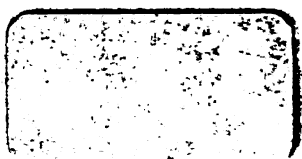


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"The Story of our Lives from Year to Year."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A Weekly Journal.

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS, JUN.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

24 ✓

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VOLUME VI.

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LONDON

G. WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, DUKE STREET, LINCOLN'S-INN-FIELDS.

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SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 1871.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER XLIX. MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

MAUD and her mother were tête-à-tête at dinner that day. Lady Vernon scarcely spoke; she seemed fatigued.

Such meetings seldom happened. They embarrassed both mother and daughter, between whom there was an undefined but incurable estrangement.

Under such circumstances a ladies' dinner does not last very long; and they were soon, each provided with a book, taking a very unsociable tea in the drawing-room.

A wood fire smouldered in the grate. The evening was a little chilly, and made it pleasant.

Maud sat by it in a low chair with her feet on a stool. She leaned back with her book before her. The silence was only broken by the rustle of the pages as she turned them over.

At length Maud lowered the book to her lap, and raised her eyes.

They met the large grey eyes of Lady Vernon fixed on her, and the flush that indicated some secret agitation was in her cheeks. The mutual gaze continued for some two or three seconds, and then Lady Vernon turned her eyes away, as it seemed to Maud, haughtily.

It had not lasted long; but it made Maud uncomfortable. She knew her mother's face so well, that she read danger in that glance.

She waited some time, expecting something to come. But as Lady Vernon remained silent Maud took up her book again, and read a page or two; but her mind did not follow the lines with her eyes.

In a little time she put down her book again, and looked up.

Her mother was again looking at her, and this time she spoke.

"Did you hear," she asked, in her coldest tones, "that Captain Vivian drove through the town of Roydon to-day?"

"Did he, really?"

"I should not have thought it necessary to ask you a second time," she said, with a sneer. "Don't you know he did?"

"No, I did not hear that he was in the town since he left this," Maud replied.

"It is so nice of you, answering me so honestly," said Lady Vernon.

Maud looked at her, not quite certain whether the irony she suspected in her tone was real or fancied.

"Did you see any one to-day?" Lady Vernon reopened her conversation, after an interval, more dangerously.

"Miss Tintern was here to-day. She came in, hoping to see you, and then I took her a little walk."

"Oh! Then this has been a day of walking," said Lady Vernon, with something derisive in her tone, that terrified Maud for her secret, and Maud blushed.

Lady Vernon, deadly pale, held her with her steady grey eyes, and an insulting smile, for some seconds.

Then the elder lady turned slowly away, still smiling, and Maud felt that she could breathe.

How much hatred there seemed to Maud in that pale, cruel smile; how much hatred in those cold, strange tones, low and sweet as the faintest notes of a flute!

Maud was in momentary fear of a renewal of the torture. But a minute passed, five minutes, and there was no renewal of the attack. Her mother seemed to have forgotten her, and to have returned to her book, with no further intention of disturbing her studies.

Ten minutes passed. The room was still as death. Suddenly that soft, cold, sweet voice was again in her ear. If it had been a clap of thunder it could not have startled her more.

"Pray, Maud, did you meet any one to-day in your walk?"

There was in Lady Vernon's tone, air, and look that which fired the girl's indignation.

She returned her mother's look, undecided whether she would answer her at all.

Suddenly losing command of her temper, Lady Vernon exclaimed, sternly:

"How dare you look at me, your mother, so? Answer my question, and speak truth. Whom did you meet to-day?"

"I shan't answer," said Maud, flushing crimson. "What have I done that you should attack me with so much bitterness?"

"Come, Maud, recollect yourself," said Lady Vernon, recovering her colder manner. "You seem to forget that, as your mother, I have a right to know, from your own lips, whom you met to-day. Who was it?"

"I question your right to catechise me," returned Maud, now thoroughly roused. "If I am to remember your rights, you must remember mine. I shall be of age in a few weeks, and my own mistress. You are not to treat me any longer like a child."

"While you remain in my house you shall be amenable to me. I can't command affection, but I can command respect. You shall obey me. I'll make you obey me."

The flush had quite left her cheeks, her face was unnaturally white, and her lip, as white as her face, was trembling. Maud had never before seen her so terribly angry. But she was now past being daunted. She was herself very nearly as angry, and so the spark had started into flame, and the flame had gathered to a conflagration.

"That is not the way to make me obey you. That is not what you want. You wish to wound me, and to trample on me. You never loved me; you hate me; yes, you hate me—your own child, your only child. And what have I done? All my life trying to bring you to love me. That's over. I'll try no more—never. You'll teach me at last to hate you, as you hate me. I wish it were God's will to take me. Oh! this dreadful world!"

"Wicked people make it dreadful to themselves and to others," said Lady Vernon.

But Maud went on with her wild tirade.

"That poor girl who drowned herself in the mere at Golden Friars—they said she was wicked—she looked like an angel. Oh! for courage like hers to take the leap out of this frightful world!"

"That's a threat of suicide, as I understand it, unless I forego, not my rights, but my duty. You shan't deter me from doing it," said Lady Vernon. "You shall confess."

"I will not answer you. I will not confess. I have nothing to confess. Why do you use that insulting word? There has been nothing in my life I need ever have been ashamed or afraid to disclose."

Lady Vernon looked at her intently for a moment, and then laughed a cold little laugh of disdain.

But that counterfeit merriment did not last long. The false smile faded, and left a deeper shadow of menace on her face.

"Another person would answer a daughter who presumed to talk to them so, very differently. But I know only too well your lamentable weakness and violence; and I'll tell you, as you have not the grace or candour to admit it, that you cannot conceal the fact from me. You saw Captain Vivian to-day. You talked and walked with him, and returned to the house only a few minutes before you came into the shield-room this evening. You might as well have spoken frankly."

If it had not been for the anger provoked by Lady Vernon's language and manner, Maud would, I dare say, have undeceived her, now. But the devil of perverse pride had been evoked, and Maud answered:

"If you knew all this, why need you have asked me to tell you. I said I should answer nothing; and I shall not."

"You shall do more than answer," said Lady Vernon, rising to her feet, with a new access of passion, and confronting her daughter. "You shall now and here write me a letter renouncing Captain Vivian. Sit down at this desk and write it."

"No," answered Maud, also rising, "I'll do nothing of the kind. I'll place myself in no such ridiculous position."

Lady Vernon was astounded. Maud had never disputed a distinct command of hers before.

"Think again, Maud, you had better. I fear you are losing your head a little," she said, coldly.

"I need not think again; I won't write anything. I've said so, and I won't," answered Maud, with all the fiery blood of the Vernons careering in her veins.

"Then take the consequences of your insanity," said Lady Vernon, almost in a whisper, but with an audible stamp on the floor.

These two pairs of large grey eyes were encountering, all this time, in a burning gaze of mutual defiance.

So the unnatural alienation that had for so many years existed between mother and child had now at last found positive expression, and the angry passions of both were declared and active.

"I think I had better go to my own room," said Maud, in tones which trembled a little.

"Do," said Lady Vernon.

Maud walked straight to the door. She had opened it, and paused with the handle in her hand. It was only to say, hastily:

"Good-night, mamma."

"Good-night," returned Lady Vernon, in a tone that sounded like a curse.

And so Maud stepped out, with heightened colour, blazing eyes, and a countenance strangely proud, yet heart-broken.

She walked up-stairs with a humming in her ears, as if she had received a blow. Her dry, hot lips were whispering:

"No, never again: we never can be again even what we were before. It is all over; there is nothing ever to reconcile us. No, never, it can never be again."

When she got to her room, her maid Jones, advancing with her accustomed smile, exclaimed with a sudden halt and a change of countenance:

"La! Miss Maud, dear, what's the matter? you do look pale and queer!"

"Do I?" said Maud, vaguely. "No, not much. But I'm sorry, Jones," and she burst into a wild flood of tears.

"What is it, Miss Maud, my dear child; what's the matter?"

"Oh, Jones! if all the world were like you!"

And she placed her arms round her trusty maid's neck and kissed her.

"What is it, my dear? There, there, don't! Tell me, like a good child, what's the matter?"

"I'll tell you all, Jones, by-and-bye. It has come at last; it's as well it should. Mamma has been so unkind, and cruel, and insulting, and I was angry, and we've quarrelled—desperately. It can never be made up again, Jones; never, never."

"Nonsense, Miss Maud, what a fuss you make; it will all be nothing at all."

"I was violent—I was wrong—I spoke as I ought not—I blame myself. But, no,

it can never be made up—it is folly to think it. I know mamma too well. It is past that; she never forgives; and she never loved me; there is no use in trying to think it. She hates me now, and always will, and I'm sorry, but it can't be helped."

So she sobbed on, sitting in the great chair, with her face to the wall beside it, and honest Jones, who was disturbed and even shocked, said, with her hand on the big arm of the chair, leaning over her, and employing a powerful superlative of her own invention:

"Her ladyship's the very most religiousest lady in England, and the most charitablest, and you musn't to say or think so. She's strict, and will have her will obeyed, and you musn't gainsay her when she thinks she's right. But she's a just woman, and good. Now don't be crying so, darling, for you have only to say what you should say to her, and everything will be as it used, and you'll say so yourself in the morning. There, now, don't take on so."

Thus honest Jones poured consolation into an inattentive and incredulous ear, and the young lady, answering never a word, wept on for a long time. It was her leave-taking of a dream that could never come again, the hope that her mother might, at last, come to love her.

CHAPTER L. LADY VERNON.

WHEN Maud had closed the door, the bitter smile that had gleamed on her mother's face with a wintry light, departed, and left the bleakest darkness instead.

She remained sitting as in a dream where Maud had left her, with her hands clasped hard together in her lap; she looked down on the carpet, a yard or so before her feet, darkly, and drew her shoulders together, as if a chill air were about her, and shuddered.

Howsudden had been the alarm! and now that the danger was upon her, how fast events were driving on!

The tiny ring of the clock over the mantelpiece recalled her. It was twelve o'clock. More than an hour had passed since Maud had left her. It had not appeared five minutes.

She lit her candle, and ascended the great stairs, still in her dream. Without effort, almost without consciousness of motion, she moved like a ghost along the galleries. The homely figure of lean Mrs. Latimer, in her plain black silk dress, startled her like the sight of a stranger.

Lady Vernon did not talk to Latimer that night; she had no questions to ask her. Her veteran maid had never known her so darkly absent before. She told her to leave the two candles on the dressing-table burning, and the maid departed, wondering what had gone wrong, or who had vexed my lady.

Left to herself, Lady Vernon lay still, in that grisly vigilance that in outward seeming simulates the quietude of slumber. Sometimes, for five minutes, her eyes were closed; sometimes wide open for as long. She heard the pulse of the artery in her temple drum on her pillow; and her heart beat harder than a heart at ease is wont to throb.

Lady Vernon had now lain awake in her bed for an hour. She grew hopeless of the rest she felt she wanted. At last she got up, unlocked her dressing-case, and took out one of its pretty cut-glass bottles, with a golden cap over its stopper. It contained that infusion of opium in water, which De Quincy mentions as the fluid approved by those who use that drug on a large scale.

Lady Vernon had recourse to its potent magic only when sleep forsook her, as at present. This of late had happened often enough to cause her to apply to it with increasing doses.

It failed on this occasion; and produced, instead of quiet, exaggerated excitement, as it always does when it fails to soothe.

At length the lady rose, and in her dressing-gown and slippers sat down at her table, and wrote a passionate letter to Captain Vivian, summoning him to Roydon, and promising to open her heart to him if he would come.

This letter written, she again had recourse to the little cut-glass bottle, and this time with success. In a few minutes she lay in a deep, motionless sleep.

In the morning when she awoke the vengeful drug exacted its compensation. She felt almost stunned by the potent medicine.

She had locked the letter in her dressing-box. The first thing in the morning she took it out and read it.

No; it would not do. The glamour of the opium was upon it. She burnt it at the candle that was still flaring at her bedside, pale and smoky, in the early light of morning which she had admitted at the open shutter.

That letter must be very carefully written, she thought; and other measures

must be taken first. It seemed doubtful, altogether, whether it might not be as effectual and wiser to write only to old Mr. Dawe.

She did not come down to breakfast that morning. Maud was infinitely relieved; she dreaded the idea of meeting Lady Vernon; and to her great delight there came a letter from Lady Mardykes, naming the day for receiving her at Carsbrook. It said:

"Your mamma has been so good as to tell Maximilla Medwyn that she will allow you to come to Carsbrook any day you please. If you can, do come on Monday next; Maximilla has promised to be here early, so if you arrive any time in the afternoon you will be sure to find her. I tried to get Ethel Tintern to come; but she can't, she says, for some time. You will find my house very full, and there are some odd, and, I think, very amusing people here. Maximilla tells me that you and she were interested by the rather striking appearance of Doctor Antomarchi. I wrote to ask him for a day or two; so you shall meet him at Carsbrook. He is a wonderful mesmerist. Two young ladies are talking in my room as I write. I hope I am not quite unintelligible in consequence. I hope you like dancing. We dance a great deal here; but you will learn all our ways in a little time."

There was a note from Maximilla Medwyn also, seconding Lady Mardykes' invitation, and promising to be punctually at Carsbrook on the morning of Monday. She mentioned also that she had written to Lady Vernon, and was certain, from what had passed, that she would place no difficulty in the way of Maud's visit to Carsbrook. Of this, however, Maud was by no means so sure.

Lady Vernon did not meet her at luncheon. Maud had gone to the room in secret trepidation. The respite was very welcome; if she could only make her escape to Carsbrook, what a happy change!

She was glad to learn from Jones that Sir David and Lady Blunkett were to dine at Roydon, and stay till next day, and that Mr. and Mrs. Foljambe and Captain Bamme were to meet the worthy baronet and his wife.

She was in hopes of getting away to Carsbrook—if she were indeed to be allowed to visit Lady Mardykes, of which she had very uncomfortable doubts since the scene of the night before—without the agitation of another tête-à-tête with her mother.

She sent for Jones, and ran up to her own room, trembling lest she should meet Lady Vernon on the stairs.

I don't know whether Lady Vernon had any secret shrinkings of a similar kind. If she had she would have disdained them, and played out her game, whatever it was, stoically.

Jones found her young mistress standing at her own window, looking out in an anxious reverie.

"Jones, do you know where mamma is?" Maud asked.

"Her ladyship went down more than an hour ago to the library, and I think she is there still, for it is only about ten minutes since she sent for Mr. Penrhyn to go to her there."

"I'm so afraid of meeting her. I should rather put off seeing her as long as I can. Did Latimer say anything of her having been vexed with me last night?"

"Not a word, miss; I dare say you are making too much of it."

"Not a bit, Jones; but we'll not talk about that. I wish I were sure that she would allow me to go to Lady Mardykes'. You would have great fun there, Jones."

"Well, indeed, miss, a bit o' fun would not hurt neither of us. Her ladyship does keep things awful dull here."

At this moment came a knock at the door.

Miss Vernon looked at Jones, and Jones at Miss Vernon, and there was a rather alarmed silence, during which the knock was repeated.

"Who is there?" asked Maud, after another pause.

It was Latimer.

"Come in, Latimer. Are you looking for me?" said the young lady.

"Please, miss, her ladyship wishes to see you in the library," said Latimer, in her dry way.

"Immediately?" asked Maud, changing colour.

"So she desired me to say, miss."

"Oh, very well, Latimer. Tell mamma, please, that I'll follow you in a moment."

Latimer was gone, and the door shut.

"I wish it was over," said the young lady, very pale. "Stay here, Jones, till I come back."

"I will, miss," said Jones, whose heart misgave her now, respecting the visit to Carsbrook. "And you won't mind me saying, miss, 'twill be best you should not contradict her ladyship in nothing."

"I don't think she'll keep me very long.

When I come back I'll tell you whether we are going or not."

And with these words Miss Vernon left the room, and proceeded along the gallery, and down the stairs, at a much more sedate pace than usual.

It was a very unpleasant excitement, and she felt for a moment almost a little faint as she approached the well-known door.

She hesitated before it. She wondered whether any one was with her mother, and with something nearly amounting to the sinking of panic, anticipated the coming scene.

With an effort of resolution she knocked.

"Come in," said the sweet, cold, commanding voice she knew so well.

Maud entered the room, and drew near with the embarrassment of one who knows not what reception may be awaiting her.

Her large eyes, fixed on Lady Vernon, saw nothing unusual in the serene and cold expression of her handsome face. She heard nothing unusual in her clear, harmonious tones. Her manner was perfectly unembarrassed. Judging by external signs, Maud might have concluded that no recollection of their fiery encounter of the night before remained in her mother's mind.

"There has come a note from Maximilla Medwyn, to-day, telling me that Lady Mardykes wishes you to go to Carsbrook on Monday next. There is nothing to prevent your telling her that you will go."

Maud was afraid to say how delighted and relieved she was. She could not say what untoward caprice too strong an expression of her feeling might excite; but a flush of pleasure glowed brilliantly in her cheeks.

"It is too late to-day for the Roydon post; you can write to-morrow. I have written to Maximilla to say what your answer will be," said Lady Vernon. "Some people are coming to dine here to-day, and I don't think we are likely to be alone while you remain at home. I only wished to mention that; and you had better tell Jones, as she is to go with you; there's nothing more."

"I hope that you are pretty well now, mamma?"

"Quite well, thanks," said Lady Vernon, cutting short any possible prolongation of these civilities. "You remember the story of—Talleyrand, was it? I forget—a Frenchman of the world, who, being bored at every posting-house, through half the journey to Paris, with messages from a gentleman who was travelling the same

road, to inquire particularly how he was, requested the messenger at last to say to the gentleman who was so good as to make so many inquiries, that he was very well all the way to Paris. So we'll take that hint, I think, and save one another some trouble, and I'll say I'm very well all the way to Monday afternoon. And now, dear Maud, I'm busy, and I think I'll say good-bye."

And with this gracious speech, accompanied by a cold little laugh that was indescribably insulting, she turned to her papers once more, leaving Maud to make her exit with a very full and angry heart.

"Always sorry when I try to show her the least sign of affection. Well, while I remain here, I'll not be such a fool again."

So, with flashing eyes, Maud resolved, as she passed from the library through the suite of rooms beyond it.

SLEEPERS AND SOMNAMBULISTS.

SLEEP is nearly as great a puzzle as ever it was. Much has been discovered concerning the bodily peculiarities manifested during this portion of our existence; but all whose opinions are best worth listening to, admit that they are only on the threshold of the subject yet. Why, for instance, can some men maintain their bodily and mental vigour with so small an amount of sleep as falls to their share? Lord Brougham, and many other great statesmen and lawyers, are known to have been content with a marvellously small quantity of sleep. Frederick the Great is said to have allowed himself only five hours; John Hunter, five hours; General Elliot, the hero of Gibraltar, four hours; while Wellington, during the Peninsular War, had still less.

How, on the other hand, to account for the cormorant sleepers? De Moivre, the mathematician, could (though it is to be hoped he did not) sleep twenty hours out of the twenty-four. Quin, the actor, sometimes slept for twenty-four hours at a stretch. Doctor Reid, the metaphysician, could so manage, that one potent meal, followed by one long and sound sleep, would last him for two days. Old Parr slept away his later days almost entirely. In the middle of the last century a young Frenchwoman, at Toulouse, had, for half a year, fits of lengthened sleep, varying from three to thirteen days each. About the same time, a girl, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, slept fourteen weeks without waking; and

the waking process occupied three days to complete. Doctor Blanchet, of Paris, mentions the case of a lady who slept for twenty days together when she was about eighteen years of age, fifty days when she was about twenty, and had nearly a whole year's sleep from Easter Sunday, 1862, till March, 1863; during this long sleep (which physicians call hysteric coma) she was fed with milk and soup, one of her front teeth being extracted to obtain an opening into her mouth. Stow, in his Chronicle, tells us that "The 27th of April, 1546, being Tuesdaie in Easter weeke, W. Foxley, potmaker for the Mint in the Tower of London, fell asleep, and so continued sleeping, and could not be waked with pricking, cramping, or otherwise, till the first day of the next term, which was full fourteen dayes and fifteen nights. The causes of his thus sleeping could not be knowne, tho' the same were diligentlie searched for by the king's physicians and other learned men; yea, the king himselfe examined y^e said W. Foxley, who was in all points found at his waking to be as if he had slept but one night." Another very notable instance was that of Samuel Chilton, of Timsbury, recorded in one of the early volumes of the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society. In the year 1694 he slept for a month, and no one could wake him. Later in the same year he had a four months' sleep, from April the 9th to August the 7th; he woke, dressed, went out into the fields (where he worked as a labourer), and found his companions reaping the corn which he had helped to sow the day before his long nap; it was not till that moment that he knew of his sleep having exceeded the usual duration of a few hours. He went to sleep again on the 17th of August, and did not wake till the 19th of November, notwithstanding the pungent applications of hellebore and sal-ammoniac to his nostrils, and bleeding to the extent of fourteen ounces. He woke, asked for bread and cheese, but went off to sleep again before it could be brought to him, taking another spell of sleep which lasted till the end of January. After this it is not recorded that he had any more of these strange relapses.

There are instances of sleep so intensely deep as to deprive the sleeper of all sense of pain. The records of the Bristol Infirmary present an extraordinary illustration of this. One cold night a tramp lay down near the warmth of a lime-kiln, and went to sleep. One foot must have been

close to the fire-hole of the kiln; for during the night the foot and ankle were so completely burned away, as to leave nothing but black cinder and calcined ash. He did not wake till the kiln-man roused him next morning, nor did he know what had occurred until he looked down at his charred stump. He died in the infirmary a fortnight afterwards.

Those cases in which the brain is hard at work during sleep, instead of being totally oblivious of everything, may be called either dreaming or somnambulism, according to the mode in which the activity displays itself. Many of them are full of interest. Some men have done really hard mental work while asleep. Condorcet finished a train of calculations in his sleep which had much puzzled him during the day. In 1856, a collegian noticed the peculiarities of a fellow-student, who was rather stupid than otherwise during his waking hours, but who got through some excellent work in geometry and algebra during sleep. Condillac and Franklin both worked correctly during some of their sleeping hours.

The work done partakes in many cases more of the nature of imaginative composition than of scientific calculation. Thus, a stanza of excellent verse is in print, which Sir John Herschel is said to have composed while asleep, and to have recollected when he awoke. Goethe often set down on paper, during the day, thoughts and ideas which had presented themselves to him during sleep on the preceding night. A gentleman one night dreamed that he was playing an entirely new game of cards with three friends; when he awoke, the structure and rules of the new game, as created in the dream, came one by one into his memory; and he found them so ingenious that he afterwards frequently played the game. Coleridge is said to have composed his fragment of Kubla Khan during sleep. He had one evening been reading Purchas's Pilgrim; some of the romantic incidents struck his fancy; he went to sleep, and his busy brain composed Kubla Khan. When he awoke in the morning, he wrote out what his mind had invented in sleep, until interrupted by a visitor, with whom he conversed for an hour on business matters; but, alas! he could never again recal the thread of the story, and thus Kubla Khan remains a fragment. Doctor Good mentions the case of a gentleman who in his sleep composed an ode in six stanzas, and set it to music. Tartini, the celebrated Italian violinist, one night dreamed that

the devil appeared to him, challenged him to a trial of skill on the fiddle, and played a piece wonderful for its beauty and difficulty; when Tartini woke, he could not remember the exact notes, but he could reproduce the general character of the music, which he did in a composition ever since known as the Devil's Sonata. Lord Thurlow, when a youth at college, found himself one evening unable to finish a piece of Latin composition which he had undertaken; he went to bed full of the subject, fell asleep, finished his Latin in his sleep, remembered it next morning, and was complimented on the felicitous form which it presented.

Still more curious, however, are those instances in which the sleeper, after composing or speculating, gets up in a state of somnambulism, writes the words on paper, goes to bed and to sleep again, and knows nothing about it when he wakes. Such cases, the authenticity of which is beyond dispute, point to an activity of muscles as well as of brain, and to a correctness of movement which is marvellous when we consider that the eyes are generally closed under these circumstances. Doctor W. B. Carpenter mentions the case of a somnambulist who sat down and wrote with the utmost regularity and uniformity. "Not only were the lines well written, and at the proper distances, but the i's were dotted and the t's crossed; and in one instance the writer went back half a line to make a correction, crossing off a word, and writing another above it, with as much caution as if he had been guided by vision." The young collegian, adverted to in a former paragraph, got out of bed in his sleep, lit a candle, sat down to a table, wrote his geometry and algebra, extinguished the light, and went to bed again; the lighting of the candle was a mere effect of habit, for his eyes were shut, and he was really not awake. About the beginning of the present century a banker at Amsterdam requested Professor van Swinden to solve for him a calculation of a peculiar and difficult kind. The professor tried it, failed, and submitted it to ten of his pupils as a good mathematical exercise. One of them, after two or three days' work at it, went to bed one night with his mind full of the subject, and fell asleep. On waking in the morning he was astonished to find on his table sheets of paper containing the full working out of the problem in his own handwriting; he had got up in the night and done it, in his sleep and

in the dark. The first French Encyclopédie narrated the case of a young ecclesiastic at Bordeaux who was in the habit of getting out of bed in his sleep, going to a table, taking writing materials, and writing a sermon. He was often watched while doing this, and an opaque screen was cautiously placed between his eyes and the paper; but he wrote on just the same. One example of mental discrimination displayed by him was very remarkable, showing how strangely awake even the reasoning faculties may be during somnambulist sleep. He wrote the three French words, "ce divin enfant;" then changed "divin" into "adorable;" then recognised that "ce" would not suit before an adjective commencing with a vowel; and finally changed it into "cet." On another occasion the paper on which he was writing was taken away, and another sheet substituted; but he immediately perceived the change. On a third occasion he was writing music, with words underneath. The words were in rather too large a character, insomuch that the respective syllables did not stand under their proper notes. He perceived the error, blotted out the part, and wrote it carefully again; and all this without real vision, such as we ordinarily understand by the term.

The sleep-walkers who go from room to room, and are very busy in a sort of world of their own, without actually composing new music or writing new compositions, are numerous. The Morning Chronicle, in 1822, gave an account of a seaman who slept for a night at an inn in York. Wishing to be called early next morning, and knowing himself to be a heavy sleeper, he directed the chambermaid to come into his room and call him, if he did not hear her knock at the door. Waking when the sun was high in the heavens, he felt certain that he had slept far beyond the proper time; but looking for his watch to know the hour, he found that it was not in its place under the pillow where he had placed it. He jumped out of bed to dress, but his clothes were gone; and looking round, he found himself in a strange room. He rang the bell; the chambermaid appeared, and then he found that he had, at some early hour in the morning, left his bed, and wandered in a somnambulist sleep into another room; for when the maid came to call him he was not in his proper room. Wienholt relates the case of a student who, when in a somnambulist state, was wont to leave his bed, go to the parlour or to his

study, take out pen, ink, and paper, place music in its proper position on the piano-forte, and play a whole piece through, with his eyes shut. His friends once turned the music upside-down while he was playing. He somehow detected the change, and replaced the paper in the proper position. On another occasion his ear detected a note out of tune; he tuned the string, and went on again. On a third occasion he wrote a letter to his brother, rational and legible to a certain point; but it was singular to observe that he continued to write after the pen had lost its ink, making all the proper movements without being conscious that he made no more marks on the paper. A case is on record of a young lady who, when under the influence of a particular nervous complaint, would walk about the house in a state of sleep or coma, steering her way safely between the articles of furniture, and even avoiding objects purposely placed to obstruct her path. Her eyes were open, but she evidently did not see through them in the ordinary sense; for she entirely disregarded strong lights held close to her eyes, and even a finger that was actually placed against the eyeball. Physicians are acquainted with many evidences of persons who do *not* see with the eyes, but have some unexplained kind of vision in certain morbid states of the nervous system.

Those somnambulists who wander about in streets and roads, or (like Amina in Bellini's opera) walk along narrow planks in perilous situations, have the muscular sense, whatever it may be, effectively awake. Doctor Carpenter notices, at some length, "the sleep-walkers who make their way over the roofs of houses, steadily traverse narrow planks, and even clamber precipices; and this they do with far less hesitation than they would do in the waking state." The sense of fear is asleep, whatever else may be awake. Some somnambulists start off while asleep to attend to their regular work, though under very irregular circumstances. Not very many years ago, a working stonemason in Kent was one evening requested by his master to go next morning to a churchyard in the neighbourhood and measure the work which had been done to a wall, in order that an account might be sent in to the churchwardens. The man went to bed at the usual time; but when he awoke he found himself fully dressed, in the open air, and in the dark. Presently a clock struck two, and he knew that he was in the

churchyard. As he found that he had a measuring-rod and a book in his hand, he resolved to walk about till daybreak (it being summer weather), and ascertain what it was that he had really done. He then found that he had measured the wall correctly, and had entered the particulars in his book. Sometimes, instead of starting up from sleep to go to work, persons will fall asleep while working or walking. When Sir John Moore made his famous retreat to Corunna, whole battalions of exhausted troops slumbered as they marched. Muleteers have been known to sleep while guiding their mules, coachmen while driving on the box, post-boys while trotting on their horses, and factory children while at work. There was a rope-maker in Germany who often fell asleep when at work, and either continued his work in a proper way, or uselessly remade cordage already finished. Sometimes when walking long distances he was similarly overtaken with sleep; he went on safely, avoiding horses and carriages, and timber lying in the road. On one occasion he fell asleep just as he got on horseback; yet he went on, rode through a shallow river, allowed his horse to drink, drew up his legs to prevent his feet from being wetted, passed through a crowded market-place, and arrived safely at the house of an acquaintance; his eyes were closed the whole time, and he awoke just after reaching the house. Gassendi describes a case of a man who used to rise in the night, dress himself while asleep, go down to the cellar, draw wine from a cask, and walk back to his bed without stumbling over anything. In the morning, like other sleep-walkers, he knew nothing of what had happened. If he chanced to wake while in the cellar, which once or twice occurred, he groped his way back in the dark with more difficulty than when the sleep was upon him. Another Italian, also mentioned by Gassendi, passed on stilts over a swollen torrent in the night while asleep, then awoke, and was too much afraid to cross until daylight came.

An additional element of interest is presented in those cases in which speaking is concerned, the somnambulist either talking or hearing what is said to him by others. Many writers mention the instance of a young naval officer, who was signal- lieutenant to Lord Hood, when the British fleet was watching Toulon. He sometimes remained on deck eighteen or twenty hours at a time, watching for signals from the other

ships; he would then retire to his cabin, and fall into a sleep so profound that no ordinary voice could wake him; but if the word "signal" was even whispered in his ear, he was roused instantly. Doctor James Gregory cites the case of a young military officer, going with his regiment in a troopship to a foreign station in 1758, who, when asleep, was peculiarly sensitive to the voices of his familiar acquaintances, and powerfully influenced by anything they said to him. Some of the other young officers, ready for any pranks, would lead him on through all the stages of a duel, or of an impending shipwreck, or of a sanguinary battle: each sentence spoken by them turning his dream (if it may be called a dream) into a particular direction; until at length he would start up in imaginary danger, and, perhaps, awake by falling out of his berth or stumbling over a rope. In 1815, public attention was called to the case of a young girl who sometimes fell asleep in the evening, began to talk, imagined herself to be a clergyman, uttered an extempore prayer, sang a hymn much better than she was accustomed to do at church, carried on rational discourse, and knew nothing about it when she woke. One of the somnambulists, or rather sleep-talkers, who have come under the notice of physicians, was a young lady accustomed to talk after she had been asleep an hour or two. If leading questions were put to her by any one in the room, she would narrate all the events of the preceding day; but her mind, sleeping or waking as we may choose to consider it, disregarded all questions or remarks except such as belonged directly to the train of thought. When she awoke she knew nothing of what had occurred. The Times, in 1823, gave an amusing account of the somnambulism of one George Davis, a youth in the service of a butcher in Lambeth. He fell asleep in his chair one Sunday evening; soon afterwards he rose up in his sleep, with his eyes closed, fetched his whip, put on one spur, went to the stable, failed to find the saddle, and got upon the unsaddled horse. Some members of the family, watching him, asked what he was about to do; he answered that he was "going his rounds." With some difficulty they stopped him, but could not stop his train of thought; for he entered into a wrangle with an imaginary turnpike-man for giving him short change, saying, "Let's have none of your gammon!" Although now dismounted, he whipped and spurred vigorously, as if really going his rounds.

In addition to all these curious varieties of partial activity during sleep, whether shown in the forms of walking, talking, working, or thinking, there are others which have engaged the notice of physicians, and which tend to increase the mysterious complexity of the whole affair. For instance, there are false impressions suggested by real facts, and bearing some rude kind of resemblance to them. A man in bed, who had a water-bottle rather too hot against his feet, dreamed that he was walking on the sulphur-lava of Etna; another, who had unknowingly thrown off the bed-clothes in a chilly night, dreamed that he was wintering in the Arctic regions; a third, who had a blister applied to his head, dreamed that he was being scalped by Indians; while a fourth, who was in a damp bed, dreamed that he was being dragged through a stream. The memory plays some strange tricks with sleep-walkers. A military officer, after a hard day of much marching and little eating, was told that there would be some hot soup ready at midnight; he threw himself down to rest, requesting to be called at the supper hour; next morning he knew nothing of the fact that he had really been called, and had really had his share of the soup. The two portions of sleep had been welded together in his mind, and he was not conscious of the interval that had separated them. Doctor Abercrombie notices the case of a woman who carried on a somnambulist conversation in a remarkable way. She would, when asleep, relate events of the preceding day (like the young lady mentioned in a former paragraph), with this peculiarity: that she repeated everything which she herself had said, but "regularly left intervals in her discourse corresponding to the periods when the other party was supposed to be speaking; and she also left intervals between different conversations, shorter in reality, but corresponding in relative length, to the intervals which had, in fact, taken place." She repeated in her sleep nearly everything which she had uttered during the day, whether good or bad, but left blank spaces of time for everything that had been said to her by other persons. She was scarcely ever known to repeat anything that she had read; the muscular and audible act of speaking was the one thing that reproduced itself in this way—a way likely to be as inconvenient as it was strange. Sleep-walkers avoid accidents wonderfully well, as we have already said, yet not always so. In 1870, the newspapers told of one Job Ed-

wards, a working man at Wolverhampton, who, during a fit of somnambulism, fell out of a third-story window, and was seriously injured. From his known peculiarities, it was inferred that he supposed himself to be getting out of a kitchen window into a back-yard. In this case only a small portion of the man's faculties could have been awake.

THREE ODD LEGENDS OF BERLIN.

"WHEN I reflect upon the superstitious fancies in which our forefathers indulged, and compare them with the vagaries of the so-called spiritualists of the present day, it seems to me that, in one respect at least, the world has not advanced in wisdom. The village ghost, who frightened the peasant, was at any rate supposed to appear for an important purpose—generally for the sake of righting wrong, of protecting innocence, or of punishing crime. The poor old woman, who was laughed at by the free-thinking squire for believing that some defrauded orphan recovered the property from which he had been debarred, through the information generously afforded by some grim lady, who wore extremely rustling silk, might have scoffed in her turn at the manifestation of a departed spirit, who revealed himself to mortal ears merely for the purpose of spelling his name indifferently, with a vast deal of misspent trouble."

Thus spake Laurence, looking amazingly wise. To him, with an approving nod, replied Maximilian: "Quite true; and now we are between four walls, I do not mind confessing that I never entertained that thorough contempt for the apparitions of the old school, which was encouraged, nay, almost enforced, early in the present century. Taught, as I had been, to place faith in a Providence, I never saw how I could consistently reject a narrative as false, merely because it involved the interposition of a supernatural agency."

"Then," sneered Edgar, "you would believe that a story was true, on the strength of the circumstance that it inculcated a good moral? The world, in your opinion, must be very happily constituted."

"You are going too far," remonstrated Laurence; "Maximilian did not mean anything of the kind. He merely intends to assert that we are not so thoroughly acquainted with the economy of the universe, that we have a right absolutely to deny

the possibility of certain phenomena simply because they do not harmonise with the results of our general experience."

"That is the argument of those poor modern spiritualists on whom you look down with such lordly scorn," observed Edgar. "Be consistent at any rate."

"We are perfectly consistent," retorted Maximilian. "We refuse even to investigate the facts offered to our notice by the magi to whom you refer, because the facts are trivial, and in our opinion not worth investigation. However, let me vary this discussion with a narrative which was long current among the people of Berlin."

"A ghost story of the good old school," insinuated Edgar.

"Well," said Maximilian, "it does not in any way refer to a ghost in the ordinary sense of the word; but still it purports to record an instance of supernatural agency, deemed extraordinary in its time. Just at the close of the sixteenth century, when John George was Elector of Brandenburg, three brothers, whose Christian names were Bruno, Michael, and Gotthold, lived in the capital of the present kingdom of Prussia. These brothers were so deeply attached to each other that the emotions experienced by any one of them were almost equally felt by the other two."

"A leash of Corsican brothers," interposed Edgar.

"The youngest brother," proceeded Maximilian, "became desperately enamoured of the daughter of Maestro Rapposi, an Italian, who was the elector's chief Kapellmeister. The maestro lodged in a house belonging to an uncle of the three brothers, and consequently Gotthold had an opportunity of declaring his passion, of which he was not slow to take advantage. His avowal having been heard with favour by the young lady, he lost no time in communicating his good fortune to his brothers, and a consultation was forthwith held as to the best means of obtaining the consent of the father to the union of the lovers. The Italian was very proud of his position, and was not to be approached lightly, and as Bruno, the elder brother, had distinguished himself much by playing on the violin before the elector, and had thus gained the post of second Kapellmeister, he was deemed the most fitting negotiator. Unfortunately, the very deserts of Bruno, on which Gotthold had relied, destroyed his efficiency, for Rapposi saw in the young musician a dangerous rival, and hating him accordingly with a professional hatred, met Bruno's

proposal with a stern declaration that all intercourse between Mademoiselle Rapposi and Gotthold must immediately cease.

"The sight of a public execution," continued Maximilian, "was, in the days of which I am speaking, regarded as a fitting recreation for persons of indubitable respectability, and thus far it was but natural that the Italian maestro and the three brothers found themselves in a dense throng assembled to see the last sentence of the law inflicted on an unfortunate young person, guilty of infanticide. As it happened, they all stood close together, and the attention of the crowd was diverted from the criminal by a loud shriek, followed by the fall of the Italian, who pointed to a knife, which had been plunged up to the hilt into his bosom, and immediately expired. Bruno, who stood nearest to the deceased, was at once arrested on suspicion; and, in spite of his protestations that he had neither struck the blow himself, nor knew in the least who was the assassin, he was speedily sentenced to death. No sooner, however, had the sentence been passed, than each of the remaining two brothers, without communicating together, resolved to save Bruno by an act of self-sacrifice, and accordingly both appeared before the tribunal, each declaring that he was the real murderer. Bruno, to frustrate their generous intentions, belied his former protestations of innocence, and, in his turn, took the crime upon himself. Here, then, was a difficult case, for it was clear that three persons could not have killed a man with one knife, and the perplexed judges referred the case to the elector, who hit upon a curious ordeal as an expedient for ascertaining the truth. He ordered that the three brothers should each carry a linden-tree to a certain churchyard, and plant it with its head downwards, adding that the one whose tree did not grow under these difficult circumstances, should be executed as a murderer."

"It seems as though John George meant to exterminate all three, though he went to work in a roundabout fashion," growled Edgar.

"Not at all," objected Maximilian. "The elector was assured that the Providence to whom he appealed would supernaturally interfere to prevent a manifest injustice. He had the simple faith of our ancestors, who believed that the innocent could indicate their innocence by walking over red-hot plough-shares, and events proved that he was not mistaken."

"Granted the truth of the story," interrupted Edgar.

"The brothers," resumed Maximilian, "proceeded to the designated churchyard, accompanied by all the clergy, the magistracy, and many citizens of Berlin, and then, after many prayers had been said, and many hymns had been sung, they planted their trees, which solemn act performed, they returned home, where they were allowed to remain unguarded."

"Some would have used their liberty to quit Berlin with all possible speed," murmured Edgar; "but of course such was not the case with this band of brothers?"

"It was not," said Maximilian, "and results proved that they were right, for the upper branches of the trees all struck root into the earth, and the original roots were transformed into branches, which instead of growing upwards spread horizontally in rich luxuriance. In less than thirty years they overshadowed the churchyard."

"And they are to be seen now?" asked Edgar.

"No, since that time they have perished," answered Maximilian, "but the brothers were ennobled by the elector as Lords of Linden, and bore the effigy of the marvellous trees on their escutcheon. Gotthold married the Italian's daughter."

"But who, after all, killed the maestro?" inquired Edgar.

"Never did I hear a question so prosaic!" ejaculated Laurence.

"The real murderer," said Maximilian, "was never discovered, but it is supposed that the Italian killed himself, on purpose to imperil the life of his rival."

"If the supposition be correct," remarked Edgar, "here is the most wonderful part of the whole story. Never did I hear so strong an instance of a man cutting off his nose, in order to be revenged on his face. And you mean to say you believe all this?"

"Not at all," answered Laurence. "It is beyond our power to prove the recorded facts. But still, Maximilian has given us a case, where a strong reason for supernatural interposition is adduced—a legend which is consistent with itself."

"Such," modestly remarked Maximilian, "was my intention."

"Well, as one good turn deserves another," said Edgar, "I'll give you a story from Berlin, which, at any rate, has the merit of being more probable than yours, and which refers to a fine house, which, I believe, is still in existence. Frederick the

Great, it seems, to reward a certain citizen for valuable services to the state, built him a handsome house, which was decorated with a number of statues. Another citizen, who lived in the immediate vicinity, regarded with an envious eye the favour shown to his neighbour, and put himself at the head of a charitable movement, with the view of gaining a similar prize. This plan proved to a certain extent successful, as the king built a house for him likewise."

"The great king seems to have been very fond of building houses for his subjects," remarked Laurence.

"You have exactly hit on the truth," retorted Edgar. "He wished to decorate his chosen capital with as many handsome edifices as possible, and therefore he readily availed himself of the pretext offered by the two citizens. Well, when the second house was built, completed, and presented to its future occupant, that unpleasant gentleman gave signs of discontent so manifest that they did not escape the notice of the king, who good-humouredly asked him the cause of his dissatisfaction. The explanation was to the effect that the man felt disappointed because his house was not, like his neighbour's, adorned with statues. Frederick promised to remedy the defect, and on the following day an artist received an order to decorate the grumbler's house with calves' heads, to the number of ninety-nine. 'With these,' said the king, 'I trust he will be satisfied. The hundredth calf's head he will furnish himself.' Now there is a story which points a moral, and in which there is nothing incredible at all. Some of the calves' heads, I am told, are still to be seen, though the entire number has been diminished by the operation of time."

"You have not critically examined the evidence upon which the credibility of this story rests?" inquired Maximilian. "You have merely taken it as you find it, actuated by that love of legends which is common to all three of us."

"Precisely," answered Edgar.

"Well, then," said Maximilian, "in the absence of the very strongest testimony in its favour, I must declare that I find your story, free as it is from all reference to the supernatural, quite as incredible as mine. We are called upon to believe that a king, remarkable for his economy, and, moreover, anxious to beautify his city, went to the trouble and expense of setting up ninety-nine ugly ornaments in a conspicuous place,

merely because he wanted to crack an in-different joke."

"I ought to tell you," said Edgar, somewhat cowed, "that the heads were those not of calves but of sheep. As a symbol of stupidity the calf's head in England answers the purpose of the sheep's head in Germany, and therefore——"

"And therefore you touched up the legend, that the point might not be lost," observed Laurence; "and no doubt it had been touched up by many others before it reached your knowledge. No doubt the originator of the tale was struck by the oddity of the ornaments, and set about inventing a probable cause of their origin."

"It should always be borne in mind," observed Maximilian, "that the monuments with which legends are connected bear very feeble testimony to their truth. The legend professes to account for the monument, but frequently it is the monument that suggested the legend. However, I will tell you another tale from Berlin, the moral purpose of which is much the same as that conveyed by the story of the three brothers. In the time of Frederick William, celebrated as the Great Elector of Brandenburg, that is to say, in the latter half of the seventeenth century, there lived at Berlin a wealthy inn-keeper, with a daughter notable for her beauty, whose hand was sought by Heinrich and Rudolph, two of the elector's body-guard. The damsel preferred Heinrich, who was of a mild, even temper, to Rudolph, whose nature was somewhat stormy; and as the former had ingratiated himself with the inn-keeper by rescuing him from a gang of ruffians, his suit was accepted, and Rudolph retired, internally vowing revenge, and resolving to do mischief at the earliest opportunity. An occasion presented itself, when the betrothed lovers met at a retired spot, and he became a concealed witness of the interview. Inflamed with jealousy, he rushed from his hiding-place as soon as Heinrich had left the spot, thrust his sword into the damsel's bosom, and fled unobserved. Her lifeless body was found soon afterwards, and popular suspicion was divided between the two admirers. On the one hand, Rudolph's disappointment and consequent jealousy were well known; on the other, Heinrich had been the last person seen with the deceased. Both were arrested, but, in accordance with the custom of the age, both were put to the torture, and both protested their innocence. The elector in his perplexity decreed that

each of the parties accused should throw a pair of dice, and that he whose throw was lowest should be deemed guilty of murder."

"Observe the progress of enlightenment in less than a century," exclaimed Edgar. "Our old friend John George, with his inverted linden-trees, was apparently inclined towards the policy of those wise school-masters who, when they could not detect the perpetrator of some mischievous deed, flogged their pupils all round. The great elector, on the other hand, gives somebody a chance of escape, though the luckless thrower may as well be the innocent man as the murderer."

"In both stories the elector," said Maximilian, "is supposed to rely upon Providence, though in one only is miraculous intervention manifestly invoked. The body-guards were all assembled to witness the trial of the dice. For the table stood a drum, near which a coffin was placed, while a reverend gentleman was in attendance to perform the last offices. Rudolph, who began the contest, threw a pair of sixes, and his victory seemed secure. Heinrich, undaunted, implored Heaven to bear witness to his innocence, and, as if in answer to his prayer, one of the dice was split into two pieces, one of which showed a six, and the other an ace, the unbroken die showing a six, and thus making a total of thirteen. Struck by this extraordinary phenomenon, Rudolph at once confessed his guilt, and was sentenced by the elector, not to death, but to perpetual imprisonment."

"The great elector," cried Edgar, "turns out to be better than he promised."

IN A CANOE.

As the sunset dies
I close my eyes,

And see the river winding, winding,
Whither I fled from sunshine blinding,
Bringing with me a mighty folio
And a silver flask of red rosolio,
Threw myself down on the margent cool,
Watched a heron fishing his pool,
Watched the swallows circle and swim.

In my whim

I had forgotten the grand old poet
In his russet coat of Russia leather,
Fragrant with tan of the birch—they grow it
In woods that stretch over leagues together:

From the birch o'erhead I had plucked a bough
To drive away the gnats and midges.
"Ah," I said, "what see I now
Up the stream by the two grey bridges?
Is it a bird so red, so red?"

'Twas the silken smood of a dainty head:

Yes, 'twas you,

Coming down in your gay canoe,
Dainty-sweet and slender-supple,
Beautiful form whose motions couple
The swift and soft. My pulse beats faster,
I will be that maiden's master.

Such my oath :
 Is my darling loth ?
 Down you came by lawn's villa
 As the swans led out their young flotilla ;
 You made the vision of Thames unstable,
 A water-bird from the Realm of Fable,
 Perfect in grace of colour and form,
 With love and the sunset doubly warm.
 As I looked I thought, " Is it only a dream
 Of the magic stream ?"
 But your paddle splashed, your gay silk rustled,
 And the mighty male swan, wild with anger,
 Swept through the reeds, your frail craft hustled,
 Roused me out of my dreamy languor.
 Into the stream I sprang: the bough
 Of birch I used and the poet's folio
 To fright the swan . . . and you, I vow,
 Were glad of a sip of red rosolio.
 Poor little child, so faint, so faint !
 But we very soon became well acquaint ;
 Soon you knew
 You had found your fate in your gay canoe.
 Not oft, I guess, does the sudden capture
 Of a water-bird produce such rapture :
 But I felt the glory of life grow vaster
 As I became that maiden's master.

PROTECTIVE MIMICRY.

IN our article on Protective Resemblances* we endeavoured to show how useful a special colouring is to many animals, and how easily it is produced by the application of well-known Darwinian laws.

In the present paper we enter upon a new form of protective agency, and have to consider creatures whose colours are marked and conspicuous, and which completely resemble some other creature of a totally different group, while they differ widely in outward appearance from those to which, in structure and organisation, they are in reality most closely allied. This resemblance of one animal to another is of precisely the same essential nature as the resemblance, already noticed, to a leaf or to a dead twig. In the one case the bird will not attack the leaf or twig, and so the disguise is a safeguard ; in the other case, for various reasons, presently to be mentioned, the creature resembled is not attacked by the various enemies of its order, and the creature resembling it has an equal safeguard.

Mr. Bates was the first naturalist who specially devoted his attention to the subject of mimicry in animals, although many observers had noticed individual cases of it. " Mimetic analogies," he observes, " are resemblances in external appearance, shape, and colour, between members of widely distinct families. An idea of what is meant may be formed by supposing a pigeon to

exist with the general figure and plumage of a hawk."

