed critic; and, notwithstanding Lord Chesterfield's admonition, "Never to talk to a man of his calling," he started from the post, plunging at once into literature in general, and periodical literature in particular; the lauding Monsieur Barbouiller's review, not only as the best in France, but in Europe; though, at the moment, he was unaware even of the name of the review he so much admired; and least of all was he aware that it was the infernal machine, and Monsieur Barbouiller the remorseless Fieski, who had so completely béchamelled his invaluable work upon Timbuctoo, especially that part of it abounding in misstatements about France.

However, upon making the discovery at a subsequent period, he consoled himself with this pithy reflection, "Barbouiller will think me a devilish high-minded, magnanimous fellow, and it must conciliate him for the future!" Alas! for the unsophisticated innocence of Mr. Herbert Grimstone, who was not lapidary enough to know, that however good dinners may and *do* have the effect, soft words never yet smoothed down the stony ruggedness of reviewers' hearts.

Thus luxuriating in this delightful conversation, or, rather, oration (for the poor Frenchman had not uttered a syllable), the trio proceeded to the place of embarcation; Monsieur Barbouiller, for the first time roused

into speech by one of those anti-ambrosial odours so rife along the shores of the Adriatic, exclaimed, just as Herbert Grimstone was quoting his own pet passage upon statistics from Timbuctoo, "Oh, c'est epouventable!" Monsieur de Rivoli, who was close behind, and had witnessed the whole scene, burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter, and, pushing Monsieur Barbouiller's shoulder, cried, "A-propos, mon cher!" while Herbert, as usual, on the wrong scent where the joke was against himself, chimed in with "'Pon my soul, it's dreadful!" while his amiable parent presented the distressed critic with some eau de Cologne, which she persisted in calling *Hungry water*.

"Non, a tousand tank, madame," said that unfortunate gentleman, "but I quite hungery enough; I should tink all de water here was hungery, for dere no fish in dis mandit mer; I can get none all de time I at Venice." Here his deserted poulet à la Tartar flitting across his imagination, Monsieur Barbouiller closed his eyes and relapsed into silence with a sigh. Having reached the gondolas, a debate arose as to how they were to be freighted; upon which Major Nonplus, with his usual active zeal for making people comfortable, suggested that, as Mumsell de Dontonville, as he called her, was French, she would find it much pleasanter to go with Monsieur Barbouiller than any one else; but Lord de Clifford, flinging at him a look all dignity and daggers, handed her into the nearest boat and seated himself beside her; whereupon the major, as was his wont upon discovering one of his own blunders, pushed up his eyebrows, pursed up his mouth in order to execute a whistle, and giving Monsieur de Rivoli a dig with his forefinger in that gentleman's left ribs, said in a stage whisper, "Whew! I suppose he thinks her virtue would not be safe with such a fascinating fellow as my friend Blue Goggles; ha! ha! ha!"

"Non—dat cannot be," said Monsieur de Rivoli, as he handed Mrs. Seymour into the last gondola, the rest of the party having rowed off "car quar amissa salva."

"Bravo! bravo! go it, my hearty," said the major, with a commendatory slap on the back; "really, for a Frenchman, you are a monstrous clever fellow!"

No sooner was the little flotilla under weigh than Herbert Grimstone returned to the charge, having misquoted some of the songs of Tasso, to "suit the word

to the action." He reopened Timbuctoo at a parallel between Dante and Petrarch, taking Monsieur Barbouiller's closed eyes and folded arms for unequivocal symptoms of profound attention, which were in reality but the effects caused by the disagreeable motion of the gondola, in juxtaposition with twenty-four hours' abstinence. "However," continued Herbert, reading as follows, '"The gratification of knowing and asserting the truth, and of being able to make it resound even from their graves, is so keen as to outbalance all the vexations to which the life of men of genius is generally doomed, not so much by the coldness and envy of mankind, as by the burning passions of their own hearts. This sentiment was a more abundant source of comfort to Dante than to Petrarch,* of which we have proof in the following lines :

"' Mentre ch' i' era a Virgilio Congiunto,
Super lo monte, che l'anime cura,
E discendendo nel mondo defunto,
Dette mi fur di mia vita futura
Parole gravi ; arvegnach 'io mi senta
Ben tetragono a i colpi di ventura.

Ben Veggio, padre mio, si come sprona
So tempo verso me, per colpo darmi
Tal, ch'è più grave a chi più s'abbandona ;
Perchè de Providenza è buon ch' io m'armi.
O Sacrosante Vergini se fami,
Freddi, o Vigilie, mai per voi soffersi,
Cagion mi sprona ch' io mercè ne chiami,
Oh convien ch' Elicona per me versi,
Ed Urania m'aguti col suo coro
Forti cose a pensar mettere in versi.
E s'io al hero son timedo amico
Tempo di perder vita tra coloro
Che questo tempo chiameranno Antico.' "

Here Herbert paused for applause, and here Monsieur Barbouiller doffed his blue goggles, opened one eye very widely, and darted a glance like an optical Columbus into Herbert's "lac lustre" orbs ; but, discovering nothing there, he calmly observed, with a slight inclination of the head, "Dose ver fine line of Dante, and dat most just critique of Ugo Foscolo dat go before dem."

"D—n the fellow ! what a memory he has," thought Mr. Herbert Grimstone, as he closed his invaluable work on Timbuctoo, and followed Monsieur Barbouil-

* A parallel between Dante and Petrarch, by Ugo Foscolo.

ler's example of shutting his eyes and folding his arms, just adding, by way of anodyne, this protocol to his thoughts—"I wonder what the fellow's politics are, for I should like to show him my pamphlet on the present administration."

"Heavens! what will not those falsehood-mongers, the poets, have to answer for," said Saville, looking out upon the sea, as they turned into the canal on which the St. Leone Bianco was situated, "for all the lies they have told about streams

"'Rushing in bright tumults to the Adrian Sea.

For a dirtier, dingier, more ill-conditioned-looking set of waters I never beheld!"

"Ma fois ouis," cried Monsieur de Rivoli; "and what a dirty bride 'de pour Doge of Venice dy' must have had!"

"And half the time raging and storming like a Xantippe," laughed Fanny.

"Yes, but then her Marito could wash his hands of her whenever he pleased," rejoined Saville.

"Toujours à nos Calamhouses," pished Monsieur de Rivoli, as the gondola stopped at the steps of the White Silver Lion, where stood mine host bowing most obsequiously, but looking like anything but a sea-god—in a pair of bran new nankeens, a light brown coat of equal juvenility, a sky-blue waistcoat, and a snow-white shirt, in the centre of which blazed a carnelion brooch, the size and colour of a pomegranate blossom. Had he had as many eyes, ears, and tongues as Briareus had hands, he could scarcely have looked at, listened to, and answered all the people who now assailed him with interrogations touching their own individual comfort and accomodation.

Lord de Clifford was anxious to know, with that parental solicitude which formed such a distinguishing trait in his character, whether he could have a dressing-room near, or, rather, next to his daughter's schoolroom. His amiable and exemplary parent was equally anxious to ascertain whether she could have one at some distance from her bedroom. "For," said she, always bent upon showing how attentive she was to the well-being of others—waving her hands as she spoke, with that grace peculiar to herself and the paddles of a wherry—"for mong fom de chomber endorm dang

mong chomber et. My dear," turning to her affectionate son Herbert, "you who speak French and Italian so vaustly well, do be so good as to tell the man that Frump sleeps in my room, and I'm afraid the screaming of the parrot might disturb her."

The dutiful son obeyed, and then proceeded to inquire if he could have a quiet apartment to write in, with the luxury of a lock and key, as he did not like leaving papers of importance about. And here he disencumbered his servant of a despatch-box he had hitherto taken charge of.

Monsieur de Rivoli, taking advantage of the pause which this occasioned, leaned forward and gave in a schedule of his wants, which amounted to the laudable desire of inhabiting a room which did not look upon the sea; "the air of which," as he justly observed, "not only made one seem, but, in reality, become 'jaunâtre.'" At the same time he stipulated not to have one of those dark, narrow dens which generally compose the rear of most Venetian houses; "for," as he with equal truth remarked, "that in such places it was impossible to make a toilet fit to be seen. 'Figaro ci Figaro la!'"

Round went the unfortunate owner of the Silver Lion's Head, as though it had been upon a pivot, and "Si Signore," "Madama bene," gushed from his lips like water from a torrent. Next chimed in a chorus of ladies'-maids, entreating the courier to ask Mr. What-d'ye-call-'em "if he was sure there were plenty of wardrobes and drawers, as their ladies' things had been so put about, to be sure, and hevery hindividual thing treated so permiscus as to be nearly spoilt."

At length, all these important preliminaries arranged, poor Monsieur Barbouiller ventured to inquire, in a voice almost inarticulate from hunger and emotion, "if, 'par hazard,' his 'poulet à la Tartar' happened to be still in existence." The "no" which gave the deathblow to his hopes seemed to promise immortality to his appetite; for at that moment he felt as if all the chickens that ever had or ever would exist would not be sufficient to assuage the compound addition of his hunger. Herbert Grimstone, pitying in some sort his distress, and thinking that after dinner would be an admirable time to sound his political opinions and show him his pamphlet "On the Present Administration," politely invited him to join his brother's dinner-party, adding

the consolatory assurance, "that the dinner having been ordered since the morning, it was then ready." In gratefully availing himself of so unexpected a blessing, poor Monsieur Barbouiller removed his India-rubber cap from his head, pressed his hand upon his heart, and, after bowing almost to the ground several times, looked at Herbert Grimstone with a smile of benignant complacency, as if then, for the first time since their acquaintance, he appeared not only to feel, but to admire the beauty, grace, and appositeness of the expressions that had just fallen from that highly-gifted young gentleman's mouth.

Lord de Clifford included Major Nonplus in the invitation, by politely saying, "D—n it, Nonplus, you may dine with us too!" But that distinguished officer and polished gentleman declined, upon the plea of having an engagement to meet a person on business half an hour from thence, at the "Café della fiore," on the piazza.

At the time of which I am writing, there was at the Silver Lion, at Venice, an English waiter, or, at least, a waiter who spoke English (vide the difference between a horse-chestnut and a chestnut horse), and, like the old woman who lived under the hill,

"If he's not gone, he's living there still!"

To him Major Nonplus now turned, and, in a sonorous and dignified voice, addressed to him the following queries:

"I say, waiter."

"Yes, sir."

"What have you got in the house?"

"Almost everything, sir, that you please to have."

"Let me see—have you any woodcocks?"

"Not in season now, sir."

"Oh! ah!—true, I forgot! A larded capon?"

"Yes, sir."

"Any mullet?"

"Yes, sir, red and gray."

"What soups?"

"Julien—seati à la Reine—à la Jardiniere—purie à la Bisque aux ouitres."

"No possibility of getting a joint, I suppose?"

"If you wait, sir, you might have a loin of mutton."

"Ah! well—what wines?"

"Here's the carte, sir."

"Humph! 'Champagne, Chateau Margot, Nuits, St. Peri, Asti blanc, Hermitage rouge, et blanc, Sauterne, vin de Paille, Hoc, Lachrymerchriste, Orvietto, vin D'Oporto, Marsalla, Xeres.' Well, a—"

Here the major turned round, and finding that the rest of the party had gone up stairs, and he was left "alone in his loveliness," said to the waiter, who was quietly transferring a napkin from one hand to another, while he stood attentively awaiting the major's directions for the extensive dinner he appeared inclined to order, with a pencil ready to mark down the numerous items, for fear he should forget them, "Well—a—you may bring me—a—mutton-chop, and—a—a decanter of water. And—a—I say, waiter!"

"Yes, sir."

"Let the water be iced."

"Yes, sir."

"And, waiter!'

"Yes, sir."

"Oh! nothing—only be sure to have the water iced, for I seldom drink water; but—a—when I do, I'm particular about it—that's all."

A mutton-chop and cold water are not things to tax a man's time beyond the small currency of minutes; consequently, Major Nonplus soon discussed his, and with equal brevity despatched his business at St. Marc's; for the dessert was scarcely on the table before he joined Lord de Clifford's party, and, after drinking a couple of bottles of claret (just merely to ascertain how it tasted after iced water), proposed that the whole party should go to the theatre, where one of Alberto Nota's plays, "I primi Passi al mal Costume," was that evening to be acted. This motion being carried, they adjourned to the theatre accordingly. In this play the Genoese advocate has drawn an animated picture of the manners of the higher classes in Italy, exemplified in a young bride, only married a few months, who, nevertheless, at that early stage of her wedded life, gives way to the follies of dissipation, coquetry, extravagance, and "serventismo." Her heart, however, being still uncorrupted, and her husband a man of a calm disposition, rather bordering on passiveness, seems to place entire confidence in her. Her father, an old officer, hasty, blunt, and credulous, hearing some slanderous report

about his daughter's conduct, proceeds to her house, and there upbraids her husband, whom he taxes with weakness; then begins to rave against his daughter, who, by the help of one of those artful assailants so useful on such occasions, wards off his charges, and persuades him at last that her faults have been exaggerated, as is really the case, but that she is perfectly irreproachable and guiltless, even of imprudence. The old gentleman, satisfied with this, becomes her warm defender. The lady's intrigue, however, with a young lieutenant, which was at first a mere matter of commonplace gallantry, now assumes a more serious and dangerous aspect: presents and billet-doux are received, and all this under that most fatal and deceitful veil of platonic love, which in all such matters is "le commencement de la fin;" the character of the lieutenant is that of most male platonists, namely, an artful, heartless, despicable roue.

The husband, by means of an unmarried sister, an envious, hypocritical woman, whom the bride has taken no pains to conciliate, obtains evident proofs of his wife's imprudence, if not actual guilt. Knowing the character of the cavaliero, the sposo devises a means of opening his wife's eyes, by showing her all the baseness of her pretended lover, thinking this will be the surest way, with a spirited mind like hers, to cure her of her folly.

Camilla (the bride) had planned to go to a masked ball, and there meet her inamorato. She had prepared a splendid dress for the occasion. Her husband at first forbids her to go, and this in the presence of her lover, under pretence that she is not sufficiently well; then, after some reflection, seeing her extremely mortified at the idea of being kept a prisoner at home, he tells her, when they are left to themselves, that she may go, if she consents not to put on her new dress (by which she would be known), and to accompany him under a common mask. They proceed to the ball, and there Camilla, to her great vexation, sees her lover, whom she had fondly imagined was (as in duty bound) at home sorrowing over his disappointment; instead of which, he is devoting himself to another, and assiduously pouring into her ear all those vows and protestations which Camilla believed to have been exclusively her own! Nay, more; she hears him vehemently disclaim all af-

fection for her, and add, in a tone of insulting pity, that he cannot help her affection for him; and even presents his present companion with Camilla's picture (which he had that morning, unknown to her, abstracted from her toilet), telling her it had been her last gift that very day, but now offering it as an ovation at the shrine of his new divinity. The veil is rent from Camilla's eyes—the spell is broken!

The next day she confesses her weakness before her husband, her father (husbands and fathers take these things more quietly on the stage), and her lover, which last she upbraids for his baseness. Her husband, seeing her sincere repentance (most obligingly), forgives her, the lieutenant sets off for the army, and the married coupled begin a new career of domestic happiness. Now, though this play certainly was not exactly a parallel to Lady de Clifford's position, yet was there quite sufficient resemblance between the circumstances, though not the conduct, of Camilla and herself, to make her feel exceedingly uncomfortable throughout the whole performance. Indeed, of late, every book she had opened, every conversation she had heard, seemed as if especially to warn or to taunt her, to turn upon the theme of female impropriety; and in the latter, she could not help thinking that every one had suddenly grown much more fastidiously moral than they had wont to be. One scene, however, in this play had plunged her into a train of painful reflections, which were by no means either new nor unusual with her. In the scene where the lieutenant shows Camilla's picture to her rival, swearing at the same time that he never loved her, Julia could not but recall many similar scenes in real life, to which she had been an eye and ear witness. How often, either prior or subsequent to some disgraceful and disgusting trial, whose issue, whether pro or con, was to send some lovely but frail (or, it might be, only imprudent) woman an outcast upon the world for ever, the theme of every gossip, the jibe of every lackey, had she seen the heartless cause of all in a brilliant assemblage, mid the blush of beauty and the blaze of fashion, the gayest of the gay! hanging wooingly over *another*, or leading the smile and pointing the jest at his last poor victim, who at that moment had no companion but her hot tears and her broken heart, and who, instead of the rosy wreaths and sparkling gems with which she lately at-

tracted all beholders, had now her poor temples wreathed with leeches to avoid madness! And is it for such cold-blooded, heartless, soulless wretches as these, she has asked herself, that a woman risks, and—*loses all?*

There are, it is true, some men who are longer than others in coming to this determination, but come to it they do at last; and although their words may be less coarse, their conduct is not more delicate. There are epicures in love as well as in gastronomy, and in either case they like to prolong and refine their pleasure as much as possible; for which reason the epicurean profligate will, for some time, endeavour to honour and exalt his victim as much as possible, till convenience, interest, or circumstance make him desire a change; or, what is more sure than any, till custom, that mildew of a man's heart, blights every feeling, and then there is but one result:

"For man, seldom just to man, is never so to woman."

And why should he? since no wickedness, no meanness, no treachery, no falsehood he can be guilty of towards them, can unfit him for a place in the legislature or in society; and since no violation of the laws of God can deprive him of the all-securing protection and immunities of the laws of man. Lord Byron says somewhere in his journal, "When justice is done to me, it will be when this hand that writes is as cold as the hearts that have stung me." Would to Heaven that every woman had this sentence engraven on her heart by prescience instead of by experience! and then fewer would put themselves in the way of more injustice than every daughter of Eve brings into the world with her, as the mortgage the serpent has left upon her sex!

Julia looked melancholy and dispirited, as she always did when reflections like the above came across her. Mowbray perceived it, and, surmising the cause, contented himself with abusing the play; the tameness of the plot, the heartless coquetry of Camilla, the dishonourable conduct of the lover, the gullibility of the father, and the humble endurance and Christian forgiveness of the husband, all by turns shared his animadversions as they walked to their gondolas. The night was soft and balmy in the extreme, and the moon shone as brightly as any that had ever lit that Adrian Sea; ever and anon, fairy sounds floated on the air, of

soft mandolins and softer voices, which, in their turn, were echoed by the ripple of the oars in the silver waters of those genius-haunted waves.

"I never see the sea by moonlight," said Julia to Mowbray, as they sat together at the head of the gondola, "without wishing that I was Undine, that I might plunge in, and see all the bright treasures beneath."

"What an exquisite tale that is!" replied he.

"Yes; and if she was supernatural, Huldbrand was, at least, a *true* man, because a *false* one," replied Julia, with a smile that was *not* seen, and a sigh that *was* heard, and felt too, at least by Mowbray.

"I fear," said he, "that his character is indeed but too true to nature; but the beauty of the story consists in the beauty of the allegory; for surely," he continued, in his lowest and most musical voice, as the gondola stopped at the steps of the Silver Lion, "surely you must admit that we never have a soul—at least, that we never feel that we have one, till we love."

"I admit," said Julia, trembling violently as she leaned on his arm to ascend the steps, "I admit that we are never in danger of *losing* it till we love."

CHAPTER XIII.

MILTON.

"True enough; your plotters bring many great changes into many whole families, and sometimes into several and distant countries, within the day; and, what is more difficult and incredible, send off all parties well satisfied, except one scapegoat."—*Walter Savage Landor's Imaginary Conversation between Andrew Marvel and Milton.*

"I have often been puzzled to assign a cause why women should have the talent of ready utterance in so much greater perfection than men. I have sometimes fancied that they have not a retentive power, or the faculty of suppressing their thoughts as men have, but that they are necessitated to speak everything they think; and if so, it would perhaps furnish a very strong argument to the Cartesians for the supporting of their doctrine, that the soul always thinks.

* * * * * * * * *

Nor must I omit the reason which Hudibras has given, why those who can talk on trifles speak with the greatest fluency; namely,

that the tongue is like a racehorse, which runs the faster the less weight it carries. Which of these reasons soever may be looked upon as the most probable, I think the Irishman's thought was very natural, who, after some hours' conversation with a female orator, told her that he believed her tongue was very glad when she was asleep, for that it had not a moment's rest all the while she was awake."—*Addison.*

We will for a short time leave Lord de Clifford and his party at Venice, preparing for Madame de A.'s masquerade, while we take a quiet stroll down the pleasant village of Blichingly, and see how fare matters there. For my own part, there is to me an indescribable charm in the calm, the quiet, the soft, the cultivated, and, above all, the home look of English scenery, which neither the gorgeous and Belshazzar-like splendour of the East, the balmy and Sybarite softness of the South, the wildness of the West, nor the frozen but mighty magnificence of the North, can obliterate or compensate for. England (the country, not the people) *is* merry England still. There is a youth about England that no other country possesses, not even the *new* world, for there the vast and hoary forests, the rushing and stupendous torrents, all seem like Nature's legends of immemorial time. It has been beautifully said, that "the world of a child's imagination is the creation of a far holier spell than hath been ever wrought by the pride of learning or the inspiration of poetic fancy. Innocence that thinketh no evil; ignorance that apprehendeth none: hope that hath experienced no blight; love that suspecteth no guile; these are its ministering angels; these wield a wand of power, making this earth a paradise. Time, hard, rigid teacher; reality, rough, stern reality; world, cold, heartless world, that ever your sad experience, your sombre truths, your killing cold, your withering sneers, should scare those gentle spirits from their holy temple; and wherewith do you replace them? With caution, that repulseth confidence; with doubt, that repelleth love; with reason, that dispelleth illusion; with fear, that poisoneth enjoyment; in a word, with knowledge, that fatal fruit, the tasting whereof, at the first onset, cost us paradise." And the same almost may be said figuratively of English scenery; it has none of the might and majesty of maturity, none of the worn and rugged look of experience, none of the deep and passionate hues of adolescence; all its

beauties are the cared for, watched over, cultivated, open, smiling, innocent, continually progressing, and budding beauties of childhood; the very mutability of its climate is a sort of childish alternation of smiles and tears; the repose of its smooth and verdant lawns is like the soft and velvet cheek of a sleeping child; the sweet and fairy-like perfume of its green lanes and hawthorn hedges is as the pure and balmy breath of childhood. "England, with all thy faults," and in all thy seasons, "I love thee still."

> "When spring from her green lap throws
> The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose;"

I like to hunt for those yellow cowslips and those pale primroses, till I fancy earth has its stars as well as heaven; but the year soon outgrows its infancy, and the innocent wild violets no longer, childlike, roll along the green; for when

> "The bee goes round to tell the flowers 'tis May,"

then come those stately nymphs, the blooming lilachs and the graceful acacias, "waving their yellow hair;" but they, like all beauties, alas! have but their day; and are succeeded by rich, blushing, pouting summer, making, with its roses and its cherries, every boy and girl sick for love of it. After which one feels more sober and sedate, and the golden harvests and matronly housewifery of autumn is more attractive; but these too, with all earthly things, must pass away; the year, like man's life, "falls into the sear and yellow leaf," and for hoary winter's artificial fires, we must turn to the hearts and hearths of our own homes.

In calling Blichingly a village, I have done it wrong; though not quite a town, it was something more than a village: the French call those mulelike domiciles, between a house and a bandbox, *maisonnettes*, and I don't see why Blichingly should not be called a *townette;* for it had one street of unexceptionable red brick houses, with stone copings, brass knockers, and green balconies; in which street (High-street, of course) flourished two rival hostelries: "The Good Woman" (most ungallantly represented by a headless female), and the "De Clifford Arms;" the two greyhounds in the supporters of which, punning apart, looked most doggedly at

the aforesaid virtuous and inoffensive individual. Blichingly, moreover, boasted an excellent market-place; a library and reading-room, known also by the appellation of "The Club;" duplicate grocers; ditto bakers; ditto butchers; ditto haberdashers; ditto saddlers; ditto tailors; ditto chandlers; ditto brewers; ditto printing-offices; ditto horseponds; in short, ditto everything but pumps and pounds; of which there were four of the former and only one of the latter. These duplicates, immaterial as they may seem, were of the uttermost importance: for at election times, when Triverton (the county town) was overflowing, party spirit might have run the risk of being smothered, did it not find vent by being extended to Blichingly; when, above all, the four pumps and the two horseponds were found extremely useful on the liberal side, being as great dampers to Toryism as the two hostelries were incentives to pure patriotism or Whiggism. It was about four o'clock on a wet October day, the rain had suddenly ceased, and the sun was bursting forth in all its splendour, when Peter Nangle, the Blichingly postman, walked into the De Clifford Arms, and delivered a letter into the hands of mine host, honest John Stokes. "Humph," said he, turning the letter in every direction without looking at the seal, which was neither more nor less than a facsimile of his own sign, bearing Lord de Clifford's arms; "humph! two and eightpence; why this letter here is from *forrin* parts. Oh so it is sure*ly*," continued he, looking for the first time at the seal, and then added, calling to his wife, who was in an inner room, "Nancy, I say, Nancy, mark down two and eightpence postage to the old lady, will ee?"