He was led to the consideration of this group of phenomena, by his observations on certain butterflies, inhabiting the forests on the banks of the Amazon. There is an extensive family of these insects, the Heliconidæ, which are almost always more abundant in these regions than any other butterflies. They are distinguished by very elongate wings, body, and antennæ, and are exceedingly beautiful and varied in their colours ; spots, and patches of yellow, red, or pure white, upon a black, blue, or brown ground, being the most general. They fly slowly and weakly, and yet, although they are so conspicuously coloured, and do not conceal themselves during repose, and could so readily be caught by birds, they are apparently safe from all attacks. This immunity is probably due to their possessing a strong, pungent, semi-aromatic or medicinal odour, which pervades all their juices, and would thus render them disgusting to birds, lizards, and other insectivorous animals. In the region where this family of insects is found there are also white butterflies, forming the family Pieridæ (to which our cabbage butterfly belongs), in which is a genus (*Leptalis*), some species of which are white, like their allies, while the majority exactly resemble the Heliconidæ in the form and colouring of the wings, although the two families differ as widely in their structural character as the carnivora and the ruminantia among quadrupeds. Yet the resemblance between a species of the one family with a species of the other family was often so great that Mr. Bates and Mr. Wallace, when they were fellow-travellers in the Amazon valley, were often deceived at the time of capture, and, although experienced entomologists, did not discover the distinctness of the two insects until they made a more complete examination of them. During his eleven years' residence in that region, Mr. Bates found a number of species of *Leptalis*, each of which was a more or less exact copy of one of the Heliconidæ of the district, and the imitation is carried out in a wonderful degree in form as well as in colouring. The wings, the antennæ, and the body of the mimickers have become elongated, so as to correspond with the peculiar and unusual condition in which they exist in the insects they resemble. The different genera of the family of Heliconidæ have special types of colouring. In one genus the wings are of a rich

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. v., p. 469.

semi-transparent brown, banded with black and yellow; in another they are translucent like horn, and with black transverse bands; while in a third the wings are more or less transparent, with black veins and borders, and often with bands of orange-red. All these different forms are mimicked by various species of *Leptalis*, every spot and band, and each degree of transparency, being exactly reproduced. Moreover, to secure all possible protection, the habits of these species of *Leptalis* have undergone modifications simultaneously with their colouring, for they adopt the same mode of flight, and frequent the same spots as their models, and, as the mimickers are very scarce as compared with the group they resemble (probably in the ratio of one to one thousand), there is little chance of their being detected by their enemies.

Precisely corresponding observations have been made in the tropical regions of the Old World. The *Danaidæ* of Africa and Southern Asia, and the *Acraïdæ*, common to the tropics generally, are arranged by the highest authorities in the same great group with the *Heliconidæ*, which are found only in South America. The two former families resemble the latter not only in general form, structure, and habits, but in possessing the same protective odour, although they are not so varied in colour. The insects which mimic them belong to one or other of the genera *Papilio* or *Diadema*. Mr. Trimen, in his paper on *Mimetic Analogies among African Butterflies*, published in the *Transactions of the Linnean Society*, for 1868, gives a list of no less than sixteen species of *Diadema* and its allies, and ten of *Papilio*, which in their colour and markings are perfect imitations of species of *Danaus* or *Acraea*, which inhabit the same districts.

In India and the Malay Archipelago we have analogous cases of *Papilios* mimicking various species of *Danaus* and *Diadema*; and in Mr. Wallace's charming volumes on the natural history of the last-named region there is a remarkable case of one species of *Papilio* mimicking another species of the same genus.

Mimicry occurs almost exclusively in the tropics, where the forms of life are most abundant, especially in so far as the insect world is concerned. Two instances have, however, been observed in the temperate region, namely, one in North America and one in England. It will suffice to notice the latter. There is a very common white moth, a species of *Spilosoma*, which is

always rejected by young turkeys, who feed greedily on hundreds of other moths. Mr. Stainton—to whom we are indebted for our knowledge of this fact—states that he has seen each bird in succession take hold of this moth and throw it down again, as if it were too nasty to eat. Mr. Jenner Weir has also found that this moth is refused by the bullfinch, chaffinch, yellow-hammer, and red-bunting, while the robin only takes it "after much hesitation," which probably means when it is extremely hungry. Hence, while the conspicuous colour of this moth would make it an easy prey, it clearly possesses immunity from attack, probably in consequence of its taste being disagreeable to birds. Now, there is another moth, a species of *Diaphora*, which appears about the same time, and whose female only is white; it is of the same size as that we have been describing, pretty closely resembles it in the dusk, and is much less common. Here, then, we have species of two perfectly different genera acting apparently as models and mimickers.

In all the cases we have yet adduced we have found *Lepidoptera* mimicking other species of the same order which possess an immunity of attack from birds, but there are several instances in which *lepidopterous* insects assume the external form of bees and wasps, belonging to a perfectly different order, the *Hymenoptera*. The resemblance is often so obvious, as in the case of certain day-flying clear-winged moths, to give rise to such specific names as *apiformis*, *bombiforme*, *vespiforme*, *crabroniforme*, and many others; all indicating a resemblance to *hymenopterous* insects, as a honey-bee, a humble-bee, a wasp, or a hornet. In this country there are many of these cases of mimicry; and in India there are several species which have the hind legs very broad and extremely hairy, so as exactly to imitate the brush-legged bees which abound in the same country. Although the *Lepidoptera* afford the most obvious and remarkable cases of mimicry, examples of more or less interest are to be found in almost every order of insects. The *Coleoptera* (or beetles) which imitate other beetles of distinct groups, are very numerous in the tropics, where this order is most abundantly distributed. Much as in the case of the *Lepidoptera*, the *Coleoptera* which are imitated always have a special protection, which leads to immunity from attacks by insectivorous birds. Some have a disgusting smell and taste, others have a covering of such stony hardness that they cannot

be crushed or digested; while a third set are very active, and armed with powerful jaws, as well as having some disagreeable secretion.

Many of the soft-winged beetles (Malacoderms) are excessively abundant, and seem to have some special protection (probably a disgusting taste), since many other species often strikingly resemble them. Mr. Wallace mentions cases of various Longicorn beetles in Jamaica, Australia, and the Malay Islands which so successfully mimic different species of Malacoderms "as completely to puzzle the collector on every fresh occasion of capturing them." As further evidence that this group enjoys a special immunity, it may be mentioned that Mr. Jenner Weir, who keeps a variety of small birds, finds that none of them will touch our common "soldiers and sailors." Passing over the numerous other cases, adduced by Mr. Wallace and Mr. Bates, of Coleoptera mimicking other Coleoptera, we shall notice one or two remarkable examples of beetles imitating other insects. There is a South American Longicorn beetle, *Charis melipona*, which receives its specific name from its striking resemblance to a small bee of the genus *Melipona*, the beetle having the thorax and body densely hairy like the bee, and the legs tufted in a manner most unusual amongst the Coleoptera. Another Longicorn discovered by Mr. Bates in the same region has the abdomen banded with yellow, and is altogether so like a small common wasp of the genus *Odynerus* that he was afraid to take it out of his net with his fingers for fear of being stung. It has hence received the name of *Odontocera odyneroides*. Other cases have been observed in which Longicorn beetles resemble sand-flies, ants, and shielded bugs.

Amongst the Orthoptera there is a kind of cricket from the Philippine Islands, which is so exactly like one of the tiger beetles as for a considerable time to deceive so profound an entomologist as Professor Westwood. Both insects run along the trunks of trees, the models being abundant, and the mimickers, as usual, very rare. Mr. Bates has since met with a parallel case in the Amazon region, in which a species of locust mimicked a tiger-beetle, and was found on the same trees that the latter frequented. He likewise found in the same region a species of Mantis which exactly resembled the white ants on which it fed, as well as several species of crickets which were wonderful imitations of dif-

ferent sand-wasps of large size, that provision their nests with these insects.

There are many known cases of Diptera, or (two-winged) Flies, that closely resemble wasps and bees, and are doubtless protected by the resemblance. In South America there are several species of large flies with dark wings and metallic blue elongated bodies resembling the large stinging Sphegidæ; and an enormous fly, of the genus *Asilus*, has black-banded wings, and the abdomen tipped with orange, so as exactly to resemble a beautiful bee found in the same region. In our own country there are species of *Bombylius*, a genus of the order Diptera, which are almost exactly like bees. The mimicry here is apparently for a double object, namely, protection and concealment or disguise. There are a number of parasitic flies whose larvæ prey on the larvæ of bees, and most of these flies are exactly like the species of bees on whose grubs they feed, so that they can enter their nests and deposit their eggs without exciting suspicion. There are also bees that mimic other bees for similar unlawful objects. These "cuckoo" bees, which are parasitic on other genera, were found by Mr. Bates in abundance on the Amazon, and "all wore the livery of working bees peculiar to the same country."

In the article on Protective Resemblances reference was made to the preservative agency of colouring in the case of various caterpillars. It is, however, a well-known fact that, in a very large number of cases, these creatures are of bright colours, and often possess markings that render them specially visible. Mr. Wallace has long held the view that birds knew, from experience or instinct, that brilliantly coloured caterpillars were, as in the case of the butterflies and beetles already mentioned, for some reason unfit for food. This view has been, to a great extent, confirmed by the researches of Mr. Jenner Weir, communicated in 1869 to the Entomological Society. He found that a considerable number of insectivorous British birds, which he kept in his aviary, uniformly rejected hairy caterpillars. The spiny larvæ of the Tortoise-shell and Peacock butterflies were equally rejected. In both these cases Mr. Weir thinks that it is the disagreeable taste, and not the hairs or spines, that led to their rejection, because they were similarly avoided in the very young stage, before the hairs or spines were developed. The latter would seem to be the mere signs of uneat-ability. Smooth, gaily coloured cater-

pillars, which never conceal themselves, as those of the Magpie moth, the Burnet moth, &c., were then offered to the birds, sometimes alone and sometimes mixed with other larvæ, but in every case they were left unnoticed. The last set of experiments was made on dull-coloured and protected larvæ, and it was found that "all caterpillars whose habits are nocturnal, which are dull-coloured, with fleshy bodies and smooth skins, are eaten with the greatest avidity; every species of green caterpillar is also much relished, and larvæ, resembling twigs as they stand out from the plant, are invariably eaten." Mr. Butler, of the British Museum, has shown that lizards, frogs, and spiders have exactly the same likes and dislikes as Mr. Weir's little birds. Lizards, that would fight with and finally devour humble-bees and frogs, which would catch the bees flying over their heads, and swallow them regardless of their stings, would always drop with disgust one of the objectionable caterpillars, although they frequently seized them, as it were, by accident. Hence, as a general rule, gaudily coloured caterpillars are protected by an agency which renders mimicry in their case unnecessary, and yet, strangely enough, the most extraordinary instance of imitation Mr. Bates ever met with occurred in one of these creatures inhabiting the Amazon valley. "A very large caterpillar," he observes, "stretched itself from amidst the foliage of a tree which I was one day examining, and startled me by its resemblance to a small snake. The first three segments behind the head were dilatable at the will of the insect, and had on each side a large black pupillated spot, which resembled the eye of the reptile; it was a poisonous or viperine species mimicked, and not an innocuous or colubrine snake. This was proved by the imitation of the keeled scales on the crown, which was produced by the recumbent feet as the caterpillar threw itself backwards. I carried it off, and alarmed every one in the village to whom I showed it. It unfortunately died before reaching the adult state."

In the Arachnidans, or spiders, a few cases of mimicry have been observed by Mr. Bates in his explorations of the Amazon valley. He describes a genus of small spiders, which feed on ants, and are exactly like the prey on which they live, and states that some are exactly like flower-buds, and take their station in the axils of leaves, where they remain motionless, waiting for the approach of their victims.

Our cases of mimicry are now drawing

to a close, as we approach the vertebrate sub-kingdom. While in the animals we have hitherto examined (insects and spiders) almost any amount of change of form and appearance may take place without any essential internal modifications; in the vertebrata, on the other hand, the outer form is almost entirely dependent on the internal skeleton; it cannot be rapidly modified by variation, nor does the thin and flexible integument admit of the development of such marvellous protuberances, as are often seen in insects. Moreover, the number of species of each group in the same country is always comparatively small, and the chances of a first accidental variation in the right direction are much diminished. In one group of the vertebrata, the snakes, there is, however, such general similarity of form that a very slight modification, if accompanied by identity of colour, would produce the necessary degree of resemblance. In tropical America there are many species of the numerous genus *Elops*, which are ornamented with certain brilliant colours in a manner not exhibited by snakes in any other part of the world. The ground colour is of a bright red, on which are black bands of various breadths, and sometimes divided into two or three by yellow rings. In the same country can be found several genera of harmless snakes, having no affinity with the genus *Elops*, but coloured exactly the same. There are at least three species of *Elops* which are thus closely imitated by harmless snakes, living in the same localities. And, what makes the case still stranger, there is in South America another perfectly distinct genus of snakes, *Oxyropus*, doubtfully venomous, which has the same curious distribution of colours (namely, variously arranged rings of yellow and black on a red ground), and which inhabit the same districts. In all these cases no one but a naturalist could discover which was a harmless and which a poisonous species, their size, form, and colour being so much alike.

Mr. Wallace regards many of the small Tree-frogs as true mimickers. In the course of his explorations in the tropics he has often been unable at first sight to distinguish them from beetles and other insects sitting upon leaves.

In birds, in addition to various cases of imperfect mimicry, such as the resemblance of the cuckoos—a weak and defenceless group—to hawks, there are in tropical regions a few known cases of mimicry as

perfect as those which are presented by insects. In Australia and the Moluccas there is a genus of honey-suckers called *Tropidorhynchus*, good sized birds, very strong and active, having powerful grasping claws, and long, curved, sharp beaks. They assemble together in groups and small flocks, and they have a very loud bawling note, which can be heard at a great distance, and serves to collect a large number together in time of danger. They are very plentiful and very pugnacious, frequently driving away crows and even hawks. They are all of rather dull and obscure colours. Now in the same countries there is a group of orioles, forming the genus *Mimeta*, much weaker birds, which have lost the gray colouring of their allies, the golden orioles, being usually olive-green or brown; and in several cases these most curiously resemble the *Tropidorhynchus* of the same island. In the island of Bouru there is a species of honey-sucker which is so closely imitated by a species of oriole, that on a superficial examination the birds appear identical, although they have important structural differences, and cannot be placed near each other in any natural arrangement. In the island of Ceram there are allied species of both genera, in which the imitation is equally complete, and in two other islands, Timor and Morty, there is an approximation in species of the two genera towards mimicry, although it is not so perfect as in the preceding cases. In three of these four cases the pairs that resemble each other are found together in the same island, to which they are peculiar. In all four cases the honey-sucker is rather larger than the oriole, but the difference is not beyond what occurs normally in the variation in species, and the two genera are somewhat alike in form and proportion. It is obviously to the advantage of the weak oriole to be mistaken for a strong, pugnacious honey-sucker, who can soon collect its allies by its noisy outcries.

In the neighbourhood of Rio Janeiro is an insect-eating hawk, a *Harpagus*, and a bird-eating hawk, an *Accipiter*, which closely resembles it. Both, says Mr. Salvin, who was the first to notice this instance of mimicry, are of the same ashy tint beneath, with the thighs and under wing-coverts reddish brown, so that when on the wing, and seen from below, they are undistinguishable. The *Accipiter* has, however, a far wider range than the *Harpagus*, and in the region where the former alone occurs, the resemblance ceases, the under wing-coverts varying to white. From this ob-

ervation it would seem that the *Accipiter* assumes the red-brown colour, with the view of being mistaken for the insect-eating *Harpagus*, of which birds are not afraid, and throws off its disguise when it can no longer be of service.

Amongst mammals there is only one known case of true mimicry, and for our acquaintance with it we have again to acknowledge our obligations to Mr. Wallace. In the course of his researches into the natural history of the Malay Archipelago, he met with an insectivorous genus, *Cladobates*, of which several species very closely resemble squirrels. "The size is about the same, the long bushy tail is carried in the same way, and the colours are very similar. In this case the use of the resemblance must be to enable the *Cladobates* to approach the insects or small birds on which it feeds, under the disguise of the harmless, fruit-eating squirrel."

As our chief object has been rather to lay before our readers the most remarkable phenomena of mimicry than to theorise on the causes inducing it, we have little left to add to this article. It is sufficient here to remark that while, until lately, the resemblances we have been describing were regarded as accidental, or as instances of the "curious analogies" in nature which must be wondered at, but could not be explained, they have recently multiplied to such an enormous extent as to force themselves on the attention of naturalists, and, as the nature of the resemblances has been more carefully studied, it has been found that they are often carried out into such minute details as almost to imply a purpose of deceiving the observer. We are indebted to the patient researches of Mr. Wallace for the discovery of certain definite laws or conclusions that all these phenomena seem regularly to follow, which again all indicate their dependence on the more general law of the Survival of the Fittest, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life. These laws, which will in future be probably known as Wallace's Laws of Mimicry, have, as we think our readers will admit, a firm foundation on the accumulated facts that have been adduced in the preceding pages.

The first law is, that almost without exception the animals (or the groups) which resemble each other inhabit the same country, and the same districts, and in most cases are to be found together on the very same spot.

The second law is, that these resemblances are not indiscriminate, but that the animals

resembled are limited to certain groups, which in every case are abundant in species and individuals, and can usually be found to have some special protection.

The third law is, that the species which resemble or "mimic" these dominant groups are comparatively less abundant in individuals, and are often very rare.

When the natural history of the tropics shall have been further studied on the spot by future observers, with a full appreciation of what has been already done in this department, we cannot doubt that marvellous discoveries will be made. "The varied ways," says Mr. Wallace, "in which the colouring and form of animals serve for their protection, their strange disguises as vegetable or mineral substances, their wonderful mimicry of other beings, offer an almost unworked and inexhaustible field of discovery for the zoologist, and will assuredly throw much light on the laws and conditions which have resulted in the wonderful variety of colour, shade, and marking which constitutes one of the most pleasing characteristics of the animal world, but the immediate causes of which it has hitherto been most difficult to explain."

TWO SIDES OF A STORY.

NED'S FIRST CHAPTER. OUR COURTSHIP.

In sketching this little history, I do not reveal my own name, but my wife shall be called Gretchen, her own sweet name which she brought with her from Germany.

I was eighteen years old when I first knew Gretchen, and my position in the world was curious enough. I was an engraver's apprentice, and working might and main for independence. I had been brought up on the charity of a whimsical relative, to whose memory I am grateful, though his oddities caused to some extent the trouble of after years. He had a fine house at the West-end of London, where he lived with great magnificence. He had neither wife nor child, and the thing that he hated worst in the world was a woman. When I was quite a little child he used to stand me between his knees, and make me promise never to marry. He had married himself, and evil had come of it. At five years old I had vowed to lead a single life.

He kept me at a good school till I was sixteen years of age. During all this time he used to invite me often to spend a Sunday with him. His Sundays he spent in retirement, and we dined tête-à-tête. He was a hard old cynic, and he amused himself by startling my young simplicity with

his stories of the world. When I had reached my sixteenth year he found that I was an idle young scapegrace, and had robbed him long enough. It was high time I was learning how to earn my bread. I unfolded to him eagerly my dear wish to be an artist. But he pooh-poohed all that, yet compromised the matter, and apprenticed me to an engraver.

He allowed me so much a week until such a time as I might find myself clever enough to earn my own support. I had nothing to spare for idleness, but I never lacked a meal. I had a humble lodging, and a second suit of clothes. I had a shelf stocked with books, picked up from time to time at the book-stalls, chiefly of art and history, besides a goodly group of the poets. At evening, when, with my day's work done, I conned one of these over my fire, there was not a happier lad in all her Majesty's dominions. My days, too, were pleasant, for my work was congenial, though it was not all that I aspired to. I liked my master, an enthusiast in his art, a good master to me, and a gentle companion. We sat in a crooked room, at the top of a high house, in one of the narrowest streets in the heart of London. We had one window, which, though never opened, commanded a view of many chimney-pots. We had a stove, and a table, and a cupboard, and some benches. It was a bare little workshop; but I peer back into its corners with reverence and love, for it was there I first met Gretchen.

She came with her father one November day. I remember distinctly how angry I felt when I saw a woman in the room. She was all covered up in a black cloak and bonnet, and she hung back behind her father, so that I could not see her face. I did not want to see it, and bit my lips with annoyance as I bent over my work, and heard the audacious errand on which the visitors were come. Nevertheless, my master listened to the request of these intruders, and, after some hesitation, agreed to their proposal. From that day forth there were to be two pupils instead of one in our workroom.

Next morning I came in bad humour to my work. I looked askance at the chair placed between mine and my master's, thinking discontentedly that now our pleasant conversations were at an end. When I heard the stranger coming, I would not raise my eyes. My master greeted her kindly, and showed her a peg in the cupboard where she might hang her cloak and bonnet. She was coming out of the shadows

of the corner when I looked up. I saw a tender, pale, child-like face, with a sweet, weary mouth, and large white eyelids drooping as if with the weight of habitual patience. She had a supple little figure, clad in a russet-coloured gown of the plainest material. There was a strange, unconscious expression of sorrow in the whole air of the young creature, and yet there was a natural radiance about her which assured me that a smile could make her shine like a sunbeam. A heap of smooth gold hair lay above her white brows, and two thick gold braids half covered her ears. Her lips, though somewhat bleached, had a soft touch of vermilion just where they parted, and her cheeks were so fair and dimpled, that it seemed as if some momentary fear must have driven the laugh and rose-tinge out of her face.

My dislike seemed to die a sudden death when I saw Gretchen coming toward me out of the corner. I no longer grudged her the seat between me and my master, nor did I feel that there must be an end of all pleasant conversation. I felt eager to talk, and to make my master talk, so that she might be led to forget her shyness, and to listen and speak. She listened very readily, and in time she spoke. The winter days fled swiftly while Gretchen's true self became slowly revealed to the knowledge of us, her friends. Gradually the genial nature threw off the cloud of reserve and depression that had obscured it. Day by day a little less of the shadow came with her face to our busy table, and the happy soul within her shone more fearlessly in her eyes. And at last Gretchen appeared before us, in the true and vivid colours with which Nature had illumined her.

She was but sixteen, and I eighteen. We were girl and boy, though I had a man's ambition, and she had all the cares of a woman upon her shoulders. Being daily companions, we soon became friends. She talked to me freely about everything but her home, yet I did not notice this, being content that she seemed happy in our workroom. She was an apt pupil, and her delicate work made me ashamed of my more clumsy fingers. We had many a merry joke over this, and many a conference as to the ways and means by which I was to win fame as an artist. I no longer thought it an odd thing that my master should take a girl as an apprentice. We felt the comfort of her presence in more ways than one. If she came to work ten minutes earlier than usual in the morning, she would spend the time of waiting in

making the ragged room more pleasant for the day. The fire was made bright, and the hearth was swept clean, and waste paper made away with, and books put in their places. Our mid-day cup of tea was prepared with a careful hand.

Her love of the beautiful was as ardent as my own, and her feminine way of viewing things had a delightful charm of novelty to me. She was distrustful of herself, and liked being led, but her fancy was so rich, and her taste so perfect, that it was delightful to teach her, and helpful to learn with her. I think we two young things were as happy in our workroom, as it is possible for mere mortals to be. In spite of our meagre surroundings, we lived in a charmed atmosphere. Scraps of pictures were always floating round us, and things of beauty, finished and unfinished, always passing through our hands. Our master impressed upon Gretchen the assurance that she had ability to do well in course of time at the work which she had undertaken, if only she would be patient and persevered to the end. Patient! It seemed an absurdity to talk to Gretchen about patience. Her steady blue eye was brimming full of it. It lay firm at the foundation of her nature. But perseverance? Even I owned to myself with sorrow that in this might Gretchen fail. For there were times when she was restless and nervous over her work, and days when she stayed away, and other days when she begged hard for a little work to do at home, so that she might have an excuse for staying away from the workroom. It is true that she had always a reason for such irregularity—her father was not well, or her sisters were in need of her. But I knew little of home life, and looked upon these reasons as mere excuses. These were the only occasions on which I was angry at our Gretchen, and I wondered at our master that he tolerated this fault. But my master was wiser than I, and though not so absorbed in worship of Gretchen as was his pupil, he had far more penetration as to her difficulties.

It had never occurred to me to think of Gretchen in her home. I knew so little of natural ties that my mind never pictured to me the scenes of family life. She was our Gretchen, and her place was in our workroom. Anything that took her from it must be wrong in the extreme; any one who disputed our right to her must be impertinent. It was my master who first lifted for me a corner of the veil that hid Gretchen's other life.

One day she absented herself according to arrangement, and when the next morning came, again she did not appear. I sulked all day. My master, too, was unusually silent. He was busy over some delicate work, but when darkness began to come on, he laid it aside and spoke.

"Lance," he said, "I am uneasy about our little friend Gretchen."

"Uneasy about her!" I said, prepared to defend her if he accused her of idleness, as I almost expected he must do.

"Yes; I fear her father is a scamp. And she has two sisters to battle with the world for. Somebody must be ill, I think, or she would not stay away from us two days running."

I dropped my graver, and sat gazing at my master. Stupid that I was, such an idea as this had never entered my mind. Gretchen in trouble in some unknown corner of London! Gretchen's father a scamp! Who then was there to protect her? And she had been sitting beside me all these months and I had not been aware of it.

"Her father!" I stammered. I remembered the tall, showily dressed, rather shabby-looking man who had brought her to our place.

"Yes, I have heard something about him by the merest chance. I have heard him spoken of as having had to fly from Homburg, where he lived by the gaming-table. What he is doing in London I do not know. I believe there is no mother. Is the girl always silent as to her family affairs?"

"Always to me," I said, and relapsed into bitter silence.

"After all there may be nothing wrong, and she may be with us to-morrow," were my master's last words to me as we parted in the Strand going home that evening. I spent a restless night. My books were all stupid. My fire would not burn, and the rain drifted drearily on my windows. In the morning I could scarcely eat my breakfast for impatience, and set out towards the workroom an hour earlier than usual. I could not get in so early, and walked about the streets, scowling at every tall man who had an air like Gretchen's father. In the end I was rather late arriving to work, and running up our narrow stairs nearly stumbled over Gretchen.

I did not rush at her with questions as I longed to do, but I said, "Oh, you have come back!" and drew a long breath of relief. Her father had not been well, but was better; and she was sorry to say there

was very little done of the work she had had at home.

After this there seemed to me to be two Gretchens, the happy one who sat between us every day, and the other about whom there was a mystery of trouble. I began to notice sometimes a cloud on her face when she arrived in the mornings, an air of sorrowful quiet, which gradually wore away as the beloved occupation engaged all her attention. Her pleasant laugh and word grew more rare. I tried to think at first that I only fancied this, because my thoughts were always running in the track which had been opened to them by my master's remarks. When Gretchen said good-night to me in the Strand of an evening, I often followed her for a mile or more on her way, keeping the little black bonnet in view. It then seemed to me that she was travelling away into a land of mist and trouble into which I dared not track her. I returned to my own lodging and laid plans all night for the discovery and destruction of her special grief or care. I often went to work in the morning resolved to gain some information as to her life at home. But I feared to give her pain. There was a delicate pride about her which I could not bear to hurt. And in spite of her friendliness I was daunted by the fear that she might not think me sufficiently privileged to be taken into confidence, or allowed to offer help.

I knew that her home was a cottage in some east-lying suburb. A feeling of honour prevented me from following her to the place. But, towards the spring, I cheated myself into thinking that it was rational I should wish for a longer walk in my evenings and my mornings. Eastern air would be good for a certain restlessness which now worried me, so I left my lodging and settled myself in the neighbourhood of Gretchen's cottage. When I told Gretchen of the change she coloured and looked troubled. And this vexed me. And for some time I carefully avoided meeting her, or even passing by her home.

One day no Gretchen arrived at the workroom. I had noticed her looking downcast for some days past, and armed with a message from our master I set out to seek for her in her cottage. I found it a very little house, and very poor and dreary-looking. It was early in the morning, before my walk to town. I was taken for the milkman, and Gretchen opened the door. She was in a very shabby old gown, not the pretty russet one which she wore in the workroom, and she wore a coarse apron,

and her sleeves were rolled up above her pretty pink elbows. Her face burned up with confusion when she saw me, but it quickly paled again, and she regained her self-possession.

"Oh, Mr. Lance, I am so sorry for staying away. Is Mr. Jackson displeased?"

"No, not displeased; but he is anxious about you. He feared you might be sick."

"No, not I. But we have sickness. Won't you come in?" She gave the invitation reluctantly, and I felt that perhaps I ought not to go in. But I was eager to know whether I could help her or not.

It was a sad little room into which she ushered me, with a pinched look of poverty about it, in spite of darns and patches and much cleanliness. There was some fire, however, and a great deal of neatness. At one end of the room an old sofa had been turned into a temporary bed.

"Fan has met with an accident," said Gretchen, as a little figure stirred on the couch. My eyes having got used to the shaded light, I saw a small bandaged head, and one half of a very lovely little face.

"Who is it, Gretchen?" asked a soft young voice, with a note in it like the music of a reed. "If it's the taxman you mustn't let him in. If Kitty were here she would frighten him away."

"Hush, darling! It is not the taxman. It is my friend Mr. Lance."

"Is it? I am so glad. Ah! dear old Gretchen, can you not let me see him?"

"I don't know, darling. I am so afraid of hurting you."

She shifted the bandage very gently, so that one velvet-like brown eye became free. A drop of blood trickled from the forehead, and dropped down the cheek. Gretchen shuddered as she wiped it away, and her cheeks grew a shade paler.

The little one fixed that one bright eye on me, and caught my hand in hers.

"I am glad you have come," she said. "I have been watching for you so long. You have stopped away till you are quite a grown man. Gretchen told us at first that you were a boy."

The door was here pushed open, and another young girl came in. She was as tall as Gretchen, and looked almost as old. She was wonderfully pretty and brilliant, but somewhat hard and defiant-looking.

"This is Mr. Lance, Kitty," said Gretchen.

"Always glad to see a friend," said Kitty, dashing off her bonnet. "They are very rare here."

I was a little disconcerted by her off-hand manner, but I said to the effect that

I was sorry to find that her sister had met with an accident.

"Oh!" cried Kitty, "there was no accident at all. It was father who knocked her down."

"Kitty, Kitty!" cried the little one from the bed.

"Oh, Kitty!" cried Gretchen, sinking her head with a sob of shame upon Fan's pillow.

"There, there, Gretchen! Don't make a scene!" said Kitty, unabashed. "What's the use of pretending? If Mr. Lance comes here often he'll see plenty of it; and if he don't come often he had better have stayed away. Chance visitors do us no good that I could ever see. Cheer up now, Gretchen! If father don't do anything for us there are other folks that will. Lady Bernard gave me that, and we'll have meat for our dinner!"

And Kitty flung a half-sovereign into her sister's lap. I thought at the time that it might be payment for work. But later I heard more of Lady Bernard.

The money slipped off Gretchen's lap, and rolled away into a corner. Gretchen raised her head again, and looked up, so crushed and ashamed that my heart ached for her. She put her hand in little Fan's, and looked me piteously in the face.

"Don't mind Kitty, please," she said; "she means no harm. And it was an accident all the same. Father did not do it intentionally."

Kitty tossed her head, and glanced at her elder sister with scorn and pity.

"That's you, Gretchen!" she cried. "Keep up a fair appearance, and suffer, suffer, till the flesh drops off your bones! That's your way we know, and you are teaching it to Fan; but I tell you very plainly that it's not going to be mine. And what's more, if you stick to it we'll all be in the graveyard before a year. At least I may be able to make some slight shift for myself; but I don't see anything better for you and Fan."

"Oh, Kitty!" moaned poor Gretchen.

"Oh, Kitty, Mr. Lance!"

"Bother Mr. Lance!" cried the outspoken Kitty. "If he can't bear to hear of it, then we don't want to see him. If it's good enough for us to bear with every day, it won't kill him just to know of it. However, I don't want to tease you, so I'll go and buy the dinner."

And Kitty picked her half-sovereign out of the corner where it lay, and tied on her bonnet again, and was gone.

I turned as she disappeared and caught that bright brown eye of Fan's fixed

eagerly on my face. Gretchen was weeping silently by the bedside.

"Little Fan," I said, "you must comfort your sister. Kitty has been very naughty, and has vexed her."

"No," said Fan, thoughtfully, "Kitty does not mean to be naughty. She has not got kind ways; but she can't help it."

"Why be ashamed of poverty?" I said to Gretchen, as she dried away her tears, and looked ready to be talked to. "I am poor. More than half the world is poor."

"Oh, I am not ashamed of it," she said, brightening, as I could see, because I had passed over the deeper agony of her father's ill-conduct. "It is not our fault, and we get along somehow. Father has not much for us, and girls need a great deal. But by-and-bye I shall be able to earn something respectable. And we shall have a better home, and Fan will go to school."

I left her that morning, promising to bring her some work which she might do at home. I could easily understand that with such a father, and with only Kitty to leave as mistress of the house, poor Gretchen must quit her home with an uneasy heart. I became a frequent visitor at the cottage, early in the mornings, when the father was not to be seen. I dreaded meeting him, and it was long before I ventured to come in the evening. It was enough that I was able to be useful to the three little sisters. With Kitty's aid I did many a little service which else I could not have accomplished. For there was soon a good understanding between me and Miss Kitty. Kitty knew from the first that I wished to help; and I knew as well that Kitty only valued me in proportion to the help I was able to give.

After a time Gretchen was able to return to her work, and Fan went about looking as pale as a spirit, and with a scar on her brow. The spring evenings were getting long and clear, and instead of poring over my books and fire, I was fond of wandering about the roads, not feeling ready for sleep until I had passed Gretchen's cottage some half-dozen times, and gazed at the lighted windows, and seen the shadows on the blinds. More than once I had seen the father stagger across the little threshold which was so sacred in my eyes. Many a time I felt inclined to fly at the wretch's throat, and punish him for his iniquity. But after all he was Gretchen's father.

I used to lean on the little gate, holding my breath intently, and listening for cries. Once I fancied I heard weeping, but the wind was sighing through the newly-

budding poplars down the road; and I could not be certain. I walked up and down before the cottage all that night. I used to think that if he ever hurt Gretchen I would kill him.

In the mean time Gretchen kept pretty steadily to her work, and we should have had happy days in the workroom, had it not been for the scene that lay in the background of our thoughts. I fancied now that I could read Gretchen's face, that I could know when the trouble at night had been very heavy, or when a special fear was hanging over her.

One night there was a full moon, round and clear, and a sort of hushed expectation of the summer that was coming was hanging about the half-clad hedges and trees, and floating in the air with the breath of the fresh, yielding earth, whose bosom teemed with flowers that had not yet seen the light. There was an air of exceeding peace and promise about the night. I strolled down the road, and passed Gretchen's cottage. All there was still. After lingering a little about the gate I turned up the road, on the way towards London.

There was a tavern on the roadside, about a mile from the cottage, just where the road became a street, and wandered away and lost itself in the city. I had often passed it when coming home by this way of an evening, and seen idlers crowding into it, and lounging about its doors. It was by this time very late at night, yet the blood-red lantern still burned over the door, and a knot of disreputable-looking characters still clustered under its glare. While some distance away I saw a very young girl go up to this group and scan the faces timidly, then slip through the crowd into the bar. "What a place!" I thought, "for such a girl, at such an hour!" And I was sorry that I had seen her. For Gretchen had made me pitiful towards all lonely girls.

I waited at some distance to see her come out. It was high time for me to turn back and go home to my bed, but I felt a lively curiosity as to the timid-looking young girl who had passed into the tavern at such an hour of the night. Yet what was it to me? She was probably some daughter, or servant of the house. I could not account to myself for my anxiety on the subject, except that she had just been Gretchen's height, and had something of Gretchen's air. Great Heavens! a horrible idea came rushing across my mind. Could it be Gretchen?

I hurried up to the spot, and made my way with difficulty through the brawlers at

the door. There was light flaring brilliantly within, and three men, half intoxicated, were jabbering, and gesticulating, and quarrelling at a counter. At the other side of the place a man was lying, totally unconscious, upon a bench. And Gretchen, with her bonnet falling off, and her golden head gleaming in the wicked flare of the gas, with the tears gathered thick under her innocent eyelids, had got one arm round his neck, and with the other was dragging urgently at his hand. A bold, frowzy-looking woman, evidently just wakened out of a nap, was leaning on her elbows, and watching the scene, with indifference, out of her half-shut eyes.

"You'd better hurry him out of this, young miss," she said, "for it's coming on shutting time, and we ain't a going to be fined for such as he."

The poor child lifted up her face despairingly, and her lips parted as if to make some appeal.

"Gretchen!" I said, coming behind her. "Good Heavens, Gretchen! run home, and leave the rest to me."

She looked up with a great start and a sigh of relief. Never had I seen such a look of mingled joy and shame as quivered on her face when she saw me standing by her.

"Do what I bid you," I added, almost sternly, for it was horrible to see her there, with those tipsy men staring at her. She turned and fled away without speaking a word. And for the moment I felt a rapture which I can yet recal, finding myself so trusted, so obeyed.

It was a hard task, even to me, to bring the unconscious man home. I hailed a passing cart, a cart going for hay out away into the sweet country, and gave the man some money for leave for Reginald Fairfax to lie across the planks, like a stricken bullock, till his cottage was reached, where Gretchen stood waiting at the door. He was laid down at his threshold, and the horses trotted off again countrywards in search of a wholesomer burden. And there we stood, in the fair moonlight of the fresh spring night, Gretchen and I, with the creature that was unhappily her father, lying prone between us, a loathsome human shape, senseless and helpless.

The younger girls were luckily in bed. "Show me his room," I said to Gretchen, "and do you go away to the children till I come back again."

Once more she obeyed me without ques-

tion, and I tasked all my strength to take the huge man in my arms, and drag him up the stairs. It was more than I could do, for, after all, I was but a stripping. At a turn in the narrow staircase I was obliged to call for Gretchen to come and help me. She came, trembling, but helpful and quiet. We got him placed on his bed, and returned together down to the sad little daily room below.

And now I must go and leave her alone in this lonely house, with only the sleeping children, and that dreadful man up-stairs! I took both her hands, and gazed yearningly in her sweet scared eyes. She burst into wild weeping, not loud, but frantic. All her pent-up agonies were set free unawares. She shuddered, and moaned, and clung to my clasping arm. Her terror and misery let loose all my love and passionate longing.

"Listen to me, my love," I said; "look up, and listen to me. You are not to be afraid nor ashamed of anything while I live. And you are not to grieve too much, or you will break my heart. I love you, Gretchen, and I have nothing in the wide world to love besides you. Gretchen, I will ask you by-and-bye to be my wife. Could you be happy with me?"

Her sobs suddenly ceased, and she became quite still. After a minute's waiting I raised the golden head that was bowed upon my arm, and turned up the tearful face and kissed it.

"Say you love me, Gretchen."

"I do," she said, simply, and hid her face again.

"God bless you, my darling. Now we are plighted, are we not?"

She raised her head again. "But——" she began, eagerly.

"I will listen to no buts," I said. "I know what you would say. Remember how young we are. Seventeen and nineteen can afford to wait."

Thus, after all, with our youth and our love, we wrought magic, and turned misery into joy. I was happier than any monarch, walking homeward in the moonlight of that fair spring night.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LI. DOCTOR MALKIN CONFERS.

ABOUT two hours later, Maud was walking beyond the avenue, in that part of the grounds in which, some weeks before, Miss Max and old Mr. Dawe had taken a little ramble together.

Suddenly she lighted on Doctor Malkin, who was walking up the wooded path from the village. Maud saw that the quick eye of the doctor had seen her at the same moment that she saw him. He happened to be in a part of the path which makes its way through a very shadowy bit of wood, and possibly the doctor thought that he might have been unobserved, for he hesitated for a second, and she fancied was about to evade the meeting by stepping quickly among the trees. But it was only a momentary thought, for he would not of course allow the young lady to suppose that he shrank from a recognition. So, pretending to look up for a moment among the boughs of the tree under which he stood, in search of a bird or a squirrel, or some other animated illustration of that natural history which was one of his studies, he resumed his walk toward her, affecting not to see her until he had approached more nearly; then raising his hat, with a surprised smile and a deferential inclination, he quickened his pace, and, as he reached her, observed on the weather and the beauty of the tints beginning to discolour the summer foliage, and then mentioned that he fancied he saw a kite, whose scientific name he also mentioned, among the boughs of a very dark tree, a little way off, but he was not quite sure. She was taking a rather solitary walk, he observed; how very much she must miss her com-

panion in so many pleasant rambles—Miss Medwyn. What a charming old lady she is, so agreeable, and such exhilarating spirits!

There was a sort of effort and embarrassment in all this that was indefinite and unpleasant. If he had been half detected in a poaching expedition to snare the rabbits, or on any other lawless design, he could scarcely have looked more really disconcerted, and more anxious to appear at his ease.

The doctor appeared to be made up for a journey; he had a rug and a muffler for the night air, still five or six hours away, across his arm, and carried his thin umbrella, in its black shining case, in his hand, as well as a small black leather bag. A fly was to meet him at the back gate of Roydon, and wherever he was going he wished to have a word with Lady Vernon before setting out on his travels.

"Lady Vernon was a little uneasy," he said, "lest that attack of the young woman at the gate-house should turn out to be diphtheria, and I promised to see her and report, and I'm glad to say it is nothing of the kind. So, as I shan't be home till to-morrow, I thought it best to look in to-day to set Lady Vernon's mind at ease. Good-bye, Miss Vernon."

The doctor took his leave, as I have said; and Maud saw the shower of dotted sunlight as he strode on the path toward the Hall flying through the interstices of the leaves across the glazed black bag he carried, or, more softly, mottling his rug and his hat. She could not account for the slight awkwardness that seemed to affect everything he said or did during those two or three minutes, and she observed that the pale gentleman with the long upper lip and short chin, smooth and blue, smiled more than was necessary, and that the obliquity that

spoiled his really fine eyes was a good deal more marked than usual.

The doctor was soon quite beyond her ken, and pursued his way at a brisk pace to the house, where he was instantly admitted to the library.

He had thrown down his rugs and other property in the hall, and had merely his hat in his hand as he entered.

Lady Vernon got up and took his hand, and smiled faintly and wearily, and, with a little sigh, said :

"I did not think the time had arrived. I have had, as usual, some letters to write; but you are punctual."

She glanced at the old buhl French clock over the chimney-piece.

"Sit down, Doctor Malkin; I have been thinking over what I said, and I don't recollect that I have anything very particular to add. There are only two things that occur to me to say: the first is, that I have quite made up my mind upon the main point; and the second is, that it must take place immediately."

The doctor bowed, and his eyes remained fixed on the table for a minute. The lady did not speak. She was also looking down, but with a little frown, and affected to be diligently arranging her letters one over the other.

Doctor Malkin felt the obligation upon him to say something.

"It is as well often—generally—I don't see any difficulty; in fact, I know there can't be, unless it should exist *here*," he said, in a low tone, speaking by fits and starts.

"There is none," said Lady Vernon, with a little irritation in her look and tone. Perhaps she did not understand Doctor Malkin's affectation of embarrassment. "I have made a note of the day I now wish to appoint, and of my reason for greater promptitude; I thought it would be more satisfactory to you to have it in that form."

"Thanks; it is so considerate," said Doctor Malkin, taking the note she dropped before him. "I'll just, if you allow me, run my eye over it."

He opened it. It was not a very long memorandum.

"Perfectly clear," he said, when he had read it through; "and I must say, your reason appears to me a very powerful one—very."

"Mr. Pembroke Damian is a very admirable man," said the lady, after an interval of silence. "He was one of the most eloquent preachers I ever heard, and

a man whose life was more eloquent still than his preaching, and he is so able, so wise. I look upon him, taken for all in all, as one of the worthies of England."

Lady Vernon had raised her dark, cold eyes, and was looking, not indeed at the doctor, but straight before her, to the wall, as she spoke this high moral testimony.

"He certainly is a most remarkable man," said Doctor Malkin.

"He is a benefactor to the human race," said the lady. "When I think of all the suffering he has alleviated, and the despair to which he has been the instrument of admitting comfort and peace, I am justified in regarding him, as I do, as the minister and angel of heaven. I have boundless confidence in that good and able man."

Doctor Malkin acquiesced.

"And I thank Heaven there is such a person living, and in his peculiar position," continued Lady Vernon. "Will you be so good as to give him this note."

Doctor Malkin deferentially took the letter she handed him.

"It is a very happy reflection that my confidence, inevitable as it is, should be placed in so sagacious and pious a man," she added.

"He has certainly been a useful man," said the doctor, still looking down on the envelope, with the address, the "Rev. Pembroke Damian, M.A.," &c., in the clear and graceful hand of Lady Vernon, "and a most conscientious person—a truly religious man. You, Lady Vernon, can speak with much more authority than I upon that point; and, certainly, I will say, his ideas have been in advance of his time; his has been a most influential mind, and in some points has led the opinion of his age."

"I would trust my life, as I am ready to trust that which, you will say, ought to be dearer still to me, in his hands," said Lady Vernon.

"He does not quite take the leading part he did, you know," said Doctor Malkin. "For the last two or three years he has not done a very great deal."

"That is a rather unpleasant piece of information, you must suppose, for me," Lady Vernon said, with an angry flush. "If I did not suppose it a little exaggerated, I think I should almost hesitate."

Doctor Malkin knew that the lady wished him to understand that he had made a stupid speech. He had put his foot in it. He said hastily :

"You know he is most ably seconded. There is not a more brilliant man, perhaps,

living, as I have explained to you, and—and, of course, I don't mean that Mr. Damian has abdicated, or anything of the kind. Of course he takes a very essential part, and is, in so far as your interests and feelings are personally concerned, everything he ever was."

"I have always assumed that to be so," said Lady Vernon, severely, "and I should be obliged to you, Doctor Malkin, if you would report to me any such dereliction of duty on the part of Mr. Damian, should you find anything the least like it, which, I must tell you frankly, I can't suppose. I can't credit it, because I know so much of him; his character is so perfectly upright, and he is in all respects so consistent a Christian. I relied upon this, and upon his principal and actual responsibility."

The lady's eyes still flashed, and she spoke sharply. Doctor Malkin was therefore still uncomfortable. He saw, too late, that she possibly construed his words as casting an undesirable responsibility upon her. He hastened, therefore, to reply.

"But I am afraid, Lady Vernon, I must have failed to convey myself. My meaning was, I assure you, very far from that. On the contrary, I believe Mr. Damian was never more vigorous in mind, or active in his habits. You may make your mind perfectly easy upon that point. He deposes nothing—nothing, in fact, involving a responsibility. I'm afraid I must have expressed myself very clumsily indeed."

Lady Vernon did not care to discuss the point further.

"I need not tell you how much I have suffered," she said. "It may come, very soon, all right again. Let us hope the best. I hope, at least, it may not be very protracted. You will return to-morrow?"

"Yes, certainly; and if you please, Lady Vernon, I can call here at any hour that suits you best, after I come back, and tell you what I have done. And I don't anticipate the slightest trouble."

"It is better to come as early as you can, thank you. And there will be some trifling arrangements still to complete, which we can then talk over. You set out, I suppose, immediately on leaving this?"

"Immediately," said he. "I have a good way to go. I think I have very full instructions now. Do you recollect anything more?"

"No. The rest had better wait till to-morrow, and it is time, Doctor Malkin, I quite agree with you, that you were on your way. So I will say good-bye."

Lady Vernon gave her hand to Doctor Malkin, without a smile, and he was more than usually deferential and solemn as he took it.

At the room door, Doctor Malkin recollected his accidental meeting with Miss Vernon, and returned for a moment to mention the circumstance to Lady Vernon, as it had obliged him to allege a pretext for his visit to Roydon Hall.

"Well," said the lady, growing a little red, "I should have preferred saying nothing. But it can't be helped now. Where did you meet her?"

He told her.

She looked down in momentary misgiving—thoughtful. But she had learned that Captain Vivian, who had undoubtedly driven through the town of Roydon the evening before, had left again for the station, and had gone away by train, and she was sure to hear more particularly in the morning about his movements from Mr. Dawe, to whom she had written a very agitated letter of inquiry and alarm.

She would take her, if possible, to the Tinterns next day, and somewhere else the day following, and keep her, should any uncertainty arise, out of the way of any further meeting with that perverse gentleman.

So Lady Vernon, recollecting that the silence had been rather long, said suddenly:

"I was thinking, I may tell you, as I have taken you so unreservedly into council, whether, under all circumstances, the grounds here are quite a suitable place for Maud to take these solitary walks in."

"Well, as you say Lady Mardykes' invitation was for Monday, she will be leaving this so soon, 't is scarcely——"

"Well, *yes*; we can talk of that to-morrow, when we meet," interrupted Lady Vernon. "For the present, good-bye, Doctor Malkin."

So again giving him her hand, she and the doctor, who was not himself looking very well or very merry, made a second leave-taking, and he took his departure.

His allusion to Maud's departure on the Monday following was in the tone of her own very decided feeling.

Lady Vernon was glad that Lady Markes had fixed so early a day for her daughter's visit to Carsbrook.

CHAPTER LII. MERCY CRESWELL.

NEXT day an humble but unlooked-for visitor appeared at Roydon Hall.

Miss Vernon, on returning in the after-

noon from her short walk to inquire at the gate-house for the sick girl, encountered the slim, dark figure of Latimer, her mother's maid, in the hall.

Latimer had evidently been looking for her, for the demure angular figure which had been crossing the hall toward the drawing-room as she entered, turned sharp to the left, and approached her with a quick step, and making a little inclination before Maud, Lady Vernon's maid said, in her low, dry tones :

"Please, miss, my lady desires me to say that Mercy Creswell, which you recollect her, perhaps, in the nursery long ago, being niece of old Mrs. Creswell, that died here when you was but a child, miss, has come here to see her ladyship and you, also, if you please."

"I do remember her very well. I must have been a very little thing, Latimer, when she went away."

"About six years old you was, miss, when she left. Where will you please to see her?" replied Latimer.

"Where is she now?"

"In my lady's morning room, please, miss. But you can see her, my lady says, anywhere you please," answered Latimer.