"And who may the old lady be? A near relation to the old gentleman, I 'spose," said a dark, cross-eyed, ill-favoured man, who sat by the fire smoking, and drinking hot brandy and water, while an old man, with a pale face and long white hair, was sitting silently and gloomily smoking on the other side.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed John Stokes, as he desisted from his researches in a Rockingham teapot for a crooked sixpence that he was anxious to transfer to the postman, "my eye, if she wor but to hear you, your feet might know the feel of the stocks again, Master Brindal, before you was much older."

"Whew!" whistled the individual so addressed, who

was no other than Richard Brindal, better known as Bring-em-down-Dick. "Whew! then the relationship is clearly proved enough."

"That is it," said the hitherto silent old man, with a deep sigh, as he dashed his pipe violently from him into a thousand pieces, and walked hastily out of the house.

"How old Lee do take on," resumed the ruffian, "about Mary's misfortune; why there's plenty of lads to Marry her yet. I should not mind doing it myself if she warn't growed so pale and so mopey looking, and if my lord would come down with anything decent to support the child; but it's not pleasant working for other men's brats, even though they are great men's."

"Hush," said John Stokes, who had by this time spelt over Lord de Clifford's letter: "hush, don't go for to say nothink of the sort, for here's a letter from my lord his self, who says as it aint hisen, and you may read it."

"Well, if he says *that*," said Brindal, "nobody can deny that he's his mother's own son; for that's a whopper that would choke a whale; but tip us the license," continued he, stooping to relight his pipe at the bars of the fire, and stretching out his left hand behind his back for the letter, which ran as follows:

"Milan, September 28, 18—.

"Stokes,—Have the goodness, upon the receipt of this, to find out who poor Mary Lee is to be married to. My mother (with that generosity for which she is so distinguished) having given or ordered Mr. Tymmons to give her a hundred pounds for her dower, out of compassion for the poor girl's insanity, which, I understand, has taken the turn of imagining me the father of her child. *I assure you, on the honour of a gentleman*, I know nothing whatever of the girl personally. I am sorry that old Lee and his sons should believe the ravings of the poor maniac, as I must always feel grateful to them for their hitherto zealous exertions on my behalf at all the Triverton elections, for which reason no subsequent conduct of theirs can ever make me either privately or politically lose sight of their interests as my fellow-countrymen. It has been hinted to me through private channels, that Richard Brindal is the father of Mary Lee's child. I should be sorry to con-

demn him upon mere report; but could this be ascertained, I should feel it my duty, for the sake of morality, to make *him* marry her. Is he in the country at present? But my chief object in writing this is to tell you, whenever Mary Lee's marriage takes place, to provide the wedding dinner, &c., &c., &c., and put it to my account. Farmer Jenkins had better be invited, with the rest of the Rushworth people, to show that neither my mother nor myself bear them any ill-will. I hope Mrs. Stokes is well, and is getting her best blue ribands ready (which, by-the-by, become her better than any other), for they talk of a dissolution in the spring.

"Your well-wisher,

"De Clifford."

When Brindal had finished reading this mingled tissue of *truth* and generosity, he fairly took the pipe out of his mouth, and laying it upon the hob while he leisurely refolded the letter, at length burst into the following eloquent assertion: "Well, if that arn't coming it pretty strong, I'm blowed if I know what is! but I wonder what chap is a going to marry Mary Lee; for I've never *heer'd* on it. I shouldn't mind doing it myself, as I said afore, for that ere hundred pounds; I be so hard up just now."

"What! and father the child and all?" asked Stokes, looking slyly from under his eyes.

"Wy, I don't know *ezacly* what to say to that," said Brindal, scratching the back of his head, and thereby pushing his hat over his eyes, "'cause as how, you see, Master Stokes,

> "'He as prigs what isn't hisen,
> When he's cotched will go to prison.'

Ha! ha! ha! And not being pertickler, I'd rather *not* go, as the old lady said when the devil comed for her."

"La, Mr. Brindal," said Mrs. Stokes, who now emerged from the inner room with a tray full of pickles that she had been tying up, "I shouldn't a thought as you'd a minded going to prison; for, as the cat's back said to the fleabites, it's nothing when one's used to it!"

Now, though Mrs. Stokes was fat, fair, and forty, and, moreover, absolute in her own house, yet the very name of Bring-em-down-Dick, like that of Rugantino erst of old in Venice, carried with it a vague terror that none cared to brave; but whether it was that the very look

of brandy inspires courage, and that Brindal was in the act of mixing a fourth tumbler of that exhilarating beverage as she entered, and that her eye fell upon it, or upon the long list of unpaid chalk-scores to Mr. Brindal's account that graced the right-hand side of the chimney-piece, or from "some stranger cause still unexplored," but certain it is that Mrs. Stokes had never before ventured so much *of*, much less *to*, Mr. Richard Brindal; and it is equally certain that she had no sooner said it than his dark sinister look made her bitterly repent her temerity. Already her imagination darted into futurity, and she felt herself minus several heads of poultry; her hams were unaccountably rusty; her gooseberry wine flat and tart; the ale at the De Clifford Arms forsaken (oh horror of horrors!) for that of the Good Woman, and her best China bowls broken by some anonymous malefactor, against whom vengeance was impotent. All this, and a great deal more, she felt would in some unaccountable manner be the inevitable result of her offending Richard Brindal; a presentiment which she was confirmed in when he calmly and coolly replied, "Why, for that matter, Mrs. Stokes, do you see there be some things that one dislikes jist because one is used to them. Now a woman's tongue, too pertly hung, is one of them; and for my part," continued he, pointing to the opposite sign, "I wish all sich was sarved like the young ooman in the picter there."

Poor Mrs. Stokes, bent upon repairing her first unlucky speech by the most obsequious civility and unoffendable good-humour, began with a benignant smile, though her blood was running cold all the while,

"Why, Mr. Brindal, that is no wonder, for—"

"No, it is no wonder," interrupted Brindal, "'cause as how its only a sign, as a woman is never good for anything till her head has parted company with her body."

There is no knowing whether Mrs. Stokes's dignity, temper, and sex could have stood this, or whether her husband might not have been obliged to come to the rescue, had not a red-headed maidservant, in a crooked and very dirty straw bonnet, with a face and hands to match, just entered with a cracked teacup and a request to Mrs. Stokes that she would lend Miss MacScrew a spoonful of vinegar.

"Well, if it ain't too bad," said Mrs. Stokes, jerking the cup out of the girl's hand, "if it ain't too bad that a

lady, if lady she can be called, however, that a woman with one hundred thousand pounds in the three per cent. consols, should be sending to borrow every hand's turn from a poor woman like me; it's to be hoped she'll remember me in her will for all the grains of pepper and salt, spoonfuls of mustard and tea, ends of candles, and parings of cheese she has had from this house."

The spoonful of vinegar having been given, and the red-headed Iris departed, Mrs. Stokes inveighed amain against stinginess in general, and Miss MacScrew's stinginess in particular, till John Stokes, who, from having formerly been a clerk in the Grand Junction Waterworks, never could see anything likely to overflow without instantly turning the current, observed, "He was surprised Mr. Herbert Grimstone had never made up to Miss MacScrew, as he understood he kept a reg'lar register like of all the great fortins in the whole world; and he had many a time heard his furrin valley say, when they was a staying up at the Park, that Mr. Herbert was none of your more nice nor wise gentlemen, for he'd marry the devil's grandmother (or, if he dared, his own mother, which was worse) for money!"

"Ah, he shows his mother-wit then," said Brindal, buttoning up his coat and shaking the ashes out of his pipe as he prepared to leave the house. No sooner was he gone than Mrs. Stokes seated herself in the chair he had just vacated, and, placing a hand upon each knee, said, as she looked wistfully at the before-mentioned white score, "I wish, John Stokes, you would make that ere good for nothink feller pay up what he owes."

"That's easier said than done, wife."

"Nonsense! why don't you bring him to the *pint* at once?"

"'Cause it's far easier to bring him to the quart, Nancy—ha! ha! ha!—than stop him at the pint."

"There you are again, always at your silly jokes; but I tell you what it is, Mr. Stokes, it's no joke to have such rum customers, and never see the sight of their money."

"My dear, he's not a rum customer, 'cause he never takes nothink but brandy."

"Flesh and blood can't stand it, John Stokes, so it can't," said Mrs. Stokes, darting out of her chair, and reaching down a black cotton velvet bonnet from an

opposite peg, which having placed upon her head, and adjusted at a small oval, blister-like looking-glass that adorned the mantelpiece, she resumed, turning full upon her devoted lord, "And I tell you what it is too, Mr. Stokes, I won't stand it neither. There am I slaving from daybreak to daybreak, pickling, preserving, mending, making, brewing, baking, serving the customers, making out the bills, larning the children, watching that no carriages change horses at the Good Woman, weeding the garden, and even baiting the rat-traps, while not a thing do you do from morning till night but laugh and joke, or drink with every one that comes in, or stand whistling at the door with your hands in your pockets, and go to bed at twelve, and never get up again till six the next morning; you great lazy, provoking, good-for-nothing, unaccountable, tyrannical, barbarous wretch you."

"Tyrannical, my dear, O—"

"Hold your tongue, do; I never can get in a word edgeways for your eternal jabber; gabble, gabble, gabble, you go all day long like a goose in a pound, instead of listening to anything that could be of service to you."

Here Mrs. Stokes's attention and speech were at one and the same moment interrupted, by observing a piece of feline delinquency that by no means contributed to assuage the indignant feelings she was already labouring under. A large tom-cat, who, during the commencement of his mistress's oration, had sat quietly within the bar, very demurely purifying his paws, suddenly espied upon an upper shelf a half-knit worsted stocking, with a ball of worsted appended thereto; this was a temptation not to be resisted, for Tom, like many other gentlemen bred to the bar, delighted in that species of mischief which consists in the antithetical process of entangling and undoing other people's work; so, having, in an accidental upward gaze, been attracted by the ball, he gave one quick, darting lick to his paws, another equally rapid circular one to his lips, and then vaulting nimbly upon his hind legs, stretched forth his dexter fore paw, till with one agile jerk he brought ball, stocking, needles, and all, to his own level. After the first nervous retrograde start at the *chevaux de frise* of pointed steel that seemed to aim directly at his eyes, he returned slowly and cautiously to the charge, till, imboldened by the now perfect passiveness of the needles, he began rapidly pushing the ball about with his paw in

a most macelike fashion, as though he had been playing billiards with his own shadow, till he at length succeeded in completely putting his foot in the stocking, and, not being able to extricate it at his pleasure, gave one loud, melancholy mew, seldom heard from out his noble breast save when serenading some feline fair one on a neighbouring wall. This unusual sound it was that called Mrs. Stokes's attention to all the ruin Grimalkin had wrought!

Now, gentle reader—for gentle at this moment I feel you are—for even though you should have just returned from St. Stephen's after ratting, still the perilous situation of poor puss must awaken all the gentleness in your nature—well, then, gentle reader, lacerate not your too susceptible heart with unnecessary fears for the safety of one who *played not wisely, but too well*. Luckily for Tom's personal security, Mrs. Stokes, like Monsieur Jourdin, who had been talking prose all his life without being in the least aware of the fact, was (equally unknown to herself) a profound metaphysician, and therefore in the habit of attributing and referring the most palpable and visible effects to the most impalpable and hidden causes; consequently, in the present instance, she gently approached the cat, and in the most dulcet tones her voice was capable of, apostrophized him as follows: "Poor Tommy; pretty fellow; I'll get his paw out for him;" which having done, she darted across the room to where her all-enduring spouse was standing, and dragging him by that part of his left arm nearest the shoulder, seated him by main force upon a high clerk-like stool within the bar before the chaotic mazes of the stocking, upon which he gazed mildly and meditatively, awaiting his doom, which his better half soon pronounced.

"There, you great,* mischievous, idle, good-for-no-

* It may be satisfactory to the hypercritical reader (especially should he be a married man, and, consequently, too prone to impute blame to wives in general, and Mrs. Stokes in particular) to know that Mrs. Stokes, with true womanly devotion, and the hyperbole of wifely affection, overrated her husband in calling him great; he was, in reality, but four feet two by one foot nothing, while she was portly as Juno when she made the assignation with Ixion, but albeit (except her brow) most unlike her when she kept it. How much better and purer the social system would be, were there more wives like Mrs. Stokes and Juno, and more husbands like Mr. Stokes! but "Diis aliter visum," and as for Jupiter, the less said of him the better.

thing feller; sit there till I come back, do; and roll up that worsted, and take up those stitches, and try and set to rights some of the mischief you have done."

"Me, my dear!" began Mr. Stokes, in a tone of well-founded astonishment, mingled with groundless contrition; "me, my dear!"

"Hold your tongue, do, John Stokes; you are enough to provoke a saint or a tee-totaller, so you are, with your eternal lies and excuses, let you do what you will; I could forgive all the harm you do, if you was not always a trying to defend yourself arterward. None of the children do half the mischief you do."

"No, my dear, no one accuses them of it."

"What's that you say, Mr. Stokes?" inquired his wife, as she finished tying on her bonnet, which operation had prevented her hearing distinctly the remark her rash husband had hazarded.

"I say, my dear, that they are very good children indeed."

"Yes, I believe they are—thanks to me, Mr. Stokes; I should like to know what they'd be if they took after you."

"Not much the better, certainly, for there is little good to be got from second-hand abuse and ill usage, which is all they could take after me, for that's all I have from morning till night."

This reply was uttered *sotta voce*, although Mrs. Stokes had retired into the inner room, from which she soon emerged, armed with a bottle of wine, a Sallylunn, and a packet of tea, all of which she destined for Mary Lee, who was ill, and unable to provide such things for herself. Mrs. Stokes, to do her justice, was overflowing with the milk of human kindness to every one of God's creatures except the enduring little animal who now sat upon that high stool within that low bar, taking up the stitches of that stocking which the cat had dropped; but doubtless she thought, as he possessed the whole fountain from which that lactary stream emanated, there was no use in wasting upon him any of its outpourings.

Mrs. Stokes, having terminated her preparations by putting on her pattens, departed on her charitable visit to Mary Lee. Alas, poor human nature! why is it that your best and purest feelings, like virgin gold, are sure to be mixed with considerable alloy before they can

pass current through this world? Mrs. Stokes had always been kind and attentive to Mary Lee, especially since what the common people emphatically call her *misfortune*. Tea, soup, and white bread she had liberally supplied her with; but, though she had long been weak and ill in the extreme, she had never yet got to wine; but Lord de Clifford's letter, and the mysterious rumour of her marriage, all roused Mrs. Stokes's curiosity beyond concert pitch; and though she could not have said *in vino veritas*, she felt that there was, and, for the first time, she suddenly recollected that a glass of wine would do Mary Lee all the good in the world. "It will warm her heart, poor thing, and open it too, perhaps; for though her wits wander, her tongue is very still," thought Mrs. Stokes, as she set out on her mission, turning to give one parting look of admonition to her husband, who no sooner knew her out of sight, and believed her out of hearing, than he began singing Burns's "Address to the Deil," which he had picked up from a Scotch pedler, raising his voice, as was his wont, when he got to the second verse.

"Hear me, auld Hangie, for a wee,
An' let poor damned bodies be;
I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,
E'en to a deil,
To skelp an' scaud poor dogs like me,
And hear us squeel!"

CHAPTER XIV.

"It is a tale better, perhaps, untold;
A dark page in the history of mankind,
Which would be better wholly blotted out:
It grieves me much to speak of evil things,
Thou knowest—yet thou urgest me to speak.
Well, then, draw near and listen."

MS.

"Was there ever seen such villany?
So neatly plotted, and so well performed?"

Jew of Malta.

Mary Lee, about three years before the present period of our history, had been the belle of the village. She was deservedly the pride of her father and brothers.

Mother she had none. There was not a young man within ten miles round that was not, directly or indirectly, an admirer of hers; and every matron in Blichingly cited her as a pattern of industry, goodness, and filial affection; and although she bore off the palm of beauty triumphantly from all her village rivals, yet such were her unvarying sweetness of temper and active zeal to oblige, that there was not one among them who (even under that severest test of female friendship, the loss of an admirer on her account) could find it in their hearts either to envy or dislike her; two feelings, by-the-by, which are generally synonymous in the human heart. Did any girl, more addicted to the culling of kingcups and the chasing of butterflies, desert the dull monotonies of hemming and sewing for green lanes and greener meadows, and so leave some task unfinished till the eleventh hour, when some angry grandam's or schoolmistress's just displeasure was to be dreaded, it was ever avoided by Mary Lee's good-natured and prompt completion of the neglected work. Many a long-puzzled-over sum had she also cast up with a quickness and fractional correctness that might have excited the envy, while it compelled the admiration, of Mr. Joseph Hume; she was, moreover, *ecrivaine publique* to the whole hamlet; her garden boasted rarer and better cultivated flowers than any other cottage in Blichingly. No wonder, then, that her bees produced more honey than any of her neighbours'; her poultry, too, had gained a well-merited reputation, which made it sought after by every housekeeper far and near; while her hens always laid sooner and later than any one else's; yet all of these was she ready to give or to lend, as the occasion might require, to her less fortunate neighbours.

There is a sort of sanctifying halo in breathing an atmosphere of affection and good-will, that precludes all base and unworthy feelings; for the love of those by whom we are surrounded is a sort of moral sunshine, which expands and ripens the best germes in our nature; while to feel the blight of envy, hatred, contempt, malice, hypocrisy, or ill-will, makes us end by being in reality what we were at first falsely accused of being. It is the conviction that every man's heart is against us that sets our heart against every man. Poor Mary was basking in the full meridian of this moral sunshine, when, at a dance given by the Dowager Lady de Clifford,

at Blichingly Park, to all her tenants after a harvest home, Lord de Clifford first beheld her dancing under an avenue of fine large Spanish chestnut-trees, as he sat listlessly smoking in one of the library windows, too cold and too proud to join the rustic group and thaw himself in the sunshine of happy faces. Equally surprised and riveted by Mary's bright and glowing face, and her fawnlike and unplebeian figure, he actually rose from his seat with an intention of joining the dancers, or, rather, of becoming acquainted with her; but always dark, calculating, and designing, even under his strongest impulses, he checked himself, and turning to his amiable parent as he pointed the amber mouthpiece of his pipe at her, inquired,

"My dear ma'am, who is that very pretty girl in the white dress, and straw bonnet with blue ribands, that is dancing with one of Lord Sudbury's gamekeepers?"

Her ladyship advanced to the window, and after having levelled her glass at her for a few minutes, said,

"Oh that, my dear, is Mary Lee, the carpenter and undertaker's daughter—a *vaustly* clever young woman—the best plain-worker in Blichingly, and so clever about poultry and a dairy, and all that sort of thing. I wanted her to live with me as my maid, but her father would not let her; *these here* petty tradespeople are so much above themselves nowadays, and Mary is thought such a paragon of perfection in the village. But, my dear, you who used to be so *vaustly* gallant, I wonder you don't go out and flirt with her; though," added the virtuous and exemplary mother, with a sigh, "I suppose marriage has *spilt* you in this way, as well as every other."

"Why, my dear ma'am," replied her son, with a sneer and a muscular convulsion, "if she is such a paragon, I think I had better go to work more cautiously."

"Very just observation, my dear; but you was always so *vaustly* clever. I never shall forget, when you was only four years old, the day you threw the glass of wine in your father's face after dinner, because, poor little dear, you was screaming for a whole pine-apple, and he, in his usual tyrannical way, ordered you up to the nursery!"

Lord de Clifford paid little attention to this oft-repeated anecdote, so illustrative of his father's tyranny

and his mother's judgment and affection; for the *vaustly* clever boy who had thrown the glass of wine in his father's face for reproving him, was the equally clever man who was now intent upon laying a plan how to ruin a poor girl, of whose innocent and happy existence he had been ignorant an hour before. If Lord de Clifford did possess a talent in the world, it was one he inherited from his amiable mother, that of at once striking out upon the anvil of his imagination a dark and intricate plot, which would have cost any man, with a grain more feeling or more principle, half a life to organize. It would be a useless as well as a disgusting task to detail the minutiæ of villany by which Lord de Clifford had effected poor Mary Lee's ruin. Suffice it to say, that by passing himself off for the son of a Norfolk farmer, and personating the character in the alternate fascinations of velveteen shooting-jackets, and blue coats and gilt buttons, he contrived to meet her everywhere—but in her father's house—for three months, and at the end of that time to get her to consent to a secret and, it is needless to add, a mock marriage. In vain poor Mary implored him to allow her to confide the secret to her father, even when, if she did not do so, her disgrace must become inevitable. Still he persisted that her doing so would ruin him with his father! And what misery, what ruin, what shame, will not the devotion of a woman's heart endure, to ward off a shadow of either from what she loves! And is man's return ever to be what it ever has been, insult, injury, and desertion? Ay, even so. When Mary Lee's child was born, in vain her poor heart-stricken father implored her only to let him know who was the author of her disgrace; in vain he promised pardon if she would: still she was inexorable, merely assuring him, with many bitter tears, that she was not disgraced, and that he should know all in good time.

Meanwhile Lord de Clifford, the soi-disant William Dale, grew less punctual at their trysting-place, a green dell about three miles from old Lee's cottage, called the Fairies' Bath, from a rivulet that terminated in a little oval pond of crystal water, at the bottom of which the smooth pebbles were to be seen, looking round and white as daisies. On the summit of a rock rich in flowing shrubs, at the northern end of this dell, was the ruin of an old abbey, whose vaults were supposed to be the

repository of the contraband treasures of a gang of smugglers, who, through the medium of their coadjutors, the gipsies, had them conveyed from a small seaport not fifteen miles distant. It was from the ruined aisle that Lord de Clifford was wont to announce his arrival to Mary, by throwing a stone into the little pond, as she stood beside it in the dell beneath. Three months (during a pretended absence of his into Norfolk) had now elapsed since they had met there. It was a beautiful summer evening. The sun was flooding the glen, and pressing it to her purple west with farewell looks of golden light, the distant lowing of the cattle was the only sound to be heard save the dreamy humming of insects, for

"Life in its myriad form was on the wing,"

when Mary Lee, her child nestled in her bosom, and her heart beating high within it, once more repaired to the dell. She waited some time listening intensely for the well-known signal, till the very silence became audible from the painful acuteness of her own anxiety; but at length, instead of the accustomed stone, a heavy packet fell at her feet; she opened it, and beheld ten sovereigns enclosed in a paper, on which were written these words:—

"Mary,—I cannot stay a moment; business of consequence prevents me; I send you ten pounds, for fear you should want money.

"Yours,

"William Dale."

Poor Mary's first impulse was rapidly to ascend the little winding path that led to the ruins, but she was startled back by hearing the loud quick echo of a horse's hoofs galloping along the upper road; and each echo seemed to rush through and trample on her heart. Again she looked at the few cold words contained in the letter she still held; "business of consequence!" she repeated, "what business could, what business ought, to prevent him, for one moment only—for one moment from seeing me—from seeing his child—whom he has never yet seen? Money, why should he send me money? he never did so before; I don't want money."

Here poor Mary burst into a paroxysm of tears, which were only checked by the cries of her child, who was beginning to feel the increasing chillness of the air. "Poor little thing!" said she, hushing it, "no wonder you cry; you have cause to cry, when he would not stay even one moment to look upon you; he who has never yet done so!" And at this reflection her tears flowed afresh: but as she retraced her steps homeward, she recollected she must suppress her affliction before her poor father, who was already sufficiently aggrieved on her account; and then, with all the sophistry of a woman's nature, which always endeavours to make excuses for what it loves, even when there are none to be made, she argued, "He was busy, he was hurried, perhaps; and men are not like women; they never think of other people's feelings when they are engaged or in a hurry. It was, it must be so; for, even was he neglectful of her, he could not but be anxious to see his child, whom he had never yet beheld." So argued poor Mary, till false hope again filled the aching void that disappointment had left in her heart. But again she repaired to the dell, and this time she waited till past midnight, drenched with rain, and almost blinded with lightning; but he never came.

Oh what degrees there are in misery! This time she would have given all she possessed in the world to have had even such another cold letter as the last. Still once again she went; it was the last time, at least to meet him; frantically, yet breathlessly, she clung to the shrubs that hung from the rock, as though their leaves had "voiceless words" that could tell her something that she did not know, but longed, yet dreaded to hear; her eyes strained upward to the old ruin, and one hand passionately straining back her fair and silken hair, that nothing might impede the faintest sound of his approach. In this state of painful suspense, if that can be called suspense which seems to realize our worst fears, she had waited above an hour, when a slight rustling was heard among the shrubs. "William! William!" almost screamed poor Mary; and "William!" echoed through the dell, as she sank at the foot of the rock nearly lifeless; but no William was there. When she revived, a letter only was lying at her feet; she tore it open and read as follows:—

"Woman, cease to persecute me; the fittest place for you is the House of Correction. As I suppose your father, being a respectable man, will disown you when he knows that you are no more my wife than I am yours, I being, I am sorry to say, married already; and as for your brat, thanks to the New Poor Laws, you can have no claim upon me for that, especially after the ten sovereigns I sent you last week. There is no use in your attempting to follow me, for I shall have left the country before another hour. I hope this may be a warning to you not to be so forward another time to any future

"William Dale."

This, then, was what she had watched, waited, hoped, feared, and suffered for in every possible shape! She did not scream, she did not swoon, she did not even shed a single tear: there she sat on that mossy stone, pale as marble, and as mute; the rock itself might have fallen upon her, she could not have felt it. Poor creature! she did not suffer; for reason, that cruel beacon that points out all our woes, had left her, and there she might have remained, had not Richard Brindal, while transacting some moonlight business in the old abbey for his friends the smugglers, towards midnight, had his attention attracted by something white.

Upon looking over the rock to see that no one lurked beneath, having taken the precaution to prime and load his gun, he descended noiselessly by the little winding path into the glen; and once there, he cried out boldly to the figure beneath the rock, "Who goes there?" but receiving no answer to his third interrogation, he levelled his piece and was about to fire, when the moon, at that moment emerging from a cloud, discovered the form, or what he at that time thought the ghost, of Mary Lee! "Why, Mary," said he, going up to her, "how now? what brings thee here, child, in this lonely place, at this lonely hour? Go home, my partridge; man-traps are useless in such a place as this—ha! ha! ha!" and the ruffian laughed till the still and solemn air returned an echo like a chorus of fiends; "go home, there's a good girl," continued he, pushing her with the butt-end of his gun; "your child will be wanting you, I'm thinking."

"Ah!" cried the poor maniac, pressing the gun to her

bosom, "poor baby, hush, hush, hush! or they will send us to the House of Correction, and they are all William Dales there; not my William, for they've killed him, but Williams that they keep to write those letters. Hush, hush! or they'll shower down upon us those letters made out of the rocks till they kill us."

"Poor thing," said Brindal, while symptoms of humanity actually glistened in his eyes, "if she ain't gone clean out of her reason: I must get her home as well as I can;" and, fearing the gun might go off, he extricated it from her as gently as possible, and hiding it in some underwood, he took the unresisting girl in his arms and carried her out of the glen, when she followed him without again uttering a sound till she reached the door of her father's cottage, when the shrill bark of a little Scotch terrier from within seemed to rouse her into a temporary and painful consciousness; she stared wildly for a few moments at Brindal, and then placing her finger on her lip, said, "Hush, William, don't you speak; I'll tell my father all, and he'll be so glad to see you at last."

The wretched father, who had been anxiously waiting for his daughter's return, and wondering and fearing at her delay, now undid the door, little imagining the climax of misery that awaited him. There stood Mary, totally unconscious of his presence; those eyes which that very morning had been soft and clear as heaven's own blue, now glared with the fearful fire of insanity; those cheeks, which a few hours before had been blushing and downy as the hues of a ripe peach on a sunny wall, were now white as ashes, save a burning spot in one of them, which looked as if it were consuming her.

"Master Lee," said Brindal, brushing away a tear with the back of his hand, "this is the worst night's work I ever did, to bring her back to you in this state, but still it was better than leaving her to die in the glen; don't ee say nothing to her, poor thing, don't ee, but get her quietly to bed."

Brindal's request was useless, for poor Lee could not speak. He drew the poor maniac to him; and as her head sank upon his shoulder, her hand relaxed its grasp of the fiendlike letter that had brought her to that state. Brindal caught it as it fell, and gave it to her father. "Mayhap," said he, "this may tell you more than I can about poor Mary."

It did, indeed, tell but too well what it was almost beyond the old man's power to bear. "Monster! demon! whoever you are!" exclaimed he, grinding his teeth and raising his clinched hand, with which he impotently struck the air; "but I will not curse you: for there are no words strong enough to wrench curses from the depths of hell for deeds like these. No, no, I will not curse you," he continued, gently parting the hair off Mary's pale and vacant face; "the reason that has left this poor beautiful innocent head—ay! innocent despite ten thousand fiends—will rush to God, and plead for surer vengeance than a poor worm's like mine; but that, too, the villain shall have, if he's above ground. Mary! my poor Mary! my best child! and has it come to this? Well, I was too proud of you, and it was right that I should be humbled; but you, you were never proud; and all things loved you well, even the bad and the wicked—yes, the wicked. And so the foul fiend grew jealous, and came in person to talk to you of love. Ha! ha! ha! that is right; work away, my brave boy, at his bridal jewel-box, and I will get the wedding shrouds ready."

This last sentence of the old man's raving was addressed to his son, who was working late in an inner room at a workhouse coffin. Every dull dense blow of the hammer fell like a doom, amid the silent idiotcy of the unhappy girl, and the furious ravings of the wretched father. Brindal, who had been leaning with his head and face against the wall, subdued, for the first time in his rugged and warring life, into more than feminine softness and infantine fear, actually shook like a leaf as he now noiselessly opened the door of the inner room where George Lee was at work, and requested him to desist from his occupation. "Why?" inquired the young man. A choking sensation in his throat prevented Brindal from replying; but pointing to the outer room, he again buried his face in his folded arms against the wall, and, for the first and the last time in his life, sobbed like a child.

It is needless to describe the renewed misery that ensued when young Lee joined his wretched sister and still more wretched father. The former he silently carried to bed, from which she did not rise till many months afterward. Old Lee and his son that very night left their home in quest of the soi-disant William

Dale, and for many months was their fruitless search continued; and both father and son, who had hitherto seldom or never been known to enter a public house, now spent their whole time from one to another, within fifteen miles round, not indeed drinking, for, beyond an occasional pipe, nothing passed their lips; but the espionnage of the French police, under the ancien régime, never exceeded the vigilant and minute scrutiny with which they possessed themselves of every fact relative to the identity and locality of each new individual that they encountered, in the vain hope of at last lighting upon William Dale; but without any other result than that of their business declining, and the daily decreasing comforts of their now desolate home. The little garden, once so neat and blooming, was a wilderness of weeds, in which every stray half-starved horse or donkey grazed, and the poultry-yard contained little save the skeleton pinions of its former inmates, left from the superfluities of some carrion crow, with an old hen or two, with drooping feathers and cramped limbs, fain to support themselves on one solitary leg, while the gates were broken and off their hinges. The interior of the cottage had, if possible, undergone a greater change, still kept perfectly clean by the maid, who minded poor Mary and nursed her child. Yet all around wore the coldness and stillness of death; for there is a mysterious sympathy in inanimate things, especially those household and familiar ones, that seems to sadden with our sadness and grieve with our grief. It may be but fancy; but on leaving a place for ever that has been our home, I have always thought that the chairs and tables looked less bright, and more solemn and fixed than was their wont; but in poor Lee's cottage this was fact, not fancy. The Dutch clock, with its parterre of peonies and eglantines, no longer preached its hourly sermon of admonitory ticks. It had been stopped, for its noise seemed to rouse Mary into a sort of vague but torturing consciousness of those by-gone hours, when she used to watch its hands with such anxiety. The cheerful flower-pots no longer graced the windows. The old china and strings of birds' eggs were dimmer and more dusty than of yore. The birdcages were now empty. Old Lee still took in the Penny Magazine; but the leaves remained uncut among the three or four dozen of books that rested upon a piece of green baize

on the top of an old walnut-tree chest of drawers. The old brazen-clasped Bible was the only one, with the exception of an odd volume of Burns, now ever opened by him. Amid coloured prints of the Last Supper, Moses in the Bulrushes, and Death and the Lady, hung the chef-d'œuvre of poor Mary's industry, a sampler, commencing with the following hymn, and terminating in a parrot, of a plumage so heterogeneous that it would have puzzled the best ornithologist extant.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace:
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face."

Often might poor Mary be seen with her mild but vacant eyes fixed on these words, and often would she hush the cries of her child by mechanically pointing to their bright colours. Deserted by all her former companions (for not an ugly girl in the village but crossed over to the opposite side of the way, as if afraid of contamination, when they had occasion to pass Lee's cottage), none ever obtruded on her solitude, save the charitable Mrs. Stokes, and Madge Brindal, a gipsy sister of Richard's, who used to play with her child for hours, and weave vague prophecies of love and vengeance, to try and rouse her from the state of torpor in which she was sunk; and sometimes Madge, with her wild dark eyes and mysterious voice, succeeded but too well; and the calm and passive idiot swelled and foamed into the uncontrolled and uncontrollable maniac. These paroxysms were always succeeded by such a state of physical weakness, that little hope seemed to remain of her life: but there is a vitality in madness that seems to set all corporeal laws at defiance, and

Mary recovered to feel and to suffer. Are they not, at least with a woman, synonymous? Her eldest brother was apprenticed to a shoemaker in London, with strict injunctions from his father, night and day, to prosecute his inquiries about William Dale.

Old Lee and his second son, when they did meet beneath their own roof at work or at meals, like Trappists, exchanged but one sentence, which was invariably the same, namely, "Well, have you heard any tidings of him?" and the negative that ensued was followed by total silence. At the end of a year, poor Mary partially recovered her senses, but the profound melancholy that succeeded was even more heart-rending to all save the wretched father, who felt as grateful for his child's recovered reason as though she had been restored to him from the dead. With that delicacy of tact which genuine feeling always inspires, neither he nor her brother ever alluded to the past, nor did Mary; but whenever the former took her child upon his knee, the blood would rush into her cheeks and the tears into her eyes, and she would hurry away to the mechanical performance of some household work, or effort to achieve some long-missing comfort for the poor old man. Mary longed to know more of her own history than she could remember; every time she read that fatal and brutal letter (which, with the cunning of insanity, she had contrived to secure and secrete), her brain seemed to stereotype the words in fire. And this told her own individual history but too plainly; her only unsolved wonder was, how her father had become acquainted with it, and how he had borne it; and of this Madge Brindal, by degrees, informed her. As she recovered sufficiently again to employ herself, the benevolent Mrs. Stokes, feeling for her deplorable situation, and the decreasing comforts of her once happy and, for her sphere of life, affluent home, busied herself in procuring plain work for her. It was about fifteen months after the events recorded at the commencement of this chapter, that Lord and Lady de Clifford having come down to Blichingly for the shooting season, Mrs. Stokes made interest with Lady de Clifford's maid to employ Mary as a sempstress, which she did by giving her some frocks to make for little Julia. About seven o'clock of a fine September evening, Mary, having completed her work, put on a deep close bonnet, and taking a back

way through the fields, repaired with it to the Park. On arriving there Mrs. Frump politely requested she would rest herself in the housekeeper's room, although such hospitality was expressly contrary to her mistress's commands, from the circumstance of she herself being in the habit of paying frequent and impromptu visits to that domestic headquarters. Mary, however, declined this contraband and perilous invitation, and requested to be shown immediately into the presence of Lady de Clifford's maid, with whom her business was. Frump having rung the bell and desired a housemaid to conduct her up stairs to Beryl's workroom, she ascended the back stairs as noiselessly and quickly as possible. In crossing the music gallery, as she was turning into the corridor where the bedrooms were situated, her shawl was caught by the sharp corner of a pedestal; in turning to disengage it she beheld a bust of Lord de Clifford. It was with the greatest possible effort that she prevented herself from uttering a scream. At this sudden apparition of those features so deeply and fatally engraven upon her memory, she was on the point of asking the housemaid whose bust it was; but poor Mary had long felt as if the very sound of her own voice was to publish her shame, and the wish died away unspoken. "Come in," said Beryl, in reply to the housemaid's knock. "A young woman from the village, ma'am," said the latter, ushering in Mary, "who has brought home Miss Grimstone's frocks."

"Oh, you are very punctual, I must say," said Beryl, patronisingly, as she placed a half-finished cap she was making on a block before her; "very punctual indeed; and the work is very neat; extremely so," continued she, scrutinizing the tucks. "Do you think you would be able to braid a velvet frock, a *vilet* velvet with narrow gold Russian braid, for my young lady, against the beginning of next week?"

"I'll try, ma'am," said Mary, modestly.

"Well, I'll hexplain to you how it is to be done," said Beryl, opening the drawer of a wardrobe and taking out the velvet; "the lapels is to be—" so far had she got in her directions, when a loud voice was heard calling, "Beryl, Beryl."

"Coming, my lord, directly," cried she, throwing down the velvet with a gesture of impatience. At the sound of that voice a shudder and a faintness came over

Mary Lee. Beryl prepared to leave the room, but, before she could do so, the door opened, and Lord de Clifford, in his shooting jacket and shoes, his gun under his arm, and a slip of paper in his hand, flung open the door. "Beryl!" said he, not perceiving Mary, who stood in the shadow of the wardrobe, her heart standing still as she tried to catch every sound of that voice, that seemed like a fiery serpent to be hissing through her brain; while Lord de Clifford's back being turned to her as he spoke to Beryl at the door, she could not at first distinguish his face.

"Beryl, Carlton is going to town this evening; send this by him to Howel and James's, and write yourself besides, telling them exactly the faults in the collars of the last shirts; they want more cutting out in the joining, or something; and put down the name of the satin you say I like for neckcloths; here, here's my list," and as he spoke he held it out to her; but before she could take it, Mary sprang forward and seized it, exclaiming, with a loud shriek and wild hysterical laugh, as she grasped Lord de Clifford's arm tightly, "So, William Dale, William Dale, I have found you at last; father, I have found him! George, I have found him! him, the real William; not the one who wanted to send me to the House of Correction. No, no! he has been properly punished; they have turned him to stone, and he stands in a corner of this house, looking so cold, and so ghastly, and so grand, but so terrible! His eyes look like petrified curses, but indeed I did not curse him. No, no, I did not; but that letter did, and here is another just like it; the same writing exactly, but the words won't stand still for me to read them. There, there," continued she, plunging it in her bosom; "there I'll hide it, for fear they should turn you to stone with it, as they did the other William; but he was false, and cruel, and deserved it. Let us go, William, let us go; don't stay here; the very air feels unkind in this place. We will go to the dell; there are fairies there, and they all know us, and we'll dance with them in the moonlight. Madge told me I should be revenged; and will it not be fine revenge to bury that stone William Dale in the Fairies' Bath? and when he cries to be taken out, the other little white round stones will mock and laugh at him, and tell him not to persecute them, but go to the House of Correction; ha! ha! ha!"

"D—n it, what the d—l brought her here?" said Lord de Clifford, frowning fearfully, and endeavouring to shake off the poor wretched girl; but madness was stronger than brute force, and she did not relax her grasp.

"Poor thing!" said Beryl, compassionately; "you must excuse her, my lord, she is subject to fits of insanity; for hers is a sad story: your lordship may have heard it perhaps. She is daughter to the most respectablest man in all the village, old Lee the carpenter. She has been cruelly used and deserted by some villain, about a year and a half ago, and she has never been in her right mind since."

"And what the deuse was she doing up here?" asked de Clifford, angrily, without evincing the slightest compunction for the scene of wretchedness before him.

"Why, being very poor, I gave her some frocks to make for Miss Grimstone, and she brought them home, my lord, this evening."

"I really think you might have found a person of less equivocal character to work for my daughter; but get her some water, for I believe she is fainting."

Poor Mary's head had indeed sunk exhausted upon the shoulder of her brutal and unfeeling destroyer. Beryl walked over to the washing-slab and filled out a glass of water; but Lord de Clifford's object being to get her out of the way, in order to try and intimidate Mary into going quietly home, he changed his genuine inhumanity into his mother's ever diplomatically successful *suaviter in modo fortiter in re* line of conduct, and when Beryl brought the water, he said in a pitying tone, "Poor girl! she seems so very weak, that I think wine would be better for her; go down and ask for some claret."

As Beryl closed the door, she could not help muttering to herself, "Well, I do declare it was too bad to talk about poor Mary's character, when she was lying quite mad, and nearly dead before him; but them there sort of profligate men, as every one knows he is, is so severe on us women; but it always was so, even in the Bible, for how wicked and spiteful Amnon was against Tamar; while no one ever heard of Joseph's saying a bad word of Mrs. Potiphar, though she richly deserved it; but men who behave themselves properly never speak ill of the women."

No sooner had Beryl gone than Lord de Clifford

shook Mary rudely, and, calling her by the most opprobrious names, threatened to give her in charge to a constable if she did not instantly leave the house. This roused the poor girl into a sort of half reason, that filled her with a bitter and burning hatred of her cruel and fiendlike betrayer. "Know, woman, whom you are speaking to," cried he; "I am not William Dale that you rave about; I am Lord de Clifford, son to the owner of these broad lands, upon which you and your family are poor mean serfs."

Wounded pride is a necromancer that converts the strongest love into the strongest and most implacable hate; let no man, therefore, be surprised, when he has sharpened a woman's heart upon the whetstone of insult, if it becomes a two-edged sword and is pointed against himself. Mary Lee seemed changed as if by a magician's wand on the instant. No longer (even in madness) the soft, the gentle, the affectionate, the enduring, the forgiving victim, reason seemed to have returned to her as a gigantic and mighty weapon. She drew herself up to her full height, scorn quivered in her lip, hatred curdled her cheek, vengeance burned and lightened in her eyes: there she stood like an imbodied curse, as if her very breath had power to wither her betrayer; even he trembled beneath the loud, relentless, deliberate tone in which she spoke; every word that fell upon his ear seemed like a prophecy impelled by its own force to its own fulfilment. As William Dale, Mary still hoped, and, therefore, could have forgiven; but in the conviction that her seducer was Lord de Clifford, she felt the premeditation of the insult, the hopelessness, the irreparableness of the injury.

"You are Lord de Clifford," said she, slowly and distinctly, as she folded her arms and measured him with a scornful look from head to foot; "then listen to what you are. You are, in your own opinion, a great lord; in that of the world, your own great world, a pompous, proud, disagreeable man; in that of the poor, a sordid, avaricious tyrant, who promises great things in his speeches at elections, and does mean ones to every one sufficiently humble to allow him to do so with impunity: and in mine, you are a cold, selfish, remorseless villain, whose dark deeds (despite this world's might, which is always right) will yet, and that at no far distant time, work out their own punishment."

Luckily for herself, during this scene Lady de Clifford was below stairs in the billiard-room, rolling about the balls to amuse her little girl; but the dowager being in her own room, which was opposite to the one in which Beryl worked, was startled by the loud, excited tone of Mary's voice: she opened her door and crossed the corridor just as Beryl returned with the wine, and, following her into the room, said to her son, by way of an apology for her intrusion, "My dear, it's nearly eight o'clock; ain't you dressed for dinner yet?"

"Oh my dear ma'am," said he, in a tone of bland compassion, got up to suit poor Mary's restored reason and its probable consequences, "here is a terrible business; this is poor Mary Lee that I have often heard you mention. Poor girl! her madness has now taken the turn of identifying me, or, rather, confounding my identity with that of William Dale, her seducer."

This amiable parent knew pretty well the real truth of the case, for her sons placed such unbounded confidence in her in some things that they seldom or ever concealed any of their peccadilloes from her. Mothers of narrower and more fastidious minds might have felt insulted at this; but she, with juster and more liberal views, attributed it entirely to their unbounded affection for her. Knowing, therefore, how matters really stood in the present instance, she merely replied,

"*Vaustly* impertinent, though, of her madness presuming to take such a turn! Very odd, Lady de Clifford's maid employing such a person; that's one reason I do hate having other people's servants in the house, they take such liberties and breed such confusion: very remiss in Frump never having told me of it till ten minutes ago, or I certainly should have made Mr. Tymmons warn her off the premises as she came through the Park, for I'll have no such hussies coming here."

"Oh, my dear mother," interposed her son, still more amiably than before, "poor thing! she appears more to be pitied than blamed."

"I'm sure, my dear, it does great credit to your head and *hort* to say so, and gentlemen, I know, are not so particular about these things as ladies; but you must allow it is very unpleasant to have such people brought into one's house."

"She will soon be out of it, my lady," said Beryl, darting a look of indignation at her; "for I sent for her

father, when I was down stairs, to take her home, poor thing!"

Footsteps being now heard, her ladyship also thought fit to assume a bland tone, and turning to Mary, said, "My good girl, now do go home; one of the servants shall go with you; you see it's all a mistake; this gentleman is Lord de Clifford, my son, and we know nothing at all about *this here* William Dale that you've been a talking about."

Mary neither spoke nor moved, but surveyed the old lady's withered and hypocritical visage with ineffable contempt. At any other time, both mother and son would have resented such conduct in a very summary and arbitrary manner; but, as the artificers of her ruin, they were in her power, and they felt it, to say nothing of vulgar, spurious pride like theirs being always mortgaged with a counterpoise of meanness and cowardice. A telegraphic look now passed between them, upon which her ladyship advanced, and affectionately placed her hand upon Mary's arm; but the poor "lowborn serf" started at the touch, and shook her off as though a serpent had stung her.

"Poor thing!" resumed the ancient dissembler, in a tone of counterfeit feeling that a Jesuit might have envied; "poor thing, it is easy to see how her wits wander."

"So much so," said Mary, in a tone of withering scorn, "that, had I not known you by repute these eighteen years, I might almost believe, from your manner now, that you had some touch of human feeling."

"'Pon my word, this is too inso—"

"My dearest mother," interrupted her amiable son (for a knock was now heard at the door), "you must make allowances for insanity." This last word was uttered at the top of his voice as he added, "Come in," to the person at the door, and a footman entered, saying, "Lee, the carpenter, is in the passage, my lord."

"Tell him to come in."

The old man entered with a pale and agitated face. "Servant, my lady, servant, my lord; I fear my poor girl, from her dreadful affliction, may have frightened you," said he, walking kindly up to Mary, who held out her hand to him.

"Make no apologies, my good fellow," dulcified Lord

de Clifford; adding, as he turned up his eyes, "madness is indeed an awful dispensation of Providence."

"Father," said Mary, solemnly, as she walked resolutely into the midst of the assembled group, which now only consisted of her father, Lord de Clifford, and his mother, who, with her usual prudence, had desired Beryl to leave the room; "Father, I am not mad; I have been mad, and I may be so again, but I am not mad now; and the man you have sought night and day, that you have watched for early and late, that you have left all things to seek, till all things have left you, that man now stands before you! that man is not William Dale, but Lord de Clifford!"

The old man turned from what he thought the distempered ravings of his afflicted child with a look of hopeless wretchedness to the author of it all, who pityingly shrugged his shoulders and sighed out, "Poor thing!"

Again Mary repeated more solemnly and collectedly than before, "I am not mad, father; under the assumed name of William Dale, and in the pretended guise of a farmer's son, that man wrought your temporal and my eternal ruin; before you he affects to pity me; but when I was alone with him, not half an hour ago, there was no threat, however mean and brutal, he did not use towards me. You still think I rave; look at his features, and look at my child's; that child has, as you know, the mark of a strawberry on the right side of his throat; so has that man, and I challenge him to show it, I dare him to deny it."

"Do, my lord, have the goodness to humour her, by showing her that you have no strawberry on your throat," asked old Lee, imploringly; but mother and son now lost their temper at being driven, as it were, into a corner, from which they could see no chance of escape except by bullying and bravado.

"Really, 'pon my soul, this is going a little too far, my friend," said Lord de Clifford. "There's no knowing what length your daughter's insanity may reach next, and I really cannot comply with any proposition so absurd."

The poor carpenter looked at the great man with somewhat of the contempt that his daughter had previously bestowed upon him; and this refusal on his part

did more to convince Lee of Mary's sanity than anything she could have done or said.

"No, depend upon it, he will not show it," resumed Mary, calmly; "but there is something that I will and can show, that may convince you that William Dale and Lord de Clifford are one and the same person;" and, as she spoke, she drew from her pocket the letter-case, out of which she took the letter addressed to her by William Dale, and taking from her bosom the list Lord de Clifford had written out and signed for Howell and James, she handed them to her father, saying,

"Compare these two hands as minutely as you will, and you'll find the one an exact copy of the other." As Lee received them, the dowager, being through passion thrown completely off her guard, made a snatch at them, but he held them tightly above his head.

"Your ladyship must excuse me," said he; "you, I am inclined to think, need no proofs of your son's guilt; I do; to me they may be useful;" and so saying, he walked to the window and compared the two writings, which were indeed fac-similes. When the examination was over, the old man groaned aloud, and walking up to Mary, drew her arm within his own. "Poor child!" said he, "let us leave this accursed house."

"You," said he, as he passed Lord de Clifford, who stood with his arms folded, his lips compressed, his nostrils dilating, and his eyes glaring like a demon; "you are a rich and a great man, I am a poor and a lowly one, but there is the same God in heaven for us both, and we shall meet again."

"I'm sure, my dear," said his virtuous and exemplary parent, as the old man closed the door, "I hope this will be a lesson to you never again to have anything to say to those sort of low girls, but keep more among your equals in all these here *affairs de* CUR! for you see, my dear, what insolence it subjects you to."