"Then I should like to see her quietly, if you would tell her to come to my dressing-room, and tell some one to send Jones there, please, and I will go myself in two or three minutes to see her."

Latimer disappeared; and Maud in a minute more was running up the stairs to her room.

We all lean a little fondly to the recollections of childhood, especially those images of very early memory, from which chance has long widely separated us.

But Maud could not get up any great interest in this particular woman, Mercy Creswell. She was, as Maud remembered her, a red-haired, stunted, freckled girl of perhaps some sixteen years; plump, and broad, and strong, with a cunning and false gaiety in her fat face, and who laughed a great deal, not pleasantly, but rather maliciously, and at untoward times.

Maud had a remembrance of an occasional slap or pinch, now and then, slyly bestowed by this short, freckled, laughing young lady, who rather liked getting her into a scrape now and then, and who used in playful moods, when they were running about the rooms together, and no one by, to run her into a corner, hold her to the wall, and make ugly faces, with her nose almost touching Maud's, till the child

would scream with fright and anger; and then she would fall into shrieks of laughter, and hug and kiss her a little more roughly than was necessary, and after this somewhat sore and uncomfortable reconciliation, she would charge her—for the love she bore her own, own poor little Mercy Creswell, who would be sent away if she did, never more to dress her doll, or trundle her cart, or roll her ball for her—not to tell nurse, or nursery-maid, or Miss Latimer, that they had had "a falling out."

Her recollections of this early attendant and, under the rose, playmate, therefore, were not quite as sunny as they might be. Still they were connected with happier days, or what now seemed happier, than those which had come later; and perhaps if Mercy Creswell was sometimes a disagreeable companion, it was to be attributed, in great measure, to the boisterous, and sometimes mischievous, spirits of very early girlhood.

When she reached her dressing-room, Maud Vernon beheld, for the first time, for fourteen years, this same Mercy Creswell.

The interval had not improved her personal appearance. Short and square, with a very fat, and rather flat face, mottled with very large freckles, and her red hair showing under her bonnet, she might have passed for a woman of the age, at least, of Don Quixote's housekeeper. No one could have supposed that her age did not exceed thirty years. She smiled so ecstatically that she nearly shut up her cunning little eyes in rolls of fat wrinkles, while she blinked them very fast, as if tears were forcing their way from them; of which, I don't think, there was any other sign. She was not prepossessing; but Maud could not find it in her heart to repulse her when whisking aside her green veil, she rose on tip-toe, put her short arms round Maud's neck, and kissing her energetically, said :

"Ye'll excuse the liberty, Miss Maud dear, but it is such a time since your own poor little Mercy has saw'd you. La! what a beautiful young lady you have growed up since then; well, to be sure, and me as small as ever. Well, la! it is a queer world, miss. I 'a bin in many a place since Roydon nursery. La, miss! do you mind the big ball o' red leather, and the black man with the cymbals, and all the toys and trumpets, dollies and donkeys. Well, dearie me! so there was, wasn't there? La! and we was great friends,

you and me, ye'll excuse me saying so; and many a day's play together we two has had; and I thought I'd 'a heard o' you married long ago, miss, but there's time enough yet. 'Twill be a lord, nothing less, whenever he comes; bless him."

"And you, Mercy, you have not married yet?" said Maud.

"Me? La bless ye! not I, by no means, miss. Oh, la! what would I be doin' with a husband? Oh, la! no."

"Well, as you say, there is time enough, Mercy; and what have you been doing ever since?"

"La, miss! I could not answer that in a week. I was at service, after leaving here, first with Lady Mardykes."

"At Lady Mardykes? I know her. I'm sure you had a pleasant time in her house?" said Maud, eagerly.

"That it was; no pleasanter, miss; no end of great folks there, and music, and fine clothes, and all sorts, and play-acting, and dancing by night; and croquet and lawn billiards, and the like o' that, all day; or driving off, with cold luncheons, to this place or that, nothing but grand people, and all sorts of fun; high jinks, the gentlemen used to call it."

"I'm going there, to Carsbrook, on Monday next," said Maud, who was full of this visit.

"Well to be you, miss," said Mercy Creswell, looking down and coughing a little; "and I would not wonder, miss, if I was to be there myself," she added, looking up again, and screwing her mouth together, and drawing in her breath through the circular orifice, while she raised her eyebrows with a lackadaisical ogle at the window.

"Oh? Really! Well, mind you must make me out if you should," said Maud, gaily.

"I'll be sure to," she answered, with one of her sly giggles.

"It is a great black-and-white house, very large, ain't it?" said Maud, smiling.

"La! How did ye find that out?" Mercy Creswell continued, with the same irrepressible giggle.

"You see I know more about it than you fancied," continued Maud. "It is three stories high, and close under the windows there is an old-fashioned flower-garden, with the croquet ground in the middle, and the lawn billiards and all that, and an old mulberry-tree growing in the middle of it; and it is surrounded on three sides by a tall hedge clipped like a wall,

with here and there an arch cut through it, something like the yew cloisters behind the shield-room here, only very much larger."

"Why, you must 'a bin there, miss," her visitor cried, half stifled with laughter.

"No, never; and there are over so many bedrooms, and more guests generally than you could number—all kinds of great, and wise, and clever, and famous people."

As Maud proceeded, her short, fat visitor in her shawl and big bonnet was actually obliged to get up and stamp about the room, so extravagant her laughter by degrees became.

"You see I know something about it," continued Maud, laughing also. "As you used to say to me, long ago, a little bird told me. But I shall soon be there, I hope, to see for myself; and I believe every one is made to feel quite at home there immediately; and it is such a hospitable house, every one says. Your only difficulty is, how to get away; and, by-the-bye, do you know Doctor Antomarchi?"

"I 'a heard of him once or twice," screamed Mercy Creswell, almost suffocated with laughter.

"Now listen to me. We have laughed enough," said Maud. "You mustn't laugh. I can't get you to tell me anything; you do nothing but laugh; and I really wished so much to hear about him. I and Miss Medwyn saw him at the Wymering ball, and we were both so curious. Can you tell me anything about him?"

"Not I, miss."

"Well, if you like, Jones shall make you a wager that he will be there at the same time," continued the young lady, a little puzzled by her fat friend's irrepressible and continued screams of laughter, and beginning to feel the infection a little more herself; "and the Spanish ambassador; *he* will be there also."

"Oh! Oh, la! Oh, miss, stop! Oh, oh, oh, you're a killing of me. I'm—I'm—I'm not able to—to—oh, la! ha, ha, ha! catch my breath." And fat Mercy Creswell, clinging to the corner of a wardrobe, actually shook with laughter till tears rolled plentifully down her big cheeks; and Maud, and her maid Jones, who was nevertheless disgusted by the vulgar familiarity and noise of the clumsy Miss Creswell, were drawn in in spite of themselves, and joined at last vehemently and hilariously in the chorus.

"Well, don't mind me," at last sobbed Miss Creswell, recovering slowly, "I always

was one, oh, ho, ho! that laughs at nothing. I do; I'm as tired now, my dear—oh, ho, ho!—as if I ran up to the top o' the fells of Golden Friars, and la! but that's high enough; but how did you hear all about it, so exact, Miss Maud dear; where in the world——”

“I may as well tell you, then,” she answered, also recovering. “I heard everything about it from Miss Medwyn; you must remember her very well. She has been there very often, and she, I know, will be staying there at the same time that I am.”

But at this moment Miss Mercy experienced another relapse, nearly as long and violent, every now and then, half-articulate, blurring out, in sobs and gasps amidst the screaming roulades of her laughter: “Oh la! ha, ha! Miss Med—Med—oh, ho! ho!—Medwyn—la! ha, ha, ha! She's so staid, she is—she's so nice. La! ha, ha, ha!” and so on.

When at length a lull came, Miss Vernon, who was protected by its impertinence from any tendency to join in this last explosion of her old under-nursery-maid's merriment, said gravely:

“Mamma has not been very well; she has been complaining of headache; and I think we are making a good deal of noise. I don't know how far off it may be heard.”

“Well, dear Miss Maud, I hope you ain't offended, miss; but, dearie me, I could not but laugh a bit, thinking of old Miss Medwyn among all them queer dancers, and fiddlers, and princes, and play-actors, and flute-players; I hope you'll hexcuse the noise I 'a made, seein' I really could not help it, miss, by no chance. I know Lady Mardykes well; why shouldn't I, having lived in her service for a many years? and a very great lady she is, and well liked, as I well know; and her papa, Lord Warhampton, a'most the greatest man in England; no wonder she should have all the highest in the land in her house, whenever she so pleases. But, la! ha, ha, ha! It's a queer world. Who'd 'a thought. There is sich queer things happens.”

This time, her laughter was but an amused giggle, and she did not lose her command over it.

“Have you had luncheon?” inquired Maud.

“I thank you, miss, hearty, in the 'ouse-keeper's room, before I came up to see her ladyship,” answered short Miss Mercy, with a comfortable sigh, blowing her nose a little, and adjusting her big bonnet and old green veil, and smoothing her red tresses, while,

still out of breath, she tried to recover the fatigues of her long fit of laughter. “Well, Miss Maud dear, and how are ye?” inquired Mercy, suddenly returning from gay to grave.

“Oh, very well, thanks; and so are you; and you haven't married, you tell me, so you have nothing on earth to trouble you. I wish we were all like the trees, Mercy; they live very long and very happily, I dare say, longer, certainly, and more quietly than we do a great deal, and I don't hear of any marrying or giving in marriage among them.”

“Not they, not a bit; they're never married, and why should we, miss? That's a very wise saying,” acquiesced Mercy Creswell, very gravely looking at her.

“If you really think so,” said Maud, “you are a wise woman; I have been trying to convince my maid Jones, but I'm afraid she is still rather in favour of the vulgar way of thinking.”

“Well, miss, you'll not find me so. I make my own clothes, miss, and I think my own thoughts,” said Mercy, with a wise nod.

“You are a woman after my own heart then,” said Maud, gaily.

“And how are you, miss?” repeats Mercy Creswell.

“I told you I am very well, thanks,” says Maud.

“None o' them headaches you used to have when you was a little thing?”

“Oh, no! I sometimes have a little nervous pain from cold over my eye; neuralgia they call it; but that is nothing, it never continues very long.”

“It never gets *into* your eye?” asked Mercy, staring steadily and gravely at the suspected organ, and screwing her lips together uneasily all the time. “Them pains, they say, sometimes begins in the eyes, miss.”

Maud laughed.

“But Heaven only knows, as you say, miss. I dare say you are right, whatever you think; for every one knows best about their own pains. Sich is the will of Heaven—so we leave them things to wiser heads, miss, and I'm sure where you're going you'll be comfortable and amused.”

“If I'm not, Mercy, I shall be the first visitor at that pleasant house who ever had such a complaint to make.”

Mercy was suddenly very near exploding in a new fit of laughing, but she mastered it.

“Well, miss, I'll be there, I think—not unlikely,” said Mercy.

"As a servant?" asked Miss Mand.

"Well, as an attendant, I would say," answered she.

"Oh!"

"And if I am, I'll be sure, I hope, to see you, miss, if you gives permission; and I'm sure I desires nothing but your 'ealth and 'appiness, miss. Why should I? And I must be going now, Miss Mand. Good-bye to you, miss." And again, but more solemnly, the short woman extended her thick arms, and rising to her toes, kissed Miss Vernon, and with a more ceremonious politeness, took her leave of "Miss Jones," the lady's-maid, who regarded her with a refined and polite disgust.

So the squat figure of Miss Mercy Creswell disappeared, and Mand, for a time, lost sight of that uncouth reminder of old times and the Roydon nursery.

NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

Nothing is easier, if we are not very particular about the accuracy of our judgment, than to judge; and this holds good with respect to nations no less than to individuals. There is a tempting facility in providing oneself, so to speak, with a set of little mental pigeon-holes, in which we can stow away, neatly ticketed, our opinions concerning the several branches of the great human family. We can pull out at pleasure the puppet that represents, say a Russian, and make him dance in most approved Muscovite fashion. There can be no mistake, for is he not a Russian, and have we not had him in our catalogue, duly classed and numbered, for many a day? So with our nearer neighbours, the French. We know all about the French. A Frenchman, as everybody is aware, is a being light of heart and supple of spine, a sort of human butterfly, gay, polite, and I am afraid frivolous, all bows and grins, and good-humour. An Englishman, ah! he comes out of quite another sized pigeon-hole, and capers to a different and less lively tune. He is a grotesque and eccentric personage, who invariably realises enormous fortunes by exporting little pen-knives, who drinks raw rum, suffers from spleen, and has red whiskers of fabulous proportions. His wife and daughters still, in defiance of the tyranny of fashion, wear green veils and preposterous bonnets of Dunstable straw, and have front-teeth of alarming length and prominence.

The truth, often unwelcome, is, that a

clear and sharp distinction between the qualities of different nations is from its nature hopeless. We cannot draw a hard and fast line that shall rigidly separate, like a well-defined frontier, the characteristics of one group of nations from those of another. Black men and white, red men and brown, have so much in common that the points of resemblance very much outnumber those of contrast. Not only were there heroes before Agamemnon, but in far-away parts of the earth, and among races reputed barbarous, no doubt there existed in Homer's days of old as much valour, wisdom, and merciful self-restraint, as did honour to the bravest and the wisest in that memorable leaguer before Troy. Still we are not all alike, not stamped with the wearisome uniformity of so many newly-minted shillings. Men and women are really as various as the coins in some numismatist's collection, where in the same drawers lie the antique doubloon, the "broad piece," so many pieces of which buccaneering Drake brought home to Plymouth, and the glossy napoleon, where the Spanish gold ounce, or the massive mohur of Mogul coinage, jostles the oblong gold itzebues of Japan, or the queer white platinum eagles, worth ever so many roubles apiece, which bear the stamp of the Czar Nicholas. There are subtle distinctions, worth remembering, between the inhabitants of different provinces. There are more salient features in the national character of those whom alien speech and creed, whom seas and mountains, keep asunder.

There is one great difficulty which perpetually starts up in our path when we would take stock, as it were, honestly and fairly, of what belongs to our neighbours. The new-comer, whose sense of the difference between what he has left and what he has found is relatively very much keener than that of the old resident, is of necessity obliged to rely on meagre evidence. The old joke of the English traveller at Lille, who, seeing a red-haired girl from the Hôtel de la Poste come forth with lantern and a feed of oats for his horses, forthwith pencilled down in his note-book that all the women of Lille had red hair, conveyed, at any rate, a half-truth. Jones has a capital dinner at a mountain inn somewhere in Tyrol; his bill is low; the Fraülein kisses his hand in acknowledgment of the splendid largesse of a zwanziger; the comely, kind-eyed landlady helps him to buckle on his knapsack; the hearty, bluff landlord

indolent, so winning of manner, and so unstable of purpose, seems always possessed by a Micawberish fancy that something delightful is about to turn up. Never mind mortgages and debt, never mind the bad husbandry that keeps the soil sterile, or the lack of forethought which fills the pastures with stunted cattle and raw-boned, ragged sheep; what matter if the peasant be over head and ears in the books of the Jewish brandy-seller, and if every roof be ruinous and every field weed-grown. Something is sure to happen. A salt mine will be found, perhaps, or a factory will be built, or a war will come that will clear off old scores, and fill our purses in some inexplicably convenient way; so let us have out the crazy old carriage, and the shaggy, half-broken horses, and drive along the sandy roads to somebody's chateau, that we may dine, and dance, and conjure dull care away by the potent charms of generous Hungarian wine, and the wild Magyar waltz. The Poland of our day must be in some respects very like the Ireland of the Edgeworths.

Perhaps the heavy Dutchman, the genuine, pipe-smoking, ponderous Hollander, so slow of speech and of thought, so voluminously attired, and with such a taste for vegetating among the flowers, and wooden lions, and gaudily painted summer-houses of the garden on the bank of a sluggish canal, may once have existed elsewhere than in the imagination of satirical novelists. But we cannot find him in the flesh, if we scour the Netherlands from Flushing to the remotest hamlet of Friesland. He and his gorgeous tulips, his fat frow, and his plump and silent daughters, have passed away like a dull dream, and the Dutchmen and Dutchwomen of the present day appear to an unprejudiced eye to be as lively, active, and well-proportioned a race as any in Europe. There are changes elsewhere. Disgusted tourists return from Ireland, grumbling at the absence of that picturesque poverty and wild spirit of fun that they had gone prepared for. Paddy, they complain, is not the tattered jester they expected him to turn out. Comfort, it seems, spoils the sparkle of the Celtic wit, and even the carmen of Dublin have lost the traditional art of keeping a strange fare in a roar of laughter by their powers of repartee. It is possible, in these degenerate days, to travel through Clare or Kerry without being much more amused than if the jaunt were made in Suffolk or Lancashire. The native drollery of the

people is fast becoming a tradition, belonging to the barbarous old times that have now happily passed away.

It is not only to the west of St. George's Channel that freedom and material prosperity prove capable, among other results, of sobering the exuberant spirits of a people. No one who knew Italy in the former epoch of division and misrule, could fail to be struck with the change that has come over the popular temper since then. The old-world Italian, the cringing, merry, affectionate fellow with whom you could never be seriously angry, be his shortcomings what they might, is likely soon to be as extinct as the dodo. His was not by any means a high standard of moral worth, but his good-nature was so genuine, and his pantomime so eloquent, that you loved him even when he cheated you. His faults, you felt, were those which were in a manner forced upon him by the abuses of the bad government under which he was reared. When every official, from the judge on the bench to the pettiest agent of the prince's little custom-house, was openly and notoriously venal, when small tyranny and vexatious restrictions made up the whole theory of government, and no business went on without bribes, and fines, and flattery, and extortion, it was not wonderful that poor Beppo should try a little trickery on his own account sometimes. All that is altered now, and Italy is united and free, and moderately thriving, but her children are perhaps not so kind or so polished as when the long columns of white-coated Austrians used to raise the dust along the Emilian Way, and when every day or two of travel brought the pilgrim face to face with the striped posts that indicated a new frontier, and a harpy host of doganieri and policemen.

The colonising instinct is often said to be one main point in which the Teutonic nations, English, Dutch, and Germans, differ from the Romanee races of Southern Europe. Yet when we consider that the Spaniards overran and re-peopled Mexico and Peru, and that an immense proportion of the United States, with the whole Dominion of Canada, once belonged to the French crown, the argument is hardly tenable. It would be more accurate to say that the spirit which once prompted the French and Spaniards to take possession of the waste places of the earth is worn out, or has changed its aims for others. In our own case, in spite of the steady flow of emigration from our shores to the lands of

promise that lie beyond the ocean, we are outstripped by the Germans, who pour into America in fast increasing numbers, while the Irish have learned to overcome the strong local attachment which for centuries made them as stay-at-home a people as any in Christendom. The grossest improbability that could once have been suggested was a Chinese emigration to the New World. It seemed inconceivable that a people whose civilisation was all-sufficient in its own idea, and that held foreigners and foreign countries in contempt, should suddenly begin to export labour, and that, too, in defiance of every discouragement and difficulty. The coolies who come to compete, in America and in Australia, with white workers, have merits of their own. They toil hard, are civil and intelligent subordinates, learn with surprising facility, accept low wages, and live and save where not even thrifty Hans from the Fatherland could pick up more than a bare subsistence. It seems hard on John Chinaman when wrathful mobs of Irish navvies or English gold-diggers assail his camp with stones and bludgeons, cudgel his unlucky shoulders, shear off his doomed pigtail, and drive him with ignominy from the scene of his labours, merely for the original sin of being a Chinaman. But certain ugly experiences in Java, Malacca, and Peru have proved that the convenient Chinese, like fire, is a good servant but a bad master, and that, however meekly he may begin, he grows dangerous when his yellow countrymen, affiliated to the same secret society, and with the same feline propensity to let the claws peep forth from the velvet, outnumber the white inhabitants of a country.

That mountaineers are greedy for money is a fact that few of those who have roamed among Pyrenean peaks or crossed Alpine passes will be inclined to dispute. The conditions of their existence are so severe as to palliate, if not to excuse, this excessive love of gain. To the inhabitants of the higher Alpine valleys, for example, the battle of life is no courtly tournament, but a fierce wrestle with the ever-present foes of cold and hunger. The wolf is so very near those humble doors of theirs, that we may pardon the poor herdsmen, if they show themselves somewhat grasping in their dealings with those who visit their bleak glens. Theirs is but a short summer, and a sorry harvest of dwarf oats and pigmy barley, even if the straggling corn can be persuaded to ripen at all so near to the flower-bordered edge of the great green-

blue glacier. Their cows must graze fast, and their milkmaids be active in cheese-making while the sun shines and the sweet herbage is plentiful, for always by night the warning chill is in the thin atmosphere, telling of the long dark winter soon to return. And then in comes winter, like a conquering king, with all the dread accompaniments of hail and whirlwind, with the hollow roar of the descending avalanche and the blinding fury of the tourmente, and the land is locked and silent in the bands of ice and snow. Add to this that the mountain peasant finds warm clothing and fuel both scarce and dear, that every cart-load or mule-load of firewood has to be brought with painful toil from the lower country, and all garments bought at the distant market-town, and it is no longer a source of surprise that Uri, Schwytz, and Unterwalden should have supplied the sternest and most unscrupulous mercenaries that ever fought for hire and plunder during the mediæval wars of France and Italy. The hardy hirelings from Andermatt or Grindelwald knew by bitter experience the value of lowland gold.

The national character of the Jews has unquestionably undergone more than one great change, the first of which dates from the end of the Babylonish captivity. Before that great event the Hebrew race had manifested a fickle but passionate admiration for foreigners and foreign fashions. There were Syromaniacs among the Jews of Solomon's reign, as there have been Anglomaniacs among the French. Their bravest captains disregarded the law of Moses, that they might ride to war on horseback, like the mounted chieftains of Moab and the cavalry of Egypt. All the fire of the prophetic zeal, and all the rigours of the judge, could not prevent the smoke of sacrifice from rising from the idolatrous hill-altars. It was in vain that the axe was laid to the stems of the sacred groves of Anti-Lebanon, for fresh sites were found, high up in the mountains, where the dark worship of Astarte and of Moloch, perhaps of Isis as well, might be practised under the guidance of heathen priests. There was a continual struggle between the true and staunch supporters of their forefathers' creed and the light and frivolous multitude who were drawn towards the splendid paganism that hemmed in the frontiers of Israel.

A more remarkable and enduring change than that which followed the rebuilding of the Temple has never been chronicled, with

reference to the conscience and temper of any people. Henceforth the Jew was altered indeed. The old hankering after alien ways, the old preference for innovations, had been replaced by the deepest patriotism and the most single-minded cleaving to the national religion that the world has ever seen. It was not alone the foreign faith that was abhorred, but the foreigner as well. Those grim zealots who died by their own swords in the rock fortress of Massala, first slaying their wives and children that the Romans might triumph over none but the dead, those frantic mutineers who long after the fall of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the people, perpetrated the hideous massacre of harmless Greeks at Cyprus, seem of quite another stock from the novelty-loving Jews who, in the days of the early kings, found an indomitable zest in every new superstition from Memphis or Palmyra. Then comes yet another development of the national character, when, wearied of resistance and crushed by persecution, the Jews became what Christendom has known them, patient, shrewd, quiet traffickers, living in the midst of communities from which they were still severed by the impassable barriers of religion and of caste, useful to, but not identical with, the races that alternately tolerated and oppressed them. In a degree, but a very minor degree, the Armenian and the Parsee resemble the Jew in his more modern type. They, too, are broken nations, with a faith to which they cling tenaciously, but without a home, and they, as well as the Jews of these last days, show signs of a hearty assumption of the political nationality of the countries which permit them to take upon themselves the duties of citizenship. The Dutch or Italian speaking Jew of a hundred and seventy years since, newly re-admitted into the England from which King Edward had driven him at the request of the burghers of London, would have been incredulous of the assertion that his descendants could ever learn to look on Britain as anything but a perching place. The Parsee of Aurungzebe's reign could never have dreamed that seats in the council of India, and possible baronetcies, could be offered to his remote progeny, and still less that they should be willingly accepted. The moral of the old fable has been renewed in the case of these wandering tribes, and the sunshine of prosperity has prevailed with the traveller who wrapped his cloak the tighter about him when the tempest raged the wildest.

The negro has altered less, perhaps, whether mentally or physically, within the historical epoch, than any other equally numerous section of the human race. We see his portraiture on the painted monuments of Egypt, and we recognise it at a glance. What the ancient travellers, the Greek and Arab chroniclers, found him, we find him still, with the same easy good temper, the same indolent indifference to the brain-breaking problems that rouse his white brethren to so much feverish activity, and the same childlike aptitude for being quickly elated or quickly depressed. Those who know the black man best, and who have learned to be fond of him, are often the least sanguine respecting his ultimate future. It is thrift, forethought, the power and the will to provide for the future, that are most deficient in poor Quashee's often amiable disposition. As matters unfortunately stand, the black race, diminishing but too fast even in Africa, is dwindling still more rapidly in North America, as the forthcoming census of the United States will prove with the ghastly distinctness of figures. Yet that the genuine negro, under favourable circumstances, can work, save, and prosper, the instance of Barbadoes will suffice to show.

MY PICTURES.

THEY gleam upon me from the silent walls,
 These mute companions of my darkened life.
 Within, the fitful firelight leaps and falls;
 Without, the March winds meet in stormy strife.
 Over the dassing page the strained eyes ache,
 The pen drops listless from the weary hand,
 The spirits of my pictures slowly wake,
 And wrapt in memory's halo, round me stand.

There the wild waves crash on the rocky beach;
 I gaze upon them till I hear once more
 The thunder music on the hollow reach,
 E'en as we listened, lingering on the shore;
 Here, through the country hush I hear the swell,
 I breathe the sea's keen breath through land-locked
 air,
 And see the feathery spray I love so well,
 Light 'mid the heather on the headland there.

That battle scene! I recollect we bent,
 To read its tale in Froissart's roll of glory;
 Gathering the bright accessories that lend
 The flash and glitter to chivalric story.
 There, through the bleak east wind, and London smoke,
 He brought the eastern tint, the crimson quiver,
 As, picturing the scenes of which he spoke,
 He drew yon long low banks and mighty river.

There float the angels, each seraphic face
 In calm reproving sweetness, stilling woe;
 There smile the woodland paths our steps would trace,
 In the old happy time, so long ago.
 And there, the yearning sorrow to beguile,
 From the chill mists that round my vigil rise,
 I see our boy's bright curls and joyous smile,
 The wistful beauty of our girl's blue eyes.

Oh, Heaven-sent art ! Death's icy shadow rests,
 On Nature's spring-like smile and kindred love,
 Only Art's voice its mighty power attests,
 Still memory's pulse and memory's life to prove.
 Yet from his pictures breathes the olden charm,
 Speaking the bliss that was—that yet shall be,
 When earth, and life, and grief, and loss, and harm,
 Fade in the full glow of eternity.

OSSIAN OR NO OSSIAN ?

Was there ever such a person as Ossian, the Celtic Homer, the blind bard of the Gael, who is supposed to have lived and sung, loved and suffered, fourteen or fifteen hundred years ago? If there were no such person, are the poems attributed to him ancient or modern? And, whether ancient or modern, is there any clue to the authorship? Such are the questions which began to be asked in the literary world more than a hundred years ago, which were discussed for more than forty years with a bitterness seldom equalled in literary controversy, and which even now are involved in doubt and uncertainty. The recent publication, under the auspices of the Marquis of Bute, of a luxurious edition of these famous compositions in the original Gaelic, with a new and literal prose translation, by the Reverend Archibald Clerk, of Kilmalie, has revived the long-dormant interest in the subject. For the benefit of those readers who never heard of the acrimonious squabbles of our grandfathers over the name, genius, and authenticity of Ossian, or of those who having heard, have unconsciously allowed their judgment to be swayed by the ruthless or incredulous critics of the Johnsonian era, it may be useful to recapitulate the facts, and try to solve this literary problem with the aid of the new lights that time has thrown over it.

In the year 1759, a young gentleman, Mr. Graham, of Balgowan, afterwards the celebrated general, Lord Lynedoch, was residing at Moffat with his tutor, one James Macpherson, then in his twenty-first year. The tutor had some knowledge of the Gaelic language, and considered himself a poet, as is the habit of clever young men of literary ambition, though he was but a writer of verses which bore but small traces of poetic genius. Among the visitors to Moffat in the summer was John Home, author of the tragedy of Douglas, which held, for a considerable period, a creditable possession of the stage. He had previously enjoyed the acquaintance of Mr. Graham, and made that of his tutor on this occasion. Home had heard from Professor Adam

Ferguson, of Edinburgh, that the people of the Highlands possessed a poetry of their own, of a very high order, which had been handed down orally from generation to generation for hundreds of years. Macpherson corroborated this statement, and explained that he had a few such pieces in his possession. Mr. Home prevailed upon him, not without difficulty, to translate them into English, Macpherson refusing at first, on the plea of his literary inability to do justice to their beauty. Mr. Home took these translations back to Edinburgh, and submitted them to Professor Adam Ferguson, Doctor Robertson, the historian, and Doctor Hugh Blair, the eminent critic and divine. These gentlemen all agreed in their commendation, and expressed their surprise at the existence of such literary treasures, among a people supposed to be so unlettered as the Highlanders. Doctor Blair was more especially excited to admiration, and put himself into communication with Macpherson, urging him to note down from recitation as many of these fast-perishing poems as he could recover from the popular voice, and to translate them into English, promising that he would introduce them to the British public, with the whole weight of his influence and authority. Macpherson had published a poem of his own, entitled the Highlander, a very mediocre composition even for that age of mediocrity and false taste in poetry, and a few ballads and lyrical pieces, of which one entitled the Cave was recognised as the best. The opening stanza of this composition will be a sufficient specimen of his powers :

The wind is up, the field is bare,
 Some hermit leads me to his cell,
 Where Contemplation, lovely fair,
 With blessed Content has chose to dwell.

The late Douglas Jerrold once asserted that what was called poetry was really divisible into three different kinds of composition—poetry, verse, and *worse*. Had he been called upon to pronounce judgment upon Macpherson's poems, he would have included them in the third category. Macpherson himself seems to have come to the conclusion, even at this early period of his career, that though an ardent admirer of poetry, and eminently fitted to appreciate poetry in others, he was neither a born poet nor likely to be converted into one by culture. He constantly expressed to Doctor Blair his inability to do justice to the Gaelic originals, and his doubts whether the public would receive favour-

ably any compositions in a style and on subjects so different from those of modern poetry. Ultimately, however, and mainly owing to the zeal of Doctor Blair, he undertook the task, and a few of the poems were published under Blair's auspices in the year 1760, with the title of *Fragments of Ancient Poetry*, collected in the Highlands of Scotland, translated from the Erse. The fragments were sixteen in number, and purported to be episodes of a narrative poem by Ossian, the son of Fingal, relating to the wars of that hero. The publication, owing to the great authority of Doctor Blair's name as a critic, was triumphantly received in Edinburgh, but did not excite much notice in England. Though the Edinburgh wits, philosophers, and critics, like the Lowland people generally, were not particularly well disposed towards the Highlanders, the patriotic and national spirit was sufficiently strong to induce them to look favourably upon the claim of their country to have produced a Homer. The enthusiasm ran so high in Edinburgh that Macpherson was entreated to take a journey through the Western Highlands and the Hebrides to collect materials for a completer work. He pleaded want of time and want of means. Ultimately, a liberal subscription to defray his expenses was entered into among the leading literati, lawyers, and resident nobility and gentry of Edinburgh, and he set forth upon his tour, furnished with letters of introduction to all the principal Highland proprietors and clergy. He was accompanied by a namesake, but no relative—a Mr. Macpherson, of Strathmashie—who had the reputation of being an excellent Gaelic scholar, which Macpherson himself was not, and whose assistance was considered likely to be useful.

The result of this tour, as stated by the two Macphersons, was a large collection of Gaelic poetry, much of it taken down from recitation, and much recovered in manuscript from the possession of Highland families. When Macpherson returned to Edinburgh he put himself into communication with Doctor Blair and his other friends and contributors. In a letter dated the 16th of January, 1761, he wrote to the Reverend Mr. Maclagan, of Amulree, whom he knew as the possessor of a copious manuscript collection of Gaelic poems, to announce that during his tour "he had been lucky enough to lay his hands on a pretty complete poem, and truly epic, concerning Fingal. The antiquity of

it," he said, "was easily ascertainable, and it was in his opinion not only superior to anything else in the Gaelic language, but not inferior to the more polite performances of other nations in that way." He also announced that he had thoughts of publishing the original Gaelic along with his translation, "if it would not clog the work too much, and if he could procure subscribers." Still encouraged by Doctor Blair, Macpherson completed his translation of Fingal, and proceeded with it to London to solicit the patronage of Lord Bute, the then prime minister. His lordship was not popular among the English, but he was a thorough Scot by blood, education, and spirit, and a great favourite with his own countrymen. The zeal of Macpherson gratified the powerful Scottish nobleman, and he liberally subscribed towards the expenses of the publication. The book appeared early in 1762, in English only, under the title of *Fingal, an Epic Poem, in Six Books*, composed by Ossian, the Son of Fingal, translated from the Gaelic Language. Macpherson declined the publication of the Gaelic on the plea of expense, and on the ground that a sufficient number of subscribers had not entered their names to warrant him in the undertaking. In the following year he published, entirely at the expense of Lord Bute, *Temora*, with five other poems, also purporting to be from the Gaelic of Ossian.

To use the common phrase of the present day, the two works created a great "sensation," and literary society at once ranged itself into two hostile factions, prepared to do desperate battle. It was mainly in England that any doubts of their authenticity were expressed. The Scotch, and more especially the Highlanders, were unpopular. The remembrance of the Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745 had not been greatly dimmed by time, and the people of the south too commonly looked upon those of the extreme north as little better than savages—ignorant alike of breeches, manners, and the alphabet. The country was very partially explored by strangers. The great genius of Sir Walter Scott had not arisen—a star of the first magnitude on the literary horizon—to show its beneficent light on those remote regions. The Highlands were not the resort of tourists as they are now, from all parts of the world, and the shooters of grouse and the deer-stalkers did not venture into the country in perceptible numbers. Even the Scotch of Edinburgh and Glasgow looked

upon their northern fellow-countrymen as little better than barbarians. They were ravers, cattle-dealers, highwaymen, and leviers of black-mail, for whom a short shrift and a high gallows were the appropriate doom. The Gaelic, or Erse language, as it was sometimes erroneously called, was declared by Doctor Johnson, who knew nothing about it, to be "gibberish," and in the total ignorance of the philologists of that day of the now well-ascertained fact that Gaelic is not only one of the most ancient, but one of the most beautiful and sonorous languages spoken on the globe, and of close relationship to the Sanscrit and the Hebrew, his dictatorial assertion obtained general credence. The wonder was consequently extreme that such a people should possess such a body of poetry, and from wonder the transition to doubt, to incredulity, and to antagonism, was easy and rapid.

Doctor Blair, and the believers in the authenticity of these poems, supported by a very large number of persons, who looked upon Ossian as a myth of Macpherson's invention, agreed in literary admiration of their merits. Opinion was all but unanimous that, whoever might be their author, and whatever might be their date, the poems were true poems, full of fire, pathos, and dramatic interest; different from all other poems known to the fastidious critics of the eighteenth century; different from the Greek and Roman classics; different from the earliest remnants of Anglo-Saxon romance and English ballad literature; different in style, spirit, imagery, and treatment, from anything previously known. The arguments in support of their authenticity were various. The internal evidence of their antiquity was exceedingly strong. The author or authors seemed to know nothing of cities, or of great congregations of men, except in hosts prepared for battle by land or sea. There was not the faintest trace of Grecian or Roman mythology, such as continually betrayed itself in the previous literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and that in a lesser degree interfuses itself into the thought and diction of the nineteenth. There was no allusion to Judaism or Christianity, or to any form of religion, but such as was taught by the Bards and Druids of the time in which the poems purported to have been composed.

There was not the faintest symptom developing itself by accident that the poet was acquainted with southern scenery, or with the scenery of any part of the

world, except that of the wild west Highlands of Scotland, the Hebrides, and the opposite shore of Ireland. All the imagery was appropriate to those regions, and to no other; the mist upon the mountain, the blast upon the loch, or the sea, the storm amid the corries and glens of the everlasting hills, or sweeping over the wide expanse of moorland, purple with heather, or yellow with gorse. The ideas of the Supreme Being, and of the immortality of the soul, were exactly such as prevailed among the Celtic races before the introduction of Christianity, heightened and refined by the culture of the pantheistic bards, and permeated with sad, but exalted thought. The incidents were entirely consistent with the known history and traditions of the earliest ages of Britain, and their episodial treatment and allusions, often slight and unimportant in themselves, were in perfect accordance with each other, and with the main facts elsewhere related. There was not a single anachronism in thought, in style, or in statement. The fourteen centuries which had elapsed since their alleged date of production had not left a mark upon them, except such as might fairly have been attributable to the interpolation of successive reciters, or be as fairly traced to the mind of the modern translator. The poems seemed to be dug out of a remote age—veritable fossils. Over them there lay an indescribable charm of vague sublimity. They were like Glen Coe, whose name the poet assumed, as the voice of Cona, the weirdest glen in Scotland; dark, gloomy, terrific, yet with the murmur of rills and mountain streams running down into the narrow strip of plain and pathway, suggestive of gentleness, and the soft murmur and stir of human life. Independently of their origin, it was impossible for any true and conscientious critic to withhold his admiration. Even the surly Johnson, the enemy of everything that was Scotch, acknowledged that it would be "pleasing to believe that Fingal lived and that Ossian sang."

The continental critics, as soon as the poems were translated into French, Italian, German, and other European languages, were unanimous in the expression of their delight, and two great men, Napoleon Bonaparte in France, and Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of American Independence, publicly declared that they preferred Ossian to all other poetry. Napoleon always carried a copy with him in his campaigns, and Jefferson undertook

the study of Gaelic in order that he might read his favourite bard in the original. Goethe was equally charmed and captivated. The enthusiasm of the lovers of poetry—altogether independent of the authorship—was amply justified by the beauty of the composition, rivalling in many instances the noblest passages in the Psalms of David, the prophecies of Isaiah, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah. What, for instance, could be finer, asked the critics—and we in our day may well repeat the question—than the passage in Carthon, when the blind Ossian, attended by the lovely Malvina, the widow of his lost son Oscar, apostrophises the sun, in language of which the perfect rhythm would be marred by the useless meretriciousness of rhyme?

Oh thou that rollest above,
Round as the shield of my fathers,
Whence are thy beams, oh sun,
Thine everlasting light?
Thou comest forth in thine awful beauty,
And the stars hide themselves in the sky.
The moon, cold and pale,
Sinks in the western wave;
But thou thyself movest alone.
Who can be a companion of thy course?
The oaks of the mountain fall,
The mountains themselves decay with years,
The ocean shrinks and grows again,
The moon herself is lost in heaven,
But thou art for ever the same,
Rejoicing in the brightness of thy course.
When the world is dark with tempests,
When thunder rolls and lightning flies,
Thou lookest in thy beauty from the clouds,
And laughest at the storm.
But to Ossian thou lookest in vain.
He beholds thy beams no more,
Whether thy yellow hair flies in the eastern clouds,
Or thou tremblest at the gates of the west.
But thou art perhaps like me, but for a season,
And thy years will have an end.
Thou shalt sleep in thy clouds,
Careless of the voice of the morning.
Exult then, oh sun, in the strength of thy youth!

This passage is but one of a multitude that might be cited, yet of itself it is sufficient to prove that the author—whether he were Ossian or a man of modern time—was a true poet. Most of our books of *Elegant Extracts*, and *Selections of Poetry*, contain passages from Ossian. Every reader of taste will know where to find them.

It is proverbially impossible to prove a negative. Those who denied the authenticity and the personality of Ossian, and there are those, and they belong to a very influential school of criticism, who deny to this day the authenticity and personality of Homer, took refuge in affirmation, and maintained not only that no such poems as those attributed to Ossian ever existed in Gaelic, but that James Macpherson was

their author; or, if not wholly their author, that he linked together a few small fragments of undoubted Gaelic poetry, and made them the foundation of a greater structure, which was the work of his own mind. The merit of the poems being acknowledged, the compliment to Macpherson's genius was a very high one; but that it was wholly undeserved was evident to any one who had compared the English compositions of which Macpherson was most proud, such as the *Highlander and the Cave*, with the English version of Ossian, of which he never boasted. The difference between copper and gold, between glass and diamonds, between water and wine, between cold and heat, is not more obvious than that between Macpherson in his own name, as an original author, and Macpherson as the translator of Ossian.

It is possible that the controversy which the publication evoked would, after a few years, have died away, had it not been for the impetus given to it by the warm attack made, not only on Macpherson, but on all Scotsmen, by Doctor Samuel Johnson, who roundly stated, in his *Tour to the Hebrides*, "that the poems of Ossian never existed in any other form than that which we have seen (the English); that the editor or author never could show the original, nor could it be shown by any other person; that the poems were too long to be remembered; that the Gaelic was formerly an unwritten language; that Macpherson doubtless inserted names that circulated in popular stories; that he might have translated some wandering ballads, if any such could be found; and that, though some men of undoubted integrity professed to have heard parts of the poems, they had all heard them in their boyhood, and none of them could recollect or recite as many as six lines." He added, with his usual venomous, though amusing, prejudice against the Scottish people, "that though the Scots had something to plead for their easy reception of an improbable fiction, they were seduced by their fondness for their supposed ancestors. A Scotchman," he said, "must be a very sturdy moralist who does not love Scotland better than truth; he will always love it better than inquiry; and if falsehood flatters his vanity, he will not be very diligent to detect it." Macpherson's reply to this insolent attack was a challenge to fight a duel, which the unwieldy lexicographer thought it prudent to decline. The reply of the Scottish literati who believed in Ossian, and of the High-

landers generally, was more satisfactory. Macpherson's alleged inability to exhibit the original Gaelic was disposed of by the fact that he had left the manuscripts for several months at the shop of Mr. Becket, the publisher in Edinburgh, to be shown to all inquirers, and especially to such as were desirous to subscribe for their publication; that few persons looked at them, and fewer still subscribed; that as to there being no one in the Highlands who could recite six lines of Gaelic poetry, there were many then living who could repeat six hundred or a thousand lines, and that one gentleman, the Reverend Doctor Macqueen, had procured from Alexander Macpherson, in Skye, a person known for his great memory as a reciter of Ossian, a quarto manuscript, an inch and a quarter in thickness, known as the *Leabhar Dearg*, or Red Book, which contained a portion of the story of Fingal, which book was handed to James Macpherson, and was translated by him. In short, a whole cloud of witnesses appeared to rebut the charges, including persons who could recite long detached passages of the poems in the original language, and Gaelic scholars who brought forward manuscript copies, which had long been in their families, of parts of the poems. Ultimately the Highland Society of London sanctioned and aided the publication of the Gaelic text, with a Latin translation by the Reverend Robert Macfarlane, in three quarto volumes. To this publication the celebrated Sir John Sinclair contributed an exhaustive introduction, in which he related the whole history of the sources whence the Gaelic poems were derived. This work did not appear until the year 1807, and if Doctor Johnson, the great opponent of the Celtic claim to the possession of a Homer, had survived so long, there was evidence to convince even him of the error into which his prejudice had led him, if not gracefully to acknowledge it.

In short, every argument that was, or may be still, urged against the authenticity of Ossian's poems, may be used against the authenticity of Homer's, or any other book that has descended to the world from remote antiquity. Ossian may never have existed. Ossian's poems, as now extant in Gaelic, may not be verbally, or, in every respect, the same as the poems which proceeded from Ossian's mind, if we go so far as to admit Ossian's existence. Some of the poems may not have been Ossian's at all, and successive bards in successive ages may have imprinted their own charac-

teristics upon the ancient compositions, which they recited for the delight of their auditors in the days when there were no books. But exactly the same may be said of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. If it be impossible to prove the existence of Ossian, it is equally impossible to prove that Homer was not a myth. And whether Ossian or Homer ever lived and sung, it is alike certain that the Gael and the Greeks produced the poems which have been attributed, truly or falsely, to those real or imaginary authors. A question of literary identity, that goes back for centuries anterior to the invention of printing, can never be authoritatively settled, so as to leave no room for denial or incredulity. And as regards Ossian, whoever he may or may not have been, one thing is all but certain—his poems were not, as Johnson and the English critics of the eighteenth century took a malicious delight in asserting, the works of James Macpherson. They were known, in scattered and multifarious fragments, long before he was born, and, though he understood Gaelic sufficiently to be able to translate it into English, he was not only incapable of writing good Gaelic, but of writing in English such poetry as is contained in the epic story of Fingal, and in the minor and perhaps more beautiful stories of Carthon and Temora. Though his translation, on the whole, is spirited and vivid, it is not always correct, and in numberless instances does injustice to the original. Macpherson at his death bequeathed a thousand pounds for the publication of the Gaelic, and, thanks to the learning, zeal, and energy of successive editors, among whom the last, the Reverend Mr. Clerk, is not the least eminent, the text has been finally settled, to the satisfaction of Gaelic scholars, and remains an imperishable monument of the genius of the Celtic people.

One assertion of the disbelievers in Ossian remains to be considered, namely, that, beyond a few undoubted Gaelic fragments that were current among the people of the Highlands before the birth of Macpherson, all the rest of the poems were translated from Macpherson's English, after the publication of Doctor Blair's treatise. To a certain extent the charge is true, for Macpherson undoubtedly pieced his fragments together, and could not exhibit the Gaelic for every line in his book. But this being granted, the poems of Ossian still remain as much Ossian's as the *Iliad* is Homer's; for in the days succeeding

those of Homer exactly the same process of preservation and, if a part were lost, of renovation and completion, must have been adopted by the successive reciters by whom the poems, as we now possess them, were handed down, till they were finally fixed in the form of an authentic manuscript. The only real question in our day is as to the more or less of Macphersonism that Macpherson inserted into the ancient poems. This point can never be satisfactorily settled; but from all that is known, and that is every day elicited by the Gaelic critics, who are alone competent to pass an opinion, it appears to be clear that whenever Macpherson meddled he muddled, and that the finest passages are of undoubted antiquity, and if not the composition of Ossian, of some other bard or bards as worthy as he to rank among great poets.

COLONIAL LIFE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

AFRICA is not all sand and lions, nor do serpents and cannibals constitute the major part of its population. My surprise was great on first coming to Natal en route to the diamond country to find it greener than even the Emerald Isle. It lies before me now as I write, rolling wave after wave of green—every shade of green, too; not mere young corn-fields or monotonous meadows. Here the cane-brakes, there the spring pastures; in the distance rise the coffee-bushes and the great, broad, flapping, split-leaved bananas, so generous in their lavish growth.

Natal is the very garden of Pomona. Oranges and limes roll about in green and golden profusion. The finest pine-apples, worth ever so much money in Covent Garden, sell here at a penny each, and there is a reduction to the greedy epicure who takes a quantity. The only true way to eat a pine-apple is to take one into a quiet, shady, unobserved corner, like that selfish and contemptible individual, little Jack Horner, and then and there to scoop it out like an egg, all by yourself, not giving even your nearest relation a bit. The result is paradisiacal, for the aroma is worthy of the fruit of Eden. Oranges sell at from one and sixpence to two shillings a hundred; however, residents seldom buy such things, but send empty baskets to their friends' gardens to be filled, for the friends are grateful to be relieved of their overflowing treasure. Fruit is, nevertheless, almost an essential of life in Southern Africa, for scurvy is common among the new settlers,

and this disagreeable disease is best exorcised by a liberal use of vegetables, fruit, and lemonade, the proper diet of the country. If hardy Norsemen will come to Africa, and there continue the potatoes useful, or at least harmless, in the cold misty North, they must take the consequence and pay the damages. Indian corn, a staple in America, and most delicious of all grain when prepared in the Indian way as hominy, is imported in large quantities into Natal, and there given as the universal food to the Kaffre labourers, also to man's humbler Darwinian kinsmen, the horses, pigs, and fowls. The cobs of the young green maize, most admirable and nutritious of vegetables, is preferred to bread by the Anglo-African children. The sweet potato (something between a parsnip and a waxy potato) is much cultivated at Natal, and, being cheap and decidedly filling, it is a useful vegetable for a thrifty household.

The climate of the South of Africa is not so hot as the poets make it. It is neither liquid fire, nor quite glass-house heat. On the contrary, it is steady, bright, and sunny, and not at all too warm for Anglo-Indians, whose blood has once been up at the top of the thermometer. People at Natal like nothing under seventy-five degrees. In summer we range between seventy degrees and eighty degrees, very rarely rising to ninety; and the mornings and evenings are so agreeably fresh and cool, that we never feel the prostrating lassitude that one experiences in hot, close weather in a stivy English town. The atmosphere is always deliciously pure, and the sky deeply and intensely blue. Heaven seems further off here than in England, and its outer court more beautiful and vast. Christmas weather is generally extremely hot. Sitting with fruit before us, we fan ourselves, and think of our dear friends in merry old England, wrapped up to the nose, and busy at their roast beef and terrible national pudding. Patriotism apart, and coaxed immediately after a heavy national dinner, I think many a John Bull would be glad to exchange his English beef and fog for African sunshine and bananas. The African winter is delightful, not unlike a fine warm English May, no rain to pour or drizzle, no gusts of bronchitis, no grey leaden clouds, but a cloudless, laughing sky, and the most lovely moonlight nights. Moreover, the moon is twice as large as the moon in England, and three times as bright. The African winter day is about two hours shorter than the summer day, that is, the sun sets in winter at five

A.M., and in summer at seven o'clock. A cheerful blazing wood fire, on an African winter evening, is cosy, and not to be despised, especially when one can sit over it and read long letters just arrived from England. Some of the Natal houses have no fire-places, but this is a lamentable mistake, and sometimes drives chilly tenants to the Cognac bottle. The great rains fall in summer, and are welcomed especially by the cotton farmers and coffee planters, as the crops then leap up as if by magic. These rains temper the otherwise great heat, and refreshingly cool the air. My farm bailiff in Surrey used to say, that if he superintended the weather office he would make all the rain fall on Sunday. Nature here, though less severe on the poor man's holiday, is quite as methodical, for it generally rains during an African summer two or three times a week, and generally in the evening or night, so that it neither interferes with business nor pleasure.