Mary Lee from that day was an altered being; though her reason wandered occasionally, yet it was but for short intervals, and those "few and far between." She seemed as though, from a mighty effort within herself, to retain it against its will, so as to gratify the burning and unquenchable thirst for vengeance that now consumed her; but to strangers, and even to her chief friend and counsellor, Madge Brindal, she often assumed a degree of imbecility that was far from real, in fur-

therance of her designs, which were, never to lose sight of Lord de Clifford's plans as far as she could ascertain them, in the hope of achieving that vague and shadowy revenge which, matured as it was by Madge's mysterious prophecies, became a part and attribute of her existence. And Lord de Clifford! what change did this dark episode make in his existence? None, save that of determining him to go abroad a little sooner than he otherwise might have done, and leaving Blichingly immediately. What other change could it make? for no one knew poor Mary Lee, and every one knew Lord de Clifford; a Mecænas in his way, a spawner of Whig pamphlets, and a crack political writer in the "Edinburgh;" he crammed newspaper editors with good dinners, and they crammed him with praise; he figured in paragraph after paragraph as "that enlightened and patriotic nobleman, whose liberal policy and just views had triumphed over the accident of birth and the prejudice of station, and who, to his eternal honour be it spoken, had taught the people that all greatness, all freedom, all justice, and all morals! must emanate from themselves!"

With regard to his personal and individual code, when his vices did not interfere more actively, his was that philosophy of indolence which the epicurean Roman taught, and which looks upon life only as a visionary pageant, and death as the deep sleep that succeeds the dream. Such philosophy, "falsely so called," ever has been, and ever will be, destructive of all pure and lofty feelings; an antidote to all that is ennobling and good; a plague-spot, dark, pestilent, and all-corrupting, in the soul of that man who harbours it. And did the image of poor Mary Lee, a wreck in mind, body, and soul, never overshadow his pleasures or shake his ambition? It has been ascertained that there is iron enough in the blood of forty-two men to make a ploughshare weighing about twenty-four pounds: Lord de Clifford had reversed the order of nature in this, as in most other things—he had iron enough in his single composition to have made forty-two ploughshares.

CHAPTER XV.

"If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge.
He hath disgraced me, and hindered me—laughed
At my losses * * *
Cooled my friends, heated mine enemies."
Merchant of Venice.

"A tale of human power—despair not—list and learn!
I looked, and lo! one stood forth eloquently!
The eyes were dark and deep, and the clear brow
Which shadowed them was like the morning sky,
The cloudless heaven of spring, when in their flow
Through the light air the soft winds as they blow
Wake the green world; her gestures did obey
The ocular mind that made the features glow."
* * * * *
P. B. SHELLEY.

"What, returned, captain!"
SCHILLER'S *Robbers.*

WHEN Mrs. Stokes reached Mary Lee's cottage, it was almost dark, for the clouds had again gathered in black masses, and predicted an impending storm. She hurried up the little wilderness of a garden, and finding the door shut, tapped at the window; but receiving no answer, she tried to raise the latch of the door, which, however, resisted her efforts, being locked from within.

"Dear me, how provoking!" said Mrs. Stokes, as large drops of rain began to fall, and a loud peal of thunder rolled above her as though it would rend the heavens; "they cannot be all out, surely? Bless me, how it lightens!" and Mrs. Stokes placed her hand before her eyes, and hurried round to the back of the house, to seek admittance there; but the thunder grew louder and louder, and her appeals for admittance were either unheard or unheeded. "How very tiresome!" reiterated Mrs. Stokes; "I shall be drowned. I'll try and get in at the window of Lee's workroom." So saying, she walked up to it, but stood transfixed to the spot at the scene she beheld within.

In the large old chimney blazed a wood fire, on which was placed a tripod, surmounted by a large black iron

pot; in one corner of the ample chimney stood a bundle of green fagots; in the opposite one was a cradle, in which slept a rosy-cheeked child of about three years old, unconscious alike of the scene within and the storm without; while on the top of the cradle, like a tutelary saint, sat a large black cat, with one white ring round her tail, the tail itself being curled round her paws, while she was luxuriating in that dignified and perpendicular sleep which only cats, dogs, and somnambulists enjoy. At one side of the cradle, in fearful proximity to the fire (unless his paws were insured), lay a mosaic of sleeping, watching, and waking, in the person of little Wasp, the Scotch terrier. Two vacant high-backed chairs were at either side of the fireplace on the outside of the chimney; in the seat of one of them was a very dirty pack of cards, a pewter soup-plate full of a dark-looking fluid, a cut lemon, and a raw pigeon with the entrails taken out; on the back of the other chair hung a gipsy hat and a red cloak, and in the seat of it was a pair of thick but small shoes, with very large silver buckles; round the whitewashed walls of the room glittered and gleamed, like death's armory, various-sized leaden coffin-plates and handles; against the wall opposite the window, on a large deal workboard, was a large-sized but lidless coffin, apparently just finished; the floor was covered with shavings and carpenters' tools; all, save a circle, in the centre of which were marked and chalked out several rectangular lines; within this circle stood Mary Lee and Madge Brindal, the former in the black dress and Quaker-like cap she always wore; her fair hair parted on her high, clear forehead; her cheeks colourless, but still with that sort of pale bloom that is seen in a Provence rose; her mouth was the only citadel that health had not deserted, it was full and rich as ever; the beautifully curved, short upper lip, gently parted, like a twin cherry, from the red, pouting under one; yes, health still seemed as though it clung to

> "Those yet cool lips to share
> The last pure life that linger'd there."

Her small, white, and almost shadowy hands were crossed upon her bosom, as she peered into the mysterious depths of her companion's wild prophetic eyes, as though time and eternity were to be read within them. Through the almost Ethiopian darkness of Madge Brindal's cheek

was a rich, red glow, like that of fire against a midnight sky; her profile was chiselled in the most perfect Greek outline; the mouth was handsome, but somewhat sensual; but then the teeth within it were so pearl-like and costly, that no wonder it seemed a little epicurean; her eyes were large, dark, and lustrous in the extreme, and would have been fierce but that they were curtained with lashes so long and so soft that they almost made one sleepy to look at them; the brows above them were low, straight, and intellectual; her hair, which was of that purple black seldom seen but on a raven's wing, was braided back beneath a red handkerchief, put on much after the fashion of an elderly Roman Contadina; not much above the middle size, her full and voluptuous figure might have been heavy had it been less perfectly moulded. She wore a short green, glazed stuff petticoat, with a short bedgown of bright red striped calico, the sleeves of which were now turned up, displaying a beautifully rounded arm, singularly white compared to her hands, which were brown and rather coarse, this being rendered the more apparent by being covered with very showy but trumpery-looking gold and silver rings, glittering with coloured stones; on her feet were bright blue worsted stockings, without shoes; and just before them was placed a small brazier, from which issued a thick, dense smoke, as ever and anon Madge threw into it with her left hand some mystic powder, while with her right she waved over it a green cypress branch, repeating at the same time some low, unintelligible words.

Such was the picture that presented itself to the astounded and disconsolate Mrs. Stokes, as she peered in through a hole in the window-shutter, the firelight blazing before her, and the lightning flashing behind, while the wind whistled, and the hailstones rattled against the windows like dice in a dicebox. "The Lord have mercy upon me!" cried she, her knees trembling and her teeth chattering a second to the contralto of the hail. "What in the name of wickedness are they about? I shall never be able to make them hear me, for the noise of this terrible storm. If John Stokes had been a man—but then every one knows he isn't—he'd have come with me, and not have let me come out alone such an evening as this."

Now it is evident that Mrs. Stokes's metaphysical and logical perspicuity must have been completely uprooted

by the storm; and that she was incapable of reasoning categorically, or she must have remembered that Tommy and her own orders (and which had the most weight in her ménage, it would have puzzled Archimedes and all his successors to decide) were the sole causes of Mr. Stokes not having braved the storm without as well as that within. Scarcely had Mrs. Stokes uttered this zoological assertion with regard to her husband, when a peal of thunder and a flash of lightning, more awful than the last, seemed to threaten her with instant deafness and blindness; but "fiat justitia, ruat cœlum." So Mrs. Stokes, at that very moment, bethought herself, that, being as deficient in ubiquity as in most other talents, her sposo could not at one and the same moment be taking up the stitches the cat had dropped, and holding that itinerant waterspout, ycleped an umbrella, over her head; therefore, with a candour and recantation of error peculiar to great minds, she added a protocol to her last sentence of, "Oh! I forgot." Again Mrs. Stokes approached the aperture in the shutter and gazed upon the scene within, when, to her horror, she beheld upon the whitened wall of the room the phantasmagoria of a horse galloping down a precipice; a man thrown from it, and a red stream flowing from him. The face she could not distinguish, as it was upon it that he had fallen. The smoke now rose from the brazier in such dense masses, while Madge continued to repeat her incantations over it, that the whole phantom became obscured by it; and when at length it was succeeded by a clear blue lambent flame, the plain wall became visible and colourless as before, while the lurid flame played upon Mary's pale fixed features and unearthly-looking eyes, leaving her as like a shade, to all appearance, as the one she had just witnessed. Madge stood gazing inquiringly into her face, while she held the cypress branch triumphantly above her head, pointed at the wall. This she continued to do for a few seconds, and then let it drop into the lidless coffin.

Mrs. Stokes could hear no more. Her teeth chattered, her head reeled. She with difficulty supported herself against the wall as she muttered, "The Lord have mercy upon me! If they ain't a raising the devil, or doing something worse! Poor Mary, to be sure, she has no reason left to know better; but that Witch of Endor, Madge Brindal, deserves to be dragged through a

horsepond for such diabolical doings, and I'll break open the door and tell her so."

Here Mrs. Stokes suited the action to the word, and vigorously pushed her by no means slight person against the door, which shook beneath, without yielding to the attack. She was preparing to return to the charge, when the remembrance of the mysterious evil wrought by Richard Brindal (aided, no doubt, by his sister's necromancy) on all to whom he owed a grudge, checked her, and she resolved not to interfere in what evidently did not concern her, but go quietly round to the other side, and again try if she could not effect an entrance at the front door.

With this prudent resolve Mrs. Stokes walked, or, rather, swam into the front garden, where the wind was less violent than at the back of the house; and where, consequently, her appeals for admission had a better chance of being heard. While Mrs. Stokes was still knocking with a stone against the cottage door, she heard a rustling in the hedge on her left hand, and presently a loud, well-toned, deep voice, bearing evident symptoms of inebriety, from occasional hiccoughings and tremulousness, singing—

"The Deil came fiddling through the town,
And danced awa wi' the exciseman;
And ilka wife cried 'Auld Mahoun,
We wish you luck o' the prize, man.'

"We'll mak our maut, and brew our drink,
We'll dance, and sing, and rejoice, man;
And monie thanks to the mickle black Deil
That danced awa wi' the exciseman.

"There's threesome reels and foursome reels,
There's hornpipes and strathspeys, man:
But the ae best dance e'er cam to our lan'
Was—the Deil's awa wi' the exciseman.
We'll mak our maut," &c.

"Why, bless me!" cried Mrs. Stokes, as the singer cleared the hedge and stood beside her, "Captain Datchet! that's never you, to be sure? If I did not think you was away in the Ingees!"

"Ship a-hoy, there!" cried the person so addressed, unceremoniously placing his arm round Mrs. Stokes's substantial waist, and drawing her towards him; "where are you steering for, my trim little craft, with the wind right ahead—eh?"

"Lor, captain, do let me go," said Mrs. Stokes, struggling to free herself; "I see you hain't left none o' your old tricks behind you. But I expect John Stokes here every moment, and though he is sich a hatomy, it would never do for him to find you at this work."

"Why, my pretty chaffinch, is that you," said the stranger, releasing Mrs. Stokes's waist, and grasping her hand like a cable, and shaking it violently; "why, what made you weigh anchor such a night as this? and how is honest John! forgotten the very smell of real Cognac, I suppose. I've been so many months away, and you, I suspect, have begun to doubt whether there are any more ribands made in France, you have been so long fain to put up with a poor mongrel Coventry topknot: but my name is not Miles Datchet if you don't soon hoist gayer pennants than ever, that shall you;" and here he wrung her hand more violently than before.

Miles Datchet was a great man in his way, having committed every crime short of murder, and being so totally devoid of every species of principle as to be almost fit for a prime minister, except that he was never known to break faith with his coadjutors, and was notorious for that species of honour proverbially to be found among thieves. These shades of human weakness, which, alas! sometimes obscure the greatest minds, would certainly have militated against his obtaining the pinnacle of political greatness, and, therefore, it is lucky that destiny had assigned to him a career of less scope—that of a mere sea politician, alias pirate. His genius for intrigue was so great, that he had acted the part of a successful spy under several governments, faithfully serving all and each, never being able (as he philosophically observed) to discover any difference in the colour, weight, and currency of the coin of the realm, whether the helm of state were swayed by Whig or Tory; save that he had been heard to confess that it flowed more freely and certainly from the latter, as though they, like the Milesian gentleman of the road from whom their name is derived, entertained juster ideas of the distribution of wealth than most modern political economists; while the sweetest promises of the Whigs were apt to turn as soon. and become as unavailable, as the original of their own soubriquet. But in England, where morality is preached more and practised less than in any other country of the known world,

Miles Datchet knew too well the value of that most powerful of all talismans, appearances, not to study them upon all occasions; consequently, his nominal calling was that of captain of a merchantman; and though he did sell French brandy, French silks, and Latikai tobacco, cheaper than English could be purchased, yet no one thought of attributing the phenomenon to any other cause but an excess of philanthropy, which made him anxious touching the comforts and luxuries of all his fellow-creatures; and surely a universal philanthropist could not defraud any man, merely because he had the misfortune to be an exciseman!

Among the female portion of the community, a very handsome Salvator Rosa-like face and commanding figure might have ensured him popularity, even had he been less generous in his gifts brought from all parts of the world; and, added to a great deal of natural humour, he possessed a mosaic of anecdotes collected from every point of the compass. At Blichingly he was a universal favourite; and had any doubts ever been entertained of his cleverness, they would have been entirely removed upon his having once effected a Glaucus and Diomede exchange with Miss MacScrew: that lady was the happy possessor of a gold box containing a nutmeg-grater, which she was wont to affirm had belonged to the Pretender.

Captain Datchet, through a mysterious eloquence known only to himself, undertook to convince her that it was pinchbeck, offering her in exchange, for the paltry sum of three guineas, a real pinchbeck one, assuming the travelling title of gold, which he said had for many years belonged to old Elwes the miser, and had always been called by him his lucky box, as, to use his own forcible words, money actually appeared to breed in it. All Blichingly was aware of the truth, save and except the fair MacScrew herself; and as no one had the cruelty to undeceive her, her eyes always sparkled at the sight of Miles Datchet, with the conscious pleasure of having overreached him!

Datchet's present mission to Lee's cottage was to look for Madge Brindal, who was (with all due respect to appearances) his Blichingly sultana. He had returned from the Levant for reasons best known to himself, sooner than she or any one else had expected; and having been to the gipsy haunt at the old abbey, above

the Fairy Bath, and finding it deserted by all save a gipsy boy, who was picketing some donkeys in the close, he learned from him where Madge was most probably to be found, and lost no time in seeking her, which will account for his sudden apparition before Mrs. Stokes.

"But, seriously," resumed Datchet, "what could bring you out such an evening as this?"

"Indeed, you may well ask, captain," replied Mrs. Stokes, wringing the wet out of the skirts of her petticoats; "but it did not rain when I set out, and I came to bring Mary Lee some wine; for, poor thing! I think she grows weaker and weaker; more melancholy and moping-like; and we've had a letter from my lord, as says she's a going to marry Richard Brindal; but we haven't heerd nothink on it; and, what's more cur'us still, he hain't heerd nothink on it either, so I'm come to hear what she says; but, lord, here have I been a knocking and knocking, first at one side of the house and then at the other, till I'm almost drowned; to say nothink of seeing the hawfullest things imaginable, and can't make them hear, do what I will."

Totally regardless of the latter part of Mrs. Stokes's speech, Datchet gave a long shrill whistle as he took up a stone to knock at the door, and then repeated, nodding his head,

> "When the dove marries with the crow,
> Then we'll hear the green grass grow,
> And the blind mole shall straightway find
> He can see the rushing wind."

"Helo, there!" said a voice, as Datchet was again besieging the door.

"Oh! Mr. Lee," said Mrs. Stokes, turning round to the person who had called out, "I'm so glad you have come at last, for I have been trying till I am tired to get in; and only guess who's arrived?" continued she, pointing to Miles Datchet.

"How are you, my boy?" said the latter, grasping Lee's hand as cordially as he had previously done Mrs. Stokes's.

"Why, captain! what wind blew you here?" asked the old man, as he placed his carpenter's basket on the step of the door, and felt in his pockets for the latch-key.

"It's an ill wind that blows nobody good," replied Datchet, avoiding a direct answer; "and I dare say

you can smell the Virginian weed in it by this time, and it won't be the less easily smoked because I did a crew of d—d Yankees out of it; but that's an after-supper yarn; so open the door, my hearty, and let us get under hatches before another squall comes on."

"How's this?" said Lee, as he pushed open the door, and entered the dark and fireless front-room of his cottage; "this is but a cold reception, captain. My poor girl! my poor girl! I suppose she's ill again."

"No, no," interposed Mrs. Stokes, good-naturedly; "don't ee fret, Master Lee, I know where she is; it's all right, only she did not expect you, I suppose; and if you and the captain will just wait here, I'll go and bring them to you, for Madge is with her." So saying, she passed her hand along the wall till she found the door, which having done, she opened, and groped her way along the narrow passage till she came to the door of the workshop, to which she was directed by the firelight which streamed from beneath it. Her first impulse was to turn the handle suddenly, and boldly appear before the guilty pair in the midst of their unhallowed rites; but Madge Brindal, the witch, deserving of a horsepond a few minutes before, was now transformed into the reigning favourite of the all-powerful Captain Datchet; a person not to be offended with impunity; so charity and toleration, in the visionary forms of Lisle lace and silk dresses, flitted across the mind of Mrs. Stokes, and "wrought a mighty change," that caused her to knock gently at the door, and calmly enter to the as gentle response of "Come in."

All traces of the late scene had passed away. Mary and her companion were quietly seated at the fire; Mary with her arms folded, and her eyes intently fixed upon the blazing fagots before her, and Madge thrown back in her chair, with little Wasp in her lap, deluding him into the belief that she had some hidden treasure in her hand, by holding it above her head, and keeping him on the tiptoe of expectation, like many a cleverer dog, grasping at a chimera!

"Mary, love," said Mrs. Stokes, "your father is come home, and wants some fire and some supper; and here am I, like a drowned rat, knocking for the last half hour, first at one door, then at the other, and could not make any of you hear. What have you been about?"

"Why, who could hear in such a storm as this?"

asked Madge, seeing that Mary was too much abstracted to answer; and fearing that, if she did, she might let out too much of the truth.

"Why, that's true enough," rejoined Mrs. Stokes; "but if the storm was ten times greater, I suppose you could hear good news?"

"Good news! what news?" gasped Mary, with that vague anticipation of a something which for ever haunts the wretched and the forsaken.

"Why, I have good news for you too, poor child," replied Mrs. Stokes; "but it will keep till by-and-by, for they are waiting in the next room without either fire or light; so make haste, and let us go to them."

"And who may they and them be, pray?" inquired Madge.

"Ay, there it is now," said Mrs. Stokes; "that's my news, and it concerns you, Madge; who do you think is come back?"

"I'm sure I don't know," said Madge, listlessly; "Richard, I suppose; for that kettle is full of rabbits and pheasants, which I found here this afternoon; so I suppose he's come back from the north, for that's generally the way he leaves his card;" and Madge laughed as she rose to deaden the blaze under the savoury mess of game and vegetables that was boiling over the fire.

"No; guess again; you are wrong for once in your life, Madge, though your brother is returned, for he was at our house this afternoon; but it is not him I mean."

"Oh, I suppose, then, it's Freddy Flipps, whom I sent to Rushworth this morning about a covered cart to take us to Triverton fair."

"No, no; you must go a great deal farther than Rushworth; you are *miles* away from being right yet; *miles* away, Madge;" and Mrs. Stokes held her sides as she laughed at her own wit.

"Why," said Madge, her cheek flushing and her eyes flashing, as she advanced a step or two and looked inquiringly into Mrs. Stokes's face, "you have not heard anything of Miles Datchet, have you? The—the captain—I mean."

"What if I had not only heard of him, but seen him?"

"Impossible?" said Madge; "he is far away at sea now; and—"

"Only a plank between him and you."

"What do you mean? do speak out," said Madge, impatiently.

"Well, well, Madge, I see you are not a witch after all; and so, to make a long story short, Captain Datchet is in the next room."

Madge rushed hastily to the door; but suddenly recollecting that Datchet, like all great men, was tenacious as to decorum, she walked leisurely back to the cradle where Mary's child was sleeping, merely saying, as she passed Mrs. Stokes, "Is he really?" and then added, turning to Mary, "I'll take up little William, if you'll carry the candle, Mary: and I dare say Mrs. Stokes will be so good as to take a burning brand in the tongs to light a fire in the next room."

All these arrangements made, accompanied by a little crying on the part of the child at being disturbed, the procession moved into the front room, headed by Mrs. Stokes with a burning log, followed by Mary with the candle, while Madge brought up the rear with the child. Mrs. Stokes lost no time in dashing forward to her destination, the fireplace, to deposite her fiery burden; and, when there, had a great deal of stooping and blowing to prevail on the damp fagots within it to imitate the example of the new arrival. Mary, as was her wont, threw her arms round her father's neck; so there was nothing left for Captain Datchet to do, in order to avoid the root of all evil, idleness, but to imprint divers salutes upon the peachlike cheeks and coral lips of Madge, under the pretext of kissing the child; while he slipped a Venice chain and a pair of Genoa earrings into her hand, which she, with equal dexterity, concealed in her bosom, acknowledging these last *gages d'amour* with a tender pressure of the hand.

"I hope, Mary, you have some supper for us?" said Lee to his daughter.

"Yes," said Madge; "thanks to Dick's return, you've no stint to-night."

"I don't like game," said the old man, with a sigh, the full meaning of which Madge knew but too well partly alluded to her brother's lawless avocations, and partly to his own fallen state in having such friends and associates.

"Beggars must not be choosers," retorted Madge, her eyes flashing and her neck stretched to its most swan-

like dimensions; "and when the craft and villany of the rich man has the power of depriving us of our bread, it is lucky, to say nothing of justice, that the cunning of the poor man has sometimes the power of supplying the deficiency."

"Madge, you are right," said the old man, holding out his hand to her as he brushed away a tear with the back of the other; "and I—I—am a pusillanimous fool—but it won't always be so."

"Right! to be sure she's right," said Datchet, applaudingly, as he filled his pipe from a supply of tobacco in the side-pocket of his rough sailor's jacket, and held it to the candle; "and may all poor men, who approve of

"'Laws for the rich, and poor-laws for the poor,'

never have anything better, say I;" and here he gave a puff of sufficient strength and density to have blown away ——— Great Marlborough-street."

"Well," said Madge, with restored good-humour, "I'll go and see about supper."

"And I," cried Datchet, gallantly removing the pipe from his mouth, and sticking it in his left-hand waistcoat pocket, with the bowl upward, "I'll go and help you."

There is a proverb which asserts that "many hands make light work." Be this as it may, it is very certain that Madge Brindal's preparations for supper did not appear at all expedited by her having the assistance of Captain Datchet, for an unaccountably long time elapsed before they returned with even the knives, forks, plates, and other preliminaries for supper. However, their absence gave Mrs. Stokes the wished-for opportunity of sounding Mary as to her reported marriage with Richard Brindal; so, after she had prevailed upon the fire to light, hung her cloak and bonnet before it, and turned herself slowly round and round, for the space of a quarter of an hour, so as to give her nether garments the benefit of its impartial influence, she ventured to sit down, and drawing her chair close to Mary's, and pulling out her apron tightly at each side (as laundresses draw out pocket-handkerchiefs) while she spoke, she thus opened her mission.

"Mary dear, what's this I hear about your going to marry Richard Brindal?"

Mary raised her eyes, and fixed them steadily upon her companion as she answered calmly and coldly—

"Mrs. Stokes, you have been very kind to me, even kind when all others became the reverse—and that is a thing not to be forgotten; yet I know not that even that miracle authorizes you to insult me with such a question."

"Well, well, love," replied Mrs. Stokes, soothingly, as she drew Lord de Clifford's letter out of her pocket, "don't be angry, for you see greater folks than I have heerd on it; for here's a letter from my lord his self, who makes very handsome offers in case you should marry Richard, and so does the old lady too."

If Mary could grow paler, she did, as she convulsively seized the letter, and ran her eye wildly over its contents.

"Monster! cold-blooded wretch!" she exclaimed, clinching her hand when she had read it; "all your plots shall not succeed; the poor lowborn serf, the outcast, the insignificant maniac whom you would make still madder, may still be too much for you."

Lee, who had been looking over a file of old bills at a walnut-tree bureau, now took off his spectacles, and laying them upon the top of it, walked over to his daughter, and placing his arm round her waist, kindly drew her towards him.

"How now, Mary?" said he, in a voice of assumed cheerfulness; "I should have thought you had too much sense to be ruffled by a paltry electioneering trick, and that letter is nothing more; as we cannot give the writer his deserts, suppose we treat *it* as it deserves, and put it into the fire."

"No, no," said Mary, grasping the letter tightly, and holding it over her shoulder, "let birds of a feather go together; there are more of the same, and with them it shall remain; see if they won't make a precipice yet." And here she gave one of those shrill idiotic laughs, which echoed like a knell in the poor old man's heart, the more so that it was a long time since he had seen or heard her so excited. The word precipice recalled the incantation scene vividly to Mrs. Stokes's recollection; and covering her face with her hands, she exclaimed with a shudder, "The Lord be good to us!" and then added, with that indescribable want of tact peculiar to vulgar minds, "well, give me back the letter, do, there's a dear." Mary's only reply to this appeal was to turn full upon Mrs. Stokes one of those vacant, petrifying looks, which were often assumed to gain her

point, and which, from filling all beholders with indescribable terror, never failed to do so. "Well, well," said Mrs. Stokes, in answer to it, "keep the letter, dear, or anything else you like." Mary's head sank quietly on her father's shoulder, while he held his hand over his eyes to hide the tears that were trickling down his withered cheeks. Mrs. Stokes felt a sort of choking in the throat, and rose to open the wine she had brought for Mary, and pouring out a glass, she took it over to her, and begged her to drink it. Mary looked up for a moment, and, shaking her head, said, "No, no, it's blood-red, give it to Madge."

"Who wants Madge?" said the latter, entering with the supper things, followed by Datchet bearing a large tureen full of stewed game, the gift of Richard Brindal, of which his sister had before made mention.

"Why, we all want you," said Lee, assuming a cheerful tone, to try and divert Mary's attention, and turn the current of her thoughts, "we all want you, if you bring us anything to eat; for I don't know how the captain there feels, but I begin to think that a seven hours' fast gives us an appetite."

"And I," cried Datchet, placing the tureen upon the table, where Madge had by this time laid the cloth, "feel wonderfully inclined to have a battue among this fine preserve of pheasants, which, in their present state, are fit for a king, and still fitter for a captain. Ladies all, here's to you," added he, seating himself at the table, and filling out a glass of Mrs. Stokes's wine, which he drank off without waiting to see what the contents of the bottle might be.

"Well, now," cried Mrs. Stokes, who declined eating, but sat by the fire, her head turned towards the supper-table, her legs crossed, her gown turned up, and her right hand gracefully placed, like a slice of ham in a sandwich, between the knee of her right and the under part of her left leg, "well, now, Mary, I shall be quite hurt if you don't take a glass of wine too, for it was for you I brought it; not but what the captain (as I hope he knows) is welcome to the best wine in our house; nobody more so; and I hope he'll soon come and make good my words; but Mary wants it, poor thing!"

"It's not the first, and I hope it won't be the last time, that I've drank your health, Mary," said Datchet, "and so you must not, for once, refuse to drink mine."

Mary took the proffered wine, more to avoid Mrs. Stokes's petting persecutions than from any other motive; and having consented to eat in order to please her father, Datchet, whose inebriety seemed to decrease as his appetite increased, began to talk for ten and eat for six.

"Very respectable wine that of yours, Mrs. Stokes," said he, as he drained the bottle, pushed away his plate, and leaned back in his chair to pause from his exertions; "very respectable; but I could give you something that would astonish you all, if I could get any one to go as far as the abbey—I mean any one we know—any one that's to be trusted."

"Lor, captain," cried Mrs. Stokes, with a shudder, "I don't suppose as you'd get any one to go for love or money; for they do say as ghostesses and spirits walk there, pertickler these dark, dismal winter nights."

"Spirits walk there, do they?" said Datchet, with a wink at Madge; "ha! ha! ha! bless you, it's only the habit they have of *doing* the Excise, and they only walk to show that they are not *run*. By-the-by, that reminds me of a lot of tobacco that came into my possession for you, Master Lee; and here's some of it," said he, removing from his pockets, as he spoke, two large packets, and placing them before Lee.

"This is very fine by the smell," said Lee, "and must have been brought from a great distance."

"Only from Falmouth, sir, only from Falmouth;" and Datchet drew another chair, upon which he placed his feet, and leaning back in the one in which he sat, relit his pipe and puffed away consequentially.

"I had no idea it was so easily to be had," replied Lee.

"Not easy to be had; pu, pu, puff—nearly lost me my life getting it."

"Dear me, that was no joke."

"Wrong again—pu, pu, puff—it was all a joke."

"Ah, I recollect you said you got it from some Americans, and promised to tell me the story."

"Pu, pu, puff—so I will, as soon as this pipe's aground; here, Madge, my girl," handing her a flask of brandy out of his most prolific pocket, "that wine's most confoundedly strong; mix me a glass of grog to take off the effects of it; not too much cold water, though; pu, pu, puff—cholera going—cold water—pu, pu, puff—very dangerous."

"I can't a bear it at any time," interposed Mrs. Stokes.

"Well, sir, you must know," said Datchet, emptying the ashes out of his pipe on the table, and returning it to his waistcoat pocket, "when I was at Marseilles a short time ago, I fell in with an American chap who had just landed from a Chinaman, and hearing I should soon be in England, he asked me to take charge of some slips and seeds of the *outom-chu*, which, you must know, is a Chinese tree, very like our sycamore, only the leaves are between eight and nine inches in diameter, fastened to a stalk about a foot long, which is so tufted and laden with flowers that not a single ray of the sun can squeeze through 'em; and for all the leaves and blossoms are so big, the fruit is so extraordinary small that it is not much bigger than a pea; so that, altogether, you see it's a curiosity, and would stand alone but for the Reform Bill, which resembles it, inasmuch as that its flourishing and flowery promises have produced very small fruits. But to go back to the Yankee chap whom I left standing on the quay at Marseilles he gives me a packet of *outom-chu*—slips and seeds—directed to 'The Honourable Cæsar Lycurgus Rantandcant, New-York, care of Captain Milton Scroggins, of the Mohawk, Lion Hotel, Falmouth,' as he wanted to cross over to Civitàvecchia (I suppose to ascertain Gasperani's notions of liberty) before he returned to America. The parcel not being over large, I took it; and when I got to Falmouth, finding the Mohawk was in port, and not to sail till the next day, I thought I might as well go aboard, and see what sort of vessel she was; so, stowing the Honourable Cæsar Lycurgus Rantandcant away in my hat, I pushed off for the Mohawk.

"When I came alongside, I saw the captain's gig laden with luggage, and a sallow-looking gentleman, with a very long nose and a back to match, standing on the edge of the boat, and giving particular directions about a writing-desk which he was handing up to the mate of the Mohawk. Presently a little man in the boat, with a black coat, cocked hat, very dirty shirt, and a large diamond pin, who turned out to be the first lieutenant of the Mohawk, cried out to the sallow-looking chap, 'I guess you'd be a tarnation deal more convenient on shore till the vessel sails.'

"Whether it was that, after such an extra allowance of nose, he had been put upon short commons with regard to ears, or that they were stowed away in the writing-desk the mate had just taken on board, I don't know, but Yellow-hammer took no more notice of the first lieutenant than if he had been a tailor asking for his bill.

"'I calculate you're considerable in the way there,' repeated the first lieutenant, this time impressing the observation on him by a gentle push, which, however, sent poor Mustard-face clean into the sea; but all hands instantly coming to his assistance, we soon handed him up again, his head not even having time to get under water. As soon as he had recovered himself sufficiently to speak, and smoothed down his face with a wet pocket-handkerchief, he rose majestically like a spring-tide, and looking resolutely at the first lieutenant, said, without moving a muscle of his face, 'Sir, I shall report you to the admiral.'

"'What need of reporting me to the admiral; I can give ee satisfaction, can't I?'

"'Sir,' said the damp gentleman, 'I am a clergyman.'

"'Well, what o' that? we've got one of your cloth on board, and he can satisfy ee, can't ee, without ee troubling the admiral?'

"To this the long gentleman made no answer; but throwing a contemptuous look at the first lieutenant, clambered up the ship's ladder, and I followed his example. As soon as I had set my foot on deck, I requested to be shown down into Captain Milton Scroggins's cabin, which was accordingly done. I had no sooner entered, than a little Yankee cur darted off the sofa, and began barking at me through his nose, which caused Captain Milton Scroggins—a short, thick-set, dark-coloured man, in whose face the smallpox had been playing at cribbage, and who was sitting with his feet on the table, reading the *Examiner*, a glass of grog on one side of him and a spitoon on the other—to raise his head and say, 'What may your pleasure be?'

"I placed my packet of seeds and slips before him, telling him how it had come into my possession at Marseilles, with a request that I would deliver it safely.

"'Oh, much obliged to ee; but I'm sure, as I always say, I find all Europe-yans (Europeans) partickler obliging and conformable. Sorry I sail to-morrow, but

next time I come to Falmouth, hope to see ee a board the Mohawk. Shall spare no expense to entertain ee; perhaps a little tobacco may be agreeable to ee? Got some uncommon fine Latakai; cost me forty-five of the best Baltimore for a dozen pounds of it; be glad to give ee some for ee trouble in bringing me the Outomchu seeds.'

"I thanked him, and it being one of my maxims to take everything but three things, which I never do if I can avoid it—cold, trouble, and advice—I accepted his offer. While he was selecting a packet for me off an adjoining table on which there were several, down came the first lieutenant.

"'Please, captain, Mr. Trevyllian is come aboard. I told him we didn't sail till to-morrow, but he says he prefers embarking to-day.'

"'Well, let his luggage be stowed away,' replied the captain.

"'Luggage!' repeated the first lieutenant, 'he's tarnation little troubled with that. Why he's brought nothing aboard but his pipe, his wife, and a pair of slippers; or, rather, he's brought his wife, and she's brought his pipe and slippers, for she's carrying both.'

"'Ah, that's the way with all your great geniuses,' said the captain; 'they're always a doing things out of the common, and unlike other people; wonderful man, Mr. Trevyllian; they say he bangs Byron at conjugalities and catastrophes. You know him, perhaps, sir?'

"'Never heard of him,' said I.

"'Never heard of him! well, that's queer, too. I thought every Europe-yan at least had heard of him; all the Europe-yan ladies, 'specially the English, are mad after him; no wonder, he has had seven wives, and they say killed—that is, *murdered*—for there is a difference between killing and murdering—the former being a sort of cowardly anonymous way that many men put an end to their wives: but he openly and honourably murdered five of his; but I never believe half what I hear.'

"'Nor I neither,' said I; 'so I dare say that it was only two and a half! But, even at that rate, he must still have an extra wife; a Sunday and an every-day one like. Pray, sir, is he famous for nothing else? for that's by no means so uncommon.'

"'Yes, he writes books; he wrote a novel called the

Unnatural Son; which, being full of terrible things, was naturally much admired.'"

"Bless me! what a orrid villain," interrupted Mrs. Stokes; "murder five wives! and why wasn't he hanged five times for it at Newgate, pray?"

"Why, my dear, he was a gentleman and a genius, and they may do anything; it is only common people that are deprived of murder, with many other luxuries," said Datchet.

"And more shame for them as deprives 'em," exclaimed Mrs. Stokes, tying on her bonnet vehemently.

"Well, to go on with my story," continued Datchet, "while we were still talking, who should come in but Mr. Trevyllian himself? I must confess he was a wonderful looking person: there was a kind of patent, self-acting-villain air about him, that gave one the idea of the devil's being a baby to him in wickedness, that was truly surprising and uncommon; his wife (the one at the time being in waiting, I mean) he had, it appears, sent to bed, and he had come to try and effect a transfer with Captain Milton Scroggins for some cypress wine he had lying in the docks, in exchange for some of the captain's much-vaunted tobacco.

"Scroggins expressed himself but too proud to have it in his power to oblige so great a man; and then glancing at a pair of large, yellow, embroidered Turkish slippers that the new-comer wore, added, 'You must be cruel easy, sir, I calculate, in those outlandish shufflers; pity they're not in parliament, they'd bring forred such a capital motion on the corn laws.'

"At this, Captain Milton Scroggins and the great man laughed together for five minutes, and then the latter added, 'Yes, and, like most of the motions of that house, it would be all "leather and prunella."' This rose Mr. Trevyllian in my opinion, because, though he was what Mr. Liston calls a bigamarian, it convinced me that in other matters he was not above speaking the truth. This induced me to cast an eye over him, and seeing my attention fixed upon a dagger he wore in his belt, he very civilly drew it out, telling me that it was poisoned with a poison subtile enough to retain its deadly qualities for a thousand years, and powerful enough to depopulate the world, if the inhabitants were only inoculated with it; that it had been given to him as a parting gift by a Bedouin chief, to whom he had paid a visit in

the desert of some months. I took the weapon; to my eyes it had a most Blue-Beardish appearance; in stretching my hand across the table for it, the two packets of tobacco which the captain had given me began to steer towards the floor, and putting out my hand suddenly to stop them, the dagger fell, and the point of it coming against my wrist, grazed the skin, but, fortunately, did not draw the blood."

"Luckily, indeed!" said Madge, turning very pale, "for, being poisoned, it would have killed you."

"And had he been a *ooman*, I've no doubt but it would," interposed Mrs. Stokes; "but the wicked monster of a thing knew that it was neither *ooman* nor wife, and *hit's* evident to me that's what *hit* had been used to."

"I hope, though," said Lee, "you did not feel the worse after it; for even that slight scratch might have been dangerous."

"Why, to tell you the truth," resumed Datchet, "I did feel an unpleasant burning and throbbing all up my arm for more than a week after, though the ship's surgeon soon set me to rights. After which I began to think that I had had enough of Captain Milton Scroggins, the amateur grand Turk, and, above all, his poisoned dagger; so, wishing them both a good voyage, I took my leave and went on shore; and two days after the Mohawk had sailed, I had the inexpressible sorrow and surprise to find that, instead of the two packets of tobacco Scroggins had presented me with, six had, in some mysterious and unaccountable manner, found their way into my pocket; but, on reflection, I attributed this apparent miracle to the omnipotent agency of that wonderful American invention entitled concentrated essence of the sublimated spirit of steam, of which a person has only to put a small vial in his pocket, and it will carry him on at the rate of fifty miles an hour; so I concluded that a little of this precious essence must have been among the packets of Latakai on board the Mohawk, and so impelled them into my pocket, where, meeting with no more of the sublimated spirit, they remained for want of farther impetus!"

"Oh, captain, captain," said Lee, with a half smile, as he shook his head, "it was too bad to steal the poor man's tobacco after his kindly giving you some."

"Steal!" said Datchet, laughing, as he rose from his chair and buttoned his coat, "no, no, massa, as the nig-

gers say, I no steal him; Sambo scorn steal, I *only take* him; but come, its time to be going; so good-by, Master Lee; I shall see you again before I go, but I'm off again in a few days."

"Again!" repeated Madge with a sigh, and in a tone of inquiry, to which, however, Datchet paid no attention; but turning to Mrs. Stokes, who had finished all her preparations for departure, even to putting on her pattens, said, "You must let me convey you home, Mrs. Stokes, for you are much too young and too pretty" (gazing with mock admiration on her fat bloated face, now glowing like a kitchen fire) "to walk by yourself at this time of night, even through the quiet village of Blichingly."

"Lor! captain," simpered Mrs. Stokes, "if you ain't jist the same as *hever* you was."

"Now that's exactly what I think of you," replied Datchet, "that you're just the same that you ever were; not a day older than when I first knew you, ten years ago; but, though I am surrounded by youth and beauty," continued he, bowing gallantly, first to Mrs. Stokes (who was fluttering beneath his compliment like a parrot in the sun), and then to Mary and Madge, "I must not forget my old friends: how is Miss MacScrew? does she still live in Lavender-lane?"

"Yes, sure," said Mrs. Stokes, "and finds it as difficult as ever to buy pepper and salt, and such like rarities, with two hundred thousand pounds! only that she never keeps a shilling by her, but has it all locked up in them ere debentures and things; I declare I'd break into the house myself; but I hope, as you've got another *goold* box for her, captain—ha! ha! ha! that was the best day's work as you *hever* did. But only think, there's Parson Hoskins after her; he as cast the *hold* lady up at the Park in the lawsuit about the tithes, and he's laid *a himmense* bet with his cousin, Mr. Tymmons the 'torney, who pretends to the *hold* lady, that he won't see Hoskins after his conduck to her, but he does though, on the sly. Well, *he've* laid a *himmense* bet, somethink quite *tremenjus* with him, that he'll get Miss MacScrew to marry him; but I don't think as he will, for all he's so 'cute, for she've a refused dozens of sightlier men nor him, 'cause she knows as it's *honly* her money they wants."

"Well done, parson!" laughed Dachet; "a virtuous

woman is a crown to her husband, as Solomon says; and as no one can have any doubt of Miss MacScrew's virtue—defended, as it has ever been, by her face—she will be a great many crowns to her husband, if she can be prevailed upon to bestow the enviable title upon Hoskins. And as for her heart, I've no doubt, being perfectly orthodox, he'd be content with the tithe—ha! ha! ha! Hang me if I don't go and see the bride elect to-morrow. Well, good-night to you again, my fine fellow," added he, stretching out his hand to Lee; and then shaking Mary's more gently, he turned to Madge and Mrs. Stokes, offering each of them an arm, and saying that he would first deposite Mrs. Stokes safely at her own house, and then walk to the abbey with Madge. When the trio left the cottage, every trace of the late storm had passed away; all around was "calm as a child's repose;" the air was singularly fresh and fragrant, while the whole landscape was flooded with the light of the clear cold moon, which was riding high in the heavens, shining out like hope laden with happy morrows—that never come!

CHAPTER XVI.

"She is none of your dainty dames, who love to appear in a variety of suits, every day new; as if a good gown, like a stratagem in war, were to be used but once."—FULLER.

"Win her with gifts, if she respect not words;
Dumb jewels often, in their silent kind,
More than quick words, do move a woman's mind."
Two Gentlemen of Verona.

"I have a penny to spend,
I'm beholden to nobody,
I'll neither borrow nor lend."
BURNS.

DEAR reader, if it be not giving you too much trouble to rise at eight in the morning, pray walk with me as far as Lavender-lane, and allow me to introduce you to Miss MacScrew. Did the dirt and deficiencies of her ménage arise from poverty, I should fear to disgust your too delicate sensibility; but as they only arise from the

little amiable eccentricities of a millionaire, they may create a smile. Miss Lavinia MacScrew was of Irish extraction, and of a tolerable family; the only surviving branches of which (beside herself) consisted of a mother, who, had she been poor, would have been called mad; but, being rich, was only thought odd: and three brothers, a rich elder one, who had married an heiress; and two younger ones, possessed of no more of this world's dross than a half-pay company and majority in two marching regiments supplied. In her secret soul, Miss Lavinia MacScrew had decided upon making her rich elder brother her heir and residuary legatee; but with a sisterly affection, which the dowager Lady de Clifford would have said "did great credit to her head and *hort*," she had apportioned ten pounds to each of her younger ones to buy mourning rings. The fair Lavinia's penetration was as keen as her appetite. Well did she analyze the motives for which she was courted by all; and doubly did she enjoy the dinners she ate at her neighbour's expense, from the reflection that she should not even pay *legacy duty* for them! In the formation of her person, nature had been as economical as she herself was in its decoration. She was short and exceedingly thin, with feet and hands that might have belonged to a giantess. Her eyes were black, small, round, and restless; her nose long and spiky; her mouth wide, but well filled with long yellow teeth; her voice was short and sharp, as if it were eternally straining to keep in a well-muzzled brogue. Words were the only things she was extravagant in, as she generally repeated her last sentence twice over, shuffling about all the time on the edge of her seat, and suddenly hopping from one chair to another as a bird does from twig to twig. Her dress baffles description, unless, reader, thou canst, by a stretch of imagination, fancy a very lanky and ill-filled ragbag, suddenly endowed with locomotive powers, lilting a sprightly measure to the tune of "The Light of other Days."

In the house or out of the house, her morning headgear, summer and winter, was an old Leghorn bonnet, with a very large, high flat crown, resembling a soufflé-dish, the leaf exceedingly small in proportion, though enlarged by a binding of broad green thrice-washed sarcenet riband, with strings to correspond, and three large black holyoaks, composed of feathers, bobbing in

the front, like young hearse-plumes. But as she generally contrived to dine out every day, she always (what she called) dressed for dinner, that is, put on a pink or yellow leno dress, while a silk pocket-handkerchief, twisted tight round her head, officiated as a turban, without interfering with two large and very dusty bunches of short black false ringlets, that appeared to be playing at hide and seek all over her forehead; and which, with a string of blue, yellow, or green glass beads tight round her throat, and a pair of brown cotton Berlin gloves, and nankeen shoes, with a rainbow scarf of coloured worsteds in cold weather, completed her evening toilet; unless on very grand occasions indeed, such as an assize ball, or the christening of one of Mrs. Tymmons's children, and then the black feather holyoaks were transplanted from the Leghorn bonnet to the pocket-handkerchief-turban, so that they were about as well known through the country as the tax-gatherer; for Miss MacScrew made a point of attending every sort of réunion where anything in the shape of eating and drinking was to be had, from the harmless tea and attenuated bread and butter of the county balls, to the strong geese and strong ale of a harvest home. The expense of carriage-hire would, indeed, have been an insurmountable barrier to these amusements, had not every one in the neighbourhood always been ready to take "*dear* Miss MacScrew anywhere;" and the Tymmonses kept a fly (a green one), and the Moggses kept a fly (a yellow one), and the Simmonses kept a carriage (a Waterloo-blue one, picked out with red), and the Bumpasses kept a coach, and not one of these amiable families but had an Emma, or a Charlotte, or a Georgy ever ready to stay at home so as to make room for dear Miss MacScrew, or a Tom, or a Bob, or a Dick equally ready to go on the box or walk, even on such nights as none save the witches in Macbeth would care to encounter.

The worst of it was, that, although the Simmonses' carriage was by far the most comfortable, yet the Simmonses and the Tymmonses were at daggers-drawn, being rivals in everything except equipages, where, of course, the carriage drove the fly out of the field. The eldest Miss Tymmons had red hair, but then she played all Strauss's waltzes and gallopes better than Strauss himself (at least so her mother said). Well, what of that? Miss Simmons had an equivalent cast in her

very verdant eyes, and rivalled Herz, Doehler, and Thalberg combined as a pianiste; here, then, was equality again. But then, Mr. Rush Tymmons wrote poetry, went without a neckcloth, wore his shirt-collar horizontally, looked as if he committed great excesses in toast and water, and, in short, was the Byron of Blichingly. Then, again, Mr. Sam Simmons had written *such* an article in the Ladies' Magazine upon tight lacing, pathology, and green tea, that he was considered to beat him hollow in science and profundity. Mr. Tymmons, senior, was awfully vulgar; ditto, Mr. Simmons, senior, and Mrs. S. was unconcealably ashamed of him; ditto Mrs. T. of Mr. T. But the younger branches of the family were so very "*genteel!*" that there was nothing like them, except it might be the younger branches of the Simmonses, and they would rather have been like nothing than like the Tymmonses. Next clashed their love of aristocratic acquaintances, which was not only their glory in particular, but like glory in general, inasmuch as that it was

> "Like a circle in the water,
> Which never ceaseth to enlarge itself
> Till, by broad spreading, it disperse to naught."

Mr. Tymmons being a radical, Lord de Clifford and his mother used to honour him with their company at dinner once during every election, on which memorable occasions a man cook, waiters, lamps, and Champagne glasses were always hired from Triverton. While, on the other hand, Mr. Simmons, being a Tory, was, with his wife and seven daughters, during these elective periods of national independence and discrimination, always invited by Lady Sudbury to her tableaux at Campfield, the last of which had been from the Vicar of Wakefield, representing neighbour Flamborough's family picture, wherein the seven Miss Simmonses represented the seven Miss Flamboroughs, with seven oranges in their hands, and produced such a sensation, that two duchesses, three marchionesses, four countesses, one royal duke, eight Lord Johns and Lord Williams, and four-and-twenty bran-new baronets, laughed themselves into hysterics. This was not to be borne; and, accordingly, Mr. Rush Tymmons, after sitting up all night and quaffing two draughts of Moxon's effervescing magnesia, produced the following (what he called) smashing epi-

gram, and inserted it anonymously in the "Triverton Independent," headed by the following little *affiché:*

"ON THE LATE BUFFOONERY AT CAMPFIELD.

"Oh, what must the Tories, Miss Simmonses, feel,
To see you so roughly can handle their *Peel?*
Every hope of success from their faction must fade,
When all they can get is such *poor Orange aid!*"

This brilliant and razor-like piece of satire was rewarded by Mr. Rush's paternal perpetrator with a *5l.* note! and by his justly proud mother with a very elegant double-gilt chain; but the injured Simmonses, the victims of this Cassius-like attack, which had made such a noise in the printing-office of the Triverton Independent and in their own breakfast-room, never dreamed, never suspected, never imagined, for a moment, the hated quarter from whence it had emanated; for they met the Tymmonses as usual, at church or elsewhere, with the same zero bows and courtesies as ever; and the Waterloo-blue coach never passed the green fly without their respective occupants smiling prussic acid at each other.