The soil at Natal is as rich as if it had been lying fallow since the Deluge, which indeed much of it has. We can get two crops a year from the same field. Potatoes put forth their nightshade (purple and yellow) blossom, fade, and quickly develop their clean-looking tubers. Indian corn shoots up rank and cane-like, and soon the great bunchy beaded cobs ripen and turn golden. We then hoe the ground over and plant oats. These we do not allow to ripen, but cut them green, and sell them at a remunerative price as forage for horses. Pigs and poultry thrive at Natal, though the latter are subject to epidemics, difficult to cure, the cause of which is as yet uncertain. Disease is also common among the Anglo-African oxen and horses. The general opinion, however, of the older settlers is, that these ailments chiefly arise from the carelessness, and recklessness, and ignorance of the lower class of settlers.

Let me describe Durban, the town where we live. Durban is situated on the banks of a large bay, about two miles from its narrow entrance, called the Point, where the vessels lie. There is a bold headland opposite the Point called the Bluff, and on it is a lighthouse. We had heard a good deal during our voyage out of the horrors of the bar, but the day we arrived it was as smooth as a lake, in fact there was no bar visible at all, so our good ship was at once towed safely in to her anchorage. In summer the bay looks very cheerful, dotted over as it is with yachts: there are frequent regattas, and great excitement prevails amongst the boating and betting

men. The beach round the bay is a pleasant ride. Strangers are surprised to see so many equestrians cantering about in every direction, for every one in Natal rides, after a fashion, and it speaks volumes for the horses that there are no accidents. Horses are indeed very cheap, especially since the exodus to the diamond fields, and their feeding is a trifle. Your Kaffre cuts the grass every day, and a feed of maize keeps the horse in good condition. The sand is too heavy for walking (at least so Durban people say); people, therefore, ride the shortest distances. There are races every year; and the South African colonist need not be dull. A fancy little railway runs from the Point to Durban. It is as unlike an English railway as it can well be, for there are no accidents and it pays good dividends. Durban is rather a foreign-looking little town, for the coolies help to give it an Oriental look with their gay clothing of many colours. The Kaffres, dusky and taller, are a powerful race of men.

The lumbering African waggon, with its team of oxen, surprises the new comer, and rouses thoughts of strange travel. Trees shade either side of the principal street, and there are excellent shops where you can procure necessaries and luxuries. The latest fashions come out to Natal, so the South African is only two months behind London and Paris. The houses are all built with verandahs, which are very cool and useful, affording an additional half-open room on a warm day. There is an excellent hotel in Durban, and the charges are very moderate. Breakfast, tiffin, and dinner, consisting of fish, soup, meat, curries, puddings, and fruit, cost at the hotel only six or seven shillings a day, including lodging. There is also a good club. Fish is very plentiful and cheap. Beef fourpence a pound; mutton, sixpence; coffee, one shilling; sugar very cheap; tea comes from the Cape and Australia; flour is one pound at present for the hundred-weight. Beyond Durban extends the flat, about a mile across; then comes the Beren, where many of the merchants and others employed during the day in town reside. This is a hill, covered with the luxuriant growth of trees, underwood, and flowering shrubs, called in Natal "bush." There is a church here, where the service is carefully performed. Paths intersect the Beren in every direction, and villas and cottages peep out, each with a garden more or less extensive. Some of these houses have magnificent views in front, looking down on the thick bush, with

its varied tints, and over the flat and the town, to the wide blue expanse of the Indian Ocean, and in the other direction to the beautiful valley of the Ilengeni river, while in the far distance the Jesanda mountains show purple against the sky, with their table-like flat tops reminding one of the Abyssinian hills. The Kaffres do all the laborious work of a house; chop wood, which costs nothing on the coast, go messages, and make themselves "generally useful." They would become good servants, but are too often spoiled by the class of settlers who at home would be servants themselves. These new comers treat the Kaffre one day with familiarity, and the next with harshness; consequently many of the natives become rude in their bearing, if they think they can safely venture on being so. The best way is to get raw, untrained Kaffres from their kraals, and train them into habits of respect and obedience. Kaffres get through a good day's work with a white man to superintend them. Their wages are from eight shillings to twelve shillings per month. They do not remain long in your service at one time, say nine months or a year; then they pack up and go back to their kraals, to see how things are going on, and spend a holiday with their wives and children. If you are a good master they will after that return to you and work for another spell. You do not see Kaffre girls in the town, but you meet them sometimes in the suburban roads. They are well made and shapely, with a good erect carriage, and by no means bad features; but the Kaffre maid-servant looks a terrible awkward shambling Topsy in European dress, and very unlike the graceful robed coolie women.

There is a very pretty little town where the governor resides with all the officials. The streets are wide, and shaded by seringatrees. The band of the regiment stationed in Natal plays once a week on the promenade. There is a great deal of business done in Maritzburgh with the Dutch from the Transvaal. People at home know very little of the divisions of the African colonies, and think that the old Cape colonies, Port Elizabeth and Natal, are all one. Natal people, however, don't like to be asked in letters from home, "Are you going to the Cape to look for diamonds?" The diamonds are as near Natal as the Cape, perhaps nearer. It is a point in dispute, and Natal, at all events, is not in the Cape Colony at all. It is a compact little state of itself, with its own governor, judges, secretaries, place-hunters, and bishops.

Rapid travellers writing skimming tours, and taking stock of half the globe, come out to Natal, race from the Hotel at Durban to the one at Maritzburgh, collect a few imperfectly digested facts, spin a theory or two, contrast us with the Cape, never go into a sugar-mill, never visit a coffee plantation, do not even ride through the Beren, then fly home and write an elaborate account of the colony, and an accurate photograph it generally proves to be!

TWO SIDES OF A STORY.

NED'S SECOND CHAPTER. CHANGES.

AFTER that things went on much as usual, except that Gretchen and I were happy in the security of our love. We said nothing to any one of the plight that had passed between us. The only difference was that I resolved boldly to attempt to make myself known to Mr. Fairfax. I learned that he was frequently sober, and often at such times was quite mild, and even good natured. I watched my opportunities, and picked up an acquaintance with him in his more self-respecting moments. I found him agreeable in his manners, polite, and well informed; but I also readily perceived that he was greedy and unprincipled. He had a handsome beard and a graceful cast of features, and had he been suitably clothed would have looked perfectly the fine gentleman. I succeeded so far in winning his goodwill, that I came and went at the cottage when and how I pleased.

Very seldom, indeed, did I find him about the place. Often he had not been seen there for a day, or for many days. If Gretchen forbore to tell me of this, Kitty was sure to announce it. Yet, in spite of all drawbacks, these visits of mine were occasions of high jubilee. I always found the three little sisters awaiting me in their trimmest order, though, sometimes, there were but two sisters, for Kitty, like her father, was a rover.

There was a certain Lady Bernard, who was a very rich old woman, and she had taken a fancy to Kitty, and would give her money and presents, and take her to drive with her in her carriage. She would have her very often to spend a day with her, to sing and dance, and act parts for her amusement. For Kitty had a fine voice, and was a capital mimic. Often when I was leaving the cottage of an evening I met Kitty returning home, attended by Lady Bernard's own maid. On these occasions Kitty held her head very high, and hardly saluted me. And if she came a

little earlier she ridiculed our supper-table, telling us with a great air of Lady Bernard's style of living. Sometimes she had an apple, or a handful of bon-bons for Fan, and then the little one was so charmed that I almost forgave Kitty her selfishness and her scornful want of tact. It took almost all Kitty's time, while she was not at Lady Bernard's, to make ready for the next occasion, when she should be summoned to the side of her patroness. She employed herself generally in ripping and sewing, cutting and settling old remnants of finery which Lady Bernard bestowed on her. She had a wonderful taste for a fantastic sort of dress-making, and to see Kitty setting out for Lady Bernard's, arranged in a costume of her own curious design, was to see a picture; not a picture of as high a class as my Gretchen in her dingy gown, but still a brilliant little picture, full of life and grace.

Sometimes of a morning I called for Gretchen, and found her gone to work before me. Then I generally beheld Kitty as I approached the cottage, seated in the window at her dress-making, with the curtain put aside, so that she might see and be seen by the people on the road. At such times Fan was moving about the place like a tiny household fairy. Mounted on a stool, so as to have command of the table, she shred the vegetables for the dinner, or she was sweeping the floor, or arranging the cupboards. She was a slender little creature, who looked as if you could blow her off your hand, but with spirit enough for a giant stirring in her great brown eyes. Gretchen was the little creature's idol. She would work like a busy bee all day long that Gretchen might have some comfort in the evening. Never was there a stronger human tie than was knit between these two little sisters of seven and seventeen.

It was some time before I was sharp enough to perceive that Fan was one of those tender human flowers that, though exquisite in their promise, never get past the bud. I had thought that as a matter of course she would grow up into girlhood, just as Gretchen had done, and Kitty. But little Fan was never born to be a woman.

"Oh, Kitty, do come and help me with this saucepan!" I heard her cry one morning as I came into the cottage.

"You tiresome little monkey!" was the answer. "Why don't you grow big?"

"I think the pain in my side will never let me grow big."

Fan's grave answer came with a child's sigh to me through the half-closed door.

"Don't be a goose!" said Kitty. "It's only indigestion. Whenever I eat venison at Lady Bernard's I get a pain just like that. Lady Bernard only laughs, and says it's indigestion."

And Kitty shook out some trimmings and gave all her attention to them.

"But I never tasted venison in my life, Kitty dear."

I entered and interrupted the conversation. Fan was standing gazing at her saucepan, with her small hand pressed against her side, and a look of patient pain upon her childish face. I think I knew from that moment about the end of little Fan. She flew to my side. Her head was scarcely higher than the level of my hand, and she had a trick of kissing my hand by way of greeting.

I watched her very closely after this, and was prepared for Gretchen's anguish when the truth first broke upon her.

"Ned," she said one day as we walked home together, "Ned, I want to speak to you. Fan——"

Her voice broke and she turned away her head.

"What is it?" I said, but I knew all about it very well. She struggled in silence awhile, and then gathered up her strength.

"Oh, Ned, Fan is going to die!"

"I trust not," I said, but I knew that I was a hypocrite when I said it. For Fan was fading away from us like a snow-drop in the sun.

Then we had pinching and saving to make up enough money to bring Fan to a famous doctor. The doctor shook his head and suggested the South of France. So we threw away our guineas, and brought the little patient home again to wrestle awhile for life.

It took her a whole year to die. During that time Gretchen was scarcely seen in our workroom. I carried her work to her, and brought it home when it was finished. Kitty was a bad nurse, and could not be relied upon. Almost all my evenings were spent at the cottage. Mr. Fairfax was seldom there, and, when there, he moaned perpetually over the troubles of his family. One would have thought to hear him that he had been a tender and industrious father, whose efforts were defeated by the unkindness of the world. He spent his days in gambling, and I knew that Gretchen shrank from taking the few odd coins which he gave her from time to time towards the

housekeeping. He was always glad to see me, and to borrow what little moneys I might chance to have about me. And this was a misfortune, for all my odd shillings were kept for dainties for Fan. When Mr. Fairfax got possession of them they were heard of never more.

It was during this year of Fan's dying that my very odd relative, whom I have spoken of before, sent for me to visit him, in a very formal manner. The event took me by surprise, as for a very long time he had not taken any notice of me. I went to dine with him, as I was bidden, upon a certain Wednesday, and the day was in itself worthy of note, as I never before had visited him, but on a Sunday, in my life. On former occasions he and I had been tête-à-tête, but now the dinner was a banquet, and the company very large. I felt rather out of place in my shabby undress coat. My relative smiled on me, however, and gave me a seat by his side. When the company were going he pressed me to remain.

When all had disappeared he drew his chair to the fireside, and bade me to do the same.

"Tell me," he said, "how do you think I am looking?"

"Only pretty well I think, sir," I said.

"That's an honest man. Yonder scoundrels all swore I never looked better in my life. But I am not even pretty well, so I am going to make my will."

"I hope you will live long to enjoy everything you have," I said.

"Well, you needn't; for I am not going to do anything of the kind. I tell you again that I am going to make my will."

"Are you, sir?" I said.

"Yes, I am, sir. And that's the fact that I want to bring before you. I have enjoyed my wealth well, but I have never squandered it, and I have got to leave it behind me. It is no mean inheritance. What I want to know is, am I to leave it to you or not?"

"Oh, sir!" was all I could articulate. A crowd of delightful ideas went whirling through my head. Gretchen—a wedding—Fan—the South of France. Good-bye to the wretched cottage and Mr. Fairfax. "Oh, sir!" I faltered, "do not tantalize me."

"Don't run too fast," he said, dryly; "there is a condition, I must tell you."

"A condition, sir?" What is it?" I felt ready to promise anything, possible or impossible.

"Only this," he said, "you are to swear never to marry. I will not have my money squandered by a woman. If you agree to my condition you shall have all that I possess. If you will not agree to it you shall have nothing."

I turned sick and dizzy. For a moment I pictured myself a rich man without Gretchen. But no; life without Gretchen would be like sand in a hungry mouth.

"Think well of it, young man!"

"I could not give her up, sir."

"Her? Is there a 'her' in the case already? Then that settles the matter. The money must go to the other one. How old are you, young man?"

"I am going on for twenty."

"And the other one is going on for fifty, I should think. If he has lived all this time without being so foolish as to marry, he deserves his good fortune, as you deserve your ill luck."

I knew very well who was meant by the "other one." He was a Sutherland by name, though no nearer by blood to my relative than I. He was the scamp of the family, and early in life had committed a fraud on account of which he had had to run away from England. He had not been heard of for years, and seemed to have dropped out of the world. But my odd old gentleman had never forgotten his existence, and it was from my guardian's conversation that I knew that this Sutherland had been born, had misbehaved, and had not yet died. Where he was, and how he lived, nobody seemed to know.

"The chances are against him," the old gentleman went on, "and there is still a hope for you. If he be married he gets nothing, and I never yet knew a ne'er-do-well who had not a wife and twenty children. He shall be sought for when I am gone, and if found to be a bachelor he is my heir. If it be proved that he is dead, or that he ever had a wife, then you are to get everything I have. Now good-night, young man, and I am sorry you are a fool!"

I did not tell Gretchen quite the truth about this affair. I told her my guardian's fortune was to go to a distant relation, of whom no one knew anything. I told her the conditions of his heirship, and of my chances in the matter. Many a time we laughed and speculated on the subject. Fan, on her sick-bed, amused herself building castles in the air. She prattled of it so often that her father overheard her.

"What is this fortune that you are

getting?" he said to me one evening, when I had met him, quite sober, on the road. "What does it mean?"

"Not much," I said, and told him the state of affairs. But I did not mention Gretchen. I had not chosen to promise against marriage, that was all.

"You are a fool!" he said, emphatically. "If I were in your place! And who is this old tyrant? And who is the lucky man who will get the money instead of you?"

I felt reluctant to give names, but Mr. Fairfax had fastened on the story, and was full of curiosity.

"My friend is called Sutherland," I admitted at last, "and I know nothing of the other except the facts I have told you; and that he bears the family name."

"Sutherland!" echoed Mr. Fairfax, "Sutherland!" He turned red, then white, then green in the face. "Sutherland!" He looked like a man who was going to have a fit.

"Yes," I said, "Sutherland. Good Heavens! Mr. Fairfax, what is the matter with you?"

He recovered himself quickly. "Matter with me?" he said. "Nothing is the matter with me. But I once knew a man called Sutherland. It must have been the same. Poor Sutherland! poor Sutherland! He was a married man."

Almost immediately after this he left me abruptly upon "business."

Some days afterwards I went into the cottage, and found an unusual scene going on among the sisters.

"I am sure," Kitty was saying, "it is very strange of you not to be more pleased. The expense of me will be quite off your hands, and, besides, I shall be such a credit to the family."

Kitty, standing in the middle of the floor, thus harangued her two sisters, who were clinging together on Fan's little couch. Tears were rolling heavily down Gretchen's face. Fan had her lips pressed to the elder sister's hand, while she looked wistfully and reproachfully at the other.

"Now look you here, brother Ned," said Kitty, triumphantly, as if glad to see a reasonable being to whom she could state her case. "Here is Gretchen fretting and crying about the finest piece of luck that ever befel this miserable house. Lady Bernard wants to adopt me, and take me for her daughter. There never was such good fortune heard of except in the fairy tales."

"Wait a little, Kitty," I said, "Gretchen will get used to it. This is a very great blessing, and nobody ought to object to it."

Gretchen looked at me, and her tears came down afresh.

"There's the way she goes on," cried Kitty, tossing her head impatiently. "It is jealous and unkind of her, that's what I think."

"Oh, no, no, Kitty!" murmured Gretchen.

"Go away, Kitty. Go off to Lady Bernard," cried Fan. "And Gretchen, you have still got little me. Don't cry, lovey sweet! Never fear but I will stick to you."

The little creature meant it. She thought nothing of the long parting that was at hand.

"I shall often come to see you," said Kitty, a little touched, "and I shall be able to bring some nice things for Fan, I dare say. It would be a dreadful pity to miss such a good thing for the family."

The good thing was not missed. Kitty went to live with Lady Bernard, and her visits to the shabby cottage were few and far between. And Gretchen bravely put away her sorrow, for Fan was going to die, and it needed all Gretchen's courage to help the little sister through this strait. It took all her nerve, and the nerve of one who was stronger, and ought to have been braver than herself. Many a night we sat up, holding the little hands, and wetting the parched lips. Fan made a generous will, and left me to Gretchen, and left Gretchen to me. "Kitty will be sure to be all right," she said. "She always told us she would make a shift for herself."

Kitty had made a very good shift indeed. Sometimes she came to us, dressed in handsome clothes, and bringing grapes or wine, or some other delicacy. But her visits were rare, and she thought more of the things she brought than of noting the changes in Fan. I think she would have come oftener, only she did not like to appear to us without gifts in her hands. She was too elegant a young lady for us now. Her silk dress was easily hurt, and her delicate kid gloves would not readily come off. She had never more than ten minutes to stay at a time, for the carriage was always waiting for her to drive her with Lady Bernard to the park. She grew tall and sleek in the course of a few months, and looked very fair and lovely in her handsome clothes. I could not but own, when I saw her beside Gretchen, that a gem is all the more beautiful for being

richly set. Yet my chosen love in her threadbare gown was all the dearer and holier to me for this thought.

It was agonising, that parting between the two little sisters. Fan held on to Gretchen while the death-struggle was rending her, till the frail spirit was overcome and borne away, and only pulseless hands were found clasping Gretchen's neck. And then we laid her out, and put lilies on her breast, and Kitty came to see her and cried a good deal. The father was not at home, and we quite forgot to miss him. Before the day of burial we had wondered about him a little. A whole week passed and we did not see him or hear from him. Gretchen was troubled, thinking of the shock that was in store for him. I was not uneasy. I thought that, like Kitty, he would be sure to make a shift for himself.

We laid our dead in a very humble grave, and Kitty dried her tears and went back to Lady Bernard. It was a comfort to her, she said, to remember about the grapes which she had been able to bring. Gretchen's cheeks were white, and her strength was worn out, but she thought she had done nothing for little Fan.

So Gretchen was left alone; for her father did not come back. Weeks passed away, and still there were no tidings of him. For the comfort of his daughter I searched and advertised—made every effort within my power to get a trace of the missing man. All exertions were fruitless. Mr. Fairfax was either dead, or had deserted. Gretchen believed the former; I, the latter.

In the midst of this perplexity Kitty went abroad with Lady Bernard. It was uncertain when she might return, as her protectress had some idea of settling in France. Her sister was married there, and lived in a pretty old chateau with a family of lively French children about her. Kitty was full of pleasant anticipations, and could scarcely tear herself away from her own delightful thoughts to remember Gretchen's loneliness and needs. But she promised to write frequently, and what more could one expect?

It was also at this time that I heard the news of my guardian's death. He had died, as he had expected, suddenly, of a fit of apoplexy. The arrangements as to his will had not been made too soon. To me

had been left the sum of fifty pounds, to take me to Paris, where he knew I had long wished to study art. And Henry Sutherland—the “other one”—was his heir.

This man was truly the heir, for he had suddenly appeared, and was just in good time to claim his inheritance, being, fortunately for himself, unmarried, and totally unencumbered. He had turned up, in the oddest way, just before the late Mr. Sutherland's death, and had visited the deceased, and been recognised by him. So he was the lucky man; and this was the end of our little day-dream.

The white-headed butler gave me these details when I called at the door to inquire about the funeral. I was too much disappointed to enter the place, or to run the risk of meeting the new Mr. Sutherland.

“A fine figgur of a gen'leman he is, sir,” said the old man. “Hextremely ‘an’some, if it warn’t for too ‘igh a blush about the nose. Lucky for him, sir, as how he never tried matrimony!”

“That’s as may be,” I said, sagely. But I sighed a little as I walked down the steps. The sigh was more for Gretchen's sake than my own.

And now came the question of what Gretchen was to do with herself. We looked in each other's faces and knew we dared not marry. We made our little plan, and agreed to be as cheerful as we could in carrying it out. I was to go to Paris, and Gretchen was to wait patiently till such time as I could come back and begin life as an artist. I found her a home with a respectable and kindly woman, and she returned to her work in Mr. Jackson's room.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LIII. THE DOCTOR RETURNS.

THE laughter of this uncomfortable Mercy Creswell remained in Maud Vernon's ears. She would have fancied that there was something odd about Lady Mardykes's house, if she had not known, by inference, from her mother, and directly from Maximilla Medwyn, that it was in every way unexceptionable. The woman could hardly have been tipsy. So Maud referred her unexplained merriment to something ridiculous which might have befallen in her own social level, the recollection of which irresistibly tickled her.

Lady Vernon was happier that day. A letter had reached her from her true, but hardly loving, friend, old Richard Dawe. It told her that Captain Vivian had made an excursion, he knew not whither, on the day on which he had passed through the town of Roydon; but that he had returned the same evening, and that the doctor having pronounced that he had been doing too much, he, Mr. Dawe, had exacted a promise from him, not again to attempt a journey for ten days. He had named that time particularly, in consequence of Lady Vernon's letter.

"I am not qualified," he said, "to speak about such feelings; but I will say, cure yourself of your excessive fondness for that young man. You have placed yourself in an agonising position. Make the effort; see him no more. I spare you. Commiserate yourself."

Notwithstanding its severe tone and unpalatable advice, this letter had cheered her. Maud would have left Roydon before his possible return. Her soul may have acquiesced, in secret, in the wisdom of old

Dawe's advice. But it was the recognition of one beholding himself in a glass, and straightway oblivion followed.

Lady Vernon had some charitable visits to pay, on two days in the week, in Roydon. Some fifty pensioners, more or less decayed, endured her occasional calls and lectures in consideration of the substantial comforts that attended a place on her list. On some days she would visit two, on others nearly a score.

Lady Vernon filled the rôle of the Christian matron with punctilious completeness. She had her great charities and her small; her tens of thousands to bestow, and her sixpences; her influential committees and powerful societies, and her grumbling and querulous old women in their garrets. She would make a flannel petticoat or build a church.

Lady Vernon bore herself to all her friends and acquaintances as an unexceptionable type of Christian life. She would tell herself, as she meditated in her solitude, that she could not remember having ever acted, in a single instance, contrary to her conscience.

Lady Vernon had violated authority a little once or twice. She and authority had differed, and she had taken her own course. But who was right, she or authority? Need I say?

Of course she had things to vex her. She had more; secret afflictions and dreadful recollections, of which but one person now living, except herself, knew anything.

For years she had been silently, though unconsciously, battling with remorse. She was battling with the same fiend now. But was not Satan writhing under her heel? Did she not stand, resting on her spear, unscathed in her panoply, like the angel of wisdom, purity, and courage? What were

these internal questionings, doubtings, and upbraidings, but the malignant sophistries of the Evil One accusing the just?

Lady Vernon had made two or three of her domiciliary visits, and was emerging from between the poplars that stood one at each side of old Mr. Martin's door, when her eye lighted upon the figure of Doctor Malkin, in his black frock-coat, newly arrived from his journey, looking a little fagged, but smiling politely, and raising his hat.

The doctor had just made his toilet, and was on his way to Roydon Hall to pay his respects to his patroness.

Lady Vernon smiled, but looked suddenly a little paler, as she saw her family physician thus unexpectedly near her.

"How d'ye do, Doctor Malkin? I did not think you could have been home so early," said Lady Vernon. "You intend calling at Roydon Hall to-day?"

"I was actually on my way," said Doctor Malkin, smiling engagingly, with his hat still in his hand, and the sun glancing dazlingly on his bald head. "At any hour that will best suit you, Lady Vernon, I shall be most happy to wait upon you."

"I shall be going home now; I have made my little round of visits."

"And left a great many afflicted hearts comforted," interpolated the appreciative doctor.

"And I mean to return by the path," she continued, not choosing to hear the doctor's little compliment. "Open that door, please," she said to the footman, who contrived with a struggle, without dropping the volumes he was charged with, to disengage a key from his pocket, and open a wicket in the park wall, which at this point runs only a few yards in the rear of the houses. "And, as you say, you were on your way to Roydon Hall, you may as well, if you don't mind, come by the path with me."

The doctor was only too happy.

The footman stood by the open door, which was only about a dozen steps away; and Lady Vernon stopped for a moment, and said to him:

"You must see old Grimwick, and tell him to send up to Mrs. Mordaunt at six o'clock this evening for the blankets that I said he should have."

"Yes, my lady."

So now she and Doctor Malkin were walking in the perfect quietude of a secluded path among the trees, and he began by saying:

"You will be glad to hear, Lady Vernon, that everything was satisfactory, and every particular is now arranged. I was detained a little longer than I expected, but I saw Mr. Damian. He read the copies of the papers, and said they are more than sufficient."

A silence followed. Lady Vernon was looking straight before her with an inflexible countenance. They walked on about twenty steps before either spoke.

"We had a visit from Mercy Creswell to-day," said Lady Vernon.

"Oh! Had you? But I don't think I quite recollect who Mercy Creswell is."

"She was once a servant here, and now she is in the employment of Mr. Damian."

"Oh! I understand; actually in his service at present?"

"Yes."

The doctor looked intently at Lady Vernon.

"I wished to see her. I knew she would have a good deal to tell me; and I had some ideas of making her particularly useful, which on seeing her, and ascertaining that she is clever, I have made up my mind to carry into effect."

"I have no doubt that anything resolved on by Lady Vernon will be most judicious and successful."

"It is five years since I saw Mr. Damian; how is he looking?" asked Lady Vernon.

"Very well. His hair has been white a long time. I think he stoops a little now; but in all other respects he is unchanged. His sight, his hearing, his mind are quite unimpaired. He is very active, too; everything, in short, you could wish. He is going for a few days, at the end of the week, to his place near Brighton. But it is a mere flying visit."

"I suppose you have had a conversation with Mr. Damian?"

"A very detailed and full one; a very satisfactory conversation, indeed. I explained every point of difficulty on which he required light, and he is quite clear as to his duty."

"And I as to mine," she said, abstractedly, looking with gloomy eyes on the grass; "I as to mine." She was walking, unconsciously, more slowly.

"You have had a great deal of anxiety and trouble, Doctor Malkin," she said, suddenly raising her eyes. "I think you have acted with great kindness, and tact, and energy, and secrecy."

"Certainly," he interposed; "religious

secrecy. I should consider myself dishonoured, had I not."

"I'm sure of that; I'm quite sure of that, Doctor Malkin; and I am very much obliged to you. You have done me a great kindness, and I hope yet to make you understand how very much I feel it. I have still, I'm afraid, a great deal of trouble to give you."

"I should be a very ungrateful man, Lady Vernon, if, in a case of this painful kind, I were to grudge any trouble that could contribute to make your mind more happy. I should perhaps say less anxious."

"I know very well how I can rely upon you, Doctor Malkin," said Lady Vernon, abstractedly. "It will be quite necessary that you should go on Sunday. We can't avoid it. I don't like travelling on Sundays, when it can be helped. But in this particular case it is unavoidable."

"Quite; of course you can command me. I am entirely at your disposal."

"And no one knows where you go?"

"That of course. I—I manage that very easily. I do all I can by rail, and take the train at an unlikely station."

"You know best," she said with a heavy sigh. "I wish it were all over. Doctor Malkin, it comforts me that I am so well supported by advice. I know I am right; yet I do not think I could endure the responsibility alone."

A little pink flush showed itself suddenly in Doctor Malkin's pale cheeks; he looked down.

"I have relied a good deal on Mr. Tintern," he said. "He has had a great deal of experience, and you know he is perfectly conversant with the mode of proceeding, and all responsibility rests ultimately, neither upon you nor upon any of those whom you have honoured with your more immediate confidence, but entirely with other people," said Doctor Malkin.

"If you don't mind, I should thank you to call on Sunday afternoon. I don't care to part with the papers until then. Will six o'clock suit you?"

"Perfectly."

"Well, I'm sure I ought to thank you very much, you have relieved my anxiety. Perhaps it is as well that we should part here. Good-bye, Doctor Malkin."

"Entirely," acquiesced Doctor Malkin. "I will call on Sunday, at the hour you name. Charming weather we have got, and what a delightful serenity pervades this place always," he added, raising one

hand gently, with a faint smile round, as if to imply that he need have no scruple in withdrawing his escort under conditions so assuring and delightful. "One thing only, I hope, perhaps, without being very impertinent, I may suggest."

Doctor Malkin hesitated here, and Lady Vernon answered easily:

"I should be happy to hear anything you may think it well to say."

"I was thinking, perhaps, that it might be desirable, Lady Vernon, not indeed to quiet any doubts; for I don't see that any can anywhere exist; but merely by way of technical authority—I was going to say, that some communication, either with Mr. Coke, or some other London lawyer of eminence, would be perhaps desirable."

"I don't mind telling you, Doctor Malkin, that I have already taken that step," said the lady. "You shall have the papers on Sunday, when you call, and for the present, I think I will say good-bye."

And so they parted.

CHAPTER LIV. MR. HOWARD'S GRAVESTONE.

LADY VERNON'S correspondence with Mr. Dawe was at this time carried on daily.

One of the old gentleman's letters intensified her alarms. It said:

"I thought for a time I had discovered a different object of the young gentleman's devotions—Miss Tintern, of the Grange. I did not open my conjectures to him, nor did he speak on the subject to me. I think I was mistaken, and I can't now tell how it is. There is some powerful attraction, unquestionably, in the neighbourhood of Roydon."

Lady Vernon's panic continued, therefore, unabated.

On Saturday by the late post a letter reached Roydon, addressed to Miss Vernon, which took Maud a good deal by surprise. It was from Lady Mardykes, and was to this effect.

The Forest, Warhampton, Friday.

MY DEAR MISS VERNON,—You will be surprised when you see that I write from the Forest. I was suddenly called here yesterday by a message from dear papa. I found him so much better, and so entirely out of danger, that I sent by telegraph to my aunt, at Carsbrook, to prevent my friends going away; and to beg of her to stay till Tuesday, where I am quite sure you will find her very happy to take charge of you when you arrive, as you promised, on Monday. Pray do not postpone your

coming, or make any change in our plans, unless Lady Vernon should think differently. Your cousin Maximilla Medwyn will arrive early on Monday, and you will find her quite an old inhabitant by the time you reach Carsbrook in the evening. I will write to Maximilla to-day and tell her not to put off coming, and that I have written to you to rely upon her being at Carsbrook early on Monday. Pray write to me here by return, when you have ascertained what Lady Vernon decides.

So the note ended.

Maud was dismayed. Was this one of those slips between the cup and the lip, by which the nectar of life is spilled and lost? With an augury of ill, she repaired with the note to Lady Vernon.

"What is this, Maud?" inquired Lady Vernon, as Maud held Lady Mardykes's letter towards her.

Maud told her, and asked her to read it, and waited in trepidation till she had done so.

"I see no reason why you should not go on Monday, just as if nothing had happened. That will do."

She nodded, and Maud, immensely relieved, went to her room, and wrote her note to Lady Mardykes accordingly.

"So now," thought she, "we have reached Saturday evening; and if nothing happens between this and Monday, I shall be at Carsbrook on Monday night."

So that day passed in hope, Sunday dawned, and the sweet bell in Roydon tower sent its tremulous notes in spreading ripples far over fields, and chimneys, and lordly trees.

In church, Maud observed that Ethel Tintern was looking far from well. She reproached herself for not having driven over to the Grange to see her.

This Sunday the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered in Roydon Church, and among those who knelt round the cushioned steps of the communion-table, was Lady Vernon. Miss Tintern and Mrs. Tintern also were there, and Maud Vernon, who, once a month, from the time of her confirmation, had, according to the rule of Roydon Hall, been a regular attendant.

Lady Vernon has risen pale and stately, and is again in the great Vernon pew, kneeling in solitary supplication, while the murmured words of the great commemoration are heard faintly along the aisle, and reverent footfalls pass slowly up and down.

And now it is ended; the church seems darkened as she rises. It is overcast by a thunder-cloud. By the side-door they step out. Lady Vernon's handsome face does not look as if the light of peace was upon it. In the livid shadow of the sky, the grass upon the graves is changed to the sable tint of the yew. The grey church-tower and hoary tombstones are darkened to the hue of lead.

Mr. Foljambe joins them; Mrs. and Miss Tintern are standing by Lady Vernon and Maud. Mrs. Tintern is talking rather eagerly to Lady Vernon, who seems just then to have troubled thoughts of her own to employ her. She is talking about a particular tombstone; Lady Vernon does not want to look at it, but does not care to decline, as Mrs. Tintern is bent on it; and Mr. Foljambe only too anxious to act as guide.

They walk round the buttress at the corner of the old church, and they find themselves before the tombstone of the late vicar, Mr. Howard. It stands perpendicularly; the inscription is cut deep in the stone; and there is no decoration about it but the clustering roses, which straggle wide and high, and are now shedding their honours on the green mound.

As they walked toward this point, very slowly, over the churchyard grass, Ethel Tintern seized the opportunity to say a word or two to Maud.

"You go to Carsbrook to-morrow, don't you?"

"Yes," said Maud, "and I have been blaming myself for not having been to the Grange to see you; but I really could not help it—twice the carriage was at the door, and twice mamma put it off."

"A great many things have happened since I saw you—I dare not try to tell you now," she said, scarcely above a whisper. "It would not do; if we were alone, of course—"

"Can you tell me, Ethel, whether the carriage is here?" said Mrs. Tintern, looking over her shoulder at her daughter.

"Oh, yes—I saw it—it is waiting at the church-porch."

And she continued to Maud, when her mother had resumed her talk with Lady Vernon and Mr. Foljambe:

"I have made up my mind, nearly, to take a decisive step. I daren't tell you; I daren't now, you understand why," she glanced at the group close before them; "but I think I will write to you at Carsbrook, if I do what I am thinking of, that

is, what I am urged to, under a pressure that is almost cruel; a terrible pressure. Hush!"

The last word and a look were evoked by her observing, for her eye was upon them although she spoke to Maud, that the three elder people of the party had suddenly slackened their pace, and came to a standstill by the vicar's grave.

They had gone to the other side. Mr. Foljambe was leading the discussion; he was advising, I believe, some change in the arrangements of the vicar's grave, which he had persuaded Mrs. Tintern to admire; and which I'm afraid he would not have troubled his head about, had he not fancied they would have been received with special favour by Lady Vernon.

Maud and Miss Tintern were standing at this side of the gentle mound that covered the good man's bones, and neither thinking of the conversation that was proceeding at the other side.

On a sudden, with a malignant look, Lady Vernon's cold, sweet voice recalled Maud, with the words,

"Don't tread upon that grave, dear."

Maud withdrew her foot quickly.

"No foot looks pretty on a grave," she continued with the same look, and a momentary shudder.

"I don't think my foot was actually upon the grave, though it looked so to you," Maud pleaded, a little disconcerted.

"Many people have a feeling about treading on a grave. I think it so horrible an indignity to mortality—I was going to say. I hope, Mr. Foljambe, that you, who are obliged, pretty often, to walk among them, feel that peculiar recoil; but I need hardly ask—you are so humane."

Uttered in cold, gentle tones, this was irritating to spirited Maud Vernon.

"But I do assure you, mamma," she said, with a heightened colour, "my foot was *not* upon it. I am quite certain."

"There, there, there, there, dear," said Lady Vernon, "I shan't mention it any more. Pray don't allow yourself to be excited, Maud; that kind of thing can't be good for any one."

Maud's fine eyes and beautiful colour were brighter. But Lady Vernon went on talking fluently, in very low tones, to old Mr. Foljambe, and she turned as they walked away, and said to Mrs. Tintern, gently, "I scarcely like to ask poor dear Maud to do or to omit anything. She becomes so miserably excited."

Maud, I dare say, had a word of com-

plaint to utter in Miss Tintern's ear as they returned to take leave, and get into their carriages at the church-door.

In a dark and sour mood Lady Vernon bid old Mr. Foljambe good-bye.

"What bores people are! To think of those two stupid persons taking me there to hear all that odious nonsense."

Lady Vernon did not come to luncheon, and hardly eat anything at dinner. She was by no means well that Sunday evening.

Doctor Malkin came and departed, the sun set, and Maud was glad, as her maid dropped the extinguisher on her candle, that the day was over, and that she would sleep next night at Carsbrook.

AMATEURS AT MOPETOWN.

A YEAR is supposed to have elapsed, as they say in the play-bills of melodramas, since my last visit to "this favoured locality," as it is called in its own journal. Duty once more brought me to the Dolphin, where I found that the Mendelssohn Jacksions had long since cast the dust off their shoes, and fled the place. But the Rooms flourished and looked as bright and spick and span as ever.

As I passed they seemed to be "up" again; all the boards were out, reclining against the pillars in very *dégagé* fashion, with a sort of lazy, hand-in-pocket style. They were covered over with small bills, headed "Grand Amateur Theatricals," and the performance was for that very night. I at once secured a ticket.

The landlord of the Dolphin was quite excited, and scarcely able to attend upon me.

"He had two of the gentlemen up-stairs, Mr. Killick and Captain Tooley. The town was full of the others who had come in; more were arriving that night. It was for a fine charity," continued the host of the Dolphin; "the rearin' of an Alexandra wing, I'm told."

I repeated the words after him in wonder. What odd objects they had in Mopetown! On referring to the bill I saw that the acting was for the erection of "an Alexandra wing" to a consumptive hospital in the neighbourhood, though what description of "wing" that was I was at a loss to discover. At all events it did not much matter, as I had reasonable suspicion that anything connected with Mopetown Rooms was not likely to bring in much funds, no matter how benevolent the pur-

pose. But it seems that there was a dramatic detachment of a foot regiment quartered a few miles off, which counted in its ranks the Killick and Tooley before mentioned, with "Little Dodd," as he was called, and, above all, the Honourable Mrs. Badminton, the colonel's wife. She, indeed, was with the head-quarters of the regiment at Manchester, but she had been engaged, or had engaged herself, "special."

It came about, I understood, in this way: Little Dodd, passing the Rooms one morning, had "voted"—a favourite and polite fiction for carrying any plan of his own into prompt execution—for going in. His exclamation was, "By Jove! we might get up a play here, and astonish the rustics!" The scheme at that moment "sprang armed" and complete from his little head. "We'd get down Timmons, with a portable stage and dresses, and 'beat up' some of the acting girls in the neighbourhood." As for audience, they'd *make* the rustics come, and "stick them for seven-and-six apiece for stalls." A brother in arms objected that Mopetown was such a hungry place, that the rustics would find it hard to club the amount for a single stall; but Little Dodd put this aside contemptuously, saying, "they'd make 'em come, and deuced glad they ought to be to be allowed to pay."

In a few days Little Dodd had fixed the plays—Miriam's Crime, I believe, which he would carry through by playing his "great part," and Poor Pillicoddy, in which he would do the same, by playing his other great part; and he would make this carrying through doubly sure by singing Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines, between both. But these arrangements, it seems, were rudely set aside by an untoward fatality. Some "stupid ass" wrote to the Honourable Mrs. Badminton, the colonel's lady, that they were getting up plays, such fun, &c., and she had written back most graciously that "she would help them, and come specially." This was a *ukase*, as it were, against which there was no appealing.

The Honourable Mrs. Badminton, in her youth, had been a perfect stroller, acting here, there, and everywhere. There was scarcely an officer in Her Majesty's army who had not acted with Lord Mountfogie's daughter. There were few small provincial theatres in which she had not appeared. It was in this way that she had won the heart of the gallant Badminton, then a simple lieutenant of foot. Her Betsy Baker was familiar; some, indeed,

said they knew it by heart, and certain of the irreverent were in the habit of calling her "Bet." Her daughters were now nearly grown up, but in the kindest and most good-natured way she was always glad to give her talents for charity.

Little Dodd's face was amusing for its blankness and disgust.

"Did you ever hear such a thing? Here's Bet coming down on us. Better give it all up. She'll take the whole fat, and we'll have her eternal Betsy Baker."

The little man seemed to forget that he had proposed securing all the "fat" for himself; but as for giving up the plan, he well knew that that was not to be thought of. For she commanded the regiment, would stop his leave, order him guards, of course "inspiring" her colonel, and annoy him in other ways.

In a few days she arrived, billeted herself on a visit to a good-natured acquaintance, Mrs. Towler, and took the whole arrangements on herself. Every one knew Pillicoddy by heart. Miriam's Crime was much too heavy. No, far better have a "powder and puff" piece, where they would be all at home, and have little to do. She had brought one down, "And as I hear," added the lady, modestly, "they are all dying to see me in Betsy; and as I have it at my fingers' ends, I think it would be the safest thing, you know. Better settle at once, and lose no time."

This was equivalent to a command. Tooley and Killick were toadies, and concurred heartily, as Little Dodd had to do, with a rueful face.

"You can sing one of those queer buffoonery songs if you like," she said, half contemptuously, "though I always think they are out of place."

"I knew it," said Little Dodd, later. "Didn't I tell you she'd force her Betsy on us, and her 'powder and puff' piece? You'll see she has all the fat in that too—some pert waiting-maid in a hoop, who lets fellows in wigs in at the garden-gate. I know the style of thing well."

Here Little Dodd showed surprising instinct and sagacity, unless, indeed, we explain it on the vulgar principle of "setting a thief," &c. Friends might have made the same remark about him, and have guessed, beforehand, that in any pieces he chose would have been found, to a certainty, pert cockneys in pink trousers and blue coats, or free-and-easy servants.

Precisely as he had anticipated, the

Honourable Mrs. Badminton produced a manuscript piece, which, she announced, Mr. St. Lucy, a clever friend of hers, who wrote for the magazines—and there are many clever people who do this, which differs a little from writing in the magazines—had adapted from the French for her. It was entitled, *A Midnight Mistake*; or, *Trianon Revels*. And that title figured bravely on the board at the door of the Rooms.

Much of the above information I gleaned from stray conversations with Mr. Dodd himself, who was quite willing to enter on the subject of his treatment with any stranger.

"The thing will be a dead failure. I suppose there aren't a dozen places taken; all the rest given away; the hall packed with her friends. I said so from the beginning. Who'd pay to see her?"

The inference was that crowds would pay to see him.

"But," said I, "the cost of the affair; the hired stage, dresses, &c."

"Lord bless you," he said. "Did you think we'd do that *now*? I suppose it would be a matter of fifty pounds out of our pockets. No, hang it! I stuck out against that; so did poor Mrs. Towler. The carpenter has knocked the thing up, and the house-painter fellow here has done a couple of scenes. But she stuck us for two guineas apiece for the hire of dresses for her infernal *Midnight Mistake*."

"Then the *Alexandra wing*?" I said.

"*Alexandra humbug!*" he said. "The thing won't give them the price of a single stone. But, bless you, the hospital people didn't want an *Alexandra* or any wing at all. They wouldn't keep it if they got it. They haven't means to keep up what they have. That was all her dodge. She is always playing for *Alexandra wings*, and never brought a sixpence to one of them. I never saw one anywhere, nor did any one else I believe."

At night I repaired to the Rooms. They were very full indeed, though the audience was rather of a mixed character. A stage and curtain had been run up at the end. A piano was in front, by way of orchestra, and the stalls were tolerably full. I noticed, however, the extraordinary number of soldiers present, attended by their wives and female friends. The stalls seemed to me to be almost entirely filled with ladies of a regimental aspect—wives, sisters, cousins, &c., of the officers, though I could distinguish the clergyman, the local soli-

ditor, ditto surgeon, the head of the post-office, and a few more notabilities.

Mr. Belman, B.A.M., who had succeeded the Mendelssohn Jackson family, and who, I believe, was on the eve of retiring like the same family, was at the instrument; playing the company in with a valse. The great ones, the distinguished party who were to drive in from Towler, had twelve places reserved for them. They had not arrived yet. Presently, however, they appeared—a procession of opera cloaks winding up the aisle to their places, the stewards ushering them. They took their seats, and then the bills were distributed. I give the document at length, as it is characteristic:

THEATRE ROYAL, MOPETOWN.

In aid of the erection of an
ALEXANDRA WING FOR THE INFIRMARY.

This Evening, the Performances will commence with a Prologue, written for the occasion, by

THE HONOURABLE MRS. BADMINTON.

After which will be presented a New Piece, expressly written for, and dedicated to, the Hon. Mrs. Badminton,

ENTITLED,

A MIDNIGHT MISTAKE;

OR,

TRIANON REVELS,

BY HORACE ST. LUCY, ESQ.

Louis XV., Mr. Sparks, —th Regt.

Comte de Buzenval, Captain Tooley, —th Regt.

Jules de Nerval (a Gascon gentleman) Mr. Killick,

—th Regt.

Bontemps (Captain of the Guard), Mr. Lily, —th Regt.

Le Coq (an innkeeper), Mr. Dodd, —th Regt.

Marquise de Beaure, Mrs. M'Cullum,

and

Rigolette (a waiting-maid), the Hon. Mrs. Badminton.

Courtiers, nobles, &c.

SCENE—*The Trianon Gardens.*

TIME, 1770.

After which a Comic Song,

CAPTAIN JINKS OF THE HORSE MARINES,

BY MR. DODD, —TH REGIMENT

(In character).

The whole to conclude with (by desire)

BETSY BAKER.

Betsy Baker (her original character) the Honourable Mrs. Badminton.

A bell was heard to ring behind, the curtain was drawn aside, and Mr. Killick, a very tall young man, in a powdered wig and sky-blue coat, his lower limbs looking very cool in silk stockings and shoes, came out to speak the prologue. He began very hurriedly:

"Kind friends, we greet you once again,
Let not—our—mimic—stage—be raised—in vain,
Of every cause from east—unto the west,
Sure that of charity's the best.
And when—and when——"

Here he stopped and looked round at the

curtain behind him. We heard a voice murmuring something, but Mr. Killick could not hear. "And when—" he began, stopped again, and gave a smile. We all applauded.

"And when—"

He at last caught the word—

"your race of life is o'er,
You'll bless the charity that's gone before."

Here he paused again, bewildered, bit his glove, smiled again, and finally went on:

"To-night, our histrionic host,
Brought from pillar and from post,
A hundred miles—"

"A hundred miles," repeated Mr. Killick, anxiously, then said, with relief, "Oh, yes," at which we laughed:

"A hundred miles has journey'd one,
You'll guess I mean fair BADMINTON!"

Tremendous applause from the soldiers and their wives, Mr. Killick smiling, and evidently racking his brain for the next line, which we heard given in a hoarse voice behind the curtain: "'Tis yours to give the draymar laws"—

"'Tis yours to give the drama laws,
And all we ask is your applause."

On which Mr. Killick—a broad grin on his features—retired hastily, bowing and nodding. Then the bell rang, and the curtain rose. I have seen Mr. St. Lucy's play, and so has the reader, a good many times—that is to say, a piece where M. le Marquis, and Jules, a lover, a monarch of objectionable tastes, and a lovely girl out of a convent, are all mixed up in some vague transaction. I will not, therefore, enter into Mr. St. Lucy's plot more than by saying that a fête was being given at the Trianon, where the marquise repaired masked, and where the king came masked with De Buzenval, and where "Jool," the Gascon gentleman, came also masked. There was a duel at one time of the night, and at the end a strong body of privates of the regiment came in, holding lights—they were the courtiers, nobles, &c.—and all was cleared up. Mr. Killick, as the Gascon gentleman, I must own, quite eclipsed Little Dodd as the comic character. He was always forgetting his part, and then standing with a good-humoured smile till he caught the prompter's words, making us all laugh prodigiously; but when he declared his passion to the marquise, we roared again. "Marie," he said, "you should not treat me so! You know me. From a boy I have thought of you, and of you alone; and I shall die if you still refuse to be mine." This was

so pleasantly said, that we were delighted. "For nights past I have watered my pillow with tears. I cannot sleep; my dreams are disturbed with weary visions; and, oh, Mary!" added Mr. Killick, dropping on one knee, "I love you, and shall not rise till you return my passion." Mr. Killick, looking the picture of health and good-humour as he remained on his knees, we all laughed heartily; and I could hear the sergeants' wives behind me: "Ain't Mr. Killick funny?"