Now Miss MacScrew was too much a woman of the world ever to care more for one person than another, let her have received what kindness she might from them, socially or politically; she had no idea of the corrupt system of assisting anybody. "*Sibi quemque cavere oportet*," was her motto. Nevertheless, with all this world of impartiality to range through, which her El Dorado in the Three per Cents. enabled her to do without offending any one, yet she was sometimes puzzled when circumstances compelled her to exert her *congé d'elire;* for if the Simmonses took her twice running to some tea-party where the Tymmonses were not going, she invariably found that she had a dinner the less that week at the Tymmonses, or *vice versâ;* then, on the other hand, there was more in the long run to be got out of the Simmonses, for they remained at Blichingly all the year round, whereas the Tymmonses regularly went every year six weeks to Margate, and empty houses give no dinners; but then, to be sure, their cousin, the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins, sent her regular supplies of poultry, game, fish, and vegetables, and, consequently, they were not to be offended, though, as she observed in confidence to Mrs. Simmons, such presents were

very expensive, as they entailed upon one the necessity of a fire to dress them; for which reason, as soon as she received them, she generally sent them down to Mrs. Simmons, with "her compliments, and that, if they dined at home, she would herself look in at five o'clock!" which was always answered with "they should be delighted to see Miss MacScrew at five precisely, or at one to luncheon, if she was not better engaged." Now the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins thought, by a parity of reasoning, that as Miss MacScrew never rejected his presents, she could not possibly reject himself; but his conclusions were drawn from false premises; for she not only refused him, but, upon his proposing for her a third time, forbade him her house, or even to make his appearance in Lavender-lane; to which he replied, with chivalric gallantry, that his heart should be laid up in lavender for her till her cruelty relented sufficiently to accept it. How could she refuse him, "for, take him for all in all, she ne'er would look upon his like again!" His face was a dark copper colour, very long and very square; his hair grizzled, short, and rampant, like a scrubbing-brush that "had done its duty, and had done no more;" his eyes were coffee-coloured and dancing, with butter-cup whites to them; his nose was short, straight, and very thick; his upper lip very long, and his under one fashioned after the model of a pap-boat; his teeth long, yellow, and so projecting, that his lips had a sinecure, for they could never meet to transact business, which gave his face the appearance of an eternal grin, even when preaching and discussing the most serious subjects; his figure was colossal, and very high shouldered, and his limbs were so loosely and jerkily hung, that he gave one the idea of being composed of stray legs and arms: the evolution of bowing he always performed by butting his head forward like a ram, while his body writhed, wriggled, and lashed about like an eel. Such was the man that Miss MacScrew had had the self-denial to refuse; but peace, alas! is not even for the prudent, nor ease for the economical! another attack upon her purse had been recently made by Mr. Herbert Grimstone through the medium of Mr. Tymmons, to try and borrow two thousand pounds at any per centage, and with every security, from her, as it would not do to borrow it from his mother, whom he assured he was brought in free; and without it he could not, at the next election, stand.

Now, though Miss MacScrew professed great reluctance to lend money on any terms, yet, from the amplitude of the security Mr. Tymmons advanced on the part of Lord de Clifford, she was on the point of acceding, when an urgent letter from Major Nonplus, written in the plenitude of his friendly zeal to back his friend Herbert's request, contained such a dismal and forcible statement of that gentleman's ruined fortunes and baseless prospects, as at once deterred Miss MacScrew from stirring another step in the business, beyond going back every step she had previously advanced. It was this unexpected and appalling contretemps that had induced Mr. Herbert Grimstone to write to Marseilles, and despatch Captain Datchet (whom he had long known in his diplomatic capacity to be an excellent secret agent) to Blichingly, to lead the forlorn hope of another attack upon Miss MacScrew's purse. Accordingly, the morning after his arrival at Lee's cottage saw Captain Datchet, at eight o'clock, on his way to Lavender-lane; not in his rough sailor's costume of the evening before, but in a handsome surtout, lined with fur, French-polished boots, unexceptionable hat and gloves, and his hair flowing gracefully, according to the present fashion, over his ears.

Miss MacScrew's mansion in Lavender-lane was a yellow brick, two-windowed, three-storied house, the parlour windows of which were defended from the intrusive gaze of street passengers by deep yellow leno blinds, drawn upon white tape, and fastened with tin tacks to each side of the window-frame. Being the first house on the left-hand side of the lane, it had only a right-hand neighbour, which consisted of a small mineral and vegetable emporium, alias a coal-shed, where potatoes, turnips, carrots, oysters, and red-herrings were also sold; next to this was a small public house, the Magpie and Spoon; next to this again was a still smaller house, with a slate-coloured board between the first floor windows, in which large yellow letters proclaimed that within was "Miss Grubb's Seminary for Young Ladies." One more house was next to this, with a worsted stocking thrust through a broken pane of one of the windows on the ground-floor, while the model of a man-of-war for sale graced the other; and two announcements over the door, of "Mangling done here," and "Matthew Square *teches reeding*, *riting*, and *rethmetic* above," completed the row on this side of the

street, while those on the opposite side were still unfinished, except one small one, whose lower windows were gracefully festooned with sausages, and the profiles of several pigs, with the torsos of others; the corner house, next to the "Swinish Multitude," presented a few old vials, and an assurance that the highest price was there given for rags of every description, and which was most likely Miss MacScrew's inducement for fixing her abode immediately opposite. The clock of a neighbouring church was striking eight as Miles Datchet tugged at the stiff black knocker of Miss MacScrew's door, till he achieved something like a postman's knock with a postscript to it, being three distinct thumps, at a respectful distance from each other. No sooner had the last sounded, than a Leghorn bonnet and three black holyoaks was seen peering over the yellow blind of the far window, to ascertain who the intruder could possibly be; while Sally, the red-headed maid, who could, through the legitimate channel of opening the door, have satisfied her curiosity at once, preferred the circuitous one of going into the area and gazing upward, to the great risk of a very dirty nightcap taking its departure in the northeast wind to the opposite ragshop. Even the lady of the coal-shed kept a dustman full two minutes longer than she need have done, opening some oysters that she had selected for his morning's repast, while she took a "lingering look" at Miss MacScrew's smart visiter. One of the windows of Miss Grubb's "Seminary" was also thrown up, and three heads precipitately appeared, one bob-major with a high-backed comb and long ringlets, which was the head of the school, Miss Grubb herself; the other two were small editions of Monk Lewis's *Tails* of Wonder, for their length was really surprising: these were two of the "young ladies." In short, the whole street was thrown into commotion by such a visiter at such an hour, and not a countenance but expressed the most intense curiosity and wonder, except those of the pigs in the opposite window. Sally at length shuffled up stairs, and opened the door with one hand, while with the other she gathered her clothes about her, lest, like the leaves in autumn, they should fall off. Miss MacScrew never kept a handmaiden more than two or three weeks, for she gave them four shillings a week to find themselves; consequently, as she observed, they got too much mon-

ey, and too little to do, which spoiled them, and compelled her frequently to part with them, therefore Captain Datchet did not know Sally, and Sally did not know him.

"Pray, my pretty girl," said he, when he had crossed the threshold, "is Miss MacScrew at home?"

"Yes, she is at home," said the girl, deliberately eying him from head to foot; "but I don't know whether I was to say so, though; but wait here, and I'll go and see." So saying, Sally opened the parlour door on the right-hand side of the passage, and slamming it after her, left Datchet free to reconnoitre the luxuries around him.

There was neither oilcloth on the hall nor carpets on the stairs; and the boards, which were very dirty, had a fine gravelly feel beneath the feet; the staircase window was open, a flower-pot was outside it, with a withered shrub in it, covered with soot, that looked like a birch-rod in mourning; a piece of whipcord ran across the window, from which were suspended two cotton pocket-handkerchiefs, and three pairs of cotton stockings of Miss MacScrew's, bearing very bilious symptoms of the lavatorial skill of Sally. The house itself had a fine zoological smell of live mice. Miss MacScrew did not keep a cat, "they were such horrid thieves!" And to judge from the shoals of dead wasps and flies in the window-seat, and the rich draperies of cobwebs that hung from the walls, it might be presumed that Miss MacScrew was much addicted to the interesting study of entomology; at least Captain Datchet had just come to this conclusion, when the parlour-door opened, and Sally, stepping out, said, "Your name, please?"

But being followed by Miss MacScrew, who kept peering through the aperture of the door which Sally held ajar, and who at that moment recognised him, saved him the trouble of answering by popping forward and saying, "Bless me, Captain Datchet, is that you? thought you were abroad, thought you were abroad. Come in, won't you? going to breakfast, going to breakfast. You've breakfasted, of course. Not proper to ask a gentleman to breakfast *tête-à-tête*, you know, *tête-à-tête;* ha! ha! ha!"

Datchet took the hint from the emphasis on the *of course*, and said he had breakfasted; and, even had he not, there was no temptation for him to do so here. In

a very small, narrow, rusty iron grate, in which there was a little, low, consumptive fire, that looked like a young lady of eighteen, in as much as it was just beginning to go out, was a small tin shaving-pot with hot water, and which had actually the conceit to attempt the part of a kettle. On a small table near the fireplace was spread an equally arrogant newspaper, that emulated a tablecloth! On this was placed a cracked blue teacup and saucer, a pewter spoon, a small black teapot, some brown sugar on a small plate, a little milk in a pomatum-pot, and a little tea in a broken tumbler: this, with the very stale-looking half of a penny roll, and a very small piece of salt butter, completed the bill of fare of Miss MacScrew's breakfast.

"You'll excuse my beginning my breakfast, I'm sure," said she, "and we can talk all the same."

"Oh certainly," replied Datchet; "I have only a few presents from a young gentleman to give you, which will keep till after breakfast."

"Presents to give me! and from a young gentleman! How very odd, very odd; he! he! he!" and Miss MacScrew's eyes danced and twinkled like stars, with the light left out. She held the one spoonful of tea she always indulged in suspended over the teapot, like the sword of Damocles; and lucky was it that she did so, for by that means there was "one halfpennyworth" of tea saved to her and her heirs for ever; for, before she had time to ingulf it in the teapot, the door opened, and Sally entered, her apron thrown over her left hand, and so protecting her finger and thumb, which secured a three-cornered note, while her right hand rested gracefully on her right hip.

"Please, ma'am, here's a note from Mrs. Tymmons, and the footboy waits an answer."

Miss MacScrew replaced the tea in the cracked tumbler, while she opened and read the note, which ran as follows:

"Dear Miss MacScrew,

"If you are not better engaged, will you dine and spend the day with us? that is, come to luncheon at one.

"Yours very sincerely,

"S. Tymmons."

"My compliments, and I shall be most happy, most happy; and here, Sally, you may put these things back

in the closet; for lunching at one, it is impossible to eat any breakfast, and the Tymmonses would be offended if I did not eat, and I would not offend them for the world, puir people, puir people."

"Certainly, certainly," replied Datchet, for there was not that thing which Miss MacScrew could have asserted, which, at the time being, he would not have agreed in; "and breakfasting at eight, it would be quite impossible to eat at one."

"Now, I'm quite at leisure to attend to you; quite at leisure to attend to you," said Miss MacScrew, removing herself from three different chairs during the delivery of this short speech.

"I shall not detain you long," said Datchet, taking a small parcel out of his sidepocket; "merely a few little keepsakes Mr. Herbert Grimstone begged of me to give you, in case I should happen to pass through Blichingly; and as I had a little business that made a four-and-twenty hours' visit necessary, I would not go without coming to see you." So saying, he handed her the parcel, which she opened eagerly, and which contained the costly offerings of a very shabby black iron Berlin bracelet, a little three-cornered fichu of Venetian beadwork, a shell necklace, and a Turkish tobacco-bag for a reticule, but which, as its perfume told, had already done duty in its original capacity. If, however, the chief merit of a present consists in its being adapted to the taste or wants of the person to whom it is given, then was Mr. Herbert Grimstone's *cadaux* most appropriate, as they consisted in that species of trumpery in which Miss MacScrew most delighted, especially coming, as it did, from abroad; for having once in her younger days passed three months at Naples with an old aunt (who had since left her the chief part of her present wealth), she always talked vertù, and affected the greatest admiration for anything foreign; and, as may have been seen by the description of the house, had, with that perfect imitation which talent combined with good taste always ensures, achieved as dirty a domicile as any of the multitudinous dens in the purlieus of the Chiatamone. Miss MacScrew's eyes danced and sparkled as she examined the different pieces of trumpery before her, especially the roses and convolvuluses in the bead handkerchief.

"That is Venetian," said Datchet, by way of enhancing its value.

"Ah! very pretty, very pretty indeed," rejoined Miss MacScrew, seizing and examining the Berlin kitchen-range-looking bracelet, with that Milesian inverse jumble of ideas common to all who have had the good fortune to have sprung from the

"First flower of the earth, and first *jim* of the *say*."

"So plain and elegant! You don't read, Captain Datchet, poetry and romances, and that sort of thing, so you don't know what I mean; but you may tell Mr. Grimstone that I shall call it my 'Venetian bracelet'—he! he! he! L. E. L.'s Miss Landon's, poor Miss Landon's L. E. L.'s Venetian bracelet, you know, or, rather, you don't know, but he'll know. All my young friends are very kind in lending me books; lending, you know, lending—"

"That bracelet is not Venetian though," interposed Datchet, anxious to prove that Mr. Herbert Grimstone had not confined himself to one solitary country in procuring testimonies of his reminiscences of Miss MacScrew; only the necklace and the handkerchief are Venetian, the bracelet is Berlin."

"Oh yes, Berlin," echoed Miss MacScrew, now intently examining the necklace. "Berlin, yes; those are charming carriages, charming carriages, those Berlins they have abroad. But really," continued she, pushing all her treasures to a little distance from her, and towards Datchet, on the table that was between them, "I don't know that I ought to take these things; the *puir* young man is not perhaps aware that I refused to lend him the money; but I make a rule (in the way of money) neither to borrow nor lend, neither to borrow nor lend—he! he! he: don't you think I'm right?"

"*De*cidedly," said Datchet, reverentially; "and as you never borrow money, I don't see how people can be so unreasonable as to expect you to lend it. But what do you allude to, may I ask?" continued he, with a look tessellated with ignorance and innocence.

"Why, two thousand pounds, two thousand pounds, that Mr. Grimstone wanted to borrow from me."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Datchet, starting back theatrically in his chair; "may I ask how long ago that was?"

"Oh, about three months ago, three months ago."

"Then he certainly knew all about it, for it is not

one month ago since he gave me those things for you, with so many kind messages. So you see your refusal has not altered his feelings towards you."

"*Puir* young man! *puir* young man!" blinked Miss MacScrew; "why really, though I make a point of never lending money, I might have lent it to him; but, but ruined as he is, and I with so many brothers depending on me, depending on me, it would be madness, madness."

"Ruined!" exclaimed Datchet, with well-feigned astonishment, "there, my dear ma'am, you most assuredly mistake; a rising young man like him, with high official appointments, the best government patronage, and to all intents and purposes the heir of Blichingly!" (with great emphasis on the last word, for Miss MacScrew knew the Blichingly rent-roll to a doit) "with all due submission to your better judgment, this is as little like a ruined man as need be."

"Well, but I thought Lord de Clifford was the heir of Blichingly?" said Miss MacScrew.

"Why, the fact is," replied Datchet, "they are alternate heirs; the tenure rests chiefly on the old lady's caprice. She may, you know, leave it to whom she pleases, and the chances fluctuate, her two sons never being in favour at once; but I should say his lordship's chance was the worst; for, besides having a very good estate of his own, he sees too much of her; and having, like herself, the devil's own temper—two of a trade, you know, can never agree—and Mr. Herbert is scarcely ever with her, and lays it on thicker when he is, which is all in his favour; but as she must know, after bringing them up as she has done, for all the real love they have for her, if it was not for her money, she might die in a ditch for the attention they'd pay her."

"Well, but," resumed Miss MacScrew, unlocking and rummaging in the table-drawer for a very large, old, torn pocketbook, tied round with very dirty tape, "I was told he was ruined by one of his most particular friends, his most particular friends."

"Of course," said Datchet, "when a mischief is to be done, who are ready to go such lengths as one's particular friends? for, knowing all about one, they best know the vital points to stick the injury into; but as I live," added he, pointing to old Elwes's pinchbeck box, that lay ensconced in the corner of the drawer, "if there

is not my old friend the gold box that you fairly, or, rather, unfairly did me out of two years ago. Ah, Miss MacScrew, I'd give the world if I was as sharp at a bargain as you!"

"Oh! three guineas is a great price, a great price had it been diamonds," screamed Miss MacScrew, while she busily pored over the contents of the old pocket-book, which, unlike some other books, had once been *red*. "Oh here it is," cried she, selecting from the heterogeneous mass of old letters, receipts, and extracts from newspapers, a foreign letter, directed in a very scrawling hand, and bearing the impress of a dozen different postmarks, "here it is—letter from Major Nonplus—always endorse my letters." So saying, she placed the following document in Datchet's hands.

"Geneva, August 23, 180–.

"Dear Miss MacScrew—Having met with my friend Grimstone at Paris (on my way here), who informed me that he had applied to you to raise the wind against the next Triverton election—as I never lose an opportunity of trying to serve a friend, I must write you a few lines to try and spur on your generosity. The fact is, poor fellow! he is devilish hard up. What with gambling, racing, and a few other pastimes that young men are addicted to—and you know what a capricious old Dust the mother is—so he's no great things to expect from that quarter; and as to the peer, I firmly believe he is so hampered himself, that he would not and could not even go security for him a single shilling; so you see he has nobody to depend upon but you, to whom we all know money can and ought to be no object; and as he has long been looking out for an heiress, I've no doubt of his repaying you with interest—when he gets one; but as all ladies are '*melting to death with open charity*,' as my friend Shakspeare has it, I need not impress upon you his deplorable situation. Should he lose his seat, as my friends the Whigs have not yet carried the abolition of imprisonment for debt, though, when one remembers the vital importance its abolition is of to nearly every member of the present Parliament, it is to be hoped for their own sakes, if not for the country's at large, that they will* carry it, and that they will I have no doubt, for to repeat a compliment which my

* The major was prophetic.

friend Sarum (though a terrible Tory) could not help paying them the other day, nothing seems too hot or too heavy for them, as their talents *lie* in everything. Wonderful men, wonderful men, certainly. When you see him, pray remember me to your brother—I mean my friend the major in the 44th—whom I hope one of these days to be congratulating as your heir. When I return to England, Mrs. Nonplus and myself will hope to see you down in Berkshire. Mrs. N. is at present in the Tyrol, or would, I'm sure, add her kind regards to those of

"Dear Miss MacScrew,

"Yours faithfully,

"CHARLES NONPLUS.

"P.S. Don't let my friend Grimstone know that I have written to you on this subject, as I should not wish him to think he was under any obligation to me."

"Ha! ha! ha! then I think you had better let him know it instantly, if that is the major's object," said Datchet.

"But, by that letter, you see he is quite ruined, quite ruined," shrugged Miss MacScrew.

"Yes, yes," laughed Datchet, "I perceive that that letter is quite enough to ruin any man; however," continued he, "so far from his lordship's not going security for his brother, I have at this moment a letter from him to his man of business in London, Mr. Lyeall, of the firm of Lyeall, Quibble, and Shuffleton, authorizing them to give the most ample security to whoever may advance the money, with a guarantee to repay the principal in three years if required; and as I intend borrowing the money from an elderly lady, a friend of my own, I have Mr. Herbert's orders to pay the first year's interest in advance. I know the lady has as great a dislike as yourself, Miss MacScrew, to lending money (and very properly); but really Mr. Herbert, in the event of his return, intends doing things in such a princely style, that it would be a thousand pities, for the want of such a paltry sum, he should not be returned, and I'm sure all the ladies ought to do all they can for him, for, as he says himself, members make a great fuss about poor laws, and factories, and municipal reform, and corporations, and their constituents; but they never seem to remember how much those constituents are influenced

by the female portion of the community. Why, then, as he very justly says, should not their interests, that is, their pleasure and amusement, be more attended to by members who have the honour to represent their husbands, fathers, brothers, sons, uncles, cousins, nephews, brothers-in-law, fathers-in-law, grandsons, and grand-nephews? And what he proposes would be to give a ball every month for the six winter months, and have Gunter from London (all at his own expense) to arrange and provide the supper, while any of the inhabitants of Triverton and its vicinity might send for the fragments the next day."

During this harangue, which Datchet uttered with inconceivable rapidity, as though he feared his risible muscles would give way if he paused on a single sentence, Miss MacScrew had transferred herself to every seat in the room, crossing and recrossing her legs alternately. At length, when Datchet had finished speaking, and was very diplomatically rising to depart, she repeated,

"Hem, good security, eh! good security, and principal to be repaid in three years; first year's interest in advance; a hundred pounds, a hundred pounds; great sum, great sum; did you say ball and supper every month, every month, captain?"

"Yes, I believe that is his intention," replied Datchet, carelessly moving towards the door, upon the handle of which he now placed his hand, adding, "Well, good-morning, ma'am; I fear I shall not have time to look in upon you again before I go."

"A-hem! hem! stop a minute, captain; a-hem! may I ask if you are positively engaged to the elderly lady you mentioned about the money? I—a—mean, *must* you absolutely borrow it from her, and no one else?"

"Why," said Datchet, listlessly, looking up at a cobweb over the door, and removing his right foot into the hall as he spoke, "as I said before, she was at first very reluctant to lend it; but she thinks it a thousand pities that so gallant a young man, who has all the ladies' welfare so much at heart, should not be returned; so I think she is now anxious to do so; but I am not farther bound to her than having spoken to her on the subject, which is not yet decided, for I am to write by to-night's post to Messieurs Lyeall, Quibble, and Shuffleton—"

"Well now, really," said Miss MacScrew, "I don't

think you are in the least bound to her; and I—I should like to oblige Mr. Grimstone myself, poor young man; it was so pretty of him sending me those things after I had refused him, refused him the money, you know, the money. And such young men like him, who give balls and suppers, and that sort of thing, ought to be encouraged; better for the county, better for the county if there were more such in Parliament; so suppose you borrow it from me instead of the other lady?"

Datchet gave a shake of the head, to which Lord Burleigh's was nothing, as he replied, in a slow, desponding tone of voice, "Why, I don't exactly know that I can do that; however," added he, more briskly, as though he were determined to brave all things to oblige Miss MacScrew, "I'll see what can be done, and let you know in a day or two; so good-by for the present; but no," continued he, returning, "to-morrow is foreign post-day, and I must write to Mr. Herbert, telling him that I have got the money; so that, if I do it at all, I must close with you now. But really, Miss MacScrew, I am half afraid; for, besides having to get rid of the old lady, which may not be easy, perhaps Mr. Herbert's pride would be hurt at taking it from you, after having refused him once before. Well, it can't be helped; it must be so, I suppose," said he, taking off his gloves and walking to the table, on which he placed them and his hat; "see what scrapes you ladies are always bringing us unfortunate men into!"

"No scrapes at all, no scrapes at all," said Miss MacScrew, her eyes dancing and her body popping up and down like the hammers of a piano; "I think you said the first year's interest in advance, first year's interest in advance!"

"I did," said Datchet, taking from his pocket a large well-filled pocketbook.

"Oh! well, perhaps you'll just write a little memorandum for the satisfaction of all parties, of all parties, you know, till I get the proper instrument from Mr. Lyeall;" saying which, Miss MacScrew opened the table-drawer to look for the back of a letter for the purpose, but every one was already filled with divers interesting reminiscences. Two very dingy-looking novels were on the mantelpiece; she opened them in the hope of finding a fly leaf; but, like her ancestors, they "had gone before;" nothing now remained but to

go into the passage and scream for Sally, who, when she appeared, was ordered to run down to the De Clifford Arms and borrow a sheet of paper from Mrs. Stokes. "And here," added Datchet, giving the nymph of the scarlet locks and zoneless waist a sovereign and five shillings, "stop at Jackson's the stationer, and bring me a five-and-twenty shilling stamp."

"Be I to pay all this money for a slip of paper?" asked Sally, her eyes and mouth opening to an equal width.

"You be," replied Datchet, laughing; "so off with you, and don't let the grass grow under your feet."

As soon as Sally was gone, Miss MacScrew entered into a sprightly conversation with Captain Datchet touching Mr. Herbert Grimstone's matrimonial prospects. "Well, but about this heiress that Major Nonplus mentions; I hope that is not as false as anything else he stated?"

"I really don't know, but think it more likely to be true than most of the worthy major's statements."

"He! he! he! should like to see Mr. Herbert in love! it would be so funny, so funny. Suppose he'd have to look melancholy, and sigh 'heighho!' like any other lover?"