But the real phenomenon of the piece was how a simple waiting-maid, such as the Honourable Mrs. Badminton was, could have so much to do. She was everywhere. She was not off the stage a moment. She talked all through, and directed everybody, even the king. She told the count what to do, and she told the lovers what to do. A woman wrapped in a cloak and hood overheard the king's nefarious designs; the hood was presently lifted, and we recognised the Honourable Mrs. Badminton. Some one was concealed in a closet, as the wicked De Buzenval was maturing designs of his own on the lovely marquise, and it turned out to be the Honourable Mrs. Badminton. She was behind trees and bushes. She was entirely in the interest of the lovers, and had a very difficult task to carry out. But, at the same time, I must say she had ample opportunity and every facility given to her. One or two inferior parts, I should mention, were played by selected privates, who, justice compels me to say, though their names were not set down in the bill, played with great steadiness and respectability. I could have wished, however, that one had not persisted in addressing his august master as "Buzzingvell," but no one remarked it.

Little Dodd was quite overpowered—as indeed he might be—in such "rot," as he would disrespectfully term Mr. St. Lucy's work. But when he came to Captain Jinks he had his turn. Even his appearance, in enormous weeping whiskers of a brick red, an immense grotesque helmet, jack-boots, and clanking sword, made the sergeants' wives laugh so, he could not begin.

"Ain't Mr. Dodd funny, Jemima? That's Mr. Dodd. Lord, how he do look!"

Between every verse he clanked and strode up and down, and, I must say, as in the case of most comic singers, such pantomime was more diverting than the singing. He was rapturously encored, and substituted the Ratscatcher's Daughter, which met with the same reception.

The farce followed. There again it was all Badminton. It seemed to go home to the sergeants' wives, delighted to see a genuine 'ousemaid with her broom, and who told each other over and over again, with many a "Lawks, Mary! that there was Mrs. Badminton, and weren't she funny!" But somehow it appeared to me that the enjoyment was not nearly so racy at Mr. Dodd's song as at the good-humoured Killick: it appeared to be enforced. The Honourable Mrs. Badminton had a colonel-like fashion even in her acting, and said her comic speeches with an air as who should say, "Applaud that." As for her aplomb and composure, it assured one as to the truth of the statement, that she commanded the regiment. Once an impertinent interruption took place in the gallery between a soldier and a native, whose place had been taken, when the Honourable Mrs. Badminton came forward and fixed her eyes in a severe manner on the disturbers. The soldier quailed, and at once gave up the argument. The native, not so accustomed to her influence, renewed the discussion, when the Honourable Mrs. Badminton, who was entering on an arch and funny speech, stopped, and said sharply:

"If these interruptions go on, I shall withdraw from the piece."

A deathlike stillness followed.

I believe it was considered to be one of the most successful performances ever known in the amateur way. Nothing could have "gone off" better—the current phrase. Little Dodd was but half content: he was disgusted, he said, with the whole thing.

It was a revolting exhibition of vanity, wasn't it—he left it to any one—that woman grabbing at everything? He saw all the people gaping and yawning, the parson and all, and he thought he never could get out of it fast enough, and wished he had his seven-and-six back. The Honourable Mrs. Badminton, however, I heard was much pleased, and paid us the compliment of saying we were a very intelligent audience.

As regards the Alexandra wing, the heavy expenses incurred did not admit of anything being handed over to the funds of the institution. There was posting, scenery, advertisements in local papers, and some suppers at the Dolphin for the actors, both before as well as after their work. Thus the "wing" received nothing. But after all, if there was truth in the view

taken by Little Dodd, the institution could not complain, as there was no intention to erect such a structure.

SCIENCE FOR THE UNSCIENTIFIC.

THERE are individuals who never take their walks abroad without a pocket-knife, a few coppers, and a bit of string. Neglecting the two first articles as foreign to our purpose, what a helpful little thing is a bit of string, both at home and abroad, to look no further than its use as a collector and a conservator. In a country walk it keeps together, in order, flowers with flowers, ferns with ferns, grapes with grapes, and sticks with sticks; in-doors, it unites the bills of the year, the journals of a class, newspaper cuttings on some favourite subject, and trash for the rubbish-heap, or for lighting fires. If, in certain offices, string is abused in the shape of red tape, what would be the state of those offices if deprived of red tape's versatile aid?

What the twine-spinner does for the odds and ends of every-day life, the bookbinder, and, above all, the reprinter and republisher does for literary miscellanies, which may have a connecting link of authorship or subject, of date or occasion, but which may be materially as heterogeneous as printed papers can be. Quartos, duodecimos, loose pamphlet-shaped tracts, stitched in covers, or uncovered and unstitched, single leaves begging the bill-sticker to give them a local habitation, defy the powers of string to convert them into a sightly and legible whole. It is then that the republisher comes in, giving unity, consistency, and order to what might otherwise have been consigned to the hopeless limbo of literature.

Doubtless multitudes of small publications deserve to meet with no better doom than a speedy consignment to that dusty fate; there are others which we pick up along the road of life, and thrust with delight into our travelling wallet, as we would soft-shining pearls discovered on a lonely shore. Few flying words are better worth collecting than those which Professor Tyndall lets fall from time to time; and the public is to be congratulated that, in obedience to an impulse from America, he has been induced to gather together the series of detached essays, lectures, and reviews which have recently come forth as *Fragments of Science for Unscientific People*.

For unscientific people, yes; for ignorant people, no; for prejudiced, bigoted, one-sided people, still less. The Fragments are not all of them easy reading. You cannot run through them as you run through a lady-writer's romance, although certain portions of them are more sensational than the most sensational novel. There is never an attempt to hide rough ground under the flowers of rhetoric or the sticks and straws of verbiage. Wherever there are hard places to be traversed, Professor Tyndall tells you they are and will be hard, and advises you to gird up your loins accordingly. When the trying bit of climbing is accomplished, he says, like a man, "Thus patiently you have accompanied me over a piece of exceedingly difficult ground; and I think as a prudent guide, we ought to halt upon the eminence we have now attained. We might go higher, but the boulders begin here to be very rough. At a future day we shall, I doubt not, be able to overcome this difficulty, and to reach together a greater elevation."

Such frankness, combined with such lucidity, renders the reading of Professor Tyndall's works a mental tonic. They often require the effort which it takes to plunge bodily into a chilly pool, but the resulting reaction of conscious energy and delight more than compensates for the effort. The professor's mind is doubly clear; clear to itself and clear to others. Obscured by no mists, it puts forth no humbug. It has never been the writer's privilege to hear this gifted lecturer's *vivâ voce* discourse, but certain he is that *he* would never do what he relates that Faraday did upon occasion. Faraday did not confine himself to experimental discovery. He aspired to be a teacher, and reflected and wrote upon the method of scientific exposition. "A lecturer," he observes, "should appear easy and collected, undaunted and unconcerned:" still, "his whole behaviour should evince respect for his audience." These recommendations were afterwards in great part embodied by himself. Doctor Tyndall doubts his unconcern, but his fearlessness was often manifested. It used to rise within him as a wave, which carried both him and his audience along with it. On rare occasions also, when he felt himself and his subject hopelessly unintelligible, he suddenly evoked a certain recklessness of thought, and without halting to extricate his bewildered followers, he would dash alone

through the jungle into which he had unwittingly led them; thus saving them from ennui by the exhibition of a vigour which, for the time being, they could neither share nor comprehend.

Now Professor Tyndall, we believe, would never do anything of the kind. In the first place, he would take good care never to lead his hearers into a jungle unwittingly; and in the second place, if he had strayed with them into one, he would make it a point of honour to pilot them out of it. So long as an uncouth difficulty is malleable, he never tires till he has hammered it into shape; if it is utterly refractory, he tells you it is so, and lets it alone.

"Let us get a clear idea of this," or words to the same purport, is his constant and urgent appeal to his hearers when about to attack some knotty point. "My wish to render our mental images complete, causes me to dwell briefly upon these known points, and the same wish will cause me to linger a little longer among others." "My aim throughout has been to raise in your minds distinct physical images of the various processes involved in our researches." He struggles heroically to be clear, and the endeavour results in his being clear. Witness his explanation of the chemical action of certain rays of light, and the way in which he obstinately persists in not allowing the leading principle of the undulatory theory of light to be forgotten.

"Here I would ask you to make familiar to your minds the idea that no chemical action can be produced by a ray, that does not involve the destruction of the ray. But the term 'ray' is unsatisfactory to us at present, when our desire is to abolish all vagueness, and to fix a definite physical significance to each of our terms. Abandoning the term 'ray' as loose and indefinite, we have to fix our thoughts upon the waves of light, and to render clear to our minds that those waves, which produce chemical action, do so by delivering up their own motion to the molecules which they decompose."

Or let us take polarised light as an example. Most educated persons have heard of polarised light; they certainly see it every day, as their attendants talk prose, without knowing it. They may perhaps have seen its brilliant effects displayed in the microscope of some ingenious neighbour. But ask them in what respect polarised differs from unpolarised light, and they will be hard put to give an answer. The present writer has seen no answer to the question

to be compared, in respect to clearness and capability of popular comprehension, with Professor Tyndall's explanation. "There is another subject connected with our firmament, of a more subtle and recondite character than even its colour. I mean what Herschel calls that 'mysterious and beautiful phenomenon,' the polarisation of the light of the sky. The polarity of a magnet consists in its two-endedness, both ends, or poles, acting in opposite ways. Polar forces, as most of you know, are these in which the duality of attraction and repulsion is manifested. And a kind of two-sidedness, noticed by Huygens, commented on by Newton, and discovered by a French philosopher, named Malus, in a beam of light which had been reflected from one of the windows of the Luxembourg Palace in Paris, receives the name of polarisation." In short, a beam of polarised light has two sides, which differ from each other in their nature, qualities, and effects. If the beam is flat and broad, like the blade of a knife, one side is sharp and thin, as it were, the other flat and blunt; if the beam were cylindrical like a walking-stick, or square like a draper's measure, one-half of it might consist of wood, the other of barley-sugar. The opposite sides of a polarised beam of light differ quite as much as that.

This clearness is a natural consequence of Professor Tyndall's writings being eminently truthful. It may be too much to assert that every muddle-headed or muddle-tongued person is untruthful, but certain it is that all uncandid, insincere persons, all rogues, swindlers, and intriguers, are obscure, involved, contradictory, and often unintelligible in their sayings. "Speech was given to man to hide his thoughts," said one of the artfullest of men. Professor Tyndall is too good a philosopher, and too kind-hearted, to hit any fellow-philosopher hardly; but is there no well-known contemporary writer open to some such a remark as this? "A favourite theory—the desire to establish or avoid a certain result—can so warp the mind as to destroy its power of estimating facts. I have known men to work for years under a fascination of this kind, unable to extricate themselves from its fatal influence. They had certain data, but not, as it happened, enough. They supplemented the data, and went wrong. From that hour their intellects were so blinded to the perception of adverse phenomena, that they never reached truth."

What Professor Tyndall knows, he does know, and says that he knows it, and why.

What he does not know he has the courage to state that he does not—adding, perhaps, that he is not ever likely to know. "Of the inner quality that enables matter to attract matter, we know nothing." While he feels a natural pride in scientific achievement—while he regards science as the most powerful instrument of intellectual culture as well as the most powerful ministrant to the material wants of men—if you ask him whether science has solved, or is likely in our day to solve, the problem of this universe, he is obliged to shake his head in doubt. As far as he can see, there is no quality in the human intellect which is fit to be applied to the solution of the problem. It is entirely beyond us. He compares the mind of man to a musical instrument with a certain range of notes, beyond which, in both directions, we have an infinitude of silence. The phenomena of matter and force lie within our intellectual range; but behind, and above, and around all, the real mystery of this universe lies unsolved, and, as far as we are concerned, is incapable of solution.

Doctor Tyndall once walked down Regent-street with a man of great gifts and acquirements, discussing with him various theological questions. He could not accept his views of the origin and destiny of the universe, nor was he prepared to enunciate any views of his own. His friend turned to him at length and said, "You surely must have a theory of the universe." That he should in one way or another have solved this mystery of mysteries, seemed to the speaker a matter of course. "I have not even a theory of magnetism," was the modest reply.

The human brain is said to be the instrument of thought and feeling; when we are hurt, the brain feels it; when we ponder, it is the brain that thinks; when our passions or affections are excited, it is through the instrumentality of the brain. But at this point Professor Tyndall very properly asks for a little more precision. How does consciousness infuse itself into the problem? Granted that a definite thought, and a definite molecular action in the brain, occur simultaneously, we should be as far as ever from the solution of the problem, "How are these physical processes connected with the facts of consciousness?" The chasm between the two classes of phenomena would still remain intellectually impassable. Let the consciousness of love, for example, be associated with a right-handed spiral motion of the molecules of the brain, and the consciousness of hate with

a left-handed spiral motion. We should then know, when we love, that their motion is in one direction, and, when we hate, that their motion is in the other direction; but the "WHY?" would remain as unanswerable as before.

The problem of the connexion of body and soul is as insoluble in its modern form as it was in the pre-scientific ages. Phosphorus is known to enter into the composition of the human brain, and a trenchant German writer has exclaimed: "Ohne Phosphor, kein Gedanke"—"No thought, without phosphorus." That may or may not be the case; but even if we knew it to be the case, the knowledge would not lighten our darkness. On both sides of the zone here assigned to the materialist, he is equally helpless. If you ask him whence is "matter?" who or what divided it into molecules? who or what impressed upon them the necessity of running into organic forms? he has no answer. Science is mute in reply to these questions.

We travel with confidence under such a guide, and do not hesitate to inspect with him the objects that happen to lie in our path. Dust, oh! If you step aside at the cry, still remain near enough to take a peep at it. For what is dust? As sand is a highly elaborate preparation of sundry rocks and other hard portions of the terrestrial crust, dust is a still more elaborate form, both of organic and inorganic matter. Dust is, partly, what we have been, bodily speaking, and what we shall be. Ashes, we return to ashes; dust, we return to dust. Dust comprises carbonate of lime, magnesia, iron, carbon, organisable matter, which may become first a grain of wheat or a cabbage, and then a fractional part of a man. In the shape of dust which is blown about the streets, we may inhale our ancestors, and be inhaled by our posterity. Great Cæsar, dead and turned to clay, is just as likely to form a dust-cloud on a summer's as to stop a hole on a winter's day. Dust is despised only by the ignorant; but whoever has possessed a microscope of even moderate pretensions, will take an interest in, and feel a respect for, dust. Dust, independently of its intrinsic nature, derives value from its mere mechanical qualities. "A bushel of March dust is worth a king's ransom." What would become of the farmer and the gardener, and what, consequently, would become of all civilised peoples, if dust were not, except liquefied as mud or solidified as rock?

Of the curiosities and marvels of dust we learn not a little from Doctor Tyndall's *Fragments*, which may be looked upon themselves as a sort of scientific dust, although the grains are of quite appreciable magnitude and importance.

Dust is such a thorough Paul Pry, so intrusive, so all-pervading, that there is some foundation for Night Thought Young's hypothesis of a universe of dust, except that each particular atom does not dance, as he imagined, according to its own devices, but according to law. The air on the top of Mont Blanc contains dust; but the acme and concentration of dirt is the atmosphere of London, enveloped by which it is impossible for anybody to be quite clean, outside or in. Solar light, in passing through a dark room, reveals its track by illuminating the dust floating in the air; if there were no dust, no track would be visible. Professor Tyndall, who has a keen eye for the beautiful, says that, on a day of transient shadows, there was something almost magical in the rise and dissolution of the luminous beams among the scaffolding poles of the Royal Albert Hall.

To carry out his researches on the decomposition of vapours by light, he was compelled to remove all dust from his experimental tubes. It was no easy matter to do so. At last, prior to admitting the air, he carefully caused it to pass over a spirit-lamp flame. The floating particles no longer appeared, having been burnt up by the flame. Those particles were, therefore, of organic origin. He was by no means prepared for this result; for he had thought that the dust of our air was, in great part, inorganic and non-combustible. The organic origin of a great portion of our floating and suspended dust is of vast importance, in more ways than one. It is productive both of good and evil. Oxyhydrogen flame, scarcely visible in the air of a room, would be still less so if it could be burnt in an absolutely clean atmosphere. Such flames are made luminous by the dust in the air. In very dusty climates, there can be no doubt that the particles so diffused act as a manure in the course of time, and likewise supply, in the crannies and on the ledges of rocks, a scanty soil which furnishes the means of a commencement of vegetation.

Dust is the cause of the lovely colour of the azure firmament. In fact, sky-blue may be produced by exceedingly minute particles of any kind of matter. To the same cause are to be ascribed the effects by

which distance lends enchantment to the view. Professor Tyndall makes an artificial sky more perfect than the real one. In mountainous countries, hills at no great distance are rendered almost invisible by haze. It will be understood that it is not the interposition of the haze as an opaque body that renders the mountains indistinct, but that it is the light of the haze which dims and bewilders the eye, and thus weakens the definition of the objects seen through it. Artists take notice of these phenomena under the name of aerial perspective. The haze varies with the temperature and humidity of the atmosphere. At certain times and places it is almost as blue as the sky itself, but to see its colour the attention must be withdrawn from the mountains and from the trees which cover them. In point of fact, the haze is a piece of more or less perfect sky; it is produced in the same manner, and is subject to the same laws, as the firmament itself. We live in the sky, not under it.

Dust acquires a fearful interest, when we regard it as an agent in spreading disease. Professor Tyndall believes there are the strongest grounds for holding contagious matter to be "particulate," and, further, that the particles are, to all intents and purposes, germs, exhibiting, as they do, the fundamental characters of propagating their own kind through countless generations, and over vast geographical areas. Their life and reproduction run parallel to, and are an incident of, the life of man himself. He does not doubt the ability of these particles to scatter light, nor that the means by which the visible floating dust of our air is arrested will also be found effectual in arresting contagion. Doctor William Budd states: "As to the germ theory itself, that is a matter on which I have long since made up my mind. From the day when I first began to think upon these subjects I have never had a doubt that the specific cause of contagious fevers must be living organisms"—dust alive.

ROME. 1870.

WRITTEN ON THE EVE OF THE ENTRANCE OF THE ITALIAN TROOPS INTO ROME.

There is a picture I remember well,
A fresco, fading in my Southern home,
A woman sleeping on the burning sand,
While baleful sunset vapours fill the land,
A type of thee, O Rome!

The slant sun searches for her cheek, and warms
Its golden brown to amber, till the bee,
Confused by sweetness, sucks it as a flower.
No queen, who dreams within her palace bower,
Is throned more royally.

Above the blue, far-off, mysterious sky,
O'er-canopies her grave majestic head,
And presses her shut eyes, so sadly sweet;
The swart Campagna stretches round her feet,
As 'twere a carpet spread.

Around (bold headlands in that tideless sea)
Surge awful ruins, prone, august, and hoar,
Void temples, broken columns, arches vast,
Where oracles and echoes of the past
Reverberate evermore!

An empty wallet lies beside her hand,
A cross defaced hangs on her scarlet vest;
Forlorn and poor, she sleeps abandoned there,
Her face, o'ershadowed by a grand despair,
Is hushed in mournful rest.

Unconscious of all peril, calm, she sleeps,
Though soon the treach'rous fatal dews will rise
Which lead from sleep to death; soft cobweb folds
Thus bind a captured fly in spider holds,
Where, crushed, it slowly dies.

The poison murders with a bland caress,
A sugar'd venom 'neath which life expires;
But wake her and she's saved. Is there no name
Will rouse her from this sleep, as sudden flame
Is held to smouldering fires?

Alas, alas! to me that picture seems
My country's symbol. Rome, thus fair art thou.
Dead vampyre lips thus fasten on thy breath,
And beauty deepening into solemn death,
Thus crowns thy faded brow.

She sleeps 'mid ruins, as thou sleepest, Rome!
Beneath as subtle, deadly a control;
A worse malaria enervates thy will,
And fate and falsehood both unite to kill,
To soil and crush thy soul.

But THOU art saved; loud o'er thy purple hills
The silence breaks, thy brave deliverers come;
Clear as a clarion's note the music falls,
And nations greet the kingly voice which calls,
Arise, be free, O Rome!

A CROW-BOY'S MIND.

It is not easy in any country, and especially in England, where caste, though theoretically non-existing, is a practical fact, for the different classes of society to understand each other intimately. And not only class, but sex and age form a barrier that it is difficult to overpass. Women continually complain that men do not understand them, and men bring the same accusation against women. The rich, although they may sympathise with, and be kind and charitable to the poor, do not know the right method of getting into their confidence, and very seldom take possession of their sympathies; and the poor, in like manner, have idiosyncrasies which prevent them from thinking with the thoughts of the rich, or as thoroughly confiding in them as they would in people in their own rank of life. The workman walks in a different mental atmosphere from that which surrounds his employer; and the employer, however willing to cultivate friendly feelings, is seldom able to establish intimate

relations between himself and the people to whom he pays wages. What does my lord know of his gamekeeper, or the gamekeeper of my lord? What does Dives know about Lazarus, or Lazarus about Dives? What does the wise man know of the fool, and vice versâ? Or the honest man—prosperous in fine linen and broad-cloth—of the shabby thief who steals his pocket-handkerchief, or of the more dashing rascal, who breaks into houses—or forges notes? Nothing. There is a shadowy, impalpable, invisible, but real and unmistakable, veil between them, which, though it does not hide each from the other, distorts the vision like a false medium. We neither see ourselves as others see us, nor do we see others as they really exist.

It was once my fancy to try and get into the mind and thought of a crow-boy, aged about fifteen, and a very difficult task I found it. I am not sure that I succeeded, and that my labour was not thrown away. The difficulties that beset the attempt were the disparity of age and of social condition. I endeavoured to take off the armour of caste, and approach him as fellow-creature to fellow-creature; but though I carefully, as I thought, divested myself of my coat of mail, he was long before he took off his, possibly because he did not know that he wore any. I first established a talking acquaintance with him, in my daily walks across the fields where he was stationed, to a favourite piece of woodland scenery, which I haunted for its beauty. Our discourse was of the weather and of the crows, and often of his appetite and his dinner, if I came across him at noon, when it was his custom to sit upon a stile if the weather were cloudy, and under a tree if it were warm and sunny, cutting his hunch of bread and bacon with a single-bladed pocket-knife. Sometimes I endeavoured to draw him into conversation about a little boat, which, when not engaged with the more important business of his dinner, or in throwing stones and shouting at the crows, he amused himself by scooping out of a clump of wood. For a long time, however, my success was but indifferent. He was by no means stupid, nor unusually shy, had a frank, open face, and such a development of brain, as, with proper education, might have fitted him for playing any part in the world, with fully the average credit, if not with more. But the armour of caste was upon him, as he seemed to have no more confidence in me than the crows had in him; and, though he answered

my questions in the friendliest spirit, there was something in his manner which implied that there would be little use in my talking to him or his talking to me, that in short there could be no companionship of thought between two persons so differently placed. But I was not discouraged by a reticence, which was instinctive rather than wilful, and I endeavoured as well as I could to warm him into confidence. If he had been only seven or eight years old, I should have tried the effect of a fairy tale, which I have always found to be an infallible recipe for opening the hearts of very little people of both sexes, but he was in the third year of his teens, and, worse than all, had indulged in the masculine vice of smoking, and was consequently too much of a little man in his own estimation to believe in dragons, ogres, and fairies, though possibly he believed in ghosts and witches.

I ascertained that he could not read without great difficulty. Consequently it was of no use to bribe him with Robinson Crusoe; or a history of adventure with lions, tigers, pirates, or robbers; or tales of travel and shipwreck, which tolerably educated boys are so fond of reading. How was I to show him that I was his friend? A gift of money might help; but it involved the danger of demoralisation, which I was anxious not to incur. At last an idea struck me. Coming upon him one sunny forenoon, as he sat on a bank busily scooping away at his little boat with his unusually blunt knife, I told him that I had something for him in my pocket.

"Sixpence?" inquired he.

"No—something better."

"A shilling?"

"No, not money—something better still."

Thus speaking, I drew from my pocket a knife with two big blades of different sizes, two small blades, a corkscrew, a gimlet, and a saw. The sight of this sevenfold treasure drew from him the sharp and joyous exclamation, "Oh, my!" while his eyes sparkled to twice their usual brightness and bigness.

"Oh, my! and is it for me?"

"Yes, for you! I bought it in London on purpose to give it you; but they say it's unlucky to make presents of knives or scissors because they cut friendship. Will you buy it for a penny?"

"I ain't got a penny," said he; "but I shall have one on Saturday."

"Well, I shall trust you till then. Meanwhile you can have the knife."

He took it from my hand, opened each blade successively, and looked for a few minutes with a satisfaction that was really unspeakable at every little apparatus; then shut them one after the other; then opened them again; then shut them up; and, finally, catching sight of a flock of crows, broke into a shout, less intended for scaring away the birds than as an expression of glee at his new acquisition.

Wordsworth says of the sonnet "that with that key Shakespeare unlocked his heart." I thought to myself that with that many-bladed knife I had fairly opened my way into that crow-boy's confidence. And so it turned out. Little more passed between us that day, and I left him alone with his treasure. From that time forth he seemed to have no secrets from me, and talked unreservedly, as to a person of his own age, unless when I prompted him with questions, and led him on to topics which would not naturally have presented themselves to his mind, and which, when presented, only seemed of importance to him because I deemed them so. He did not disclose himself to me all at once, but gradually as our mutual humour allowed. His name was Tom Beck. He was the fifth of a family of eleven—four boys and seven girls—of whom eight survived. His father was a farm-labourer, earning fourteen shillings a week. His mother had been a servant-of-all-work in a small family, and added something, though not much, to the family income by taking in washing. They had a little garden and a pig; got presents of tea and flannel occasionally from a charitable society; had the privilege of getting sticks for fuel in the neighbouring woods and plantations; got coal at half-price from the coal store established by the squire and the parish gentry; and managed to jog along somehow. His elder brother was a labourer, and married, and the younger children all began to earn a little as soon as they were ten years old, by weeding in the season, if it were only sixpence or a shilling a week. Tom himself earned four shillings a week as a crow-boy, but had to be at his post seven days in the week in the spring season, as the crows "didn't take no account of Sundays." All the family slept in one room. He had never been to any school but a Sunday school; could read a little, but could not write or read writing. Had never heard of the multiplication table, but knew that twice two were four, and twice ten twenty. Did not know how many eight times eight

were, but could count up, he thought, on his fingers, or with stones or bits of stick. Had heard the Bible read, and could repeat the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. Had heard of the Mount of Olives, but did not know where it was. He had never heard of the Alps, the Pyrenees, or the Andes. Had heard of the river Jordan. Had never heard of the Thames, the Rhine, or the Mississippi. Had heard of the Dead Sea. Did not know whether it was in England or not. Had never heard of the Atlantic Ocean. Had heard of Jesus Christ; everybody had. He was the son of Abraham and the Virgin Mary. He (Tom Beck) was a Christian. All of us were Christians, except the dogs and horses, and birds and animals. Some dogs were as good as Christians—"they knowed such a deal"—and he sometimes thought as how the old crows were Christians; they were so uncommon sharp. Had often seen an old crow fasten itself upon a sheep's back, and pull the wool out of its back to help build its nest with. Thought that was more like a Christian than a crow—it was so jolly knowing. Crows were not frightened by scarecrows, as he had often seen them sit on the old hats atop of them, and caw, caw, as much as to say, "We don't care, we don't, for such stupid old rubbish as this!" He thought all birds were too cunning to be afraid after the first "go." Just at first they might be scared, but after a day or so they got used to scarecrows, and he had known starlings build their nests in them. He once took three starlings out of a nest, in the stupidest old guy of a scarecrow he had ever seen. If scarecrows were of any good there would be no need of crow-boys. His master would not let him have a gun to shoot at the birds. He wished he would. Said he was not old enough; but he knowed better, and would like nothing so much as to blaze away at them. Crows were afraid of stones and guns, but as for dudmen (scarecrows), the crows precious soon found out as they could do 'em no harm. Had heard of heaven—a place where all the people as were poor in this world were to be rich, and wear golden crowns, and where the squires and such like were to be poor, and not able to get so much as a drop of water when they were thirsty, let alone beer. He did not think this arrangement was unfair. He would like, however, to be rich in this world, and run the chance of the next. Had heard of the devil. Did not understand much about him. Thought

he had great eyes like the red lights of a steam-engine, horns on his head, and a long tail, with which he could lash down a whole plantation of trees if he liked. Could not say as he was much afraid of him. His father warn't. He believed people would be punished if they did wrong, especially if they was found out. Hadn't thought much about it. Where was the use? Parsons understood it. He didn't, and wasn't a going to try till he was older, and then he supposed he should know as much about it as other folks. Had never thought much of what he would like to be when a man. Supposed he should be a farm-labourer, like his father and his brother. Wouldn't mind if he were a soldier. Should rather like it, but was not sure. All the chaps as he heard on, who went for soldiers, went because they had got into scrapes with the "gals." His brother always talked of going for a soldier when he was out of luck, afore he got married. If he, Tom, could be what he liked, he thought he should be a gamekeeper or a poacher. Them was the chaps that lived a jolly life, especially the gamekeepers. Didn't see any harm in poaching. As why? The squire didn't feed the partridges, the pheasants, and the hares, as he did his horses and dogs. Besides, why should the squires have all the fun? He didn't see why a poor boy mightn't have a shot, if he liked. It was better to be a gamekeeper than a poacher, because the gamekeeper was never sent to quod as the poachers was. Poachers wasn't always caught, however, 'cos many gamekeepers was poachers themselves once, and didn't like to be too hard upon their chums. Did he know any poachers? Yes, a good many, but he wasn't going to tell on 'em.

He often in the long winter nights went to the Fox and Goose, the beershop in the village, where they used to meet, and have a smoke and a pint o' beer, and sing songs. They sang such songs as All Round my Hat, Down in Cupid's Garden, Success to the Barley Mow, Betsy Baker, and Cease Rude Boreas. Had heard 'em sing 'Tis My Delight on a Shiny Night. It was a poaching song; but they didn't often sing about poaching. They liked to sing about the gals, and going a courting. A favourite song was the Honest Ploughman. Almost every body as he knowed on could sing it; he could sing some on it himself, not all. He had it by heart, and could say some of it off, but didn't like to sing just then, with only one man listening to him, and no

baccy and beer about.* He liked to hear a good song, and so did father. Father could sing prime, though he often said as the hard times had took all the singing out of him.

He supposed he should have to labour on the farm when he growed up. Would rather do that than be a groom, or a coachman, or a gentleman's servant. He'd like to be a gamekeeper better than anything else in the world, because gamekeepers had to do with birds and animals, and he was fond on 'em. He was uncommon fond o' dogs, but not of horses. Had a terrier-bitch of his own, which was a famous one for rats. Was offered five shillings for her, but he wouldn't sell her, no, not for five pounds. Had never seen five pounds all at once, but knew it was a lot of tin, and should like to have it; but he wouldn't part with Trip for five pounds, nor for six neither. She had four pups last week, and he wouldn't mind selling the pups for a shilling apiece. He had a weasel once as he had tamed, and it used to sleep in his lap and crawl up his arm to sit upon his shoulder; but it fell in one day with a wild weasel, and ran away with it, and he never saw it again. He was very fond of birds'-nesting, and knew the eggs of all the birds, and the most likely places to find 'em in. Of all the birds in the air, the hawk was the bravest and the prettiest, though the gamekeepers were main savage against them for killing the partridges and pheasants. He thought as how hawks had as much right to live as partridges, and as how the shooting of too many hawks was bad, unless people would shoot off the sparrers and the finches. The finches did more harm

* The ballad referred to is to be found among the Catnach collections, once, and possibly still, so popular among the rural classes. It describes the condition of a farm-labourer "ninety years ago," a time when the farmers' wives milked the cows, and did not wear dandy veils, and gowns made out of silks, and play "the pianny." The honest ploughman took a wife to himself when twenty-five. Though poor, they could keep a pig and a cow. The wife—

Would sit and knit and spin, and he the land would plough,
There nothing was upon a farm at all, he could not do,
He found things was different now, 'twas many years ago.

Labourers "lived very contented," and banished pain and grief, and had no occasion to apply for relief to the parish. "But now," continues the song with a hit at the unpopular Poor Law—

But now that I am feeble grown, and poverty do feel,
If for relief I go, they shove me into a Whig bastle,
For when a man has laboured all his life, to do his country good,
He's respected about as much as a donkey in a wood.
His days are past, and he may weep, in misery and woe,
The times are very different now to ninety years ago.

than hawks did; hawks didn't do no harm to farmers that he knowed on; but them finches and sparrers did gobble up such lots of grains and buds as no one knowed but them as watched 'em. Howls, too, was nobby birds, and oughtn't to be shot. He liked to hear 'em in the night, enjoyin' of 'emselves. A howl was as jolly a bird as ever was. Yes, if he was a gamekeeper, he knowed he'd have to shoot the howls, all on 'em did; along of the game; but as most likely he never should have the luck to be a gamekeeper, he wouldn't shoot a howl, even if he had a gun. He'd much rather shoot the crows, and the sparrers, and them finches as picked out all the buds off the apple and pear-trees, and the goose-berry and currant bushes. Eat grubs? No, they didn't. He knowed they didn't, not one on 'em.

Yes, he thought he should like to have larnin', if he could get it. But there warn't a school nearer than five miles from his father's cottage; and ten miles walking every day, specially in the rain, warn't no treat. The readin' and spellin' at the Sunday school didn't do much good. He forgot in the week most o' what he'd larned on the Sunday. Would like to be able to write, at least he thought so, but he warn't quite sure. Father and mother couldn't write. Father couldn't read. What would his father do when he was too old to work? Why, go to the 'ouse, to be sure—the union. His grandfather was in the union now, and his grandfather's father had been in the 'ouse, and died in it. He supposed that he should have to go there, if he growed to be an old man, and couldn't work. Why not? It was his right. Them as paid the poor-rates had a right to live. They warn't dogs or donkeys, to be left to die in a ditch. No, he had never been in London. His sister had. She lived there; was a cook to a gentleman as kept a shop in Whitechapel. Oh my, didn't she dress, that was all! Came down to see the old folks once or twice a year, and such a dasher! Such a thingumbob, a chignon some call it, as big as a drum-head cabbage, stuck atop of her poll; and a silk dress, too, and a parasol. It made mother stare, it did, to see how she was rigged out. No; she never gave any of her money to mother, but brought father a little baccy for a Christmas-box. Should like to go to London to live, but hadn't no chance. He couldn't do anything as London folks wanted, except run errands, perhaps; but liked crowd-minding far better nor that. Was larnin' to do all kinds of farm work when he had

a chance. Could do a little hedgin' and ditchin', and had once tried to plough, but warn't strong enough. He thought when he was about eighteen or nineteen he should be able to earn good wages, as much as twelve or fourteen shillings a week. He should be a man then, and could do as he liked—smoke, drink, and get married. Too young to get married at nineteen? No; the chaps hereabouts didn't think so, nor the gals neither.

Such was my crow-boy's mind as exhibited by himself in many communications. Such was Tom Beck, such were his wishes and hopes, and such his views of the world and things in general. It will be seen that he was not vicious, nor stupid, but only inert and ill-developed; and that the seeds of good were abundantly latent in him, if there had been any spring-time and sunshine to draw them forth. Will the new Education Act reach him, and such as he, and inspire the agricultural labouring class with the self-respect that springs from true knowledge, however limited it may be? It is to be hoped so. A labourer who labours until his back is bowed with age and sorrow, with no resources after that time but public charity, may be a very good man in his humble and wretched way, but he is not a good citizen of a free and progressive state, or an ornament to our civilisation. The raw material of the English peasant class is as good as that of any peasantry in the world—perhaps, better than most—but it has not hitherto been manufactured into a particularly excellent article, except, now and then, the article "soldier," when the raw material happened to be drunk or desperate, or in the muzzy state that lies between the two. The Scottish peasantry, who are well educated, and have been for the last two centuries and more, are not contented to remain peasants. Why should there be a difference between them and their English fellow-labourers? And if there be a difference between the two, may not education remove it?

TWO SIDES OF A STORY.

GRETCHEN'S FIRST CHAPTER. OUT IN THE WORLD.

It still makes my heart ache to remember how desolate I was when left alone in London. I felt Kitty as completely cut off from me as Fan, and when Ned was really gone I could scarcely be brave enough to feel sure he would come back. My old landlady, though a kind soul, was rather a

Job's comforter. Ned had told her of our engagement, and had said to her at parting, "Remember, Mrs. Rice, I am leaving my wife in your hands." She was very attentive to me, and would often come in of an evening to drink tea with me. She seemed to think that this was part of her duty as my keeper. She would arrive in her best cap, and bearing in her hands a Sally-lunn of her own making. She would tell me about the children of her daughter, who kept a millinery shop in Oxford-street, and she would ask me many questions about Fan and Kitty, for Ned had left me likenesses of both for my comfort, and I had them hanging up over my fire-place. Kitty was the great woman of the family in her eyes. Fortunately she thought my father dead long ago, and so I was spared her speculations on the subject of his disappearance. I felt at a loss just once, when she asked me where he was buried. She was eloquent about Ned, though she evidently thought the chances were against his coming back to marry me. She told me of a young man who had courted her daughter Jane. And he went away to sea. And he never was heard of again; and Jane lay down and died. I used to wonder whether, if Ned should never come back, I should lie down and die?

I had tried to believe that my father must be dead. It was easier to think him dead than that he had heartlessly deserted us. I kept myself at peace, and attended to my work. But soon I found that another serious trouble was in store for me. My eyes began to fail me of the very acute sight that was needful for engraving. A doctor whom I consulted bade me at once give it up. With much regret I left my kind master's workroom, and accepted a situation as nursery governess.

My future dwelling was to be a nursery at Queen's-gate. My few books and pictures must be taken down and set up in a small closet-bedroom, where I was to sleep with a fiery little miss, who had already scratched me for trying to kiss her. I had made up my mind that Queen's-gate children were not like other kinds of children, and I dared not think of Fan, with her soft lips against my face. Coming home one evening, after completing my new arrangements, I reflected on these things with a heavy weight on my heart, and longed for a letter from Ned to make me glad. A letter lay on the table, and I snatched at it eagerly; but I grew dizzy and strange as I recognised the writing.

The letter was from my father. He was

well, he said, and he sent me twenty pounds. He hoped that Fan was better, and that I stuck to my work. He would send us a little money from time to time. He thought it would be an excellent thing if we would consent to go to America or Australia. At the latter place women were in demand, and we should be sure to make good matches. I was a pretty girl enough, and Fan would be much handsomer. He would try and find the money if I would make up my mind to go. I was on no account to try and find him out, or to ask what he was doing. The letter, which was addressed under cover to my old master, Mr. Jackson, had been posted in London, and a bill for twenty pounds was enclosed in it.

I had no means of knowing more about my father, and was obliged to be obedient, and neither seek to find him, nor learn what was his occupation. I regarded his money with many a troubled misgiving. It was some little comfort that he had remembered my existence, a very little comfort, but that was all. Now, with twenty pounds, what could I not afford to indulge in? I sent a present to Ned, who was properly amazed, and I bought a shawl for Mrs. Rice. I got some clothes for myself, which I needed very badly, and made a tidy appearance in my new situation.

I soon found that it is not easy to please, even when one tries one's best. On the first day, when I sat down to lessons with the children, their mother came up to the nursery, as if afraid that they might learn something. The eldest girl was interrupted in her lesson, and sent off to nurse to have her hair curled more elegantly.

"I cannot bear to see you with it so negligently dressed," said the mother. "I could not bear to think of it as I sit in the drawing-room. You see, Miss Fairfax, I like everything in order."

The little boy was also dismissed to have different coloured rosettes put on his shoes, so that our class was broken up. And then her eyes lighted on me.

"You will excuse me, Miss Fairfax, but I do so dislike black! A person dressed in black is such a dreary-looking object to have in the house. And I like especially to see young people looking a little smart and gay."

The next day I arrayed myself in a light-coloured muslin. It was made very simply, with a tucker at the neck, and a blue ribbon round the waist. I thought this much better, but I quite got into disgrace.

"Really," said my mistress, "this is

quite a young lady. Such very flighty attire is exceedingly unbecoming. If there is anything that offends me it is to see a servant dressed up."

The lady's mind was just as changeable where her children's lessons were concerned. One day Freddy ought not to be asked to learn spelling. It was too great a strain. Children learnt spelling by instinct when they grew older. But the next day Freddy's letter to his papa was quite disgraceful. She really thought Miss Fairfax might teach him a little spelling. At last she found out that I knew nothing about the violin, which was a great drawback, and could not be got over. She had heard of a nursery governess who taught the rudiments of the violin. And really a nursery governess ought to teach the rudiments of everything. So I was ordered to pack my trunks, and depart out of Queen's-gate.

I next went as sick nurse to a dying woman in a grand, gloomy house in Russell-square. Her wits were very keen, and she wanted to be amused. I read to her, told her stories, and prayed with her when I dared. Sometimes she was able to have a drive in her carriage, and then we rolled slowly through the gay places of the world, and she groaned as she went along, because the people would not miss her when she was gone. She told me it was only in the night time that she could believe in another world. In the day time she believed only in the sunshine; in laughing faces; in high-stepping horses and brilliant dinner-tables, in rich brocade gowns, and diamonds, and flower-gardens. She used to sit and gaze at me, envying me my youth and my health, my hair, which she called pretty, my eyes, and my very teeth. Sometimes, when nervous from her companionship and the gloom of her house, I got a momentary superstition that she would steal these things from me in some unholy way. I tried to be tender to her, and she liked to have me with her. I was alone with her when she died, for the servants were having a supper-party, and the doctor had paid his visit for the night and gone away. I did what I could to give her up with fitting reverence into the hands of her God. She left me some gay coral earrings and a necklace of pearls, "so that," said the will, "she may dress herself and look pretty while her little day lasts."

All this time Ned's letters had been punctual, and the thought of his dear face and strong arm had been a constant joy to me, so that nothing made me fear, and sad-

ness was only a shadow that passed away. There is just one black period of a day and a night that lies like a blot on my wholesome memory of those waiting, working years. It is not pleasant now to look back on it, but I have promised Ned to write truly, and this would not be a faithful picture if I did not put in the darkest touch, as well as the highest light.

One morning while I lived in Russell-square, my former landlady, Mrs. Rice, came to pay me a visit. She was accustomed to visit me at intervals, bringing a cake of her own baking. But on this occasion her hands were empty, and when she saw me she fell to wiping her eyes and dropping curtsies. I knew of old this sad apologetic pantomime, which was always with her the preface to ill news. My first thought was that her curly-headed grandson had got to heaven out of the measles; my next that the mother herself was dead, leaving Curly-Head to his grandmother. For either of these troubles I should have been very grieved indeed, for Mrs. Rice was a faithful friend to me. I took her to my own room, and prepared to condole with her.

"Oh, miss dear," she said, bursting into tears, "sorry I am to have to bring you such news, but he have gone and married, he have, in spite of his soft eyes and kind ways; which I'm sure they was most delightful when you did not know how they would end."

"Who has got married?" I asked.

"Mr. Lance, miss; your husband as was to have been."

"Nonsense, Mrs. Rice," I said; "what an exceedingly silly story. I am not such a baby as to listen to it."

Mrs. Rice did not like to be contradicted, and to have any statement that she made ridiculed was altogether more than her patience could endure.

"Well," she said, wiping her eyes resolutely, as if she thought tears were wasted on me, and tightening her shawl round her with a twitch of resentful dignity, "I don't know about silly stories, miss, but all I can say is, as how my Mary Ann, being in Paris at the time on account of the spring fashions, beheld your young gentleman in a church putting a ring on a fine young lady, as busy as could be. And if that ain't marrying, it's what used to go by the name. But maybe my Mary Ann don't know her right hand from her left."

"Your daughter does not know Mr. Lance's appearance," I said, stoutly.

"Not know his appearance!" cried Mrs.

Rice. "Well, there is a good 'un! Her as used to see him constant goin' up and down my hall of an evening when she came for a quiet shrimp and a cup of tea with me in my parlour. And didn't she know him when he went to buy that duck of a little bonnet from her as arrove for you afterwards as a surprise on Christmas Eve? Howsomever, if you don't believe my story, miss, it's high time I was a taking of myself off."

"Good-bye, Mrs. Rice," I said, "and I don't believe your story."

When she was gone I returned to my duties, and tried to forget her visit and her news. But everything was a trouble to me. I felt weary and ill, and terrible fears kept pressing on my mind. By evening I was white in the face with trying to keep them at bay. It was part of my day's work to sit for two hours every evening, silent and motionless, in my mistress's large front bedroom, while she slept. It was dark in the room, and I dared not have lights lest my patient should be disturbed. On this particular evening I found this duty very hard, as I could not do anything to divert my thoughts from the one haunting subject. My will was firm, never to doubt Ned, unless he told me himself that he had deserted me, yet my treacherous imagination kept running on the likelihood of his having been tempted to do so. Why should he keep faithful to a poor creature like me? It was true that I could love him and make him happy too, but there must be many in the world who would readily undertake to do the same. Perhaps they would do it better, for poverty is no beautifier of exteriors, and some rich and beautiful woman might have aspired to be his wife. I wrought myself nearly frantic between conjuring up these fancies, and striving to beat them down when they had risen up before me. But all the while I fancied that I had kept a fast trust in Ned. I found myself thinking over his late letters, recalling words and phrases, and asking myself could it be possible he could have written so on the eve of forgetting me for ever? I said it was not possible, but I felt weary enough for my grave when the two hours were ended. I got lights then, and as I closed the curtains over a mirror, I saw myself faded and pinched, and ten years older-looking than I had been in the morning. Ned's imaginary bride seemed to glimmer out of the recesses of the room, and to gaze over my shoulder with a pitying smile. I saw the glow of her perfect

loveliness, and the glitter of her satins and her pearls. She was a wife fit for Ned, and she would help him with her gold more than could empty-handed Gretchen, even with the most loving care in the world. Stupefied with the reality of this idea, I sat down to my work before the lamp. My mistress, now awake, lay and watched me with her keen, searching eyes. I had forgotten her presence, until her voice made me start.

"Is anything the matter with your lover, child?"

She knew all about Ned, and that he was my only friend. She had often shown a lively interest as to the likelihood of our marriage.

"No, madam," I said, quickly.

"Then why do you look so grey and dead? Has he written you a cross letter, or is he faithless?"

"Nothing of the kind," I said; "I have only got a headache."

And as I spoke I determined that it must be the truth which I was telling. If I had confessed my trouble all the cynical side of her temper would have been roused by such a story. She would have gloated over the faithlessness of man, and groaned for days about the general unkindness of human nature. This would have been more than I could bear, so I kept my own counsel. A long feverish night and day followed, in spite of my self-assurance that I was satisfied and at ease. Towards dusk the next evening I could endure suspense no longer. That day was the day on which a letter was due from Ned, and no letter had come. I asked leave of my mistress to take a walk down Gower-street to see my friend, Mrs. Rice. I sent a maid to sit with her till my return, and I flew to my own room to put on my bonnet. I had no plan formed as to what I should say to Mrs. Rice, but I felt that I must speak to somebody or go mad.

I stood at the window while I tied on my bonnet. It was just getting dark, and the lamps were being lighted. I saw a figure crossing the square, from a corner of the side-walk round the railings of the garden. It was coming towards the house, and I seemed to know the figure.

I remembered nothing more for some two or three minutes, and after that I found myself lying on the ground with my forehead slightly cut, and with a sort of belief that I had been dead, and was returning, like Lazarus, out of the jaws of the grave. I had fainted, for the first time in my life, with the joy of seeing Ned, who

had been coming across the square. When I got up on my feet again, I knew by my numb brains and tottering limbs how great my struggle had been. I went to meet Ned, and slipped my arm through his. I did not ask him a question, for I felt when I saw him that the question which I could ask would be an insult. He had come all the way from Paris for no purpose but to see me. No letter had arrived in the morning because he himself was on the way. As we walked along together I told him that little story about his wedding. We went at once to Mrs. Rice to set her right, and she gave us tea and muffins, besides a shower of apologetic tears for having ever put her belief in that great gawk Mary Ann, who had an eye for nothing but the colour of a ribbon, and couldn't be sure of her own children if she met them a mile away from home!

When my mistress died I was again upon the world. It was now four years since I had lost my father, and Kitty, and Fan, all at once. I advertised for a new situation. This time I offered myself as companion to a lady. Very quickly I had an answer to my advertisement. The answer was from a lady in the country. She offered a good salary and a pleasant home. I accepted the situation without delay. The lady was a Mrs. Sutherland, of the Sycamores, Hopshire. After I had agreed to go to her, it struck me, while turning over her letter, that Sutherland was the name of the gentleman who had inherited Ned's fortune. How odd if I should be domesticated in the house of this very man! When writing to Ned I suggested this idea. In replying, he assured me that I had engaged myself as companion to the wife of that Sutherland who had been so singularly lucky. The Sycamores, in Hopshire, was his country seat. He had married within a year after inheriting his fortune.

It was a snowy winter's day when I set out upon my journey, and Hopshire looked a ghostly world, with its tall, snow-wreathed woods, and white, silent fields. I could not help thinking, as I spun along in the train, that there were very odd chances in the world, seeing that at one time it must have been a toss up with Fate whether I, Gretchen Fairfax, should be mistress of the Sycamores, instead of the wealthy Mrs. Sutherland, under whose roof I was this day seeking leave to earn my bread. I left the train at a small, bleak-looking station, and looked anxiously about for a vehicle of some description, for I had

yet two miles to drive before I could reach my destination. To my great surprise I was told that a carriage was waiting for me. I found it a very fine carriage, with two high-stepping horses, and thought this a very good beginning, so that my spirits were quite cheered. I enjoyed my ride across the dim, white country as the night began to fall, and red lights sprang up in the hollows, and the evening firelight shone ruddily out of the open cottage doorways. Arrived at the Sycamores, I was driven down a magnificent avenue, sweeping between high-spreading trees. A river, now half-frozen, lay at the feet of densely wooded slopes and far-stretching lawns. I got a peep at the flower-gardens, where the hot-houses showed a gorgeous warmth of colour, but where the pale-cheeked beauties, whose place was in open air, shivered under the white wrappings that the snow had provided for them. The house was noble and ancient, and glowed at me with a promise of stately welcome. There was just light enough to enable me to trace the heavy ornamentations of the mullioned windows. Urns full of burning red plants were placed along the terraces, and up the wide-spreading steps; and even in the twilight they made a brilliant contrast to the thickly piled snow. I was at once shown into the drawing-room, which was lit up by the flames of a vast wood fire, which glowed and crackled on the glittering steel hearth. A lady came to meet me, and said she was Mrs. Sutherland.