"I've no doubt," said Datchet, laughing, "that if he was making love, particularly to an heiress, he would with truth sigh *I owe!*" but fearing the amiable spinster might detect the latent meaning of his pun, he quickly changed the subject to that strictly national one, the weather, when Miss MacScrew, after having echoed all his opinions thereupon for the space of three minutes, suddenly exclaimed, "Apropos des bottes; short accounts make long friends, you know, long friends; and, to save time, I'll make out Mr. Herbert's little account to me."

"Mr. Herbert's little account to you!" said Datchet, with unaffected surprise; "why, I was not aware that he owed you anything till he borrows the two thousand pounds."

"Oh, only a few little things, a few little things;" and taking up a small piece of common house slate, a fragment of which served for a pencil, Miss MacScrew scratched down the following items, and read them out as she wrote.

"Letter from Mr. Herbert, from Paris, asking for the money, 2*s.* 8*d.*

"Letter on Mr. H.'s business—business, you know—that is not betraying that the letter was from Major Nonplus, as he did not wish him to know it, 2*s.* 11*d.*

"And as I have no doubt Mrs. Stokes will eventually make me pay for the sheet of paper I have sent for, I'll put paper on Mr. H.'s business, 1*d.*

"Which just makes it—let me see—

£	*s.*	*d.*
0	2	8
0	2	11
0	0	1
0	5	8

"Five and eightpence exactly!"

This was almost too much for Captain Datchet's gravity. However, with the assistance of his pocket-handkerchief and an artificial fit of sneezing, he was enabled to take out his purse with tolerable gravity, and present Miss MacScrew with six shillings, adding that he had no halfpence.

"Oh! well, I dare say there will be more sheets of paper wanted before the business is over, and the odd fourpence will do to pay for it, you know, pay for it."

Scarcely had Datchet given his unqualified assent to this provident assertion, before Sally returned, bearing the stamp within the sheet of paper, and the sheet of paper within three inches of white-brown paper, which in its turn was placed within Sally's forefinger and thumb.

"Please, ma'am," panted Sally, "Mrs. Stokes says as how the next time you wants a sheet of paper, you'll find Jackson's the stationer's ten doors nearer nor the De Clifford Arms."

"Haven't I told you," said Miss MacScrew, snatching the paper out of Sally's hand, "never to bring me any messages, unless it is an invitation to dinner or to tea, or anything of that sort, but never from those sort of people! There, that will do; you may go. Now you are sure," continued Miss MacScrew, turning to Datchet, as soon as Sally had closed the door, "you are sure that the security is unexceptionable?"

"Oh! not better in England, of which Messrs. Lycall, Quibble, and Shuffleton will clearly satisfy you; and as for the principal, here is a promissory note of Mr. Her-

bert's, filled up with all but the lender's name, agreeing to repay it in three years if required, for which his brother makes himself responsible."

Miss MacScrew took the note, turned it, and looked at it in every possible direction, thereby evincing her sagacity; for Mr. Herbert Grimstone was so innately classical, that upon Cicero's authority he adopted the old Roman double and antithetical meaning of the word promise, which was with him, as it had been with them at one and the same time, both *promittere* and *recipere*.

"Well," said she, apparently satisfied with the examination, "I'll give you a bill on my bankers, at two months after date, after date, you know, which will be more convenient than after sight."

"No comparison," responded Datchet, as Miss MacScrew, preparatory to the operation, emptied a little water out of the before-mentioned shaving-pot into a cracked egg-cup that contained some dried-up ink; and Datchet having mended the old stump which had once been a pen, Miss MacScrew proceeded with a trembling hand to fill up the stamp with,

"October 10th, 180-.

"Messieurs Tugwell and Holdfast—Please to pay to my order, two months after date, to Mr. Herbert Grimstone, or bearer, the sum of two thousand pounds, for value received.

"Lavinia MacScrew.

"To Messrs. Tugwell and Holdfast, bankers,
No. — Fleet-street, London."

"Now I'll just keep this till I get Mr. Lyeall's letter. When will that be?" added Miss MacScrew, carefully locking up the bill.

"Why, if I write by to-day's post, as I shall do," said Datchet, "you will hear from him the day after to-morrow. And now for the first year's interest." Saying which, he counted out five ten-pound and ten five-pound notes, which he handed to Miss MacScrew, who got into an additional trepidation, requesting to know if he could not give it to her in fewer notes, for it was so very, very dangerous walking up High-street with so much money, which she must do, to deposite it in the Blichingly Bank.

"Oh, yes, I can give you two fifty-pound notes instead," said Datchet.

"Thank you; that is much more convenient," said Miss MacScrew, untying her Leghorn Golgotha, and carefully pinning the two fifty-pound notes in the crown of it with a very large pin, which from long and constant wear shone out in all its brazen glory, and added to the already various decorations of that immortal bonnet.

"Well, once more good-by, ma'am!" said Datchet, buttoning his coat carefully over his pocketbook; "and remember, if I get into any scrape with Mr. Herbert about taking this money from you, you must bear me harmless."

"Yes, yes, I'll bear you harmless," giggled Miss MacScrew, nodding her head, which was all the better for the additional hundred pounds she had got in it; "but I'm sure Mr. Herbert is too gallant to be angry with a lady; you know a lady—"

"Well, I don't think there is much chance of his being angry with you, or even me, on the present occasion," said Datchet, as he walked into the hall to conceal his laughter, which, however, he could not indulge even there, as he was closely followed by Miss MacScrew, who always officiated as her own porter, and opened the street door. No sooner had she done so on this eventful morning, than a huge black cat rushed into the hall, carrying a herring in its mouth, which it had just purloined from the neighbouring coal-shed. In its anxiety to cover its retreat, it rushed between Miss MacScrew's feet, thereby greatly endangering her equilibrium; but she supported herself against the wall, and with great presence of mind cried out, "Sally, Sally, stop that horrid cat!" Now, luckily for Miss MacScrew, but unluckily for the cat, Sally was coming up stairs at the time, and did as her mistress desired her, when that lady sprang forward and forcibly wrested the herring from the cat's mouth, which she had no sooner done than she let the lawless marauder loose upon society again, by allowing him to pursue his way without further molestation through the staircase window, which, when he had done, Miss MacScrew made over the herring to Sally's custody, with orders to dress it immediately; "and then, Sally, put it by, for I am exceedingly fond of cold fish, exceedingly fond; and it will do for my luncheon to-morrow; hate cats, they are such horrid thieves, horrid thieves!"

"Humph!" thought Datchet, as he wended his way

out of Lavender-lane, and who had been exceedingly amused at the whole scene; "they say one should always hear both sides of the question; and I dare say, if the cat could speak, he would say you were a horrid thief, and I've no doubt he would be able to make out his case very clearly."

CHAPTER XVII.

"Not that the thing was either rich or rare,
They only wondered how the d—l it got there."

"Yes, I have said it—love, madam—life and death lie in your tongue."—SCHILLER'S FIESCO, *translated by G. H. N. and J. S.*

"Who, though they've been fierce foes before,
Soon as *the cause* is done and o'er,
Shake hands, and then are foes no more."
Our Lawyers.

AFTER Datchet's departure, Miss MacScrew had just time to complete a demi-toilet for the day, which consisted of a soft, thick, yet thin muslin dress, which had once been white, with sundry pyramidical flounces, and which "clung round her like a lover," surmounted by a blue cloth spencer, with a very tight back and equally tight sleeves, when Mrs. and Miss Tymmons drove to the door in the green fly, thinking "it would be pleasanter to *dear* Miss MacScrew to drive," or, as they said, to *ride*, "than to walk, as she might have some shopping to do before she came to them."

"Oh, very lucky, very lucky!" said the fair Lavinia, as she wedged herself in between fat Mrs. Tymmons, "for I want to go to the Bank, not to leave or get any money, not to get any money, but just to ask a question, a question, you know."

Nature could not have well invented two greater personal contrasts than Miss MacScrew and Mrs. Tymmons, for the latter rejoiced in a form of infinite rotundity, with a face like a full moon in a scarlet fever, and eyes pale, mild, and full as bottled gooseberries. Mrs. Tymmons had been a blonde, and, consequently, had subsided into a bay-wig, with little, fat, round, shi-

ny curls, that looked like capillary forced-meat balls. Having got into the habit of presenting Mr. Tymmons with an annual miniature of himself, she had acquired the appearance of always being in that interesting situation, even during the three intermediate months; consequently, Mr. and Mrs. Tymmons were the happy parents of what, in England, is called "a fine family;" that is, half a dozen sons and daughters, one uglier than another. Miss Tymmons was, in spite of her *ponçeau*-coloured hair, considered by her parents, and indeed by every one in Blichingly, except the Simmonses, "a very *genteel* (!) girl;" for she sat very uprightly on her chair, never had a crease upon any of her clothes, scarcely ever spoke, and never laughed at anything that she heard or read, for fear it should not be proper, and had forbidden her brothers (with whom she was an oracle) to read the Pickwick papers, because, as she said, they were so "very low and ungenteel," and, for her part, she could not conceive why people thought them so clever. She had only two brothers at home, Mr. Rush Tymmons, who, as we have already stated, was all poetry, pensiveness, and peculiarity, being the genius of the family; Mr. Joseph, on the contrary, being destined to follow his father's calling, was the man of business. In proportion as Mr. Rush was tall and thin, he was fat and short, with nice, fat, sleek-looking, dark-brown hair, like the ears of a pointer pup, and a face between a cherubim's and a trumpeter's, only his whiskers standing boldly out like wings, made it rather more approximate to the former.

Mr. Joseph Tymmons's only peculiarity was attending every wedding that took place within ten miles round, no doubt to study how he was to comport himself against the time when he should act a principal part at one, for he made it a point to propose to every young lady he danced with twice, and had thereby obtained the title of "Solicitor-General," which his sire looked upon as a lucky professional omen. Mr. Tymmons, senior, requires no separate description, for he was whatever his wife and daughters pleased, and his dress, which was the principal part of him, consisted, all the year round, of a snuff-coloured coat, mud-coloured results, and gaiters of the same, except in full dress, when it was exchanged for a blue coat, gilt buttons, white waistcoat, and black brevities. The three younger Miss Tymmons-

es were not remarkable for anything beyond the way their hair kept in curl in all weathers, and the constancy with which they talked of "the officers," there being generally a detachment of cavalry quartered at Triverton, and the promptitude with which they wrote to London for the "Key" (!) of every fashionable novel that came out, and got the names by heart. So much for Miss Maria, Sarah, and Isabella Tymmons. The remaining scions consisted of Master Grimstone Tymmons, aged four, who did as much mischief, ate as much apple-pudding, and accumulated as many scratched faces as any young gentleman of the same tender years; to say nothing of his exercising a truly manly degree of embryo bashawism over his youngest sister, Miss Barbara Tymmons, who, not yet being able to walk, had no means of running away from his persecutions, and could therefore only defend herself from them by proving, with the perfectionized skill of eighteen months' practice, that her lungs were perfectly sound. Scarcely had the fly crawled out of Lavender-lane, before Mrs. Tymmons began panting and patting her sides with sundry affectionate pats of her little fat hands.

"My dear *Mith* MacScrew," lisped she at last, in a most humble and imploring voice, "would it be too much for you if I had a bit of the fly open? it is so very close."

"Oh dear, no; should like it of all things; these hard times glad to raise the wind, you know, raise the wind —he! he! he!"

Now Mrs. Tymmons knew that Miss MacScrew never tittered at the end of one of her own speeches, without meaning to let people know that she had said something which she thought witty; so accordingly Mrs. Tymmons laughed, and said, "Very good, very good indeed, Miss MacScrew;" but Miss Tymmons looked even more grave than usual, for she did not think it was "*genteel*" to talk about wind, and raising the wind she thought a particularly "*ungenteel*" expression.

"Seraphina, my love," said her mother, "just put your head out of the window, and tell *Alontho* to stop and open the carriage."

Seraphina did as she was desired, but exactly in the low, faint, inaudible voice that might naturally be supposed to issue from a fly; consequently, Alonzo did not hear.

"Never mind, love, I'll call to him," said Mrs. Tymmons, squeezing her bust through the window, and screaming at the top of her voice, "*Alontho, Alontho, Alontho!* you stupid oaf, are you deaf?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Alonzo, pulling up: but whether in answer to the sound or the sense of his mistress's interrogation, is not known.

"Open a bit of the carriage," resumed Mrs. Tymmons.

"Yes, ma'am," said Alonzo, thumping away with a stone at the obstinate hinges of the fly, which, however, at length yielded, after undergoing, for ten minutes, as much martyrdom as St. Stephen; a strip of the fly was opened, and a slice of air let in, much to the relief of Mrs. Tymmons, who drew one long breath previous to telling Alonzo to drive to the bank. No sooner had they arrived there, than Miss MacScrew got into a terrible flutter, assuring them she should not be a minute, and therefore begging that neither of them would take the trouble of accompanying her. Alighting from the fly, she made a precipitate rush into the bank, which, to her great satisfaction, contained nobody but the clerk, who, seeing Miss MacScrew, and knowing that her usual demand was from three to five pounds, got both sums ready.

"Don't want money to-day; come to leave money, come to leave money," said she, hopping up to his desk, and beginning to untie her bonnet, which, however, was a work of some little time and trouble, she having tied it in a multitude of knots for further security. At length the last was undone, and the poor clerk could with difficulty keep his countenance, when he beheld Miss MacScrew's monklike coiffeur, her head being perfectly bald, and her forehead alone decorated with the tufts of dusty black curls. "Here," said she, unpinning the two fifty-pound notes, and placing them before the clerk, while she looked cautiously round to see that no one was looking or listening, "here, you see how much it's for," pointing to the amount, for she would not breathe it for the world, lest it might be overheard, "and you'll give me a receipt for it; quick, if you please, quick."

"You have a fine clear head for business, ma'am," said the clerk, with a half smile, glancing at her bald pate, as he removed the pen from behind his ear to

write the receipt, which he no sooner handed to her than it was pinned in the same place that its predecessors, the fifty-pound notes, had previously occupied, and Miss MacScrew shuffled out of the bank even faster than she had shuffled into it. "Sorry to have kept you so long," said she, scrambling into the fly; "but these people at country banks are so stupid, there's no getting an answer from them, no getting an answer from them."

"I'm sure you've not been at all long," said Mrs. Tymmons; "has she, Seraphina?"

"By no means," dulcified Seraphina.

"Where to now, Miss MacScrew?" inquired Mrs. Tymmons, as Alonzo stood holding the brim of his hat with his whip-hand, to the great risk of putting out his right eye.

"Oh, there is a cheap shoemaker's in Silver-street; I mean he is poor, poor you know, and it's a charity to deal with poor people, and he's selling off, you know, selling off; his name is White; he has some shoes of mine to alter, to alter; I should like to go and see if they are done."

"Go to White's, the shoemaker, in Silver-street."

"Yes, ma'am," said Alonzo, ascending the box, and urging on the reluctant steed.

"Hope I'm not taking you out of the way though, out of the way?" said Miss MacScrew.

"Not in the *leathst*," responded Mrs. Tymmons; "I'm *thure* we're alwayth happy to be of any *uthe* to you, Mith MacScrew."

Suddenly the fly stopped. "*Whath's* the matter?" screamed Mrs. Tymmons.

"Nothing, ma'am," said Alonzo, stretching over his body and looking down through the aperture in the fly, "only they're mending the street, and I can't get up."

"Dear, dear, how very *tirethome*," cried Mrs. Tymmons; "would you mind walking as far as the shoemaker's, my dear *Mith* MacScrew?"

"Not in the least, not in the least," said that accommodating lady; accordingly the three graces descended from the fly, and walked up Silver-street till they got to the shoemaker's, which was the last shop in the street.

"Are my shoes done, Mr. White?" asked Miss MacScrew, hobbling into the shop.

"Why, ma'am," said Mr. White, who was busily

employed pasting some bills, and evidently in all the chaos of removing, "one of them has been mended so often that I really could not make a job of it at all, but I'll let you have a new pair very cheap, as I am selling off."

"What do you call very cheap? All an excuse for not mending the others, all an excuse; tradespeople always impose upon one, always impose upon one."

"Why, ma'am," replied Mr. White, totally disregarding the compliment to himself and his order, "five shillings I call very cheap."

"Oh shocking! dreadful!" screamed Miss MacScrew, throwing herself into a chair; "sha'n't give you any such thing; robbery, perfect robbery; but give me some shoes to try?"

Now it was not to be expected that Miss MacScrew could even contemplate disbursing so large a sum as four or five shillings without taking all due precautions to ascertain which pair of Mr. White's shoes could possibly be worth such a sum; accordingly, she spent full half an hour in balancing between their contending claims: it so happened, as we have before stated, when the three ladies entered the shop, that Mr. White was busy pasting bills, which were, in fact, no other than announcements that his shop was to be let, contained in the words, "To be disposed of, inquire of the proprietor," in large printed letters, and, in his hurry to attend to his customers, he put the last bill he had pasted aside, by placing it, with the pasted side upward, on the back of a chair. Unfortunately, it was into this very chair Miss MacScrew had flung herself, and leaning back for so long a period as half an hour, the aforesaid bill meeting no impediment in the very flat surface of her tight-backed spencer, had ample time not only to adhere, but to dry upon her back. "Well," said she, rising at length, "send me this pair to-morrow morning; but remember, I sha'n't give you anything like five shillings."

Mrs. and Miss Tymmons had walked out of the shop. Mr. White walked side by side with Miss MacScrew, protesting he could not let her have the shoes for less; so that poor Miss MacScrew joined her friends in the street without the remotest idea that she was enacting the part of the "Public Advertiser," till she heard the "hue and cry" her appearance occasioned. Shouts of laughter greeted her as she passed along, while, to add

to her astonishment, all the faces she met were perfectly grave; but behind her the tumult was increasing every minute: till at length she was surrounded by a mob of boys, hooting and yelling, with pocket-handkerchiefs tied on sticks, which they waved over her like flags. One cried out, "How much do you ask for yourself, old money-spinner?" while another answered, "They say she's worth a plum, but I would not give twopence for her;" and a third screamed still louder, "No, no, the debentures are all very well; but any one may have the *personals* for me."

Poor Miss MacScrew turned and twisted, and twisted and turned; but the more she turned, the more the mob laughed and shouted; and in one of her turnings Mrs. and Miss Tymmons discovered the cause of all their mirth. The former nearly went into hysterics on the spot; and Miss Seraphina would have made it a point to faint, but that she providentially remembered, just as she was going off against a lamp-post, that she had somewhere read, in one of her favourite fashionable novels, that there was nothing so vulgar as making a scene, even let the provocation be what it might; accordingly, she returned to the perpendicular, and looked immoveable. At this crisis, who should pass along the opposite side of the street but the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins. True, a gulf yawned between him and his Lavinia, of scattered mould and upturned stones, while within the deep abyss were gas-pipes black and bare as the phantoms of a German forest. What of this?

> "Love's heralds should be thoughts,
> Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,
> Driving back shadows over low'ring hills.
> Therefore do nimbled-pinion'd doves draw Love,
> And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings."

Wherefore, this being the part Mr. Hoskins determined to act, the air in the narrow street became suddenly darkened, as it were, with long black legs and arms, rustling like the wings of the glums and glowries, as the fascinating Peter flung himself across the street to the rescue of his "ladye love," and with one magic incantation, performed by a circular movement of his walking-stick above their heads, and a quickly-uttered spell, in which the words beadle, treadmill, and stocks were the only ones audible, the mob evaporated instantaneously.

"Bless me!" said Miss MacScrew, backing into a

shop, in which she and her companions all took refuge, "is that you, Mr. Hoskins? you know I never was to speak to you again, never was to speak to you again; but, as the proverb says, misfortune brings one acquainted with strange—"

"Bedfellows," achieved Peter, floundering through one of his most gallant bows, and grinning like a face over a hall-door.

"Will you be so good as to tell me," said Miss MacScrew, first feeling one of her arms and then the other, as though anxious to ascertain beyond a doubt her own identity, "now that you have got rid of those odious wretches, what they were all hooting and yelling about, and following me? me, of all people in the world, who for the last ten years have been in the habit of walking through Blichingly, from morning till night, without ever being followed by any one."

Mr. Hoskins spoke in a broad northern accent, always saying booke for book; augh for I; vagabone for vagabond; with several other little elocutionary gems that gave a brilliancy and zest to everything he uttered. So, casting a retrospective glance at the placard on Miss MacScrew's back, he replied, wriggling through another bow,

"Augh raley don't know, unless it is the tempting notice ye have pasted on yer bock—'To be disposed of, inquire of the proprietor;' and I can only assure ye, Miss MacScrew, that I *hop* to find myself first on the list of opplicants for so valuable and desirable a property."

"All you are saying may be very witty and clever, I have no doubt, very witty and clever; but as I do not understand one word of it, I'll thank you to speak in plain English, plain English," said Miss MacScrew, drawing up with the tyrannical air of a coquetish young beauty.

"My dear *Mith* MacScrew," cried Mrs. Tymmons, coming to her kinsman's assistance, "*ith a motht* unfortunate *conter-tong*" (Mrs. Tymmons was in the habit of speaking French with the Dowager Lady de Clifford), "but when you were at White's you leant against a chair that had one of hith billths on the back of it, and it stuck to your spencer, thath all; and the mob theeing it, followed uth, and hooted ath they did, and it ith to that bill my couthin alludes."

"Oh dear, how very dreadful, shocking, terrible! Sha'n't pay White anything for the shoes after his having those horrid bills, and shall never enter his vile shop again, for fear he should do something worse to me."

"*Ne sutor ultra crepidam*," muttered Hoskins.

"What's that? what's that?" asked Miss MacScrew.

"Augh was saying augh defy him to go beyond his *last* act of atrocity, and augh think yer quite right in yer resolve of never entering his shop again after such a bill; for though one ought always be ready to *meet* a bill, yet augh declare it's not pleasant to be endorsed in this way one's self, as it does not get one *honoured at sight*;" and Peter's teeth protruded more than ever, as he passed his hand over his mouth to hide an ill-timed grin at his own bad puns.

"A-hem! Miss Seraphina, my dear, do be so good as to take that odious bill off my back, off my back; looks so shocking, you know, so shocking."

Miss Seraphina tried and tried, but the obstinate paper would only come off by instalments.

"I cannot get it all out, I fear," said she, in a languid voice, tired of her exertions.

"Augh doubt it's a difficult matter to get onything out of her," muttered Peter *sotto voce*, walking to the door to hide another grin.

"I think," interrupted Mrs. Tymmons, sympathizingly, "my couthin had better go to the carriage for your shawl, Mith MacScrew!"

Peter waited for no further orders, but rushed out of the shop like a whirlwind, and strode down the street *à la monstre* in Frankenstein, till he reached the fly, and Alonzo handed him out Miss MacScrew's variegated lambswool garment, with which he returned at the same speed. When he entered the shop, he flung himself on one knee, and said, in a theatrical tone, as he presented it to its owner, "How augh envy this happy shawl, to cover so much beauty and grace!"

"Nonsense, perfect nonsense; you either take me for a fool or are mad, quite mad," said Miss MacScrew, gathering the friendly worsted rainbow tightly round her, and walking out of the shop.

"'Twas your beauty made me so, then," persisted Peter, walking by her side and bowing over his hands, which he had first placed on his heart, while his sharp and bony elbows stood out in fine relief, like the han-

dles of an Etruscan vase. "It's to be hoped," continued he, "that ye'll let me see ye safe *hom;* for ye see the dangers a lone woman is exposed to."

"No dangers at all, no dangers at all. Dine at Mr. Tymmons's, dine at Mr. Tymmons's."

"Maugh I never eat another dinner if augh don't dine there too!" chuckled Peter, with un-put-down-able and un-offend-able gallantry; "for augh'm sure my cousin Sarah there would never be so inhospitable as to shut her doors upon a relation with such a *fule* heart and empty stomach as augh am suffering from at this moment."

"Why, my dear Peter, you know the way we are thituated," said Mrs. Tymmons, shaking her head; "consider our small" (Anglicè, large) "family; and you know it would be ath much ath all Mithter Tymmons's other practith ith worth to offend old Lady de Clifford; and if she wath to hear that we athked you to dinner, I don't know what the conthequence might be, particularly after her standing godmother to Barbara."

"Augh think yer very right not to ask me to dinner, if you think it would offend the auld duchess and lose ye anything; but it maks all the difference if I ask myself to dinner. And if auld Lady Overreach should hear of it, why she could only say that it *did great credit to my head and hort* to wish to be on such friendly terms with my relations." So saying, Peter, sans cérémonie, leaped into the fly, after depositing Miss MacScrew and his cousins in it first, and, in a maître-de-la-maison tone, ordered Alonzo to drive home, that is, to Mr. Tymmons's red-bricked, green-doored, and brass-knockered edifice in High-street, where they had no sooner arrived than Alonzo was ordered by Miss Tymmons to *rap* loud, as there was nothing so "ungenteel" as for a servant to give one of those little, diffident, poor-relation, come-to-borrow-money sort of knocks. Alonzo's appeal was, after some delay, answered by a smart, rosy-cheeked maid, all ringlets and blue ribands, whose clothes Master Grimstone Tymmons was exerting all the strength of one hand to tear off her back, for in the other he held a thick piece of bread and butter, veneered with raspberry jam; his mouth being also full of the same horticultural and agricultural condiments, prevented his enforcing his commands by words as explicit and compulsory as he was in the habit of using,

which drove him to the argumentum ad hominem, to the great danger of Mary the maid's chali dress, the gift of Miss Seraphina, as a reward for her having once gone at midnight and knocked up the people at the library to get her a novel.