She was a beautiful creature, about five or six years older than myself, and was attired in full evening dress, which struck my unaccustomed eyes as unusually splendid. She wore a long flowing robe of white satin, and her neck was heavily covered with chains of gold and pearls. Her hair and arms and bodice were decked with pearls, and she wore a bouquet of scarlet exotics in her bosom. Her face was dark and rich-looking, suggesting a warmer clime than this, yet she had all the delicacy of feature of an English woman. I remembered at the moment that Ned had said that Mrs. Sutherland had been a West Indian heiress. Indeed she looked like one on whom the bounties and tendernesses of the world had been showered, so lovely and sumptuous was she in her beauty and its adornments. Never had I seen a creature in the least like to her before. She came rapidly to meet me, with a strange look of anxiety and timidity on her face.

"I am glad you are come," she said. "If I had known a little sooner that you

were coming this evening I should not have engaged myself to go out."

"Oh, madam, do not mind me," I said, eagerly enough. "I assure you I am not used to be treated with so much ceremony." And I wondered very much at her; her manner was so kind.

She removed my cloak and bonnet, and drew me nearer to the firelight, so that she could see me the more plainly. She seemed to like me the better after a short examination, in which there was nothing to offend. She stroked down my hair, and put her hand under my chin, and raised up my face, and looked wistfully in my eyes.

"I am going to be so good to you," she said, "oh, so good, if you will let me."

"Don't, dear madam," I said; "just wait a little, I beg you. Who knows how you may dislike me when you know me a little longer?"

"I think not," she said, releasing me, "but I do not doubt that you may be wiser than I. In the mean time, I am neglecting you. Are you cold? Are you hungry? Dinner will be served for you in your own apartments. May I bring you there at once before I go?"

She led me through two or three rooms, the splendour of which dazzled me, and then up a mighty staircase, with paintings on the walls, and lamps burning softly in mid air. We travelled a long wide corridor, till I thought we had gone a mile, and on either side were pictures and statues, and cabinets of curiosities, screens and fantastic seats; and here and there little tables, with toys, and books, and gems. At last we came to my apartments, for it was a fact that I, who had been happy to possess a closet bedroom, had got a suite of apartments set aside for my own use. I had a charming sitting-room, with rose-silk hangings, and a carpet like the woodland moss. The walls seemed made of mirror, except where pictures filled a space. The daintiest ornaments were disposed through the room, and flowers had not been forgotten. The fire blazed merrily, and softly shaded lamps burned on their brackets. A round table was laid with service for dinner, adorned with glass and silver of the most exquisite workmanship. I was much startled and amused to see that all these things were for me. Abou Hassan was not more amazed at waking in the Caliph's chamber than was I by this reception which I met with at the Sycamores. My love of the beautiful was very strong indeed, and it was a passion which had been very little ministered to of late.

"Can it really be for me?" I cried, in delight.

Mrs. Sutherland flushed with pleasure. "Really for you," she said. "But I am going to make a bargain: I want a little love."

"There will be no difficulty in that," I said, and I felt it keenly as I said it.

"Do you think so?" she said, and her eyes filled with tears. "I have so wanted a little love. I have so watched and prepared for you in the hope that you would care for me. If you love me I will be good to you in a way that you little think of."

She embraced me then with a curious tenderness, and hurried away to her party through the cold winter night.

The next day my new life begun. My chief duty seemed to be to submit to be caressed and amused by Mrs. Sutherland. She entertained herself a whole week showing me all the rooms in her vast house; which was, indeed, such a place as I had never seen before. Every thing was a wonderment to me, and that delighted her greatly. She showed me her splendid jewels, and her strange things from India. There was a half-barbaric love of brilliancy and movement and pleasure about her, and she was nervous and timid, and could not bear being alone. But she was easily amused, and sometimes made me think of some happy savage child playing with the sunbeams and gay flowers of her native forest. The only thing that kept her quiet when in good-humour was a huge piece of tapestry, into which she stitched birds of showy plumage, and blossoms of vivid hues. She played for me mad fantastic music, which must have been created by herself, for I never heard the like of it, either before that time or since. She hated reading and thinking, and was subject to fits of melancholy. She discovered that I had the art of telling stories, and when her sad moods came upon her I could cure her by the practice of this simple art. When all the wonderful stories I had ever heard of were exhausted, I passed half my nights inventing fresh ones against her next hours of gloom.

Mr. Sutherland was from home, and I heard nothing of him beyond the fact that it was uncertain when he would return. I noticed that the mention of Mr. Sutherland brought a look of trouble which was half fear into his wife's beautiful face. She did not know where he was; he was fond of going about. No letters were exchanged between them, and she seldom

mentioned his name. He was almost always absent, but he was glad that she should amuse herself. She had visitors. All the families around her came to her house, and she was fond of going to balls and dinner-parties, and other entertainments. After these excursions she used to look worn and fatigued, and at times seemed so ill that I begged she would give them up. It was evident to me that her health was very frail, but she could not bear to hear of this, and almost quarrelled with me for hinting it. I felt from the first a lively wonder as to whether she would really come to love me, or would by-and-by get tired of me. After some weeks of companionship with her my own heart got interested in this question, for I really became fond of her, with her beauty and her tenderness, and her innocent love of pleasure. After a time this wonder became appeased to my satisfaction. Mimi, as she would have me call her, began to lose her taste for gaieties, and would enjoy herself more thoroughly at her fireside with me than dancing amongst flatterers many miles away from her home.

"Ah!" she said, sadly, "if I had had a sister like you I should have been a different woman."

I smiled, and asked her what she thought she should have been.

"Useful and happy," she said. "As it is, I am nothing but an encumbrance in the world."

"That is a foolish speech," I said.

"What would your husband say to it?"

"My husband?" she said, bitterly. "He would think I was right for once in my silly life."

At that time I did not know as I knew afterwards that there was no love between this husband and wife. Bit by bit she unfolded to me the story of her marriage. Her husband had seemed to love her for a month or more, and she thought bitterly that she ought to have been grateful for so much; as on her part she had never cared for him at all. She had a lover who had loved her truly, and who had died; and after he was dead she had not cared what might become of her. Her guardians had urged her to accept Mr. Sutherland. He was of a fine old English family, and she was only a half-caste. She had thought that in wedding him she must at least be a prized and petted wife. But he had tired of her soon, and lived most of his time away from home.

It was long before I knew that she had had a baby, and had lost it. It was not

until we became closer friends, and she had grown more home-loving and contented, that she showed me her inmost heart, in which the dead baby lived. It had been far more precious to her, that baby, than even my Fan had been to me. I had had Ned to console me, but it seemed that she had no one. She wept her very heart out on my breast the first time she spoke of it, but in time she could talk of it quietly, and one day she even took me to the tortoise-shell cabinet where lay, saved up in smooth order, the pretty cast-off clothing of the little one.

"I used to think I should go mad when I looked at them," she said, "and yet I could not keep my eyes off them, and used to wander about the house with this key in my hand. A good neighbour assured me that I ought to give them to the poor, and that that would help to take the sting out of my heart. I tried to do it, but I could not; and I feel ever since as if the poor were reproaching me for keeping them lying idle here."

I suggested to her that she and I might spend the winter evenings pleasantly in making other clothes like these, of more useful materials, to be given to the poor babies whose nakedness so distressed her. She grasped at this idea, and soon we were very busy with calico and flannel. In the mean time, as we worked I told her stories of my Fan, and of other lost children. And from that date forth I believe she loved me indeed.

One day at last she got a letter from her husband, saying he would be home on a certain day, and bidding her give a handsome ball to celebrate his arrival. Mr. Sutherland, it seemed, liked to keep up a delusion in the minds of his neighbours that he was obliged to live a good deal on the Continent for his health, but was glad to come back, when possible, to the country and his wife. But Mimi turned pale when she read his unwelcome letter.

"You will be glad of a little gaiety," I said. "You have not had any for so long." And I kept my eyes away from her, lest she should be ashamed of the trepidation into which the prospect of her husband's coming had thrown her.

"No," she said, "I have grown sick of all that, and have been so happy with only you. Gretchen, dear, you will be very careful to be friendly with Mr. Sutherland. He has some odd fancies, and—and—he does not even know that you are here. He has been so long away, and it was of no use telling him. I had a right to have you,

or any one I pleased. I trust he will take it well—your presence I mean—which has been such an unutterable comfort to me.”

I felt a little startled, and not very comfortable, at this new view of things, which was thus put before me. To be in a house, of which the master might disapprove of me when he appeared, was not very pleasant, to say the least. But I thought only of the fear that he might insist on my dismissal. For I had hoped to stay with Mimi till such time as Ned might want me.

Mimi had now to obey her husband's orders, and make ready for her ball. Mr. Sutherland liked to have everything done in very grand style, and Mimi was full of anxiety to have all in such order as could not fail to please him. She insisted on my appearing in the ball-room, and, to remove all difficulties, gave me a beautiful Indian muslin to wear on the occasion. The pure whiteness of the dress was relieved by the handsome coral ornaments which had been bequeathed me by my poor dead mistress. I thought of the words of her will as I clasped them round my throat and in my ears—“That she may wear them and look pretty while her little day lasts.” I wondered how much longer my little day was destined to last at the Sycamores. I certainly did not know myself when my toilet was complete, and I owned to a foolish wish that Ned had been there to see the change.

I took my place quite early in a corner of the drawing-room to see the guests arrive, for this was a sight which I had never seen before. In they poured, bevies of fair women, in their silks and their satins, and their other fine fabrics. The mothers were all handsome, and the daughters all lovely. They appeared so radiant, so happy, and so splendid, that I seemed to see women out of fairyland. I could not detect an ill-tempered nor a troubled woman amongst them. I could not follow any of these women to their own homes, it is true, to prove whether they were perfection indeed, or only looked it. But I preferred to believe them what they appeared to be that night. They smiled, and smiled, and fluttered their fans and their laces, as if brimming full of good-humour, and only longing for some object upon which to pour it forth. The men, also, looked strong and brave, and as manly as men should be. I believed that I made acquaintance with a new race, different from the human beings

whom I had seen crowding London streets. And Mimi was queen of them all, as she received her handsome guests.

Almost all the folks had arrived, and yet there was no Mr. Sutherland to be seen. He had not arrived at the Sycamores, when I took my place in the drawing-room. I kept my eyes on the door, wondering if I should know him when he entered, if I should guess by something in his bearing that this was the master of the house. I grew tired with watching, and yet I was sure that I had not seen him.

There was standing by me all this time a gentleman whom Mimi had introduced to me early. He was one of those fine-looking men whom I had admired so much, and he told me many anecdotes of sporting life, and seemed satisfied with me for a companion, though I had very little to say to him. I gave him, indeed, a very divided attention. As I shall have to mention this person again, I may call him Mr. Field.

My head kept running upon Mimi and her husband. This seemed to me such a strange way for them to meet after so long a separation. I wondered if others would think so besides myself. I turned from this thought to give my attention to Mr. Field. When I looked towards the door again I saw a figure entering, whose apparition made my heart stand still. I believed that I saw my father come into the room.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LV. THE JOURNEY BEGINS.

MONDAY came; and it was now evening, and about the hour at which Lady Vernon had ordained that Maud was to set out upon her journey to Carsbrook.

The carriage was now at the door. The boxes were on top, and Jones, ready dressed for the journey, was in the hall.

Maud was also in travelling costume, the pleasant excitement of her excursion for a moment quelled by the pending interview with her mother.

Oh, that she could have gone without seeing her!

In the hall she told Jones to get into the carriage. The sight of her maid in her place, smirking through the carriage window on the familiar front of the old house, at which she peeped at intervals when she was not busy with the internal arrangements of the carriage, was satisfactory; it assured her that her journey to Carsbrook was a reality. The feeling of uncertainty, until she should be well out of reach of Roydon and the practicable range of a capricious recal, made her a little feverish.

Jones's fussy frown had left her quite, as she smirked through the open window at her young mistress. Maud smiled in return, in spite of her little alarm. Then she receded into the shadow of the hall, and peeped at the door opening into the suite of drawing-rooms, trying to gather courage for the dreaded leave-taking.

She entered the first drawing-room, and passed from one to another in succession, with the nervous feeling of one who is taking possession of a hostile magazine, and does not know the moment when an unseen train may explode it and blow all into air.

She had now passed through all the drawing-rooms, but her mother was not in any one of them. She must seek her in that room which was not cheered by a single pleasant association, a room of which Maud had the secret dread with which a suspected person eyes the council chamber.

She knocked at the door, but Lady Vernon was not there.

Maud was relieved by her failure; she returned to the drawing-room, and touched the bell. A footman entered.

The footman did not know whether her ladyship had gone out, or whether she might be up-stairs; but she was not in the shield-room, or in any of the rooms at that side. The butler, having something particular to tell her, had looked there only a few minutes before.

"Could some one send mamma's maid to me?"

In due time Latimer appeared in the drawing-room, and Maud said:

"Mamma told me, Latimer, that I was to go at four o'clock, and the horses are waiting, and I don't know where to find her, to bid her good-bye. Can you tell me?"

"I think she is in her morning room, up-stairs, miss. Do you wish me to see?"

"Yes, Latimer, please. Will you tell her what I have said, and find out what she wishes?" answered Maud.

Latimer returned in a few minutes, and said:

"Her ladyship says, miss, if you'll please to wait a short time, she will send for you so soon as she is at leisure."

"Very well; thanks, Latimer," said Maud, and she went to the window and looked out upon the court-yard, very ill pleased at the delay. In a little time she saw the coachman drive the horses, at a

walk, a short way up and down the avenue, and round the court-yard; she thought the delay would never end; wondered what her mother could intend by it, and went from window to window, and sat down, and stood up again.

More than half an hour passed, before a footman arrived to inform Maud that Lady Vernon awaited her in the shield-room.

Thither she took her way, and found Lady Vernon alone in that stately and spacious room. She was standing at the further end, looking from one of the windows, when Maud entered.

Hearing the door close, she turned.

"I am not sorry, Maud, that you don't leave this quite so early as I at first intended. No, I am rather pleased."

"I think," said Maud, who was vexed profoundly at the delay, "that it is almost a pity. But of course, whatever you think best. They tell me it will take a little more than five hours to reach Lady Mardykes's house; and it would be uncomfortable, I'm afraid, getting there very late."

"Your arriving half an hour late, or an hour late, or two hours late, will cause Lady Mardykes no uneasiness," said her mother; "nor any other person. Pray allow me to direct the manner in which my own servants, carriages, and horses shall be employed, and you will find that I am quite competent to carry out any arrangements which, while you remain in my charge, may appear desirable."

Though Lady Vernon spoke, as usual, with a calm manner and in cold tones, her faint smile expressed something of positive antipathy, and there were, in her measured emphasis, evidences of strangely intense and bitter temper, to which Maud was not accustomed.

These signs irritated, but also awed Miss Vernon. There was something of the malignity of suffering in the gloom of her address, and Maud instinctively shrank from any betrayal of feeling which, in Lady Vernon's mood, might possibly lead to a sudden countermand of the entire expedition.

"From me you don't deserve confidence," she said, suddenly. "You have given me none. I should not accept it now. But I know all I need know; from whom you receive letters among the rest. Don't speak; don't answer. I will have no altercation. What I allude to I know. You have been no child to me. I have been, you'll say, no mother to you. It is false. I look into my heart and life, of which you know nothing, and I see that I have done, am

doing, and, with Heaven's help, will do, my duty. I am sacrificing myself, my feelings, for you and for others. Yes, for you — for you, at this moment. I don't care, with that comfort, what may be said or fancied. What is it to me what the wicked and frivolous may say or think? I do my duty by you always, steadily, and I defy them. I and you, we are what we are. There; go. No good-byes. Only remember, wherever you are, duty rules my life; my care shall follow you."

With these odd words she turned away, and left the room by the side-door, and Maud was alone. Glad she was that the interview was over, and she at liberty.

The shadow of this cloud did not rest long upon her; black as its transit had been.

She and her maid were presently driving at a swift trot away from Roydon. She had not driven a mile away, when that unnatural parting began to recede in her mind, before the free and sunny prospect opening before her at Carsbrook.

"You never were at Carsbrook, Jones?" said Miss Vernon to her maid, for the tenth time during the last week. "No. I forgot I asked you that before. I should not wonder, Jones, if I were to leave you there. Miss Medwyn is a great match-maker, and three of her own maids have been married from her house."

"Marriages is made in heaven, miss, they say; but I don't see many wives that would not be maids again if they could. I might 'a been married a many a time if I would. And if I would change my mind there's many a one would take me, if they thought I'd have them, without going all the way to Carsbrook."

"Oh, yes; but I mean a very eligible match. No matter; my cousin Max will look about, and we'll be satisfied with nothing less."

"La, miss! do give over your nonsense!"

"We change horses five or six times on the way to Carsbrook. What o'clock is it now?" She looked at her watch. "About half-past four. What a good pace he is driving at. We shall be there before ten, I think."

The evening tints were over the landscape by the time they reached the Green Dragon—a lonely posting-house near Dornbury Common.

"We'll tell them to make us some tea. Here, Jones, what do you think? Should not you like it?"

"Thanks, miss, very much; I should like it very well, miss, please."

By this time the horses came to a standstill before the pretty little inn; the ostlers shuffled out to take the horses off; and Maud ran into the house under a fragrant bower of jessamine and honey-suckle.

They look out upon the quiet slopes and rather hungry sheep-walks that surround the Green Dragon, and make it solitary, through a little window that makes a frame of dark leaves and roses round.

Here they take their tea in high spirits. And this little repast over, they walk out upon the platform before the porch.

The horses are, by this time, put to; and from this elevated point of view Maud looks towards Roydon Hall, now seventeen miles away, exactly in the direction where the sun is now sinking from view.

It is a strange, wild, ominous sunset. Long floods of clear saffron flush into faint flame, and deep purple masses, like piles of battle-smoke, load the pale sea of green above. The sun dives into its abyss of fire. Black clouds, like girding rocks, with jagged edges heated dazzling as flame, encircle its descent with the yawn of a crater; and, high in air, scattered flecks of cloud, like the fragments of an explosion, hang splendouring the fading sky with tongues of fire. The sun is now quite down; all is gradually darkening. The smoke is slowly rolling and subsiding, and the crater stretches up its enormous mouth, and breathes out a blood-red vapour that overspreads the amber sky, and meets the sinking masses; and so the vaporious scenery fades and blackens, leaving on Maud's mind a vague sense of the menacing and portentous.

When she takes her place in the carriage she is silent; she is thinking of her mother's oracular and incoherent leave-taking, and she sees her pale, handsome face, and fitting smile, and does not know whether they indicate more suffering or dislike.

But is she not leaving Roydon and its troubles fast and far behind her, and is she not driving now with four good trotters, at an exhilarating pace, towards her dear old cousin Max, towards Carsbrook, and its pleasant excitements, towards her new and hospitable friend, its charming hostess, and towards a possible meeting still more interesting?

CHAPTER LVI. THE PIG AND TINDER-BOX.

SOON the pleasant moon was shining, and silvered all the landscape.

In one of Swift's picturesque illustrations he describes the hilarity with which

a party of friends ride out on a journey; in the morning how spruce they look, how they talk and laugh, and admire all they see, and enjoy everything, and how bespattered, silent, and spiritless, after some hours in the saddle, the same party arrive at their journey's end.

Something of this, in a modified way, our travellers experienced, as they approached the Pig and Tinder-box, the fourth posting-house, where they were to change horses.

It is a larger building than the Green Dragon, and older a great deal, with a porch of Charles the First's time, and a portion of the building as old as Queen Elizabeth's.

This inn, like the others along the posting line, depends in no sort upon its neighbourhood for support. A well-kept road across a melancholy moor, called Haxted Heath, passes its front. The Pig and Tinder-box is nine-and-twenty miles away from the chimneys of Roydon Hall, and about sixteen from Carsbrook.

Maud has ceased to enjoy the mere sense of locomotion, and has got into the state in which the end of a journey is looked forward to with satisfaction. She looks out of the carriage window, and sees the road stretching over the black moor, in the moonlight, like a strip of white tape.

Beside it show, at first dimly, the gables and chimneys of the Pig and Tinder-box, with the outlines of its stables and offices, and the poplars and chestnuts that grow near it.

Listlessly she looks on, and thinks she sees a carriage before its door.

"Look out, Jones, and tell me, is that a carriage before the door of the inn?"

Jones" stretches her neck from the window twice as far as is necessary.

"A waggon, miss, I think," said she, without interrupting her scrutiny to pull her head in. "No—is it? Well, I do believe it does look like a carriage, rayther."

"Let me look, Jones," said Miss Maud, tapping her shoulder. "I hope they are not taking our horses."

Miss Vernon looked out, and now plainly saw a carriage standing upon the road, with the horses' heads turned towards them. A post-boy in top-boots was in front, at the horses' bridles. The moonlight showed all this distinctly, and his comrade, partly hid in the black shadow of the old building, and partly revealed by the lamp-light that shone from the porch, was talking to some one inside.

It was plain that these people now heard the clink and rumble of the approaching

coach-wheels, for the man at the porch, pointing along the road in their direction, turned towards his companion, who forthwith led his horses toward them a little, drawing up at the side of the road.

The Roydon carriage passed this swiftly by, and drew up before the porch of the Pig and Tinder-box.

The landlady waddled out swiftly in front of the threshold, to receive her distinguished guests.

"You had a letter from Lady Vernon, hadn't you?" inquired the young lady, eagerly, thinking what a mortification it would be to find no horses, and be obliged to put up till morning at this melancholy old roadside inn.

"Yes, miss, sure, everything is ready, as her ladyship ordered; and will your ladyship, miss, please take a cup of tea? I made it when we saw your ladyship's carriage a-coming, jest two minutes ago."

Tea is always tempting on a journey, and although they had taken some scarcely two hours before, Maud agreed, and their hostess showed them into a comfortable panelled room, where tea-things were on the table.

The fat landlady of the Pig and Tinder-box stood with her apron against the table, on which her knuckles leaned, and said:

"I hope, miss, you may find the carriage comfortable."

"Thanks, we are travelling in mamma's."

"But Lady Vernon said in her note, please, miss, that her own was not to go further than this, and I was to furnish a carriage, on——"

"Oh, I did not know; I'm sure it is very nice; I have no doubt we shall find it very comfortable. Jones, you had better go and see that they make no mistake about our boxes and the things in the carriage that are coming on with us."

Jones went off in a fuss. The room in which she left her young mistress is at the end of a passage, which runs to the left from the hall, with some doors opening from it toward the front of the building.

When Jones, in obedience to her young mistress's orders, had got to the foot of the stairs in front of the open hall-door, she saw standing in the entrance of the corresponding passage, at the other side of the hall, a man, with a dark, determined face and fine forehead, about the sternest and gravest-looking man she had ever seen. Judging by his dress you would have supposed him a person in the rank of an upper servant, and he wore a black outside coat

buttoned up to his throat. His hat was in his hand. But judging by his air and countenance you would have taken him for a Jesuit, on a secret service of danger. There was in his face the severity of habitual responsibility, and in the brown eye, that glanced from corner to corner, the penetration and cold courage of a man of action.

He stepped forward as gravely as an undertaker, and speaking low but rapidly, said: "Are you Miss Jones, please?"

"Yes, my name is Jones," said that young lady, with ears erect.

"Miss Vernon's maid?" continued the inquirer.

"Yes, sir," she replied, with dignity and some disdain, for she was not accustomed to be questioned by strangers.

"You have just come, Miss Jones, with the young lady from Roydon?" he added, politely.

"Yes, sir," she again answered, dryly.

"Then, Miss Jones, if you'll be good enough to come this way for a moment, I'll give you a message and a note from Lady Vernon," he continued.

"Certainly, sir," answered Miss Jones, with a little start, and her eyes very wide open. A slight sinking at her heart acknowledged the ominous character of the occurrence.

The dark stranger had a candle in his hand, and led Miss Jones down the passage, at the opposite side of the hall from which he had just emerged.

As she followed him into the room, the door of which stood open, she thought she saw a fat, unpleasant face, which she little expected to see there, smiling from the further end at her.

She stepped back from the door, and looked steadily down the passage; but, if it had really been there, it was gone.

There was a pair of candles in the small room to which he had conducted her, one upon the chimney-piece, the other he had himself placed on the table; and he now snuffed it.

"Lady Vernon desired me, Miss Jones, by letter received this morning, to look after Miss Vernon's luggage here, and to see it transferred all right to the carriage she is going on in. That is done, except your two boxes, which are not to go on."

"But I can't get on at Carsbrook without my two boxes, sir," exclaimed Miss Jones, alarmed for her get-up and decorations. "I shall want every single individual thing I took with me from Roydon!"

"Perhaps, Miss Jones, you would prefer sitting," said the imperturbable stranger, placing a chair, and sliding the candle along the table towards her. "This is the letter which Lady Vernon desires me to give you with my own hand."

At the same time he placed a note in the alarmed young lady's fingers.

She opened it, and read these words:

Roydon Hall, Monday.

REBECCA JONES,—I require your presence here. Therefore, immediately on receiving this note, you will return to Roydon Hall in the carriage in which you left it. Miss Vernon will continue her journey with, for the present, another maid.

BARBARA VERNON.

Miss Jones sniffed once or twice, and felt an odd chill, as she laid this note on the table; and looking with flushed cheeks and undisguised scorn at the courier, she asked, with a little toss of her head:

"And who are you, sir, if I may make bold to inquire?"

"As regards you, Miss Jones, in this present matter, I am Lady Vernon's messenger, and nothing more," he answered, phlegmatically, and smiled, after a pause, showing a row of even, white teeth.

"I think it's a very odd way I'm treated," said Miss Jones, whisking the note, with a little jerk, by the corner. "I don't know no reason why I should be sent to and fro, between Roydon and this, and this and Roydon, back and forward, as if I was good for nothing but to be tossed here and there like a shuttlecock!"

"Very likely, miss," acquiesced the serene messenger.

"And I'll acquaint my young lady, and see what she will say to it," continued Jones, in her indignation, preparing to go direct to her young mistress.

"But we are forbidden to do that, Miss Jones," said this grave person, calmly.

"You know Lady Vernon's handwriting?"

"I rayther suppose I ought to," answered Miss Jones, scornfully, with her head very high, and dismay at her heart.

"My directions are strictly to prevent any such thing. Will you be good enough to read this."

He doubled back a piece of the letter, and permitted her to read the following lines:

"I have ordered Rebecca Jones to return immediately to Roydon. She will, therefore, without speaking to Miss Vernon,

take her place again in my carriage, into which you will be so good as to put her, and my servant will immediately drive the carriage back to Roydon, as you advise."

"I have given them their directions," said the man, putting up his letter, "and the carriage, with your two boxes, Miss Jones, waits at the door, to which I will, if you permit me, conduct you now."

"Well, as for me, I'm but a lady's-maid, and I suppose I ought to be thankful to stand anything. Having been Miss Maud's own maid, which no one can deny what I have been to her through many a troubled day and night, ever since she was old enough to have a maid, anything is good enough, and too good for me."

"I think, Miss Jones, Lady Vernon won't like it if you delay here any longer," remarked the quiet man, approaching the door.

"And who's to go with Miss Maud? I'd like to know that, if it's no treason; 'tain't every one that can dress a young lady like she is, and I don't suppose her ladyship could 'a meant I was to leave my young lady without knowing who was to take care of her, and be in charge of her things; and so I should like to know better, before I leave here, who's to go on with her to Carsbrook?"

"Lady Vernon is a very particular lady, I'm told, and she has arranged all that herself, and I have no directions to give you, Miss Jones, except what I have told you."

"Well, it is a queer way, I am sure! I suppose I must do as her ladyship desires. I hope Miss Maud mayn't be the sufferer; and it does seem a bit queer I mayn't so much as say good-bye to her."

There was here a little interrogative pause, as she looked in his face in the hope that he might relent.

"Lady Vernon's directions are plain upon that point," observed the dark-featured man; "and we have delayed too long, I'm afraid, Miss Jones."

"It ain't me, then," said Miss Jones, quickly. "I'm making no delays; I'm ready to go. I said so when I saw her ladyship's note, that instant minute."

"Be so good as to follow me, miss," said the stranger.

And he led the way down the passage, through the kitchen, into the stable-yard, and through the gate, forth upon the road, where the Roydon carriage, with the tired horses, which had just brought them there, were waiting to take crest-fallen Miss Jones back to the Green Dragon.

That young lady was quickly shut up, left to her angry reflections, and the prompt man in black said a word to the coachman, who was again on the box, and another to the footman, who handed his pewter pot, just drained, with some flakes of foam still on its side, to the ostler.

The footman took his seat, and Lady Vernon's carriage and servants, including Jones, much disgusted at her unexpected reverse, began to roll away toward Dornbunbury Common and distant Roydon.

BROOKE-STREET, HOLBORN.

Just past the monastic gates of Furnival's-inn, and between that den of lawyers and the narrow crowded turning to Gray's-inn-road, there exists a short dingy street, closed at the northern end by the wall of the church of St. Albans. The dim thoroughfare, otherwise quiet, sordid, and dirty enough, resounds at early hours with the appealing bell that summons the low-browed cester-mongers of Brooke's Market, the unkempt roughs of Fox-court, the wild Irishmen of Greville-street, and the mocking organ-boys of Leather-lane. On the right of the street (eastward), as you enter it, stands a curious, truncated building, that looks like a cut-down man-of-war, but really is a huge furniture warehouse, that has been partly burnt down and never properly rebuilt. The houses in Brooke-street are divided amongst the usual petty trades, with here and there a thermometer maker, the overflowing of the Italian colony in Hatton-garden. An alley on the west side leads the evasive pickpocket, who by chance finds himself here beset, into Gray's-inn-road, a turning on the other leads the wayfarer into the Piedmontese settlement of Leather-lane. Of colour, brightness, gaiety, there is no trace here; and even if the sunshine, on some favoured summer sunset, does stream down upon the eastern side of the street, it soon fades away, as if unwilling to make the dulness and dinginess of the locality seem greater upon its departure.

And yet at the end of this street, in Queen Elizabeth's golden reign, rose the town house of a very grand person, a nobleman of the court, and the treasurer of marine causes. Just where St. Albans now stands, dining Protestant ears with its importunate call to ecclesiastical ceremonies, stood the residence of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, the bosom friend, brother author, and constant companion of that last of the true

knights, Sir Philip Sidney. We venerate the crabbed old poet (incorrigibly bad as his quaint, twisted verses are) because he was a generous and loyal friend to Lord Bacon after his fall, and because he was a persistent patron of authors. He got Ben Jonson's master at Westminster, learned Camden, appointed Clarendon-at-arms, he discovered the industrious Speed, the historian, on the tailor's board. He used to say, forgetful of all claims to statesmanship, that he only wished to be known to posterity as "Sidney's friend, Shakespeare's and Ben Jonson's master, and the patron of Lord Chancellor Egerton and Bishop Overall." This former magnate of Brooke-street sprang from an illustrious Warwickshire stock, and claimed alliance with Neville Beauchamp and Willoughby de Brookes; and Sidney was his kinsman, for Sidney claimed descent from the Beauchamps, too, through the blood of the Dudleys, Grays, and Talbots. Fulke Greville was exactly the same age as his cousin Philip, whom, he says in his life of him, he "observed, honoured, and loved so much; of whose youth," he writes, "I will report no other wonder but this, that though I lived with him and knew him from a child, yet I never knew him other than a man with such staidness of mind, lovely and familiar gravity, as carried grace and reverence above greater years. His talk ever of knowledge, and his very play tending to enrich his mind; so as even his teachers found something in him to observe and learn above that which they had usually read or taught. Which eminence, by nature and industry, made his worthy father style Sir Philip in my hearing (though I unseen), 'Lumen familiæ mee.'" This young Warwickshire gallant, after the usual grand tour, returned to the English court to renew his friendship with Sidney, who in the mean time had narrowly escaped the bloody massacre of St. Bartholomew, and had afterwards been studying at learned Padua. But Greville, like young Norval, had heard of battles, and longed to follow to the field some warlike chief. He first tried to obtain leave to go to the Low Countries, and break a spear with Don Juan's Spanish cavaliers, and finally, in 1578, he stole away to the Netherlands, joining Secretary Walsingham, who had to try and make peace between Don John of Spain and the Prince of Orange. Elizabeth, jealous of her young men, and ever unwilling to lose their services, frowned upon him after this for several months. Again,

in 1584, the same chivalrous restlessness led Greville to agree with Sir Philip to accompany Sir Francis Drake in his last expedition but one to the "golden South Americas;" but here again the jealous queen laid her imperative hand on the wayward youth. Finally, when the Earl of Leicester was sent with aid to the Dutch, Greville requested leave to command a hundred horse; but the queen refusing, he resolved to entirely abandon his errant ambition, and to remain and grow where the queen, his mistress, planted him.

In 1591, he and Sir Philip were two of the chief actors in those great tilts and pageants held at Whitehall to celebrate the projected marriage of Elizabeth (then forty-nine) with the misshapen, ugly Duke of Anjou, son of Catherine de Medicis, and brother of that detestable wolf's whelp, Charles the Ninth. The duke, who had a deformed nose, was at the same time, it was rumoured, wooing the Infanta of Spain. It was of him that his sister Margaret said, "If all faithlessness were banished from the world, Anjou has enough to fill it again." A great banqueting marquee was erected at Whitehall. Master Philip Sidney (who, by-the-by, warmly opposed the dangerous match), and his kinsmen, Master Fulke Greville, Lord Windsor, and the Earl of Arundel, were to represent the foster children of Desire, and to take by storm the Castle of Perfect Beauty, which had been erected at one end of the tilt-yard (on the site of the present Horse Guards). The challenge of these champions was delivered by a pert page, who, on the 16th of April, faced the queen without bow or reverence, as she was on her way to chapel. The great masque (no doubt written by Sidney, for the words are in his gallant high-flown manner) took place on the next day, "Whitsun Monday." Before the young horsemen came a rolling trench of canvas, painted to resemble earth, and driven forward on wheels. On the top were wooden cannons, guarded by gunners clothed in crimson sarcenet, protected by baskets filled with earth. High above all an ensign stood, displaying his blazoned flag. Within the moving redoubt were "divers kinds of most excellent music." Then followed a procession of great splendour. First rode the Earl of Arundel, in graven armour, followed by two gentlemen ushers, four pages, and twenty of his gentlemen in crimson velvet hose, yellow silk doublets, and crimson hats, fluttering with yellow feathers; six trumpeters sounded before them,

and thirty-one yeomen followed, dressed in crimson velvet cassocks, and yellow taffety doublets. After the earl came Lord Windsor, in gilt armour, his retinue of twenty-four gentlemen and sixty yeomen being resplendent in orange-tawny and black; the yeomen wearing their master's badge, a silver unicorn, on their left arms. Master Sidney's armour was half blue, half gilt, his four horses were covered with cloth of gold trappings, studded with pearls, and his yeomen wore yellow velvet, with white feathers in their caps. As for Master Fulke Greville's men, they affected loose jackets of tawny taffety, slashed and lined with yellow sarcenet, and looped and buttoned with gold.

Now, with many fantastic speeches and quaint verses, the four knights of Desire summoned the fortress of Beauty to surrender with shouts of "Alarm, alarm!" and the two cannons were then shot off, one with sweet powder, the other with sweet water. The band clashed, to represent firing, scaling ladders were applied to the walls, and flowers and love-letters were thrown into the obdurate fortress that represented old Elizabeth's heart. The defenders then descended into the tilt-yard, and broke six lances. Two of the knights clad in armour, painted with fruit, wore helmets covered with hair, to represent Adam and Eve. The next day this somewhat too prolonged spectacle continued. Desire and her four children entered, in a brave chariot, to doleful music. Her four white horses were caparisoned in white and crimson silk, and before them went a herald. The two bands fought with swords at the barriers; and the revel ended by a boy, clothed in ash-coloured robes, who, holding an olive branch, coming in, prostrated himself at the queen's feet, and tendered the submission of the dejected children of Desire, who were henceforward to be the slaves of Virtue and the Queen of the Fortress. The queen graciously gave them all great praise and thanks, and Fulke Greville and his companions then solemnly departed in the order in which they had entered. The gay show, after all, was of such stuff as dreams are made of. The detestable French duke, who arrived in November, made hot love, and was caressed and humbugged by the queen and courtiers, departed in February for Flushing. The queen certainly showed Anjou more favour than any other of her suitors, but then she was wanting the help of France against Spain. The duke died

two years after, of either poison, wine, or chagrin. Five years after the great tilt at Whitehall, Sidney fell at Zutphen. In a fog under the walls of the town his troop got entangled with the Spaniards. A musket-bullet from the trenches broke his thigh. He lingered sixteen days. His last words were:

"Love my memory, cherish my friends, but, above all, govern your will and affections by the will and word of your Creator; in me beholding the end of this world with all her vanities." This true knight was only thirty-two when he thus died. He left to his dear friend Greville a moiety of his books. That same friend has said of him: "The greatness which he affected was built upon true worth, esteeming fame more than riches, and noble actions far above nobility itself." Spenser, who loved Sidney, in the elegiac poem, the Ruins of Time, dedicated to Sir Philip's sister, says of the patron he loved and honoured so much:

Most gentle spirit, breathed from above,
Out of the bosom of the Maker's bliss,
In whom all bounty and all virtuous love
Appeared in their native properties,
And did enrich that noble bress of this.

When Fulke Greville set his face to the sun, he turned statesman and office-holder in earnest. He was appointed treasurer of marine causes, and when a second Armada threatened, eleven years after the first, he was made rear-admiral. Horace Walpole, venting some stray temper (as such creaky old beaux sometimes unreasonably do), accuses Fulke Greville of trying to substitute Southampton (Shakespeare's friend) for Essex in Elizabeth's favour; but, if his lordship will pardon us, this is stark nonsense, for Southampton was Essex's dearest friend; he followed him through Temple Bar in that insane sally of February the 8th, 1601, and his head had all but rolled on Tower-hill in company with that of his friend. Fulke Greville sat frequently for Warwickshire with Sir Thomas Lucy (Shakespeare's Shallow?). King James gave him Warwick Castle, and made him Knight of the Bath. But Greville did not thrive at James's court while the perfidious Cecil lived, and he was refused documents necessary for writing the life of Queen Elizabeth. After Cecil's death, he passed again into the court sunshine, and Brooke House then flourished. Greville was soon called to the privy council and the peerage, and in 1621 was made one of the lords of the

king's bedchamber. He continued in the privy council of Charles the First, and in the beginning of the same reign founded a history lecture at Cambridge.

He was not fated to live far into Charles's reign. A sudden death and tragic end awaited the old statesman. He was now seventy-five, wise, sententious, fond, no doubt, of quoting his own tragedies, and talking of his friend Sir Philip. An old bachelor, he had young Davenant, the poet, living with him as a protégé. Known well in Holborn, he was equally honoured and loved at Whitehall. Among Lord Brooke's attendants was one morose, discontented Varney of a man, who secretly repined at having devoted the greatest part of his life to serve the old nobleman, and as yet without any special reward or mention in the will. One day, while waiting in the old man's bedroom, Heywood angrily blurted out this long concealed grievance, and asked for justice. The old noble, sententiously indignant at the manner and tone of the demand, chided the fellow roundly. In a sudden frenzy of hatred, Heywood drew his sword and stabbed his master in the back. It was a deadly wound. The murderer then ran into another room, locked the door, and threw himself on his own sword. This crime took place September the 30th, 1628, and scared London as much as the somewhat similar murder of Lord William Russell, by his Swiss valet, did in our own day. The old nobleman's corpse, lapped in lead, was taken from Brooke House to St. Mary's Church, Warwick, and there buried in the choir. On the monument was inscribed, "Fulke Greville, servant to Queen Elizabeth, counsellor to King James, and friend to Sir Philip Sidney. Trophæum Pœccati." The less we say about Fulke Greville's poems the better. They are obscure and knotty (though Lamb does impute to him the fine elegiac lines on Sidney beginning, "Silence augmenteth grief"). The rest are acid as crab-apples, and quite as hard to digest. As for those wonderful black-letter tragedies, never yet acted, called Alaham and Mustapha, they are only fit to be produced in a tragedian's purgatory, with their laboured speeches, two folio pages long, their soporiferous dialogue debates, and that consummation of all puzzle-headed impracticability, the Chorus Tartarorum. Yet Leigh Hunt, if we remember right, discovers a certain dignity and grasp about these dramatic studies, and finds a charm in the prologue of Ala-

ham, spoken by the ghost of one of the wicked old kings of Ormuz, and beginning :

Thou monster horrible, under whose ugly doom
Down in Eternity's perpetual night
Man's temporal sins bear torments infinite.
For change of desolation must I come
To tempt the earth and to prophane the light.

This reads like Ben Jonson when in his gravest, as in his prologue to *Sejanus*. Greville's early sonnets, though rough and uncouth enough, are often simple, bright, and colloquial. The following is a pretty country picture of Elizabethan rustic lovers:

I with whose colours Myra drest her head,
I that wore posies of her own hand-making;
I that my own name in the chimneys read,
By Myra finely wrought ere I was waking.
Must I look on, in hope time coming may
With change bring back my turne again to play.

I that on Sunday at the church stile found
A garland sweet, with lovers' knots in flowers,
Which I to wear about my arm was bound,
That each of us might know that all was ours.
Must I now lead an idle life in wishes,
And follow Cupid for his loaves and fishes?

It is pleasant to find a halo thrown over this street by the thought that Shakespeare must have often come here from his noble friend's opposite, at Southampton House (now Southampton-buildings), that Sidney was no unfrequent visitor, that Camden and his grim pupil, Ben Jonson, had constant audience of Davenant's patron and Sir Philip's friend, and must have shuddered at the news of that cruel murder that autumn morning of 1628. In the account book of old Nicholas Stone (the sculptor and master-mason of Charles the First, who worked under Inigo Jones at Whitehall and St. Paul's, and executed that curious statue of Dr. Donne, the poet, which, surviving the great fire of 1666, is still preserved in St. Paul's crypt), there is a record of a dial made by him for Lord Brooke in 1622. Stone, it is worth remembering, was at this time living on the south side of Long Acre, only two doors from a certain not altogether unknown Huntingdonshire captain, one Oliver Cromwell, and there he lived for six years—from 1637 to 1643.

But there was another poet, the memory of whom still more consecrates this obscure Holborn street, a poet whose end was more tragic than that of the old privy councillor, a poet whose genius was of a high class. In a dismal garret of No. 39, now a small grocer's, a few years ago a coffee-shop, before that a plumber's, that wonderful and unhappy boy, Chatterton, not yet eighteen, killed himself on the 24th of August, 1770. Chatterton was the son of

a clever, dissipated man, who had been sub-chanter at Bristol Cathedral, and master of a small free school in Pipe-street, Bristol; his uncle was sexton of Redcliffe Church. The father died before the poet was born. The child, from an early age, displayed the marked sensitiveness of genius, and evinced a thirst for fame; at only five years old, being asked what device he should like on a mug a friend of his mother's was about to give him, he answered, like a young Alexander:

"Paint me an angel with wings, and a trumpet that will trumpet my name over the world."

Being taught to read from an old illuminated manuscript, and a black letter Bible, his mind was directed, even at seven, to mediæval books. At eleven he wrote a short satire on a religious hypocrite. Soon after, he produced a sort of Ode to the Deity, superior to Pope's verses at twelve, or Cowley's at fifteen. The poem begins:

Almighty Framers of the skies,
O let our pure devotion rise
Like incense in thy sight;
Wrapt in impenetrable shade
The texture of our souls was made,
Till thy command gave light.

A neglected parcel of old mediæval manuscripts, found in a ransacked chest in a room over the north porch of Redcliffe Church, and which was supposed to have belonged to William Canynge, a merchant of Bristol, in the reign of Edward the Fourth, seems to have led his mind to those forgeries which brought him fame and misery, immortality and death. He was only fourteen when he began these extraordinary deceptions by writing an imaginary pedigree of the family of Mr. Burgum, a pewterer, who had been kind to him. In 1767 Chatterton was bound apprentice to an attorney, and began to forge mediæval narratives of local events, beginning by a spurious account of the opening of Bristol Bridge, inserted in Felix Farley's Bristol Journal in 1768. He was then only sixteen. He gradually pushed on his mines, and won fresh dupes. To a Bristol historian he supplied historical fragments, with a tragedy which he called *Ella*, and fathered on Rowley, an imaginary priest of the reign of Henry the Sixth. Last of all, he flew at higher fame, and boldly volunteered to send Horace Walpole, for his *Anecdotes of Painting*, a treatise on English painting, supposed to be written by Rowley for Master Canynge. Walpole at once submitted the verses to his more experienced friends, Gray and Mason, who pronounced them palpable forgeries. Wal-

pole then returned the verses, recommending Chatterton to keep to his profession, in duty and gratitude to his widowed mother. Chatterton unjustly attributed the rejection to the disclosure he had made of his poverty to a mean man of rank. Agonised at this failure, "the mad genius," as his Bristol friends called him, threatened suicide, and drew up a reckless will, which so frightened his master that he at once cancelled the lad's indentures. At this catastrophe Chatterton wrote to a friend:

"No, it is my pride, my damned native unconquerable pride, that plunges me into distraction. You must know that nineteenth-tenths of my composition is pride. I must either live a slave, a servant, have no will of my own, no sentiments of my own which I may freely declare as such, or die. Perplexing alternative. But it distracts me to think of it."

The lad's resolve was soon made: he would go to London. "A literary life," he wrote to a friend. "If that fail I will turn Methodist preacher. A new sect may easily be devised; but if that, too, shall fail me, my last and final resource is a pistol." He left Bristol in high spirits in the London coach, April the 26th, 1770. The city, paved with gold, lay all before him. The magazines are eager for the new poet. Wilkes hears of him. He becomes known to all the geniuses at the Chapter Coffee House. He almost gets appointed tutor to the young Duke of Northumberland, only he knows no foreign language. A music-seller in the City meets him in the pit of Drury-lane Theatre, and asks him to write songs for Ranelagh. He becomes intoxicated. He affects fashionable airs, and writes patronising letters to astonish his humble friends at home. He is introduced to Beckford, the audacious lord mayor, who dared to beard George the Third, and expects to get much work in lampooning. He sends his mother a French snuff-box, his sister two fans, and some herb tobacco for his grandmother. But this was all pretence; he was at this very time really all but starving, too proud to own it, and too deep in despair to avow the truth even to himself.

Beckford had died suddenly from a fit produced by over-exertion; the poet's editors were in prison. By four months' brain labour he had earned only four pounds, fifteen shillings, and ninepence. The needy publishers owed him ten pounds, nineteen shillings, and sixpence. In July he removed from a friend's in Shoreditch to

No. 39, Brooke-street, the house of Mrs. Angell, a sack-maker (mantua-maker). He asked the Bristol historian, Barrett, to give him a certificate so that he might go to Africa as a surgeon's mate. Barrett conscientiously refused. The poor lad was starving fast, but would not own it. For two days he brooded in his room, ate nothing, and was angry when kind Mrs. Angell asked him to take a little dinner with her. That night he bought some arsenic, and drank it in water. When his door was broken open he was found dead, the floor strewn with little scraps of paper. An inquest was held on the body, which was carelessly interred, without knell, prayer, or tear, in the dismal burying-ground of Shoe-lane workhouse (the site of the present Farringdon Market). A doubtful Bristol legend asserts that, by a friend's kindness, the body was sent down by a carrier's cart to his mother, and buried on the right-hand side of the lime-tree middle paved walk of Redcliffe churchyard, within the shadow of the old north porch, where he had spent so many happy hours.

Many months after this tragedy, Horace Walpole, gay, fashionable, and fresh from France, was dining at the Royal Academy, when Doctor Goldsmith drew the attention of the company to an account of a marvellous discovery of ancient poems at Bristol, for which he was laughed at by Doctor Johnson, who was present. Walpole, finding the poems were Chatterton's, told Goldsmith that, if he had pleased, he could have had the honour of ushering that great discovery to the presence of the learned world; "but though Goldsmith's credulity diverted me," writes Walpole, "my mirth was soon dashed, for, on asking about Chatterton, he told me he had been in London, and had destroyed himself. I heartily wished then I had been the dupe of all the poor young man had written to me . . . a poor young man, not eighteen, and of most miraculous talents."

In Fox-court, Brooke-street, a miserable alley leading into Gray's-inn-road, was born, January the 16th, 1696, that most unhappy man, Richard Savage, the poet. Really (as Mr. Moy Thomas has proved, with great subtlety and ingenuity) the son of a cobbler, Savage claimed to be the illegitimate child of the infamous Countess of Macclesfield, by her worthless lover, Lord Rivers. The wretched woman openly acknowledged her shame in order to obtain a divorce from her husband, and a child was born after

their separation. She was secretly brought to Fox-court, and wore a mask while she was delivered, but that child, it has been proved, died soon after its christening at St. Andrew's. Lady Mason, Savage's supposed maternal grandmother, sent him to a grammar-school at St. Albans. When about eighteen, his supposed mother dying, Savage found letters among her papers disclosing, as he said, and perhaps believed, his real descent; but there is no doubt that if such papers ever existed at all, they referred to the dead illegitimate child. This lit up his ambition; he wrote a satire on Hogarth's friend, the worthy Bishop Hoadley, frequented the theatres, wrote a tragedy, and became acquainted with Steele. Already wild and reckless, in a drunken night brawl he killed a Mr. Sinclair at a tavern near Charing-cross, and was with difficulty saved from the hangman. Threatening to lampoon his supposed mother, who repudiated him, the poet was at last bought off by a pension from Lord Tyroonell. This he soon forfeited by what Boswell justly calls his "indecorous pride, meanness, and ferocity." Calling himself the Volunteer Laureate, much to Colley Cibber's annoyance, the hopeless man extorted a pension from Queen Caroline, who had before procured his pardon. Idle, drunken, debauched, Savage sank into miserable poverty, when in 1737 the queen died, and his small pension of fifty pounds a year ceased. It was at this time that Johnson (only one year in London) knew him, and describes himself and Savage, both poor, wandering all night round St. James's-square for want of a night's lodging, loudly patriotic, denouncing the ministers, and vowing that, whatever happened, they would stand by their country.

Savage was already known for his powerful poem of the Wanderer, an imitation of the Seasons, and that shameless denunciation of his supposed mother in the Bastard. Pope, Thomson, and other friends, now raised a small amount for the clever scoundrel, on condition he should fly the (to him) irresistible temptation of London, and go and live in Wales. He consented, but coming up to town, against his friends' wishes, to produce a tragedy, he halted at Bristol, and there feasted among the kindly merchants, proud of such a guest. All these friends he offended by his debauchery, violence, and ingratitude. One by one they deserted him; still he lingered in the city, drinking and revelling, till at last thrown into prison for a small coffee-

house debt, he died in jail, aged forty-six, of a fever caught after six months' imprisonment, and was buried in St. Peter's churchyard, at the turnkey's expense. Savage's own lines in the Bastard, on his fatal duel, furnish the best comment on his wasted life.

He might have lived till folly died in shame,
Till kindling wisdom felt a thirst for fame.
He might perhaps his country's friend have proved,
Both happy, generous, candid, and beloved.

In Charles the Second's time, Brooke House was called Warwick House, and there sat the inquisitive and troublesome Committee, which met to inquire into the way all the money raised for the Dutch War had really gone. Pepys describes going to Warwick House, March the 3rd, 1660, to see his great patron the Earl of Sandwich, who was dining there with Lord Manchester, Sir Dudley North, Lord Fiennes, and Lord Berkeley.

The Earl of Clare moved to Warwick House from Drury-lane before 1683. We have this fact accurately fixed by a touching incident which Bishop Burnet relates in his account of the execution of that worthy nobleman, Lord William Russell, for his share in the Rye House Plot, July the 21st, 1683. The conspiracy (two years before the death of Charles the Second) seems to have been compounded of plot within plot. There was no proof, however, that Russell knew anything of the plans to assassinate Charles and his mischievous brother at Rye House Farm on their way from Newmarket to London. Lord William came in his coach, with Tillotson and Burnet, to the scaffold ready in Lincoln's-inn-fields. As they passed Warwick House, observing all the windows shut, he asked Burnet if my Lord Clare was out of town. Burnet replied that surely no windows there would be open on that occasion. As Russell passed Southampton House (Southampton-buildings), where he had wooed his wife, the earl's daughter, he showed a natural emotion, though his courage never gave way.

It was in Brooke-street that that wise and good man, Lord Chancellor Hardwicke (1690—1764), the son of a Dover attorney, was articulated, without a fee, to Mr. Salkeld, an attorney residing there. Salkeld's thrifty wife hurt the pride of the clever young articulated clerk by frequently sending him out on petty errands. He at last cured the lady of this by charging her one shilling and sixpence for a cauliflower he had been told to buy—six-

pence for the cauliflower and one shilling for a sedan-chair to bring it home in. Hardwicke went up the ladder bravely. In 1714 he was called to the bar, in 1720 he was solicitor-general, in 1733 chief justice of the King's Bench, in 1737 lord chancellor. Burke and Wilkes both praised him, and of this great lawyer, Lord Mansfield once said to Ruffhead, Pope's dull biographer:

"If you wish to write the life of a truly great man, write the life of Lord Hardwicke, who from very humble means, and without family support and connexions, became lord high chancellor of England, on account of his virtue, his talents, and his diligence."

It was in low beer-shops round Brookstreet that the Cato-street Conspiracy of 1820 was concocted. The weavers of this plot were Thistlewood, a broken-down gambler and ex-subaltern in the marines, who lived in Stanhope-street, Clare Market; Brunt, a boot-closer in Fox-court, Brookstreet; Keys, a pork butcher, of the same dismal locality; Davidson, a man of colour, and a cabinet-maker; Tidd, a labourer, who lived at No. 5, in Hole-in-the-Wall-passage, Brooke's Market, where the conspirators' arms and powder were kept, and Harrison, a discharged Life Guardsman. The meetings were generally at Brunt's, and there it was arranged to kill Wellington, Canning, Eldon, and the other cabinet ministers, at a dinner to be given on February the 23rd, 1820, by Lord Harrowby, at his house, No. 39, Grosvenor-square.

Thus much, and no more, relating to the street of the three poets history has handed down.

THE DEATH STRUGGLE.

My back is to the wall,
And my face is to my foes,
That surge and gather round me
Like waves when winter blows.
The ghosts of bygone errors,
The faults of former years,
That sting my veins like arrows
And pierce my heart like spears.

But let them do their utmost,
For these I can endure
And meet and overcome them
By suffering made pure.
Against all other foemen
I'll fight with fiery breath,
And if, all done, I'm vanquished,
Go gloriously to death.

My back is to the wall,
And my face is to my foes,
I've lived a life of combat,
And borne what no one knows.

But in this mortal struggle
I stand—poor speck of dust,
Defiant—self-reliant
To die—if die I must!

A DAY DREAM OF THE EARTH.

OUR mother earth, the bounteous, the beautiful, the prolific! Is she conscious of her existence? And is she subject to pleasure and to pain—to growth, maturity, and decay—like all the other living creatures that are born and nurtured on her breast? I have a dream, which may not "be all a dream," that not only this teeming mother of animal and vegetable life, but her spouse and lord, the sun, and all the countless worlds that disclose themselves to our eyes when night removes the veil of too much light that concealed them, are conscious beings, who, in the words of Addison,

Utter forth a glorious voice,
For ever singing as they shine,
The hand that made us is divine.

It is likely that the ultra-mathematical folk, who believe nothing that is not as provable as the multiplication table, may laugh this vision to scorn, if such rigid people ever laugh at all; but what then? Denial proves nothing, and there are more things in heaven and earth than mathematicians can explain. Denial is often much more rash than assertion. Suppose a little, infinitesimal animalcule, sporting in a drop of water, were to take it upon its small self to deny the existence of this earth because its eyes could not discover, nor its countenance touch it? What an ineffably stupid and conceited little animalcule it would be! And suppose, coming to larger creatures, distinctly visible to the unassisted eye, the unclean parasite that dwells in the hair or on the skin of animals, were endowed with speech and a glimmer of reason, and were to declare that the tangled forests and mazy wildernesses of fur and peltry amid which he crawled were the vegetable growth of the world on which he lived and moved and had his being, and that the world aforesaid on which these forests grew for his use and habitation was an inanimate mass, what a crass, conceited, abominable little insect he would be! And have we who inhabit this magnificent earth any more reason to deny its consciousness of life, or its possession of an animating spirit than the little creatures alluded to would have to deny the consciousness and the soul of man? It is only man's ignorant pride

which leads him to imagine that he is the paragon of nature, and the monopolist even of the countless orbs of heaven, which he is too apt to assume were solely created to flash their light upon his eyes, when the revolution of his own globe deprives him of the sunshine.

Dallying with the belief that the earth lives as well as moves, I take a pleasure in picturing to myself how she passes her time, and in what manner she enjoys herself. In the first place she creates time. Time is her work. It is only her revolutions upon her axis—in her majestic course around the sun—that causes time to be a measure of duration, to be understood of men. To the earth herself there is no time. She rolls through eternity. And how does she employ the eternity in which her lot is cast? Not only in hymning, as Addison sings, the glory of her Almighty Creator, but, we may well suppose, in intellectual intercourse with her sister planets. We poor dwellers on her surface can manage, by means of the electricity of which we have discovered part of the uses and the secrets, to send a message round her whole girth with a rapidity exceeding that of time; and may not she, by means of the same subtle agency, converse with her fellow-travellers through the appointed pathways of infinity as easily as man talks with man? And the Aurora Borealis—the northern lights or streamers, that dart their lovely flashes from the pole—may they not be, in spite of any denial that Mr. Practical, Mr. Prosaic, or Mr. Matter-of-Fact may hurl against the supposition, be the signals by which she speaks to distant orbs, and answers their questions about the state of mankind, whether the race has or has not grown wiser than of old, turned the sword into the ploughshare, the spear into the pruning-hook, learned to love each other, and abandoned the infernal study of war and slaughter! Perhaps, too, our mother earth may learn from them that the golden era, the age of peace, the paradise of love and true religion, has, after much struggle and suffering, been finally established in their happier spheres; and mother earth, with a radiant smile, and possibly a sigh, may say that “for me, too, this divine consummation shall arrive in God’s good time,” nay more, that it visibly approaches, and may be seen afar off by the eyes of this yearning mother, though invisible to human ken.

This is one of my day dreams of the

earth. I take a pleasure in believing that her maternity is a source of joy to her, as it is to other animated and intelligent beings, and that the efforts which she makes in spring, when she gives birth to the flowers, and clothes the trees with leaves and blossoms, and which she continues through the summer and the autumn till the ripening of the fruits and the harvests, are efforts attended with as much pure joy and emotion as the maternity of human mothers, who bless God for the lovely gifts of children, and take unselfish pleasure in their growth and training. I dream that when the sun shines upon her in all his midsummer splendour, she may be as happy as a bride is in the presence of him she loves. Were the earth sterile she would be unhappy. Being fruitful, she must, of necessity, be glad; perhaps so glad that the wilfulness and perversity of her favourite and most beautiful child—man—may be the only trouble and sorrow she has to endure.

There are facts in the physical nature and history of the earth which we who dwell in her bosom have but recently begun to study and to understand, and which go to prove that her life, whatever it may be, is not one of monotony. She has gone through, and may yet go through, many crises, some of them violent, and some of them peaceable. Geology tells us of upheavals and subsidencies on her surface, of the action of fire, frost, and water upon what, as we know so little of her interior, we must call her skin or crust, and we may believe that as she is subject to pleasure she is also subject to pain, and to discipline, and that these convulsions, sent to her for a beneficial purpose—like the sorrows and calamities of mankind—may not have been unattended with suffering. We have all of us heard of the Golden Age, and of the youth of the world, even if we have not been nurtured upon the Greek and Roman classics, or read Mr. Gladstone’s *Juventus Mundi*; but science, that lifts occasionally a corner of the veil that hides from us the mysteries of nature, gives us unmistakable hints that the earth, however old she may be in years, is still young in epochs, and that possibly, by some mysterious means, or the operation of the mighty solar agencies of electricity and magnetism, she may periodically renew her forces, and go back again into adolescence. The author of a volume entitled the *Miseries and Liabilities of the Present Life*, declares the earth to be growing decrepit.

"The earth," he says, "gives signs of age, disease, and fickleness. It yields its increase grudgingly, and demands an exorbitant fee beforehand in toil and sweat from the husbandman. It has ill turns or paroxysms, when it rouses the ocean into tempests, and makes sport of navies, strewing the shores with the wrecks and with the carcasses of men. It rocks a continent, or sinks an island, shattering massive cities into countless fragments, and burying the wretched inhabitants in indiscriminate ruin. Anon it writhes and groans in mortal agony, and finds relief only by disgorging its fiery bowels, burying cities and villages in burning graves. The earth is old and feeble, and must needs groan on until it renews its prime." These paroxysms in mother earth, of which this quaint author writes so dolefully, may be nothing more than the natural movement of the magnificent creature in the full healthiness of her youth and vigour, which may only appear irregular and violent to us, because we do not understand either their causes or their periods. Even deluges—of which there appear to have been many, in addition to the great deluge recorded in Scripture—may all occur in the natural and beneficial course of the earth's existence and development.

There was a time, according to the earliest traditions and mythological legends of the most ancient nations (and the idea is strengthened, if not positively confirmed, by the researches and inductions of modern science), when the earth rolled around the sun, on the plane of the equator, and not, as now, on that of the ecliptic, and when, consequently, the days and nights were always equal on every part of the globe, and sunrise and sunset knew no variation. The ecliptic or zodiac marks now, with the plane of the equator, an angle of twenty-three degrees twenty-seven minutes thirty-five seconds. Supposing the earth, as ancient legends tell us, and as science admits is probable, to have once revolved on the plane of the equator, did she start suddenly on her present path of more than twenty-three degrees of obliquity, or did she incline to her new course by slow and imperceptible degrees through hundreds of thousands or millions of ages? Modern science cannot tell us authoritatively. It tells us, however, as one of its latest calculations and deductions, from long-continued study of the heavens, that a clearly ascertainable diminution of the obliquity of the earth's orbit and approach to the old, and possibly original, equatorial line

has taken place within the historical period, and that the ecliptic is slowly receding towards the equator. Mr. Robert Grant, the well-known professor of astronomy at the University of Glasgow, tells us that here "an interesting question arises. Will the obliquity continually diminish until the equator and the ecliptic coincide? If this should happen, the sun will daily attain the same meridian altitude as at the equinoxes, and an eternal spring will reign over the whole earth. Lagrange first showed that such a condition cannot possibly exist, the mutual action of the planets occasioning only small oscillations in the position of their orbits. The ecliptic will therefore continue to approach the equator until it reach the limit assigned by the action of the perturbing forces, after which it will gradually recede from that plane, according to the same law as that which determined its previous approach." Colonel Drayson, of the Royal Artillery, at a recent meeting of the Royal Society, read a paper on this subject, in which he stated, as the result of patient study, observation, and calculation, that "the pole of the earth traced a curve in the heavens, which was a circle round a point six degrees from the pole of the ecliptic, and that this curve gave an obliquity of upwards of thirty-five degrees for the date thirteen thousand years before the Christian era." If this could be accepted as absolutely true, it would follow that in about fourteen thousand eight hundred and seventy-one years the plane of the ecliptic had approached about twelve degrees nearer to the equator. Colonel Drayson, like Mr. Grant and other astronomers, though he has started a theory which does not seem to be altogether accepted by his fellow-labourers in the study of the stars, is of opinion that these changes are only progressive up to a certain point, and that the oscillation, having reached its limit, retraces its course to its starting point, and that the complete period of what he calls this conical movement is accomplished in twenty-five thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight years. Far be it from me to contradict an astronomer in his own science, but if these learned men may calculate, it may be allowed to an unlearned man—unlearned in these matters—to dream. And I dream accordingly. Shakespeare dreamed of the electric telegraph, or something very like it, when he made the delicate Ariel girdle the earth in forty seconds; and Coleridge, in the *Ancient Mariner*, distinctly dreamed and predicted the pneu-

matic railway. And my dream, though science may not accept it, may, like the nod of Lord Burleigh's head, have something in it. Meditating sometimes on the possible history and biography, so to speak, of our mother earth, I have thought that this theory of oscillation, of swinging and balancing to and fro, might possibly not be correct, except in the little space that man can count, and that in the great eternity of the earth's onward career, since the dawn of creation, there has been no retrogression in the mighty precession of the equinox; that the earth originally started on the plane of the equator, and that the obliquity of the ecliptic increased slowly, surely, for ever and for ever, until, in due course, the path of the ecliptic lay right across the pole, so that the pole and the equator changed places; that the precession still continued until, perhaps, in millions of years, every part of the earth's surface, in its turn, became tropical, temperate, and polar, and exhibited itself to the sun, so as at one time to receive the extremest heat, and at another to be subjected to the extremest cold; that in this stupendous march the alterations of the sea levels overwhelmed islands and continents, and caused other continents and islands, once at the bottom of the ocean, to be left dry by the receding waters, and that this process still endured, and will endure, until the earth herself shall be no more, if such a consummation is ever to be arrived at. As has been said or sung by Dynamene, the sea nymph, in *Studies from the Antique*:

Not even lift the perishable hills
Their cloven summits to the moon,
Not even run the mountain rills
The self-same course, and sing the same glad tune,
Not even sleeps the unprolific pole
In chains of adamant ice,
Not even through their groves of spice
And tangled woods, the tropics' rivers roll.
For Fate is just, and every rood of earth,
In all her amplitude of girth,
Hath its appointed course beneath the sun,
And passes northwards as the Aæons run.

There are many well-known facts—*not otherwise susceptible of explanation*—with which this theory would correspond. How came the bones of elephants, tigers, and such animals as can only exist in tropical regions, to be found at the verge of the pole, at Spitzbergen and Nova Zembla? How came the Caspian and the Dead Sea to be filled with the waters of the ocean? How came the glaciers to flow down the sides of Ben Lomond and other hills of the Scottish Highlands, leaving their marks

behind them, to be seen of men to this day? And was it not an irruption of the Atlantic Ocean through the Straits of Gibraltar, consequent upon the change of level of sea and land, that deluged the low-lying country that then united Europe and Africa, and formed the sea that is now the Mediterranean? And is not the Baltic Sea gradually becoming shallower, even in the observation of living men? How can we account for the fact that deep under the bogs and morasses of the outer Hebrides, where not even a bush will grow except it be sheltered from the winds, there are to be found the blackened and prostrate trunks of gigantic oaks and other trees? And how can we account for the existence of coal—not only under the surface of the earth, but under the waters of the sea? The traveller who walks along the high northern bank of the great river Niagara, between the Falls and the entrance of the stream into Lake Ontario, will see, on a level with Lake Erie, and about a hundred and sixty feet above the level of the magnificent waters that rush and foam into the lower level of Ontario, large beds of fossilised oysters, covering thousands of acres, a fact suggestive of the time when the ocean extended as far as Lake Erie, when the Falls of Niagara were not in existence, and when these oyster beds were on the margin of the Atlantic, that then stretched as far inland as Lake Erie, and when the lower portions of Canada only existed as an archipelago, and when the range of the Laurentian mountains formed the eastern boundary of the North American continent. These are but random selections from many facts, all tending to prove that what is now dry land, may once, if not many times, have been covered by the sea; and that what is now sea may once have been islands and continents, peopled perhaps as thickly as our old Europe, or as older Asia. Carrying out this day dream of the earth to its logical conclusion, and remembering the Mosaic record of the submergement of all the then known world in the time of Noah, with all the temples, towers, cities, arts, and sciences of the people who then lived, may it not be asked, whether at the bottom of the deep Atlantic, or the Pacific, there may not now exist the ruins of past empires and kingdoms, and of past civilisations, perhaps in their day as highly advanced as our own, possessing printing presses, and railways, and gas, and the electric telegraph, all those great achievements of the

human mind, of which we are apt to boast as exclusively our own?

Not ever trod men's feet the soil of Rome.
 Long ere its name was breathed of mortal lips,
 The sea washed over it in stormy foam;
 And where the Atlantic whirls the laden ships
 Great rivers ran, and gorgeous cities stood
 Upon the margin of the flood.
 And where to-day the fishes spawn,
 Ten times ten thousand years ago
 Contending hosts for battle drawn,
 Made crimson with their blood the winter snow,
 And were as mad in their appointed hour
 As fools of yesterday, that rage and bleed,
 And slay their fellow fools for greed
 Of wicked and insatiable power.

So sings my favourite sea nymph, Dynamene, and so has run my day dream many a time and oft, when, poring over the pages of the geologists and the astronomers, I have thought their theories prosaic and dry, as well as insufficient, and longed to oppose a little imagination to their learning, and escape for awhile from the slavery of the actual to the blue empyrean of the possible, and revel like a bird uncaged in the infinite freedom of the sunshine and the starlight. And why not, dear reader? The dreams of night and sleep, though they sometimes give us pleasure, are not under our own control. The dreams of daylight and of waking have a double advantage. We may shape them to our will, and so take care that they shall always, however otherwise useless they may be, administer to our own gratification.

"SHUTTERS."

It is often difficult to distinguish a technical term from a slang word. Our language, in common with our army, is constantly obtaining recruits from the lowest classes. These remain apart for awhile under probation, as it were, and forming a sort of linguistic awkward squad; but by-and-by passing examination and satisfying the authorities as to their worth and utility, they are duly enrolled in the dictionaries of our tongue. After many years of active service certain words are pensioned off, so to speak, as obsolete; they retire into the poor-houses and hospitals of speech, and though occasionally recurred to by philological and antiquarian students, they are for the most part permitted to expire peacefully of inanition, neglect, and old age. At best they can be regarded but as reserve forces, only to be called into the field upon some occasion of so extreme a nature as to be barely conceivable. Meanwhile, their places are filled by young

and fresh words which come into being unaccountably enough, one hardly knows how, or when, or why. Some are no doubt supplied by science, and result of necessity from the changes and discoveries attending upon the progress of civilisation; others, and perhaps these are the majority, are picked up in the streets, are "gutter children," into whose origin it is vain to inquire. Thus, when a new word forces itself upon our attention, we may well hesitate as to the kind of reception we should accord to it. Ought we, as a matter of course, to give it forthwith the welcome that is proverbially due to a stranger? Or should we rather view it as a suspicious coin issued by an illicit mint, and without real title to a place in the currency of the realm?

These comments and inquiries arise out of a brief conversation I lately enjoyed with my friend Float. I should explain that my friend Float is a theatrical man. Not that he has any sort of professional connexion with the drama. He is not a manager, an actor, a scene-painter, or even shifter; he is not a costumier, a check-taker, a dramatic author, or even critic. He derives from quite other and far removed pursuits the means whereby he lives. Still he is theatrical—deeply and intensely so. Nor does he stand alone in this respect. Just as there are furious politicians, who have no sort of share or hope of share in government and legislation, who possibly are not even registered electors, but who, nevertheless, devote themselves to the affairs of the State, and discuss vehemently, and watch over incessantly, the national interests both at home and abroad, so are there men to whom the theatre need be nothing and yet would seem to be all in all; who are more Thespian than the Thespians themselves, and who move, and breathe in, and carry about with them everywhere a dramatic atmosphere. Float is of this class. He is absorbed in the stage, its professors, and proceedings. The production of a new pantomime is more to him than the fall of an empire; the failure of a play of greater moment than the deaths of kings. Play-bills and placards are to him what books and newspapers are to other readers: his literature, his study, and his joy. And certainly he is informed to erudition on the subject of his choice. Nothing escapes him. He descends to esoteric depths in his researches. The current gossip of the green-rooms he knows of course: the plans of this manager, the mistakes of that, the pro-

spects of the other: what novelties are in preparation, and what changes are impending in particular dramatic establishments: why, of specified transactions, this had failed and that had prospered. But his information is far more subtle and extensive than this. I despair of conveying an idea of it without occupying more space than seems expedient. Let me by means of an instance attempt to do justice to Float in this respect. He knew such things as the maiden name of the aunt of the pantaloons of the Royal Octagon Theatre—an establishment of inferior rank situated in Lambeth—the church at which she had been baptised, the number of times she had suffered from toothache, and the precise amount at her credit in the savings' bank of her parish exactly six weeks before her demise. And this, be it understood, was not a merely fortuitous scrap of learning. His mind and memory are stuffed full of similar valuable and curious matters. I trust I have now made it clear that Float is really a very theatrical man.

Meeting Float, it was of course necessary to talk theatrically. He permits, indeed, conversation of no other kind. If you venture upon another topic he adroitly takes it in hand, and soon turns it to dramatic account, and slides into the grooves of the stage. So I said—for I hate to run counter to my friends' inclinings—I much prefer, if only for the sake of my own greater ease and tranquillity to give their hobbies a good start and a fair field—I said, "I see the Hexagon Theatre is going to open with a new company." Float, who is so far himself an actor that he conveys a great deal of meaning by means of shrugs, winks, nods, and gestures, replied simply, "Shutters!" accompanying the utterance with a peculiar facial expression and an air of strange significance. I at once gathered that he thought indifferently of the company, and of the concerns generally, of the Hexagon Theatre.

"Shutters!" The word was new to me. Was it, to revert to my preliminary notes, technical or slang? Was it, in the only sense in which he could be understood to employ it, a recognised member of the family of English words? I was perplexed. It was no doubt depreciatory. It purported disparagement of the Hexagon company. Still I was not clear about it. With certain terms of Parisian argot—applicable to unskilled or hapless players—such as *tombeurs*, *galettes*, *crotons*, I happened to be acquainted. But—"shutters?" I was not clear about it.

Naturally I turned to the play-bill of the Hexagon which announced the list of the members of the dramatic troupe. Possibly I might thence derive explanation and intelligence. I speedily noted among the personages engaged the familiar names of the actors, Wraith and Double, and the actresses, Miss Banshee and Mrs. Fetch—to mention no more. I perceived also that the musical arrangements of the theatre were to be under the control of Herr Dopelgänger.

It then occurred to me that these players had very frequently been connected with disastrous enterprises, with temporary managements and dog-day campaigns at the theatres, when the population of the stage and the orchestra has been sometimes known to exceed in number the visitors to the pit and boxes. Had this fact—probably not solely attributable to any great fault on the part of the performers themselves—led to their engagement being superstitiously regarded by Float as inevitably ominous of impending misfortune, of the bankruptcy of their manager, and the closing of his theatre? Were they "shutters" in that they were suggestive and significant of shutting up? It really seemed that Float's expression could only so be explained.

They were not players of any great distinction certainly. With Wraith as a public performer I was well acquainted. He was not a good actor; but still that was not a convincing reason why he should not have prospered in his profession. He had been many years on the stage; a small, spare man, with a dingy, wrinkled face, and a husky, snuffy, bass voice, and was well versed in the business and traditions of his art. In this respect he possessed much information, which did not prevent him, however, from being, generally regarded, rather a dull and depressing person. He played tyrannical kings and inflexible fathers as a rule, but misfortune often interfered with his predilections, and reduced him to accept any kind of character with which managers could be induced to intrust him. Still he was prepared to "go on," as he phrased it, with alacrity, and at a moment's notice, as the representative of such parts as King Claudius, Friar Lawrence, Brabantio, and the Ghost of Hamlet's Father. Unhappily for Wraith, however, the demand for his portrayal of these famous personages could never be described as at all lively. I remember it used to be told of this actor that once, when an ambitious

amateur had taken a theatre for the express purpose of startling, or, let us say, rather shocking the town with his notion of the character of Hamlet, Wraith had been invited to appear as the Ghost. But a difficulty arose on the question of terms. The veteran player had appraised his services very modestly. He had required a salary of three pounds or so per week. The ambitious amateur—who, by the way, held his own exertions to be quite beyond price (they were much more cheaply valued by everybody else)—regarded Wraith's demand as exorbitant. "Tell him," he said to the agent intrusted with the negotiation, "that I can get any number of Ghosts for thirty shillings."

Wraith turned away; he declined to listen to such a communication. "No, sir," he said, simply, with moist eyes, "not Shakespeare at thirty shillings a week. I can't do it, sir."

Poor fellow! He was much pinched at the time. There was little in his pockets but pawn-tickets, and his conspicuous display of rusty black satin stock suggested cruel deficiency in the matter of his body linen. No doubt in this instance he was completely clad and kept sufficiently warm altogether by his pride. He was foolish, no doubt; still his folly had its heroic element. At the same time, the distinctions he insisted upon were not very easily to be comprehended. For I have known him reduced to somewhat ignoble histrionic occupation. Once I heard, issuing from the pasteboard cavern of a pantomime mask, a solemn voice, enunciated with the severe staccato method of tragic elocution. There could be no mistake about those tones. Wraith was playing the King of the Blue Devils, or some such potentate of the Christmas drama. To be sure he made no attempt to divert his audience by affecting comicality. So far he revenged himself upon Fate and his part. And probably he reasoned that the humiliation of his task was fairly compensated by the amount of his salary, whereas his playing the Ghost for thirty shillings a week involved quite unremunerative discredit, brought down the market price of the character, and in some way conveyed a slight to Shakespeare, to whose works and memory he professed great devotion. The former was a personal, the latter a professional, degradation. The argument is not very clear, but when sentiment invades a question, logic, of course, is put to flight.

I have said he was not a good actor, and

now it seemed that Float had classed him among "shutters." Perhaps he played best off the stage. He represented to perfection an actor out of an engagement. Only, those who did not know him would urge that then he was not in truth acting at all, but was simply himself. He made a great deal of the part of Wraith, however. He walked down Bow-street, let us say, with the air of one "taking the stage." He was then a sort of Timon in modern dress of threadbare quality. He delivered asides to passers-by, his acquaintances, in a masterly way. He indulged in amazingly ironic smiles and sinister scowls. By the art of his delivery his most ordinary observations acquired a curious kind of blank verse flavour. A portentous system of gesticulation accompanied his every utterance. If he but designed to convey his opinion that a change in the wind might possibly be looked for very shortly, he would yet speak with half-closed eyes, opening them at the close of his sentence with as bright a flash as those not very lambent orbs could effect, and he would the while lay a gaunt forefinger against the side of his prominent nose—an act that, upon the stage, has always been held to imply the communication of something subtle and momentous. In this way he imparted something of the elevation, or perhaps I should rather say the weight of tragedy, to the most trivial phrases. His napless hat was tilted forward with an inclination to one side, so that his left eye was always shaded by the brim, and thus sheltered was permitted to roll and glare very freely indeed. Two scanty tufts of iron-grey hair were carefully brushed over his temples towards his cheek bones, perhaps to conceal the many deep wrinkles that had there congregated. Poor Wraith! I fear that he was too often cast for this part of an actor out of an engagement. Yet though he was by no means of cheerful or genial disposition, and was apt to view the world about him and its present condition rather acridly, he was rarely desponding. He derived solace from very small matters. "The pit rose at me at Wakefield!" he would sometimes say with an air of triumph that had yet something severe about it. He did not think it necessary to explain that there were very few persons indeed in the pit at the time, and that some of these, so at least Wraith's enemies were wont to allege, had risen to go away. Indeed, the season at Wakefield had lasted little more than a week, and,

commercially viewed, had been very disastrous to all concerned. Happily, perhaps, he never knew that he was ranked among "shutters" by Float and such as Float. Wraith was proud of his engagement at the Hexagon, and thoroughly believed in the enterprise.

"We shall do great things there," he said, significantly. "At last I shall make my mark upon the town."

But then he had invariably ventured upon similar prognostications relative to all his previous engagements, which certainly had not turned out particularly well.

Wraith was a thoroughly well-conducted, respectable, and sober man, whereas I think Double was dissipated and drunk. Double was a light comedian, and, no doubt, his age and corpulence considered, he was surprisingly light. But then lightness and unwieldiness may be seen in combination, as a balloon will testify. And there was much of the balloon about Double's contour. He was really a dreadful performer, yet he often won applause, I noticed. His old stage tricks, his conventional friskiness of demeanour, his obsolete gaiety of costume, the flaxen wigs that crowned his bald old pate, his noisy, artificial laugh, his wheezy, falsetto tones, the hard creases in his pasty, fleshy, full-moon face, still had charms for some of his audience, I suppose. Yet they soon wearied of him probably, for he was one of Float's "shutters," although certainly he had managed to live long upon very short engagements.

Of the ladies, I need only say that Mrs. Fetch was a commonplace but quite inoffensive representative of the elderly dames of the theatre, and that Miss Banshee (whose real name, by-the-by, was Spook—she was the widow of Spook, the low comedian, who committed suicide) was a mature actress who had, so to say, travelled over the drama generally without having secured any special walk in it. She had been known to play Lady Macbeth, and she had been seen to dance a breakdown. It was hard to say which of these her efforts was the more or the less to be admired. Poor woe-begone looking lady, her only ambition was to secure an engagement, on whatever terms, and to be as useful as possible to her manager. Tragedy queens and comic soubrettes were alike to her, and she did not present them very differently to her audience. Her walking ladies, singing chambermaids, and her dancing burlesque princes alike partook of the colourless manner and sombre air which

were her natural possessions. Herr Doppelgänger was a German musical conductor, who stamped noisily with his feet, and beat his desk furiously with his baton. He was supposed to be especially skilled in providing tremulous and mysterious accompaniments to the more distressing passages of melodrama. But he had wandered, like a troubadour, from house to house. Owing to unexplained causes, his conductor's post had never known him long.

These, and such as these, were Float's "shutters," then. They were not as the rats which quit a sinking ship, but rather the rats, if such there be, which assemble just before, and in such wise presage the going down of the vessel. But did their theatres close because of them, or were they somehow magnetically drawn to a theatre over which ruin was certainly, in any case, impending—ruin which it was not possible for them or for any other performers to avert? This was the difficulty of the case. Did shutting up follow as of necessity the presence of the "shutters;" or were the "shutters" present because shutting up had become inevitable? I could elicit no explanation from Float upon this head. He contented himself, I think, with supernatural views, about which, of course, there could be no arguing. He regarded the engagement of the "shutters" as an evil omen and portent. Whithersoever they went discomfiture followed, he maintained. They were as so many death-watches. The fatal ticking commenced upon their assembling upon the stage, and before many days their manager was a manager no more. This theory was so far convenient, that its unreason prohibited controversy. To discuss the absurd is only to waste time.

"I told you so," said Float, upon my meeting him upon a subsequent occasion. "The Hexagon is in the market again."

It was true. After a brief and calamitous season the theatre had closed its doors. And the final moments of the undertaking had been attended by ignominious circumstances, which yet were not without precedent in theatrical annals. The band had gone "on strike." There had been "no treasury" for some weeks. Herr Doppelgänger, to do him justice, had remained at his post; but a conductor without an orchestra can, of course, achieve little in the way of harmonious sounds. There had been unseemly struggles in the wings. Various performers, flushed with physical exertion, had proclaimed vociferously to

the house that for some time past they had received no remuneration for their services, and therefore declined, firmly, but as they believed, respectfully, further to exert themselves. These mutineers were not the "shutters" it would seem, but raw, untutored, yet pretentious, and arrogant creatures. The "shutters"—Wraith, Double, and the rest—made no sign of this kind. They respected themselves, or their manager, or their public too much. They were not taken by surprise. They had been disciplined by misfortune, were well supplied with similar experiences of exhausted treasures and bankrupt impresarios. They had been so long accustomed to play to diminishing profits, that the absolute disappearance of their salaries brought with it no amazement. They had perhaps been prepared for and expected as much. The burden of affliction had come. Well, their shoulders had borne it before, and if need were could sustain it again. There was dignity about their attitude of uncomplaining calm and endurance. Still the theatre was in an uproar. Strange scenes were enacted upon the stage. An indignant manager had also made speeches from before the footlights denunciatory of the disloyalty of his company. A scanty audience roused from apathy by these strange incidents had yelled derisively, and flung half-pence upon the boards. Decency was disregarded. Angry recriminations, and the noise of pugilistic encounters, were heard to proceed from behind the scenes. It was all very lamentable and painful; and, as Float had stated, the Hexagon was "again in the market," where, indeed, it was very often to be found. And presently Wraith and Double, Miss Banshee, Mrs. Fetch, and Herr Doppelgänger, the company of "shutters," were again to be let with immediate possession.

It is comfortable to reflect, however, that the "shutters" do secure engagements—of an intermittent kind no doubt, and uncertain as to their emoluments—but still sufficient to provide these performers with subsistence. They appear and disappear, but they invariably reappear. The Hexagon closed, they are found at the Pentagon, or, failing that, at the Parallelogram, or the provinces afford them temporary refuge, and such triumphs as Wraith found, or deemed he found, at Wakefield, are open to them. No doubt they have rather mistaken their vocation, and eventually perhaps they may be landed in other occupations. Wraith may prosper as a teacher of elocution, and by aid of a limited number

of ladies and gentlemen, whom he has undertaken "to prepare for the stage," succeed in perpetuating the greater number of his much-prized yet rather preposterous theatrical traditions. Double, if he does not succumb to delirium tremens, may perhaps eventually thrive as a check-taker. A tobacconist's shop may be in store for Miss Banshee, and Mrs. Fetch may find a position well suited to her abilities behind the bar of a dramatic public-house. Even Doppelgänger may possibly obtain sufficiently lucrative employment as the trombone player of a German band. In any case, failing here, he can always return to his native land. His departure will assuredly be borne with resignation by his acquaintances in this country.

And if these unfortunates are really to be described as "shutters" by Float and others, it must be remembered that there are failures and "misfits" in all vocations, "false starts" upon all the roads of life. As Sir Walter Scott once said, the stage must have its Guildensterns as well as its Hamlets. At the same time it is important to observe that there is no necessity for the Guildensterns being so numerous a body as to be out of all proportion to the Hamlets. And something of that kind has happened to the modern theatre.

TWO SIDES OF A STORY.

GRETCHEN'S SECOND CHAPTER. MR. SUTHERLAND.

CERTAINLY my father; though so different in dress, in bearing, and expression of countenance, that I could scarcely believe the evidence of my senses, which assured me beyond a doubt that it was he. He addressed Mimi with a familiar air, and passed her hand through his arm, and they proceeded to walk thus round the ball-room. I saw and heard confusedly, while my eyes followed mechanically the movements of those two. So stupefied was I, that the truth never flashed on me.

"Who is that gentleman?" I asked at last of Mr. Field—"I mean the gentleman who is walking with Mrs. Sutherland?"

Mr. Field smiled.

"I see you are not acquainted with your host," he said. "That is Mr. Sutherland."

"Mr. Sutherland!" I echoed, faintly, and drew back behind the curtain.

Mr. Field was not observant, except of the good points of horses and the naughty tricks of dogs.

I don't know how the next half-hour passed. I could not make my escape with-

out crossing the vast room, and I feared to meet my father face to face—for he was my father, whether Mr. Sutherland or not.

Listening to Mr. Field, and obliged to answer occasionally, I could not properly think the matter out. I could not find it possible by any twist of my thoughts that my father and Mr. Sutherland could be one and the same person. While I sat wrapt in my stupefaction, my curtain was drawn aside, and Mimi and my father stood right before my face.

"Henry," said Mimi, "allow me to present to you my dear friend, Miss Fairfax! Gretchen, this is my husband, Mr. Sutherland!"

When I raised my eyes I found my father looking at me with a terrified amazement, which, for some moments, seemed to paralyse him, so that he could neither speak nor move. By an effort he regained his presence of mind, and his eye held mine sternly, with a warning expression. As for me, I had no presence of mind, and I neither bowed nor spoke. I only stared at him blankly, while my arms fell straight and hung limp by my side.

Nearly a full minute passed, during which Mimi looked from me to her husband, and from her husband back to me. But I did not think of her at all. I was thinking of Fan in her grave, and of all this grandeur and luxury which seemed belonging to her father. It was some hours afterwards before I realised that Mimi must have thought the scene a strange one.

"Any friend of my wife's must, of course, be welcome to me," said Mr. Sutherland at last, speaking sharply, as if in pain. I bowed my head silently on my breast, and they passed on.

I hurried to my room as soon as I could escape from the gay scene below. I wanted to be quiet and to think. I wanted to find out who my father could be. What connexion did there exist between him and Edward Lance? If my father were a pretender, then how had he wronged Ned! And that he was a pretender I myself was a living witness. For I remembered the condition on which Mr. Sutherland's good fortune had been obtained. After some hours had passed, when the last of the carriages had rolled away, Mimi came in to me and sat down upon my bed.

"Gretchen!" she said, "I cannot sleep till I speak to you. What do you know about my husband? Why did you and he look so awfully at one another?"

"I know something about him, it is true,"

I said, "but I cannot tell you. I cannot tell you, and you must not ask me."

She reflected for a little. "It is about some friend of yours whom he has injured, I suppose. I have heard the like of it before. Your brother—but no, you never had a brother—your father—"

"My father!" I repeated, mechanically.

"Ah, that is it. Was your father a gambler?" she said, speaking in a whisper.

I paused for a moment, and then I said "Yes."

"And my husband, who is a gambler, ruined him, perhaps?"

I could not say "no," and somehow I did not dare to say "yes," though it would have been true. So I said: "Go away to bed, Mimi, and let us talk of this no more."

She left me as I bade her, sighing heavily as she went, and I did not sleep at all for thinking of the trouble. I guessed that my father would want to speak to me privately, and I was longing to be enlightened as to the mystery which hung about him. I dressed myself early, and went out to walk in the park. It was a fine, frosty morning, and wrapped in my warmest shawl, I went leisurely past the windows of the house, so that any one could see me who might be watching within, and then took my way out of sight among the trees. It was scarcely daylight, and the house was wrapped in sleep after the unusual dissipation of the night before. I was not wrong in supposing that I should be wanted. When a quarter of a mile from the house I heard footsteps following me, and, turning, came face to face with my father.

It is bitter, the memory of that interview. He unfolded to me deliberately the story of his present and his past. His real name was Sutherland, and he was indeed the person for whom the inheritance which he now enjoyed had been intended. Early in life he had been tempted to commit a fraud, and to escape the consequences had hidden himself in foreign places, and assumed the name of Fairfax. As Fairfax he had married my mother, who was a humble German maiden, and as Fairfax his children had ever known him. He had never ventured to recal himself to the memory of the friends whom he had disgraced, and he had almost forgotten the existence of the old relative who had so unexpectedly enriched him. On finding himself at last a wealthy and important man, his first step had been to take measures to prevent his being prosecuted for that old fault of his youth, which he had confessed to me. He had attained this

object, he believed, but only by the sacrifice of large sums of money. It was true that he had committed a second fault in claiming his inheritance, by concealing the fact of his marriage with my mother. But, after all, this was not so great a fault as that of the old simpleton who had imposed such a ridiculous condition. To conceal that fact he had deserted his children, and to conceal it for evermore he was ready to do anything that was necessary for the purpose. Fan was dead, and Kitty abroad, where she would probably marry, and never be heard of any more. I was the only difficulty, and I need not be a great one, if I had only a little prudence.

"But, father!" I began.

"Hush!" he said, nervously. "Do you want to ruin me? You cannot stay here if you will not observe caution."

"I must go away from here in any case," I said. "I could not remain, things being as they are."

"I do not see that," he said. "Since chance has brought you here, so strangely, under my roof, I do not see, why you now should go away: I can make you as comfortable as if you were acknowledged my daughter, and Mrs. Sutherland seems to like you, and things may yet be smooth enough. I have no doubt at all that I can marry you very honourably in the county before long. You are handsomer than I expected, and you used to have brains. In the event of your marriage, the name of Fairfax will be sunk, and all danger will then be over, once and for all."

But all the time I was thinking of Ned and his great wrong.

"You will see that this cannot be," I said, trying to be bold, for the words that must be spoken were very hard to speak. "Do you remember Edward Lance?"

My father started as if I had struck him.

"Well, what about him?" he said. "I had forgotten him; a young fool, who might have been in my place if he had been possessed of common sense!"

I did not know what this meant at that time, for Ned had never told me that had he but given up me, the great Sutherland fortune would have been certainly his own. I did not know how dear I had been to him, in more senses than one.

"We are doing him a dreadful wrong," I said. "The inheritance would be his if the truth were known."

"That is my affair," said my father, darkly, "and I will not hear of it from you."

"It is true that it is your affair," I said,

"but I must not conceal from you that I am his promised wife!"

"My father quailed at these words, and an awful look came over his eyes, as if he saw some dreaded judgment suddenly take unexpected shape and stare him in the face. He staggered, and leaned against a tree.

"No," he said, rallying, "no, no. This is only a piece of mischief. You are not such an idiot as to marry a man who is both a beggar and a fool!"

I shook my head. "He is neither beggar nor fool," I said. "I know him better than you do. He was the only one to take care of me in my day of desolation."

He winced again, and I pitied him from my heart. He was my father, and there was a fearful barrier between us. But I pitied myself more; for how was I to do justice between these two who stood so near to me?

My father now seemed to realise that he was wholly in my power. He stood before me at bay, and burst into bitter anger.

"You will ruin your own father," he said. "You will write to your lover, and set him on to hunt me down. You will take the bread out of my mouth to put it into your own. You will bring a curse on your head for the remainder of your days."

This is a small part of what he said. I might have answered that a father who had forsaken me had little claim on my care; but I could not say it, and I did not want to think it. I knew that he would never understand what was passing in my heart. It was useless attempting to explain it. His accusations and reproaches beat upon my brain till they broke down all my nerve, and I bowed my head and wrung my hands in despair.

"Indeed, indeed," I said, "I do not want to ruin you. Oh, that I had never known a suspicion of all this! Oh, that I had never come here!"

This outburst silenced him. All his passion vanished. He saw my doubt and trouble, and he took my hands gently.

"Promise me, at least," he said, "that you will take time to think of all this before you make up your mind to expose me. In a cooler moment you will see that it will be better for you quietly to get rid of this old lover. You will perceive that after all there would be a difficulty about his proving my marriage, which took place in an obscure corner of a foreign country. If he failed in the end in driving me from my position, he would only have lost time and got into serious difficulties. You would have done him great harm instead of good.

I believe that, upon reflection, you will agree to give him up, and, for the future, we can contrive to keep out of his way. And I will find you a better husband, I promise you, on my word."

My heart was too sick to let me speak. I only shook my head, and possibly my father took this as but a feeble dissent from his plan. It seemed to me that there were two heart-breaking things which I was bound before God to do without delay. To reveal my father's guilt, and to refuse to be Edward's wife. Not to refuse for a day and afterwards consent, but to refuse persistently, so that some other woman must enjoy that unlucky fortune which my act should have wrung from my father's hands.

"Promise me!" he said, more urgently, but in a tone of some relief.

"I can promise this much," I said: "that I will make no revelation without first giving you notice."

He flung away my hand with an angry word, which I did not catch; but the next moment he checked the expression of his disappointment.

"There," he said, more mildly, "I will not press on you too heavily at the first." He spoke as though I were a criminal, with whom he was going to deal leniently. "Remember, you are to think of the things I have put before you. I believe you are too sensible not to be guided by my advice."

Thus we parted, going different ways, I more dead than alive between cold and anguish. On the doorstep I met Mimi, looking out into the frost with a white, drawn face.

"Where have you been?" she asked, sharply, then answered her own question, saying: "You have been walking in the park with Mr. Sutherland."

"Yes," I said, quickly, "but you must not let him guess that you know it was so."

She gave me a strange, scared look, but said no more at that time. Whatever the reason might be, she held her husband in great awe. I do not think he was cruel to her, but she was a timid soul.

After that began for me a long period of pain and doubt, during which the thought of duty was a torment to me, and a heavier cloud seemed to hang over every day that dawned. Mr. Sutherland showed no intention of leaving the Sycamores, but settled himself as if for a long stay at home. In some of his habits I found that my father was improved. He showed more self-respect, and was at all times the gentle-

man. To me, in presence of others, he was courteous and distant in his manner, but he watched me incessantly, so that I saw he lived in terror of my betraying him. He was uneasy if I left the room where we all sat together, and if I walked out in the grounds he followed me, as if unintentionally, at some distance. At this time he certainly was not unkind to Mimi, but neither was he kind to her; he simply overlooked her. As for her, she became so changed that I scarcely recognised her. All her light spirits had become rapidly extinct. Her fitful alternations of humour were no more. Her gaiety was gone, and even her melancholy did not appear. She lived wrapped up in a great hush. I knew that she watched and wondered, and that vigilance and amazement absorbed all her life. She saw that there was something hanging over us all, a trouble which she could not grasp, a mystery which she might not penetrate. She had ceased to question me, but she also ceased to seek my company, and at times even shunned my presence. I had no power to break through this estrangement, so long as I kept my secret. Sitting alone in her own rooms, I do not doubt that she twisted the mystery into many fantastic shapes. She exaggerated the wonder till it became a horror in her eyes. She grew thin and white, and her step became weak and slow.

At last I said to myself, in desperation, that this could not go on. My father was clearly resolved to stay at the Sycamores to watch me. My letters to Ned were stiff, and no longer the true reflections of all that was passing in my mind. And the change was not unnoticed by him, for he reproached me gently for their abruptness, and made anxious inquiries about my spirits and health. I lived in an atmosphere of deceit. It were better far to take the dreadful step at once, than to suffer such misery, putting it off from day to day.

I made up my mind to leave the Sycamores, explaining fully to my father what I meant to do. On the evening before the morning on which I had resolved to depart I retired to my own room, and wrote two long letters, which cost me many a terrible effort, and many a bitter tear. One was to my father, explaining the course of conduct which I had marked out for myself, and the other was to Ned, telling the whole truth, and refusing to be his wife. I placed one in the letter-bag, which always lay at night on the hall-table, the other upon the desk in my father's study. He was dining

out that evening, and he would find my letter when he came home.

When all this was done, I went to take leave of Mimi. I went into her dressing-room, where she sat alone over the fire. I went in softly, and I noticed on her face, before she saw me, a sort of stricken look, which made my heart sink. Even the long bitter vigils which had prepared my letter to Ned had left a little life in me, so that I could pity a fellow-sufferer.

I came to her side, and wrapped my arms around her, but she shrank from me, and turned her head away.

"Look at me, Mimi," said I, "for this is a farewell visit. I am going to leave you very early in the morning."

She gave a low, wild, smothered cry, and gazing in my face, as if to try if I could be in earnest, she flung herself at my feet, and clasped me round the waist.

"Oh, no, no," she cried. "You cannot mean that. Oh, Gretchen, don't leave me the little while I have to live. It won't be very long, dear, but never, never leave me."

I was quite unprepared for such a scene as this. I had expected that she would be rather glad to get me away.

"It won't be very long, dear," she repeated, "for indeed and indeed I am going to die."

This new idea put for the moment all others out of my mind.

"Why, Mimi dear," I said, "what a miserable fancy. You are a little out of health and over-anxious, but you will live to be very happy yet, I trust." But as I spoke my heart misgave me. I saw no happiness for her upon any side.