"My dear Grimthtone," said the fond mother, in a voice so piano that it could not have intimidated a fly, "you really mutht not be tho naughty; now go in, love, do, and you thall pull Ithabella's hair, if you like."

"But Isabella's paying, and se won't et me," bread-and-buttered Master Grimstone.

"Ah, ye young vagabone!" said Hoskins, striding into the hall, and seizing the unfortunate urchin with both hands by the throat and suspending him in air, "come here till I show you London."

Great but unavailing were the screams of Master Grimstone, as his mother left him to his fate, to open the drawing-room door for Miss MacScrew. Mrs. Tymmons piqued herself upon her drawing-room. It was a square room, of tolerable dimensions, on the left-hand side of the hall, opposite the dining-room and Mr. Tymmons's study; for Miss Seraphina said it was not genteel to call it an office. From the centre of the drawing-room was suspended an ormolu lamp, with three circular burners, the whole of which was now defended against the flies by a yellow leno bag, as was the frame of the looking-glass, the gilding of Miss Tymmons's harp, and the frames of the portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Tymmons, the former of which was represented with an open letter in his hand, with a very large red seal on it, a volume of Blackstone open on a table, with a bundle of papers tied with red tape, and a red morocco spectacle-case ("Bradbury," in gilt letters, upon it) lying on the Commentaries, while in the back ground hung a purple stuff bag, apparently very full. This graced the space over the looking-glass, and on the opposite wall hung the effigy of Mrs. T., in a black satin gown, with a pointed body, a white blonde scarf, and a gold tissue turban. On her lap sat a baby, with a coral and gilt bells, which formed a rich and Titian-like contrast to the *white kid gloves* upon its mother's hands. Papier-machée-looking miniatures of the younger branches of the family graced each side of the chimney-piece; and one, in especial, of Mr. Algernon Tymmons, who having attained to a company in the Bengal cavalry, his fond

mother had had him drawn in full regimentals, blowing the bugle.

Though far advanced in October, no fire dimmed the brazen brightness of the grate, for Mrs. Tymmons never allowed fires before the first of November; her mother, and grandmother, and great-grandmother before her, had never done so, and the weather was, of course, the same now as it had been then; so, instead of fire, was suspended, like a curtain before the bars, an elaborate honeycomb of yellow silver paper. The carpet consisted of beautiful drab squares, with bunches of blue flowers upon them, intersected with blue circles and drab bouquets; but particularly clean and cold-looking brown holland defended the chief part of its beauties from profane footsteps. The chairs were, of course, rosewood, covered with blue tabouret cushions and brown holland dressing-gowns, and were ranged so regularly and fixedly along the wall that they looked as if nothing short of galvanism could move them. Two stiff, hard, boarding-school-looking sofas fac similed each other at either side of the fireplace. The knicknackery of the room consisted of divers plates, kettles, and inkstands, intended to imitate old Dresden by large red, orange, blue, and green clumsily-cut flowers, but bearing a much stronger resemblance to the carrot-and-turnip floral emblems on the hams and tongues at one of Mrs. Tymmons's own dinners. These, with jardinières filled with worsted and cloth dahliahs, perforated card-screens, with Berlin work, and little egg-cuppy-looking vases festooned with rice-paper flowers, formed, with the addition of a few annuals, and pens with bead devices, and Hessian-boot-looking tassels at the end of them, the ornamental part of the furniture. At the upper end of the room, with purple nose and still more purple hands, sat Miss Isabella Tymmons at a grand piano, thumping out detachments of the Huguenot galope.

"My dear Bella," said Mrs. Tymmons, as Miss MacScrew and Mr. Hoskins seated themselves on one of the Grandisonian-looking sofas, and Mrs Tymmons received her son from the latter; "My dear Bella, I'm sure you've practhithed long enough; and do let poor Grimmy pull your hair, or do anything to keep him quiet, while I go and speak to your pa on buthineth."

"Really, that child is so spoilt, there is no bearing him," said Miss Isabella, rising pettishly and advancing

to shake hands with Miss MacScrew and her cousin Peter.

Leaving the latter to press his suit as he best might, Mrs. Tymmons waddled out of the room "to see about" luncheon and "after" her husband. Upon opening the "study" door, she found her spouse (though only one o'clock) with his legs considerably elongated under the archway of the library table, his hands in the pockets of his smallclothes, his shoulders shrugged up till they supported his ample ears, his under lip much protruded, and widely severed from the upper, while a loud, deep, and sonorous grunting gave unequivocal evidence of his being fast asleep. On one side of the table lay Tomlin's Law Dictionary, open at *quare impedit;* and before him a letter he was writing to the Dowager Lady de Clifford, over which he had apparently fallen asleep at the following sentence, as it was the last written. "Grantee of a next avoidance may bring this writ against the patron who granted the avoidance—39 Hen. 6."

Mrs. Tymmons glanced her eye over the letter, and then shaking her lord rather roughly, said, "Really, Mithter Tymmons, I think your patron may bring this writ against you, if this is the manner in which you fall asleep over her buthineth; besides, here is Peter Hoskins has insisted upon dining with us, to carry on his nonsense with Miss MacScrew; and if the old lady should hear of our letting him into the house, after the way in which you have pretended to abuse him to her, I'm sure I don't know what will be the conthequenth."

"Eh, eh?" muttered Mr. Tymmons, rolling his head more to the left, without, however, opening his eyes, and letting the words fall, much mutilated, out of his mouth. "Pleas in bar, such as a release, the statute of limitations, agreement with satisfaction, &c., &c., destroy the plaintiff's action for ever; but pleas in abatement are temporary and dilatory, and do not destroy the action—only stop the cause for a while, till the defect is removed. Take away the mutton, and bring the goose; d—d tough, Mrs. T.; d—d tough! Send those children out of the room. The general issue of general plea is what traverses, thwarts, and denies at once the whole declaration, without offering any special matter whereby to evade it. As in a trespass, either *vi et armis*, or—"

"Mithter Tymmons!" screamed his better half, sha-

king him so roughly by the arm that his throat rattled as though he were dying, and he opened one eye very widely, exclaiming, "God bless my soul! what's the matter?"

"Matter enough, Mr. Tymmons; what a pretty example it ith to your sonths to thee you thleeping away your whole time in thith way?"

Mr. Tymmons now opened both his eyes, removed his hands from the pocket of his unmentionables, stretched them above his head, and gave one loud, long, "sleep-no-more" sort of yawn. After which, placing his arm round his wife's waist, and drawing her towards him, said, "Well, duckey, what is it?"

"It is too bad your being fast athleep at thith time of day," persisted Mrs. Tymmons.

"Ehem, I never sleep, lovey, when you are with me," said the tender Tymmons, with a look that would have brought any other man into Doctors' Commons.

"Well, but, dear," euphonized Mrs. T., condescendingly seating herself upon his knee, and stroking his fat red cheek, "you really should not thleep in the middle of the day, and I want to speak to you upon buthineth."

"Your business is my pleasure," replied the gallant husband, taking his wife's fat face in both his hands, and imprinting a kiss upon her voluminous lips; "what is it, my lily?"

"Why, here'th Mither Hothkinth inthith upon dining with uth to-day, because Miss MacScrew's here."

"Egad, that's capital," cried Mr. Tymmons, rubbing his hands. "I'll give him every opportunity of winning his bet, though it's against myself; but if he gets the old girl, it will be such a famous thing for the family!"

"Yeth, but while heth talking over the old girl, how will you talk over the old lady?" asked Mrs. Tymmons.

"Oh, easily enough; leave that to me; I have not been humbugging her these four years without knowing how to manage her. I must only lay it on a little thicker about her being so exceedingly clever, and having such a wonderful knowledge of business; abuse Hoskins a little more, and not look too business-like myself, so as to let her think she could easily overreach me; interlard my letters with similes and poetry, and that sort of thing, which Rush can always supply me with, you know, lovey, and then I can knead her like dough."

"Ah, you gentlemen" (for common people never say

men and women) "are sad dethievers, sad dethievers," said Mrs. Tymmons, with a most proper wifely look of conscious inferiority, and vivid admiration for the stupendous structure of her husband's masculine intellect.

"Now, lovey," resumed her sposo, drawing his chair close to the table and dipping his pen into the ink, "let me finish my letter to the old lady, and order dinner at half past four, and be sure we've a bottle of that old Burgundy port that I bought at Lord Cramwell's sale, for Hoskins likes a good bottle of wine as well as any man; and perhaps, by dint of it, I may get him to suppress that pamphlet about Mary Lee; for it won't do to let him go too great lengths against this family, especially as I have had Richard Brindal with me all the morning, who tells me that Mary Lee positively refuses to marry him, so that scheme has failed; and if every other does too, the old lady may begin to suspect both my abilities and my allegiance, and that's what must not be. So you must tell Hoskins, ducky, that unless he is content to be more pacific towards the dowager for the future, and, moreover, to publicly attribute his being so to my remonstrances and interference, he need not expect any trystrings with Miss MacScrew in this house."

"I will, dear," responded Mrs. Tymmons, moving towards the door.

"And, lovey," cried Mr. T., calling her back, "be sure we have some *souse*, for I am *particklar partial* to souse."*

As Alonzo was not only charioteer, but "chief butler," the asses could not be fed till the horse was attended to; consequently, Mrs. Tymmons had to fuss about for some time before the luncheon was ready, to Miss MacScrew's no small annoyance; for, being both cold and hungry, the warmth of Mrs. Hoskins's protestations became doubly disagreeable to her; but when luncheon was announced, and he led her into the dining room, he contrived to transfer such a quantity of cold

* As there may be persons in the world as ignorant as I myself was respecting *souse*, till I discovered what it was in an American cookery book that recently came in my way, I think it right to impart the information I then and there acquired, by informing such ignoramuses that *souse* is nothing more nor less than macadamized pig's feet and ears, plunged into a Stygian lake of vinegar, and mummied with spices.

beef and mashed potatoes to her plate, that in a short time she became not only affable, but facetious, as she crammed herself into good-humour.

"Now, to prove what stories you tell," said she to the amiable Peter, her mouth so full as to render her words almost inaudible, "you say you would do anything if I would marry you—he! he! he! Now the only thing that would make me marry you, I know you would not, and could not do—he! he! he!"

"Name it," said Peter, gallantly, "and, be it what it may, augh tak my cousin Sarah and the girls to witness that augh'll do it; and if ye prefere the promise being legally attested, augh'll call in Mr. Tymmons, so just say what it is."

"He! he! he!" tittered Miss MacScrew, "you can't, can't; so I'm quite safe, quite safe. You would not play a tune on the fiddle in the midst of one of your sermons, now, would you?" said she, triumphantly.

For a moment Mr. Hoskins's visage elongated, but soon rallying, he replied, "Well! yes, even that augh'll do; but augh don't know if I can pley the feedle, because, ye see, augh never tried; and as it may tak me some leetle time to *laren*, augh should like to know how long ye'd give me to do it."

"Oh, till doomsday, till doomsday," chuckled Miss MacScrew.

"Augh declare that sort of *ad græcas calendas* is not fair, and augh think augh ought to insist upon a definite time being named for the match to come off, as they say on the turf," cried Hoskins.

"Moth dethidedly," said Mrs. Tymmons and her daughters unanimously, the latter much amused at the trap Miss MacScrew had got herself into, for they knew their worthy cousin to be a man *capable de tout*.

"But," resumed Mrs. Tymmons, who thought it only prudent not to appear too eager in forwarding her kinsman's designs, "you surely never would or could play the violin in the pulpit; it would be thuch a dithgrathe to a clergyman, and particularly to you, who have given uth thuch evangelical dithcourtheth of late."

"That's the *very* reason," said Peter, "augh'll not only do it, but augh'll mak it an instrument of great instrooktion to my congregation. Augh don't see why sarmons may not be foond in feedles as well as stones, and goode in *avery*thing."

"He'll never do it," whispered Mrs. Tymmons, very diplomatically, to Miss MacScrew, "he couldn't; you know it would be quite impossible;" and then added aloud, as if to play off Hoskins, "Now really, my dear Mith MacScrew, you ought to name thome fixed period for putting my couthin to the tetht, after thuth a gallant offer on hith part."

"Yes, you really ought," chorussed the young ladies.

"He, he, he!" giggled Miss MacScrew, abstractedly helping herself to some more beef; "well, next midsummer, then, next midsummer; fine weather you know, fine weather, and the church will be fuller."

"Very true, only it's a long time to wait, for many a slip between the cup and the lip; but we'll make sure of one, at all events," said he, pouring out two glasses of wine, and presenting one to Miss MacScrew, while he took the other himself. "Here's success to our wishes, which ye'll allow is fair, Miss MacScrew; for though augh don't know what your wishes may be, I know perfectly what my own are."

At this juncture Mr. Joseph Tymmons entered, having just returned from a wedding five miles off, and gave a most glowing description of the bride's beauty and bonnet, and of the bridegroom's waistcoat and Waterloo blue cravat.

"Our wedding shall beat all the weddings that have been for the last century," whispered Peter, drawing his chair so close to Miss MacScrew's that he nearly found himself in her lap.

"Get away, get away," said she, backing her chair, and beating him away with her hand as one does a wasp; "get away.

> "'She partly is to blame who has been tried;
> He comes too near who comes to be denied,'

you know."

"Yes, yes; augh know that's not worth coming for; but augh hop to come for something better next midsummer."

"Where ith Rush, Joseph?" inquired Mrs. Tymmons.

"Oh!" said Joseph, "in the clouds, as usual. He went to see the industrious fleas yesterday, and has been writing an ode on them ever since."

"Ith quite shocking," moaned Mrs. Tymmons; "he studies so hard he'll kill himself."

"No doubt, he'll go out like a rushlight some of these days," said Peter, with one of his stentorian laughs.

"Oh, you've no thoul for poetry," said Mrs. Tymmons; "but, really, some of hith things are quite ath good ath Lord Byron's!"

"Very likely," replied Hoskins, with great gravity: "while, at the same time, it must be a great source of satisfaction to you, Sarah, to think that he'll never write anything as bad as Don Juan, Heaven and Earth, and the Vision of Judgment."

"It ith, indeed," said Mrs. Tymmons, turning up her eyes with an exulting look of maternal pride and gratulation.

Here a short pause ensued in the conversation, while Alonzo was summoned to take away the things. Till four o'clock nothing of any importance occurred, except Master Grimstone's stealing a lump of damson cheese with his fingers, as it was exiting with Alonzo, and afterward surreptitiously wiping the aforesaid fingers in the back of Miss MacScrew's dress, which varied without improving it; but at four o'clock a deep and solemn sound was heard; it was Alonzo outside the drawing-room door, giving three distinct thumps with the kitchen-poker against the lid of a copper fish-kettle. This was an invention of the gifted Seraphina's, who knew that at Blichingly Park, Campfield, and, in short, all the great houses she had ever heard of, a gong announced to the assembled guests when it was time to dress for dinner, and this was the best imitation of it she could devise. As Miss MacScrew invariably transferred the black holyoaks from the Leghorn bonnet to the pocket-handkerchief toque for dinner, she ascended with the young ladies for the purpose of doing so, which left Mrs. Tymmons an opportunity of making known her husband's wishes to Mr. Hoskins, and extorting from him (in the plenitude of his delight at having so far succeeded with Miss MacScrew) a promise to comply with them.

The young ladies and their guest had scarcely re-descended to the drawing-room, and been joined by Mr. Tymmons (who entered in high good-humour, having succeeded in coaxing his wife into having a fire in the drawing-room), when that universal genius and ubiquitous individual, Alonzo, announced dinner, which he had no sooner done than a great deal of sprightly badinage ensued between Messrs. Tymmons and Hoskins,

as to which of them should have the honour of taking Miss MacScrew in to dinner; Mr. T. wittily observing, that it was more lawful (!) for him to do so, and Mr. H. replying with equal wit, that it was more orthodox for him to do so, adding another spice of pleasantry in the further assertion that he was a young man on his preferment: this, of course, decided the point. As every one must have some Tymmonses among their acquaintance, and must have dined with them at election or other times, it is perhaps needless to describe the fuss that took place respecting seats upon their entering the dining-room, and the jokes which warmed the guests but cooled the dinner, about "the gentlemen dividing the ladies," while Mr. Hoskins assured his cousins, with a wink, that they ought to hold up their heads, for he was sure they would not always have to sit next their brothers; and though certain events might give him more to do, yet, for all that, he sincerely wished it. Here followed a great deal of blushing and twisting of ringlets, and "Law, what do you mean?" from the young ladies.

At length they were actually seated, but not without poor Miss MacScrew having been twice made to change her seat *nolens volens*, from the assurance, first, that she was too hot at that side, and then that she was too cold at the other, she vehemently but vainly denying both charges. Mrs. Tymmons, like Mrs. Primrose, always "carved all the meat for all the company," and spent every moment that she was not eating, in praising everything on the table, and assuring every one that it was the best in the world, which she did by the elegant exclamation of "Oh my! did you ever taste the like of that?" and those not in the habit of dining there could with truth answer Never!

"On hospitable thoughts intent," she not only helped everything, but deluged everything she helped with melted butter, to the no small annoyance of Miss Seraphina, who knew that all such condiments ought to be handed round; but, alas! as Alonzo was not Briareus, she dared not even hint at this ambulating circular reform. Another thing, too, that greatly disgusted her (as well it might), were the sulphureous-looking straw mats that Mrs. Tymmons persisted in under the dishes. Miss Seraphina had, on more than one occasion, expressed her opinion of them, by saying, it really looked

as if they had once been straw-bonnet makers, and so had used up all their spare straw when they left off business; but even this did not do, and the mats stood their ground. Everything at the table was an imitation of something; each dish might have been labelled, *Aut navis, aut galerus;* the mutton was roasted to imitate venison; the soup was mock turtle; potato loaves played the part of Risoles without anything in them; and a peahen took refuge in celery-sance, and passed itself off for a turkey. It was not till dinner was half over, and the "gentlemen had asked the ladies" over and over again to take wine, and Mr. Tymmons had praised his "Burgundy port" quite as much as his wife had lauded the dinner and the cookery, that Mr. Rush Tymmons made his *entrée*, his throat bare, and tempting assassination; his eyes "in a fine phrensy rolling," and apparently totally unconscious of the presence of any one. Miss Seraphina made room for him beside herself, which she was in duty bound to do, for she it was who was the cause of his being so late, for she was always telling him that the genius of every aristocratic family (when there was one) invariably either kept every one waiting dinner an hour, or else walked in when it was half over. Now it so happened that this day, of all days in the year, poor Mr. Rush was most unpoetically hungry: but, sooner than violate the aristocratic standard of genius, he had stood for a full quarter of an hour outside the dining-room door, quadrupling his appetite by the *friande* steams of the forbidden feast.

"Why, Rush," said his sire, "always last."

"At all events, I hope not least, sir," said Mr. Rush, modestly.

"No, no, that ye can never be as long as ye are six feet high, and all yer brothers so much shorter," said Hoskins, with a laugh and a wink that was anything but complimentary to Mr. Rush's greatness, and for which that gentleman planned lampoons on him for the rest of dinner.

"As everything is cold by this time," said Mr. Tymmons, senior, "you had better try some of my souse," pointing to the seductive *plat* on the dumb-waiter beside him. Mr. Rush looked wild boars at his progenitor for insulting his delicacy by such a proposition, and glancing at a chicken, "motioned" to Alonzo to bring

him some, which, when he had discussed, he gallantly drank toast and water with all his sisters, for he never touched wine. When the cloth was removed, and very small divers-coloured worsted doyleys were placed before every one, with *one* wineglass upon each, and Alonzo had knocked down the last trayful of things, Mr. Hoskins became so alarmingly demonstrative to Miss MacScrew, that Mrs. Tymmons was fain to do something to turn the current of his thoughts; and seeing Mr. Rush, with his eyes fixed upon the ceiling, as if watching the arrival of a new cargo of ideas, which, no doubt, came straight from heaven through the roof of the house, as people always look for them in that direction, she ventured to request that they might be favoured with a sight of his ode upon the fleas.

"Now do, my dear Rush," urged his fond mother, "for I'm thure ith beautiful, like everything you write."

Mr. Rush blushed and stammered, and declared it was not yet finished.

"Well, but let uth thee as much of it ath ith done," entreated his mother.

"Why, certainly, if you wish it," said the obedient son, glancing round the table for further suffrages.

"Do, Rush," nodded his father, who again began to feel somniferosuly inclined, and who knew his son's effusions were infallible narcotics.

"Well," said Rush, withdrawing the precious *morceau* from his waistcoat pocket, where it had lain like a love-letter in a postoffice, "to be kept till called for," "remember it's not *finished*, and it's an irregular ode"—and irregular enough it certainly was—"and, in order to make you understand it, I should tell you that one flea enacts Napoleon, another the Duke of Wellington, two more O'Connell and Lord Alvanley fighting a duel, a whole band imitate Strauss's, while two young fleas are flirting in a drawing-room, and the mamma flea is reading a newspaper and does not see them." After this clear and lucid explanation, Mr. Rush smoothed the crumpled ode and read as follows, his mother exclaiming, by way of prelude, "How very interesting!"

ODE TO THE INDUSTRIOUS FLEAS!

Silent! subtle! hopping flea!
Napoleon's self may be in thee;
For still thou dost present to me
A marvel and a mystery!
But Wellington thou canst not be,
Since 'tis well known *he* ne'er did *flee*.
Then jump and bite,
And take thy flight,
Like Joseph, when from Zulica, he
Did take his garments up and flee,
While sages say and shake their head,
"'Twas Fleance did it, for 'twas Fleance fled."
If blame you'd shun,
Ne'er cut and run.
But what is this? Oh fire and fuel!
Next see O'Connell in a duel;
Nay, surely, sir, the mighty Dan
May kill, but never flee his man.
Oh keep, St. Kevin,
His vow in heaven!
But list! Flea fiddlers fill the house
With sounds not quite so good as Strauss';
A damsel's in a ballroom flirting,
Her mother's chap'ronage deserting;
A flea in ear
She'll get, I fear!

"That's all I've done yet," said Mr. Rush, looking round for admiration.

"Oh, very clever, very clever indeed," cried Mrs. Tymmons; "in fact, tho clever, that ith not every one that would understhand it."

"It's a great deal cleverer than that," said Hoskins, "for augh don't think there's ony one who could understand it."

"Well, that ith a great deal for you to thay, Peter, and your praithe ith worth having about poetry (!) ith so hard to get," said Mrs. Tymmons; "and," continued she, "thuch a pretty compliment to the Duke of Wellington, I'm thure hithe grathe would be much flattered if he heard it, and he could not doubt ith sintherity, becauthe you are futht to O'Connell, calling him the mighty Dan; but ith quite delightful, my dear Rush, to thee a young man of your age, though really liberal in politics, giving merit on every *thide* where merit is due."

"D—n those fleas!" muttered Mr. Tymmons, starting from his slumbers; "they are all over me," continued he, scratching the back of his hands.

"There, Master Rush," laughed Hoskins, "*augh* advise you to make the most of *that*, for it's as *grat* a compliment as the birds pecking at the grapes of Zeuxis."

"My dear, my dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Tymmons, screaming at her spouse, "you're going to sleep again; let uth have tea, and that will waken you."

Tea was accordingly ordered, and all the cups and spoons rattled immediately under Mr. Tymmons's ears, till they produced the desired effect, and he was wide awake as every attorney ought to be. This enabled him to look over some bills; and while he was billing, Mr. Hoskins was cooing, which delightful amusement lasted till nine o'clock, at which hour Miss MacScrew invariably left "the festive scene," for, as she justly observed, in houses where there was no supper, there was no use in staying any longer, as it was only leading Sally into the temptation of burning a rushlight, as no servant could be trusted to sit by the firelight alone. Accordingly, at nine o'clock, Alonzo appeared with lantern, clogs, and umbrella, and, flanked by the obsequious Peter, Miss MacScrew was escorted back to Lavender-lane.

Scarcely had she left the house before Miles Datchet (who had taken leave of the Lees, Mrs. Stokes, and even Madge, during which last ceremony he had caught Freddy Flipps grinning over a hedge, and for which he had bestowed upon him a parting drubbing, with a benedictory prophecy that he would yet ride a horse foaled by an acorn)* called for Mrs. Tymmons's despatches to Lord de Clifford and his mother, as he (Datchet) was to start for the Continent early on the following morning, where it is high time we should follow him.

* Come to the gallows.

END OF VOL. I.