She shook her head. "Let me have a little time with you," she said, "before I go. It is a long time since I knew that I have not a great while to live."

She then told me things about her health which filled me full of fears. She clung to me weeping, and reiterating her entreaty that I would not forsake her. I coaxed her to bed, and sat by her bedside till she fell asleep, which was not till I had promised that I would stay yet a little longer at the Sycamores.

I had intended leaving the house by day-break in the morning, walking to the railway station, and leaving my luggage to follow me. I now remembered that as I had given

up this plan, I must recover and reconsider my letters which I had written to my father and to Ned. One was in the post-bag, and the other was lying waiting upon my father's desk. When Mr. Sutherland had left home that evening, he had stated his intention of remaining absent till next day. I now thought this a fortunate chance, as it enabled me to recal my letter before he had seen it. I took a light in my hand, and went down the staircase to repossess myself of both my letters. To my great surprise I heard a noise below, and, on listening, found that my father had returned, and was at that moment in his study. So then my letter to him was quite irrecoverable. I hurried to the hall, determined at least to regain my packet which had been for Ned. On arriving at the spot where it was accustomed to lie all night, I found that the letter-bag had already been removed. This was strangely unfortunate, for the bag was not usually moved before six in the morning. My die was now cast, and I must wait for the result. But I resolved to do my best to keep my promise to Mimi.

I returned once more to my room, utterly wearied with perplexities and griefs. I felt that I had scarcely any care as to what might become of me. I seemed hardly to fear my father's anger, though my heart bled for his shame. And I wondered what Ned would say, and even more what Ned would do. I had just thrown myself on my bed, when I heard a key turned in my door from the outside. Then I knew that my father had read my letter, and that he was determined not to let me go. "Ah," I thought, "but he does not know that I have already written to Ned!"

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No. 135. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JULY 1, 1871.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LVII. A SURPRISE.

MISS VERNON rang her bell, and the landlady looked in.

"Where is my maid? Can you tell me?" she inquired.

"In the hall, please, miss, at present, talking with Mr. Darkdale about the luggage, please, my lady," she answered in good faith, not knowing which maid she inquired for.

"Well, as soon as she has seen after those things, I should like her to come here," continued Miss Vernon.

"Do you wish to see Mr. Darkdale, miss?"

"No. Who is Mr. Darkdale?"

"We all think a deal of Mr. Darkdale down here," said the woman, reservedly.

"And why do you think so much of him?" inquired the young lady.

"Well, he brings a deal of business to us, one way or other, going and coming, and he's a very responsible man, he is. And Mr. Darkdale, please, miss, has a note from Lady Vernon for you."

"A note from mamma? Why, I have come straight from Roydon."

"He says, please, miss, that a letter came by the late post about an hour after you left, and your mamma sent him partly by mail, and partly on horseback, to overtake you here. If you please, miss, I'll fetch the letter."

"Thank you, very much," said Maud, suddenly alarmed.

She stood up, and awaited the return of the landlady of the Pig and Tinder-box, almost without breathing.

In a minute she reappeared with a large envelope, which she placed in the young

lady's fingers. It contained a note from Maximilla Medwyn to Maud, which consisted of a few lines only, rather hastily written, and said:

You have heard of Warhampton's illness. He is better; but I have not had a line from Lady Mardykes, and don't know whether she would yet like to have us at Carsbrook. I think we had better wait for a day or two. I will write to you the moment I hear from her. I am sure you agree with me.

At the corner of this letter Lady Vernon had written a few words in two oblique lines, thus:

Go on, notwithstanding. Don't think of turning back. I write to Maximilla by this evening's post.

B. E. V.

So she was to go on, and find neither Lady Mardykes nor her cousin at Carsbrook.

Well, Max would get Lady Vernon's letter at nine o'clock the next morning, and, we may be sure, would lose no time in joining Maud at Carsbrook, and before the day was over very likely Lady Mardykes herself would arrive. Max would make a point of coming forthwith, to relieve Maud from the oddity of her solitary state. She need not come down to breakfast, she determined; and on arriving she would go straight to her room. At all events, it was a mercy that her mamma, in the existing state of things, had not ordered her back to Roydon.

"Would you mind telling my maid to come here and take some tea?" said the young lady.

In a few minutes the shoes of the hostess were heard pattering along the tiles of the

passage, and coming in with a curtsy, she said:

"She's very thankful, miss, but, if you'll allow, she'd rather sit in the carriage till your ladyship comes out."

"Very well. So she may," said the young lady. "How far is Carsbrook—Lady Mardykes's house—from this, do you happen to know?"

"We count it just twenty-two miles, miss. It might be half a mile less if the new bridge was open, but it ain't."

"Two-and-twenty. I thought it was only sixteen. Well, I'm not sorry, after all. The night is so very fine, and the moonlight so charming, it is quite a pleasure travelling to-night."

The young lady was really thinking that it would be better not to arrive until the guests had gone to their rooms. She did not hurry herself, therefore, over her cup of tea, which she drank from the state china of the Pig and Tinder-box.

She looked from the narrow window, and saw the carriage with four horses and two postilions at the door, and saw, also, the energetic figure of the grave man in the black great-coat, pacing slowly, this way and that, in the neighbourhood of the carriage-door, and now and then turning towards the hall of the inn, and looking at his watch in the light that shone through the door.

It was plain that the people outside were growing impatient, and Miss Vernon made up her mind to delay them no longer.

She took her leave of her new acquaintance, the hostess, in the hall. The man in the black coat opened the carriage-door, and Miss Vernon, handing in first a roll of music she was taking with her to Carsbrook, said, "Take this for a moment, and don't let it be crushed," was received by a dumpy gloved hand from the dark interior, and took her place beside her attendant, to whom, assuming her to be her old maid, Rebecca Jones, she did not immediately speak, but looked out of window listlessly on the landscape, as the carriage rolled away towards its destination from the inn-door.

"I wonder, Jones, you preferred sitting alone to coming in and drinking tea. It was better than they gave us at the what's-its-name?—the Green Dragon."

The person accosted cleared her voice with a little hesitation.

Trifling as was the sound, Miss Vernon detected a difference, and looked round with an odd sensation.

The figure in the corner was broader

and shorter than Jones's, and wore a big obsolete bonnet, such as that refined lady's-maid would not be seen in.

"You see not Jones?" said the young lady, after a pause.

A low giggle was the only answer.

"Who are you?" demanded the young lady, very uncomfortably.

"La! Miss Maud, don't you know me, miss?"

"I—I'm not sure. Will you say, please, who you are?"

"Dear me, miss, you know me as well as I know you."

She sat forward as she spoke, giggling.

"Yes, I see who you are. But where is Jones, my maid? She is not sitting outside?"

"Not she, miss; she's gone home to Roydon, please."

"Who sent her away?—I want her. It is quite impossible she can have gone home!"

"Please, miss," said the woman in a tone of much greater deference, for there was something dangerous in Maud's look and manner, "I got a written order from Lady Vernon yesterday, Miss Maud, directing me to be in attendance here to go on with you as your maid in place of Miss Jones."

The carriage in which they now were was something like the old-fashioned post-chaise. Miss Vernon, without another word, let down the front window, and called to the post-boys to stop.

They did accordingly pull up, and instantly the stern man in the black great-coat was at the side window.

"Anything wrong?" he said, in an undertone, to Mercy Creswell.

"No, no," she whispered, with a nod, "nothing."

"Now, if you please, Creswell, you'll show me that note of mamma's. I must see it, or I shan't go on."

The man stood back a little, so that Maud could not see him at the open window; but with this precaution, he kept his ear as close to it as he could, and was plainly listening with the closest attention.

"Certainly, miss, you shall read it," said Mercy, fumbling in haste in her pocket. Indeed, she seemed, as she would have said, in a bit of a fluster.

She did produce it, and Maud had no difficulty in reading the bold writing in the moonlight.

It was a short, very clear, very peremptory note, to the effect she had stated.

"How did my maid go without my being so much as told of it?" demanded Miss Vernon, fiercely.

Half a step sideways brought the man in the black coat to the window.

"Please, Miss Vernon," said he, very quietly, but firmly, "I received instructions from Lady Vernon to send Miss Jones home to Roydon, precisely as she has gone, by the return horses, in her ladyship's carriage, as far as the Green Dragon, on Dorminbury Common, and so on, in charge of her ladyship's servants, and without any interview beforehand with you, all which I have accordingly done. If her ladyship did not acquaint you beforehand, or if any disappointment results to you in any way, I regret having had to disoblige you."

For some seconds Maud made no answer. Those who knew her would have seen in her fine eyes the evidence of her anger. I dare say she was on the point of ordering the drivers to turn the horses about, and of going back to Roydon.

But that impulse of her indignation did not last long. She looked at the man, whose intelligent, commanding, and somewhat stern face was new to her, and asked, with some hesitation:

"Are you a servant of Lady Vernon's?"

"Only for this journey, miss."

"But—but what are your duties?"

"I look after your luggage, miss, and pay the turnpikes, and settle for the horses, and take your orders, please, miss."

Although this man was perfectly civil, there was something in his manner by no means so deferential and ceremonious as she was accustomed to. He looked in her face with no awe whatever, and at her dress, and leaned his hand on the carriage window. And when she leaned back a little, to recollect what next she should ask him, he touched Mercy Creswell's arm with his finger, and whispered some words in the ear which she placed near the window.

"I've made up my mind. I shall go on. Tell them to go on," said the young lady, indignant at these free-and-easy ways.

Mercy Creswell gave the man a clandestine look from the window, which he returned with a stern smile, and instantly calling to the post-boys "All right," he mounted the seat behind, and the journey proceeded.

CHAPTER LVIII. LAMPS IN THE DARK.

The carriage drove on. Lady Vernon had certainly, Maud thought, treated her very oddly. It was not the first time, how-

ever, that she had snubbed or puzzled her daughter; and when Maud had a little got over her resentment, she resolved that she could not think of visiting her vexation upon the innocent Mercy Creswell.

She was leaving constraint and gloom behind her at Roydon. Nearer and nearer were the friendly voices, the music, and laughter of Carsbrook, and she could fancy the lights of that festive place already visible on the horizon.

"I dare say something has suddenly happened to make it unavoidable that mamma should have Jones back again with her at Roydon," said the young lady. "I wonder what it can be. I hope it is nothing that could vex poor Jones; have you any idea, Mercy?"

"Me! La! no, miss!" said Mercy. "I do suppose Miss Jones will come after you hot-foot. Like enough your mamma has heard of some grand doings she didn't know of before, and means to send some more jewels, or fans, or finery, or dresses, after you, and that is what I thinks."

"Well, that is possible; it can't be, after all, anything very wonderful, whatever it is. What is the name of that man who is acting as a sort of courier for this journey?"

"I don't know, miss," said Mercy Creswell, instantly.

"If he is a servant he certainly knows very little about his business," said the young lady. "However, that need not trouble us much, as we are to part with him at the end of our journey. You know the country, I suppose, between this and Carsbrook?"

"Oh?" she said with a prolonged and dubious interrogation in the tone. "Do I know the country betwixt this and there? Well, yes, I do. Oh, to be sure I do—hevery inch! We'll change next at Torvey's Cross, unless Mr. Darkdale have made other arrangements."

"Oh! Darkdale? Is that the name of the man?" asked Maud.

"Well, I won't be too sure, but I think I heard some one call him Darkdale. It may 'a bin down there at the Pig and Tinder-box; but I don't suppose his name is of no great consequence," answered Miss Mercy Creswell, endeavouring to brazen out a good deal of confusion.

"And what is Mr. Darkdale? Is he a servant; or what is he? He looks more like a poor schoolmaster," said Miss Vernon.

"La, miss! What could I know about him?" exclaimed Mercy Creswell, oracularly. "Next to nothing, sure. Did they

say I knewed anything about him? La! Nonsense!"

"I want to know what he is, or what he was," said Miss Vernon, unable to account for her fat companion's fencing with her questions.

Miss Creswell plainly did not know the extent of Maud's information, and hesitated to say anything definite.

"The old woman down there at the Pig and Tinder-box—she doesn't know next to nothing about him, or me. I don't know what she was saying, I'm sure; not a pin's-worth."

There was a slight interrogative tone in this discrediting of the hostess, who, for aught she knew, had been talking in her gossiping fashion with Maud.

But Maud did not help her by saying anything.

"He was a postmaster, I'm told, somewhere in Cheshire, and kept a stationer's shop. I'm sure I don't know."

"But what is he now?" asked Maud, whose suspicions began to be roused by Mercy Creswell's unaccountable reluctance.

"What is he now? Well, I believe he is a sort of under-steward to a clergyman. That's what I think."

"You seem not to wish to tell me what you know about this man; and I can't conceive why you should make a mystery of it. But if there is any difficulty I am sure I don't care, provided he is a person of good character, which I suppose mamma took care to ascertain."

"That I do know, miss. He is a most respectable man is Daniel Darkdale; he is a man that has been trusted by many, miss, and never found wanting. La! He has had untold wealth in his keeping, has Mr. Darkdale, many times, and there is them as would trust him with all they has, and knows him well too."

"And you say our next change of horses will be at a place called Torvey's Cross?" said Miss Vernon, interrupting, for her interest in Mr. Darkdale had worn itself out. "This is a very wide moor. Have we a long way still to go before we reach Torvey's Cross?"

Mercy put her head out of the window, and the moonlight fell upon her flat, flabby face.

"Ay, there'll be near four miles still to go. When we come to the Seven Sallies—I can see them now—there will be still three miles betwixt us and it."

"How do you come to know this road so very well?" inquired Maud.

"Well, I do; and why shouldn't I, miss, as you say, seeing I was so long a time in Lady Mardykes's service, and many a time I drove the road to Carsbrook before now. Will you 'av a sangwige, miss?"

She had disentangled by this time, from a little basket in her lap, a roll of rather greasy newspaper, in which the proffered delicacies were wrapped up.

Maud declined politely, and Miss Mercy, with a word of apology for the liberty, stuffed them, one after another, into her own mouth.

Maud was a good deal disgusted at the vulgarity and greediness of her new waiting-maid, as well as upset, like every other lady in similar circumstances, by the loss of her old one. She was sustained, however, in this serious bereavement by agreeable and exciting anticipations of all that awaited her at Carsbrook.

"When were you last at Carsbrook?" asked the young lady, so soon as Miss Creswell had finished her sandwiches, and popped the paper out of the window, brushed away the crumbs from her lap, and wiped her mouth with her handkerchief, briskly.

"This morning, miss," she answered, with that odd preliminary hesitation that made Miss Vernon uncomfortable.

"Are you there as a servant, or how is it? I should like to know exactly whether you are my servant, or whose servant."

"Lady Vernon's at present, miss, to attend upon you, please," said Mercy Creswell, clearing her voice.

"Were you ever a lady's-maid?"

"Oh, la! yes, miss; I was, I may say, Lady Mardykes's maid all the time she was down, three years ago, at Mardykes Hall, near Golden Friars; you have heard of it, miss; it is such a beautiful place."

Maud could hardly believe that Lady Mardykes could have had such a person for her maid, as she looked at her square body and clumsy hands, in the dim light, and bethought her that she had never heard that Mercy Creswell had shown the smallest aptitude for such a post. Certainly if she was a tolerable lady's-maid she looked the part very badly. It was unspeakably provoking.

By this time they had passed the Seven Sallies, and changed horses again at Torvey's Cross; and now, a mile or two on, the road, which had hitherto traversed a particularly open and rather bare country, plunged suddenly into a close wood of lofty fir-trees.

The post-boys very soon slackened the pace at which they had been driving. It became indeed so dark, that they could hardly proceed at all without danger.

It is a region of wood which might rival the pine forests of Norway. No ray of moonlight streaked the road. It is just wide enough for two carriages to pass, and the trunks of the great trees rear themselves at each side in a perspective, dim enough in daylight, and showing like a long and irregular colonnade, but now so little discernible, that the man in the back seat called to the drivers to pull up.

His voice was easily heard, for this road is carpeted with the perpetually falling showers of withered vegetation that serves for leaves upon the sprays and branches that overhang it, and hoofs and wheels pass on with dull and muffled sounds.

Now that they had come to a standstill, Maud lowered the window, and asked a question of Mr. Darkdale—a name not inappropriate to such a scene—who had got down, and stood, hardly discernible, outside, opening something he had just taken from his breast-pocket.

“Can we get on?” inquired she, a good deal alarmed.

“Yes, miss,” he answered.

“But we can’t see.”

“We’ll see well enough, miss, when I light the lamps.”

“I say, Daniel, there’s lamps a-following of us,” exclaimed Miss Creswell, who, hearing some odd sounds, had thrust her head and shoulders out of the window at her own side.

“There are lamps here,” he answered.

“No, but listen, and look behind you,” said Mercy Creswell, with suppressed impatience.

The man turned and listened; Maud, whose curiosity and some slight sense of alarm were excited, partly by the profound darkness, and partly by the silence, looked from the window at her side, and saw two carriage-lamps gliding toward them, and faintly lighting the backs of four horses jogging on, with postilions duly mounted, just visible, and still pretty distant.

Mr. Darkdale bestirred himself, for these postilions were palpably quickening their pace, a rather reckless proceeding in a pass so profoundly dark.

He took down one of the carriage-lamps, and lighting it with a match, shouted:

“Hallo! Look ahead!”

The warning light that sprang thus suddenly out of darkness, and the voice,

seemed hardly to act as a damper on the ardour of the postilions; and Maud heard distinctly those sounds to which, probably, quick-eared Mercy Creswell had referred.

She mistook them first for the laughter and vociferation of a rollicking party on their way home from a supper-party. But she soon perceived, with alarm, that they indicated something very different.

They were sounds of fury and terror. She heard a voice exerting itself in short gasps and shrieks, and declaiming with frightful volubility:

“I say Vivian’s my name! Murder, murder—my God!—two to one—they’re murdering me!” yelled this voice, which, disguised as it was with rage and terror, she nevertheless fancied she knew, and exactly as the chaise drove by, at a suddenly stimulated pace, the window was broken, and the jingling glass showered on the road close beside the wheels; and, in the flash of the lamp, Miss Vernon had a momentary glimpse of the cantering horses and the postilions lashing them, and of the hands and faces of men struggling within, and, as the strange phantasmagoria flew by,

“Hallo! I’m here—Daniel Darkdale. Pull up; stop. Hallo!” yelled Mr. Darkdale, grimly.

And he ran on in the direction in which the carriage had passed, shouting, as he followed, “I’m Daniel Darkdale. Hallo!”

There was a magic in this name, which brought the chaise, a very little way further on, to a sudden stop.

CHAPTER LIX. MR. DARKDALE’S GUEST.

“THIS will never do,” said Mr. Darkdale, sharply, striding up to the carriage window, from which cries of “murder” were still proceeding. “What’s going on here?”

“Two assassins trying to murder me, here in this carriage, sir. For God’s sake, sir, see me safe out of this. They have pinioned me.”

Mr. Darkdale put his hand through the broken window and let it down a little, and then withdrawing it, let the window down altogether, and popped his head in, holding the lamp, which he still carried, close to the window, so as to light up the interior with a rather fierce and sudden glare.

“Who are you, sir?” he asked of the young man who, with a torn shirt-front, disordered hair and necktie, and a very pale face, across which a smear of blood showed rather ghastly, was staring with wild eyes.

There were two powerful-looking men, sitting one at each side, hot and blown after the struggle. With these Mr. Darkdale exchanged a significant glance, and said:

"You'll give me your names, you two. You know Mr. Darkdale, you know me—Daniel Darkdale?"

The two men exchanged a sheepish look, as if they would have winked at one another, and gave their names.

"I'm the constable of this county, sir," said Mr. Darkdale, in a loud voice. "I'm pretty well known. I'll set all this right. If they have injured you they shall be made examples of. They have secured your hands somehow?"

"Yes. I'm a cavalry officer. My name is Vivian—that is, it will do as well as another," cried the gentleman, in high excitement, gabbling at that gallop which recognises no stop longer than a comma, and hardly that. "I had been down in that part of the country behind us a good way, you know, and I wanted to get back to my quarters; and this man had a carriage, and I could not get another"—the injured man was talking at such a pace that the foam appeared at the corners of his lips—and he undertook to give me a lift to Chatham; and this other fellow—d—them, they are both murderers, I say, get my arms out." And he began to tug again.

"Wait a moment. I have a reason. You'll say I'm right in a moment," Mr. Darkdale, leaning in, sternly whispered in his ear.

He opened the door.

"I say, you come out, till I hear this gentleman's complaint," he said to the man next the door.

He obeyed, and walked a little to the rear of the chaise, and the officer sat close to the window next Mr. Darkdale.

"Don't you be listening," said Darkdale to the other. "Now, sir, we shan't be overheard; tell me the rest, pray."

"He asked for leave to take in that fellow, who said he wanted to go on to Chatham, and they wished to play 'blind-hooky' with me, and I like the game, and said yes, and they had cards, and I told them how I was used, very badly, I'll tell you by-and-bye, and they seemed very agreeable, and I had been kept awake all night, last night, by half a dozen scoundrels drilling in the room next mine, with a couple of sergeants and a drum, you can't conceive such an infernal noise, like so many ghosts out of hell, I knew very well why it was

done, there's a fellow, Major Spooner, he has been doing everything imagination can devise, by Heaven, to make the army too hot for me, but I think I have a way of hitting him rather hard, ha! ha! and when I was asleep, as sound as if I had made three forced marches without a halt, those two robbers, agents they are of the same villain, gambling, rascally murderers, tied my arms behind my back, and only for you, sir, I should have been robbed and murdered by this time."

"I should not wonder, sir," said Darkdale. "I should not wonder. But I have them pretty fast, now. I have their names, and I know their faces; I have seen them long ago; and I'll have them up for it. Don't you be listening; allow me, sir, to whisper a word in your ear. You'll be at the next posting-house very soon, an hour or less. Those fellows are frightened, now, and they will try to make it up with you. Don't you be such a muff. They would be very glad, now, to loose your hands; don't you allow it. I'll get up behind, so soon as they are in, without their knowing it, and I'll have them arrested the moment we arrive, and I'll have witnesses to see how they have tied your hands, and I'll compel them to disclose their connexion with that blackguard, Major Spooner, and I'll lay you twenty pounds they'll split. Do you like my plan?"

"Uncommonly," whispered the young man close to his ear.

"Well, when he gets in, do you pretend to be asleep, and if they try to undo the pinion, don't you let them—hush! Mind what I say. We'll pay the whole lot off."

"Will you?" gasped the pioned traveller. "By Heavens, then, I'll do it, I'll bear it, I say I will; anything to bring it home to Spooner, he's so cunning; the villain, he's as hard to catch as a ghost, never mind, I'll have him yet, the scoundrel, I wish this thing wasn't quite so tight, though, by Jove, it does hurt me, never mind, it is worth some trouble, we'll catch them, it's a serious thing, this outrage, and if you can show they aimed at my life, it will be a bad business for Spooner, ha! ha! and if I can't hang him, whenever I get a fair chance, I'll shoot him, by Heaven, I'll shoot him—I'll shoot him dead if it was in church!"

"Hush—don't mind. Here comes the fellow. We understand one another—you and I—eh?"

"All right." And the voluble gentleman, with his arms tied behind him, and ex-

tremely uncomfortable, would have run on again with a similar declamation, if Mr. Darkdale had not said, with a peremptory gesture of caution:

"They'll hear us; not another word."

He drew back, and walked toward the man whom he had just ejected from the carriage, and he said very low, and without turning his head, a few words in his ear, ending with:

"'Twill be all right now; get on at the best lick you can. You must be there in forty-five minutes sharp."

The man gave his orders to the postilions, and got into the carriage, and away they whirled at a great pace, flashing a fiery streak from their lamps along each brown trunk as they flew by on the close forest road.

Mr. Darkdale stood, lamp in hand, for a minute, watching the retreating equipage; and then turned and approached his own carriage, which he had left standing about a hundred paces in the rear.

DOUBLE PEOPLE.

If Miss (or the Misses) Millie-Christine should quarrel, it would be no easy matter for her (or them) to part company. She (or they) must submit to any incompatibility of temper and tastes: seeing that her (or their) fate is unified for life. And if any gentleman (or gentlemen), whity-brown or dark brown, should pop the question to her (or them), there would be two (or four) wills to consult in the matter, to avoid a still further complication of incompatibilities.

This is of course very clumsy phraseology; but what is to be done? How are we to decide whether the singular or the plural number is to be used? As Millie-Christine can certainly talk in two different voices, together or separately, can express two different sentiments at the same time, and can have two simultaneous opinions on the same subject, it is more convenient to use the plural number. Then about dancing. There was a Spaniard in London a few years ago who danced on one leg in a very wonderful way; there are other men who can double-shuffle on two legs with much dexterity; and there are two pantomimists who contrive so to dress themselves as to appear to dance upon three legs, the fourth being stowed away in some ingenious fashion; but no one human being ever danced a pas-de-deux on four legs. Then

Millie-Christine sing soprano and mezzo-soprano, and very prettily too. Moreover, Millie would not be satisfied if Christine alone had her dinner; she also has an appetite, and mutton for two would be in requisition. When *Hermia* and *Helena*, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, had a temporary misunderstanding about love matters, the latter gave a charming description of a kind of double existence, one mind in two bodies:

We, *Hermia*, like two artificial gods,
Have with our noëlds created both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
Both warbling of one song, both in one key,
As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,
Had been incorporate. So we grow together,
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted;
But yet a union in partition,
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem:
So with two seeming bodies, but one heart.

Millie and Christine have two hearts and two minds; *Hermia* and *Helena* (according to Shakespeare) two bodies and one heart.

Deviations from ordinary organisation are often presented in very odd ways, both in the genus *homo* and among the lower animals; sometimes we find more or less than the proper number of limbs, sometimes a strange rudiment of some other being. In 1765, there was a calf born at Bettws Abergale, in North Wales, having two heads, four eyes, four ears, two mouths, two necks, but body and legs as usual; it sucked with both mouths during the few days of its existence. In 1759, the *Memoirs of the Berlin Academy of Sciences* contained an account of a puppy-dog born with a rudimentary turkey-cock's head, but with no mouth, nose, or eyes; a red pendent mass, like the red gills of a turkey-cock, contained the first beginnings of a hooked beak. Of course the creature died very soon after birth. In 1808, there was a three-legged calf at Westrip, in Gloucestershire; two legs were in front, and the odd one behind, and the animal walked along tolerably well. In the same year there was caught a partridge with three wings, one growing out of the breast. A double-headed bull-calf was exhibited at Tenbury in 1780; whether it had a double appetite, a double capacity for food, is not recorded; but it ate with two mouths. In 1806, the *Union, East Indiaman*, brought to England a dog with two noses. There was a cat at Greenock, early in the century, with four ears on one head, eight feet, and two tails. A still-born heifer has been described, at a village near Lincoln, with two heads united into one, one neck, one heart, and two tails.

Boys and girls, men and women, have often had less than the usual number of toes, fingers, and other members. The Memoirs of the Berlin Academy (already mentioned) contain an account of a whole family of negroes living near Paramaribo, born without thumbs; and each foot was something like a lobster's claw where the toes ought to have been. In 1764, a boy-infant was born without a right hand; he grew up, married, and had a child similarly deficient in a right hand. About the same time a healthy child was born without arms or even shoulders. The once-celebrated Miss Biffin, born without hands or feet, managed, in an extraordinary way, to draw and write with the implements held between the stumps. People with one finger only, one toe only, a thumb and little finger only, forefinger and no thumb, are to be met with. On the other hand, instances are not uncommon of persons endowed with more than an equitable proportion of such aids. An old man named Carolan died at Meath in the last century, having six fingers on each hand, and six toes on each foot. A boy near Ely was born with even more than this number—twenty-eight thumbs, fingers, and toes, in all. Another boy, near Market Drayton, had three arms and three legs; the additional limbs were imperfect, and grew from the trunk in a very strange way.

Concerning double people, twins united in an abnormal manner at birth, the authentic records are numerous, but cannot be discussed at any length in these pages; a few examples must suffice. In 1701, united twins were born at Szany, in Hungary; they were christened by the names of Helen and Judith, and were exhibited for some years in the chief cities of Europe. They were joined together at the lower part of the back, the faces and bodies being half sideways or diagonal, neither back to back nor side by side. The two girls were not equally strong, nor equally well made; one had a more resolute will than the other, and settled all questions as to whether to move, and whither. Being carefully educated, they read, recited, and sang well, conversed in Hungarian, German, French, and English, and afforded much scope for study to psychologists; for there was sufficient difference between them in strength, temper, health, and intellect, to give play to two sets of forces, mental as well as bodily. It was observed, however, that when one was ill, the other became more or less affected with the same

complaint; and it was deemed probable that their deaths would be nearly simultaneous. This proved to be the case. Judith was attacked with a complicated disease of brain and lungs in 1723, and died; Helen, who at the commencement of her sister's malady was in good health, soon sickened with her, and the two died almost at the same instant. They were buried in a convent graveyard at Presburg, and the particulars of their remarkable history found admission into the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society.

In 1765, the local journals give an account of one Susan Gutteridge, the wife of a pensioner at Hadleigh, near Ipswich, who had three children at a birth; two were joined together at the middle part of the body; all three had an existence of only a few hours. The Anatomical Museum at Leyden contained some years ago (and perhaps still contains) the preserved remains of a two-headed child, with the inscription, "Un enfant avec deux têtes bien formées, né à Jutphaas près d'Utrecht dans l'année 1785." Such instances of partial doubleness are much more numerous than those of the more complete Helen-Judith and Millie-Christine kind. The most extraordinary on record, perhaps, was one which was described by Sir Everard Home in a letter to John Hunter, the great surgeon; it was a Hindoo double-headed boy, born near Burdwan, in Bengal; and the degree of sympathy, or absence of sympathy, between the two heads was watched with much interest. The particulars are given in the Philosophical Transactions. There was another case of a man named Lazarus, or rather a double man named Lazarus-Johannes, very attractive to sight-seers in Germany several years ago. There was much of a curious character in the degree in which the feeding of Lazarus helped to feed Johannes, without any distinct participation of the latter in the eating process. As the Johannes portion of the duplex was less fully developed than Lazarus, some discussion arose among the ecclesiastics as to whether each half had a soul to be saved, distinct from the other; it was decided in the affirmative, and the two names of Lazarus and Johannes were given in baptism. The men were alive at the age of twenty-eight, but we have no mention of their age at death. Mary Poynter, the wife of a labouring man at Kyrewood, in Worcestershire, gave birth to a baby child which was rather more single than double, having only one pair of lower limbs, and

many other parts of the system duplex. Such appears to have been the case also with Rita-Christina, born in Sardinia in 1826, and taken to Paris for exhibition; it was no easy matter to decide whether there were two little Italian babies to be looked at or only one: whether Rita and Christina were two names for two beings, or a double name for a complex unit.

Many of our readers are, no doubt, familiar with the appearance of the Siamese twins, who were exhibited in London in their youth, and again, a short time ago, in their maturer years. The twins are more completely two human beings than any others we have here spoken of; for the only physical or organised band of connexion between them is at the two chests. In one of Doctor Todd's medical works a description is given, which conveys a sufficiently clear notion of the nature of this band to those who have neither seen the twins themselves nor pictures of them. When first exhibited, they were not exactly opposite to each other, but stood side by side, or rather obliquely one by another; but this position, there can be little doubt, was acquired by the attempts which they had instinctively made to separate from each other in walking, or in lying and sitting down, and by the extension they had thus effected in their band of union, which was considerably more slender than in any other yet described. It was quite impossible for them to remain always face to face; therefore their bodies acquired an oblique direction, in which they also moved. The consequence of this was, that the right limbs of the one and the left of the other individual were the principal organs of movement, and that the intermediate limbs (that is to say, the left of the one and the right of the other) remained nearly passive. In organic and animal relation of life, they seem to be independent of each other. Each has his own circulation of the blood, his own respirative and digestive functions. The curious, yellow-skinned couple were wont to play at battledore and shuttlecock with each other; one had a battledore in his right hand, the other had one in his left, and very deftly they tossed the feathered messenger to and fro.

We therefore see that Millie-Christine is (or are) not without predecessors in this very remarkable walk in life. They are more closely united than the Siamese twins; and there can never be any question of separating them by surgical means. They must be

with each other till they die, a duality in unity, for better or for worse; and if—in their talking, singing, dancing, eating, drinking, sleeping—there can be harmony of sentiment and temper as well as junction of person (and they themselves say that such is really the case), all the more bearable will their strange existence be. Like Helen and Judith, the Hungarians, they cannot stand precisely side by side; the coalescence of their frames renders necessary a kind of diagonal position; but use has enabled them to overcome most of the awkwardness that would otherwise result. Helen-Judith, if now living, would be great objects of interest to Millie-Christine, and vice versa; for the two pairs seem to have made a nearer approach to similarity than any other examples of such *lusus naturæ*.

What would be the status of double people in the eye of the law? Could they hold property, and how? Would an insurance office grant two insurances or annuities, or limit the number to one of each? If Millie-Christine have money, could they invest it in consols; and would the Bank of England require one entry or two entries of names in the books? And could each make a will irrespective of the other? Again: if Woman's Rights are ever granted, would Millie-Christine give one vote or two at a general election? And would they be "the honourable member" or "the honourable members" when they came to take their seat in parliament? And if they become medical practitioners, would Doctor Millie and Doctor Christine receive one fee or two?

BARMECIDE DAINITIES.

ABOUT the regions of the Palais Royal, where, through the grating over the kitchens of those artists Vefour or Very, there used to float upwards a fragrant cloud charged with the most delicious extracts and savours in the world, a number of gaunt faces were to be seen bent forward, regaling themselves on the feast, after the only fashion permitted to them—sniffing it wistfully and inhaling eagerly. Now precisely after the pattern of these famished epicures, I find myself, at times, hanging over certain inviting programmes, brought by nearly every post, with a persistency which shows that the senders are at least acquainted with the power of this spring of human character. Imagination kindles as I

read, tables fit for the gods spread themselves out, the air becomes heavy with the aroma of rare vintages, the purple of the grape glistens in the sunshine, and the taste becomes bewildered by innumerable beverages held to the lips, Tantalus-like, and snatched away; liquors foam and sparkle in the crystal goblets, and flasks with silver necks and heads, which are ranged round in dazzling rows. All this as I read; and yet the wild debauch is tolerably harmless. There is no headache, no intoxication, no reeling home; the pleasant carouse is produced in this innocent fashion by certain unctuous circulars, which positively make you feel thirsty as you read. The entertainment is certainly far preferable, as regards health, to a demoralising visit to the Docks with a tasting order. Instead, too, of ruining myself with costly purchases, I quaff these catalogues, and mentally purchase large "parcels" for "laying down" in splendid condition. I can have them either in the wood or "the patent bin-case," which can be "paked by a child," and is secure from "breakage or pilferage." By "stacking any number of these cases, one on the other, a set of bins can be formed in any part of the house." I revel in this idea—in any part of the house, up-stairs, down-stairs, or in my lady's chamber. I can picture the enjoyment of having men to carry up the bins, while I "stack" and stack again, as the whim seizes me.

I would begin with sherries: and here is to be seen at once the folly of giving fancy prices, when for eighteenpence I can have a sherry from "the large producing district" of Xeres, "possessing body, good flavour, and stimulating qualities." It is, moreover, a pale wine, and "suitable as a luncheon or dinner sherry—three years old in wood, and bottled in brilliant condition." All this for eighteenpence, imbeciles! ye who give your four or five shillings a bottle for "laying down!" I notice that I can quaff from no less than twenty-two different brands, and that there is a sort of melodious gamut, as it were, which can be rung in chiming the praises of these vintages. All have "body, flavour, and stimulating qualities." But mark, some have "delicate flavour," some "fragrance," which latter virtue sells at the tenth degree, and at two and tenpence. At the fourteenth degree, and at three and six, we find the "dry luncheon and dinner or dessert sherry" lifting its head modestly. The "fine Amontillado flavour" begins to be discovered about the same

stage. At the sixteenth degree we find a little confusion and incoherence, not to say a perceptible thickness of utterance and tautology; thus, a wine is boasted as "possessing a dry Amontillado flavour, with fine delicate aroma," commendation which ought to be comprised in what followed being "suitable as a delicate Amontillado luncheon or dinner sherry." A step further, and we come on a "brown wine most suitable for dessert, having the dry East Indian character; also"—I rub my eyes at the descent—"for drinking with water!" This is a poor virtue indeed. But we rally at the next step, and grow rapturous over "a superb dry Amontillado flavour, with delicacy of aroma, and which is offered to connoisseurs of sherry of the Amontillado character, as a choice wine for dinner or luncheon." Compare this with the next: "a gold wine, which is offered to connoisseurs of full-flavoured dry sherry, without the Amontillado character"—which is offered as "a choice dinner, luncheon, or dessert sherry;" and, in a bewilderment of vinous admiration, we come forward as "the connoisseur who can appreciate the high characteristics of really fine Amontillado sherry, and of one of the finest and oldest wines procurable."

In the department of ports, I admire the caution of recommendation, which hints that the two shilling article should only be produced at dessert. But it is vaguely added, "or for general consumption," which I interpret in this sense: it is to be set before the friend who has been dining with us, and whose nicer critical sense is blunted by satiety; or if we must have it out at other seasons, it will do for the village hospital, or the country visitor. Introducing it to your guest, you might conveniently quote the words of the description. "My dear boy, this glass of port is the produce of the Douro district. It has been selected after careful comparison, as possessing good body and excellent flavour. It is quite fit for present use, but will improve by age: it was bottled in brilliant condition." Such a guarantee would confound any doubts he might entertain as to its being suitable for "his own good body." Fourpence more, and we get the "fruity flavour, yet not too sweet on the palate;" sixpence, and the "fine aroma and rich flavour" manifest themselves. Later on come the "connoisseurs of fine old port wine," who, according to the grammatical construction of the sentence, have been "matured in the wood," and to whom it is

offered as possessing "superb dry flavour and great fragrance." But on this matter of port we little dream how the tongue can "grow wanton," as the immortal William says. In the finer sorts which we now approach, and I hope reverently, we hear of what is called "a bottled character," which would seem a natural quality in liquor that is bottled, but which may be assumed to have analogy to the "corked-up" character in the human race. It is also "exquisitely fine," has good bouquet and a great deal of "wing," "dry Burgundy flavour," "delicately silky," &c. It can be at the same time "tawny," have "exquisite aroma," and having "immense body with plenty of wing," which seems as if we were speaking of an insect. The highest encomium, however, seems to be the possession of "a fine finished bottled character," which again seems to me to be an over delicate refinement. Thus, it will be recollected, that master of sarcasm, the author of *Lothair*, accused one of his political rivals of wanting "finish;" we can almost hear him taking a lesson from the connoisseur of ports, and artfully disparaging some enemy, by admitting that he had the "bottled character," but wanted "finish."

In dealing with the French wines, I am sorry to find that the poet seems to have allowed his powers of description to be coloured by a sort of contempt for our unfortunate neighbours. For there is almost too much allusion to dilution with "two parts of water," with declarations that this vintage will not bear dilution with water. Too indifferent to give his imagination play, he repeats the old forms, "flavour," "matured in wood," and the like; and actually damns with such faint praise as "it will be esteemed as a cheap dinner wine." Again, what sort of commendation is this: "Has the advantage of age in bottle?" A truism, surely; as is also the following: "Is selected as having all the characteristics that are appreciated by the connoisseur in Rhine wines." This poor generality means nothing.

I was curious to see how the champagne vintage would be celebrated. Yet the first sample is not encouraging, where two and elevenpence is recommended as suitable for dinner, or for medicinal purposes. But the man cannot get over his incurable prejudice against a fallen nation. I might remind him that even the barbarous Mecklenburgh, and that Hun, Von der Tann, were delicately considerate as to the sacred-

ness of the Champagne districts. The French themselves, when introducing this ROYAL WINE, grow magnificent. It is the "grand vin d'Ay," it is "creaming," "mousseux," "rosée." But the highest praise (consonant with the highest price) that this grudging enconomiast can utter is, "This very sparkling wine is the produce of one of the best situated vineyards in the Champagne district. It has been selected, after careful comparison with the choicest dry wines, as possessing great delicacy of flavour and fragrance, but from its extreme dryness this quality will be appreciated only by those who have acquired a taste for very dry champagne."

There are others of these Barmecide dainties, which I see daily spread out on the broad newspaper sheets, as on a table-cloth, and which really are appetising in the choice and unctuous phrases used. The conclusion really to be arrived at is, that if one were in good faith to lay in a stock of these dainties, and if they at all corresponded to the epicurean language in which their qualities and virtues are described, we might at small cost enjoy a luxury, a ceaseless banqueting, which *Heliogabalus* himself might envy. We could not be so unreasonable as to bind these caterers by the almost extravagant perfections of the articles they proffer, but if we deduct even a handsome allowance of exaggeration, we should be more than content with the handsome balance that remains. If but a tithe of what we read were true, who would ask more than is held out to us in the advertisement sheets in which all that concerns food, drink, medicine, and other things would seem to be of a sort of Elysian excellence? Why, there is one article alone which in itself would appear to be "meat, drink, and clothes," and which, allowing a good-natured margin for the pardonable exaggeration prompted by the conscious pride of its proprietor, would alone suffice for all that man wants here below—need I say that I allude to a well-known panacea? Why, with such an article to be had, and had so cheaply, we go to the trouble of purveying other delicacies, is inconceivable to me. For a shilling or two we can secure a talisman more efficacious than *Saladin's* in *Scott's* romance. Mark, with it invalids can cure themselves, "without medicine, inconvenience, or expense;" it is "delicious, far more nourishing, digestible, and less expensive than meat." Have we children, then "delicate infants thrive on this food,

which imparts to them, in a pleasant form, all the elements of new blood, bone, muscle, brain." But these merits may be passed over lightly, as compared with their miraculous power in a therapeutic direction. Fancy seventy-two thousand cures of the most terrible maladies "of old and young, which had resisted all medical treatment, and had been abandoned as hopeless." After this feat we may give up physicians as dull bunglers. It might, indeed, be curious to inquire whether these seventy-two thousand cases would not be in excess of all that had been "abandoned as hopeless," and spread over a number of years. At least, I doubt if the whole College of Physicians would own to such a vast number of cases defying their skill. However, we, the patients, have this comfort, that between both, the exertions of the college and of this wonderful panacea, all cases, whether desperate or otherwise, may be comprised. The physicians may cure what they can: when they fail we may call in the panacea.

Another article, that makes one thirsty to read of, is called the Nourishing Stout, which I once remember covering the whole side of a newspaper, repeated in monotonous lines. It did all sorts of things this wonderful beverage; restored invalids to strength, made the sluggish buoyant, and was strongly encouraged by doctors. The sight of this capital title was in itself invigorating—it was like a pint of the beverage with the head on. Of the same family was Somebody's Bottled Cooper, which was described as "a gentle restorative, healthful, and life-giving, and universally recommended for the sick-bed." Many doctors, I noticed, joined with a generous warmth in these encomiums of its virtues. No doubt they had stood by the sick bed and seen the languishing patient raised up by partaking of a goodly goblet. But on scrutinising their really handsome testimonials, I was struck by the recurrence of such phrases as "the cooper which you were good enough to send me," "I have tried the cooper which you sent me," &c. One physician added that "he always continued to use it in his own family;" another "that he invariably prescribed it for his patients." I should not like to insinuate anything that would impair the value of these witnesses, but still I cannot help framing some such little domestic picture as this. Case of three dozen cooper arriving per rail at Doctor Diapoisson's country house, the family try-

ing it at dinner, the necessity of a suspended judgment and second supply, before the result on the health of the younger branches could have any marked result, and then gratitude for so warm and deliberate a judgment would surely prompt a further supply. Again, prescribing the Somebody's Cooper for Sir William Stubb's young family, would probably demand recognition of some sort.

What shall we say to "this celebrated and most delicious old mellow spirit, which is the very cream of Irish whisky?" Uctuous words these, "mellow," "cream"—we feel it gliding down our throats, and hail the familiar "LL.," which beams out upon us, an old friend, from every newspaper in the kingdom. "Observe," it says, in a friendly way, "my pink label, seal and cork."

Once embark on the vast ocean of "baking powder," and we grow bewildered; which is it to be, Brown and Polson, Borwick, Sea Moss Farine, Oswego? All make the most "delicious" blanc-mange, puddings, custards, pastry, tarts, like a conjurer who brings such things out of a hat. One feature common to all is, that a single packet will make innumerable shapes—a dozen, I think—of blanc-mange or jelly. With so many fair claims how are we to decide? But I own that Sea Moss Farine, with its polychromatic pictures—its Neptune riding the billows—its versatility, so to speak, its elegance, as it were, seems more of a dazzling sort. Its fellows have a homely, house-keeping air. Farine is of a gaudy, attractive sort. However, this is all speculative, as I have not made trial; and I dare say Brown and Polson, Borwick, Oswego, Maizena, and others, if put on their mettle—rather, if they put on their metal freely—and exhibited showy, dashing advertisements, might convey the same idea.

Sances, too! I own to an exceeding penchant for Elizabeth Lazenby and her old-established Harvey, that old Tory piquancy, which has held its own honourably, in spite of a thousand revolutions, and, it must be said, much persecution. Our poor Elizabeth has been harassed by pretenders, and whenever I meet her in advertisements, seems to be under guard of some injunction from the Court of Chancery. There is Elizabeth's own signature, in a free hand, on her own bottles. She is not addicted to boasting, and has the comfort of knowing—wherever she be now—that she has helped off many a bad fish, and more bad cooking. That young radical

"Worcestershire" has merits of his own, though he has a jargon of his own about "digestion;" and that perpetual flourishing about "from the receipt of a nobleman in the country," savours of the parvenu. It is like some new rich man boasting, "Try that wine. Lord Tumbletowers sent it to me."

There is something inconclusive, too, in the recommendation. A nobleman having a receipt is no guarantee for excellence. Noblemen often have bad wine and other bad things. But this is a "nobleman in the country," and noblemen in the country, according to my experience, have worse articles than noblemen in town. Altogether, I cannot father this indorsement, though I have no doubt there are numbers of weak souls who would prefer the comestible on this account to the humble unheralded article of Elizabeth. Both are excellent.

There are many other articles which might coldly furnish forth our Barmecide table. But the reader can supply them for himself by glancing at his daily newspaper.

SUMMER CALM.

A SUMMER silence sits upon the lake,
No sound of plashing oar, no herd-boy's call,
To wake the mountain echoes. A soft haze,
A dreamy haze of pale and liquid gold
Hangs o'er the placid waters: glow so pure
As scarce to touch with fire the ruby specks
That gem the troutling's back.

Now comes the low
Of answering kine, knee-deep within the flood,
And now the hum of the brown-armoured bee,
Laden with spoil, of the rich scarlet flowers,
That glint amid the sedge: no with sharp "whirr"
The purple dragon-fly skims idly on,
His brief existence all an easy dream.
The fisher-heron beside the reedy pool
Poised on one leg, with eager head drawn back,
Scans the clear surface of the dimpled lake,
And strikes unerringly his silver prey.

Here, the broad flags their sturdy pennons wave,
And gently rustle as the kingly swan,
With arched neck and snowy plumes, sails by:
Here blue forget-me-nots their petals hide,
And water-lilies in their chaste white cups
Veil their gold-fringed eyes: a glorious calm
Lies on the bosom of sweet Windermere,
Fraught with the tender balm of summer peace.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

(SECOND SERIES.)

STONEY ROBINSON—HUNTING DOWN AN
HEIRESS.

THE Hiltons of Hilton Castle, three miles west of Monkwearmouth, in the county of Durham, a family now extinct, used to boast of having been settled in power and affluence in the north country, three hundred years before the Conquest. This, at least, is certainly known, that in all

struggles, for good or evil, greed or feud, treason or loyalty, these same stalwart Hiltons of Hilton swung the axe and plied the sword with creditable zeal, and gave and received blows right manfully. Three Hiltons were left on the hot sands of Palestine by Richard the First, three went down near the banner of the Black Prince in a battle at Bordeaux, one was struck dead at Agincourt, two the Scots smote to the heart at Berwick-upon-Tweed, two shed their blood at St. Albans during the cruel Wars of the Roses, five were trodden underfoot in that desperate mêlée round the dead Crookback, at Bosworth, and four the Scottish swords swept down on the crimson hill of Flodden. "The highest noblesse of the north, without the peerage," says worthy old Surtees; and indeed at one time these long-armed Hiltons seem to have held a good third of the county of Durham, not to mention good slices of Yorkshire, Northumberland, and Cumberland. Old oaks, with far-stretching roots, were the Hiltons, and none of your potted out commercial biennials, showy in flower, but shallow-rooted and desperately perishable. After a proud series of twenty descents, stretching through five long troublous centuries, the blow, however, came at last. In Charles the First's reign, a Henry Hilton, conceiving some grievous, morbid, and incurable hatred against his own flesh and blood, deserted the old castle in the wooded vale by the river Wear, went to live in obscure retirement with a kinsman in Sussex, and finally in a last burst of spite and scorn, in 1641, left his whole property, for ninety-nine years, to the City of London, setting aside all "natural lives" for that severe probation. Then the old tree began to pine, the race dwindled down to petty drapers at Gateshead, and the light blew out.

Soon another great family, by marriage or purchase, got hands on Hilton, the old castle still haunted by the ghost of the "Cold lad" (a stable-boy killed in a rage by a Hilton of James the First's time). This race Surtees traces back to a certain cousin of Alan, the Black Earl of Richmond, who appointed him captain, with five hundred archers, of the Tower of Bowes. The family proved able, and intermarried (after its first really great man, a chief justice in Eyre, about 1310) with the Greenstocks, Fitzhughs, Conyers, Eures, Cliffords, Percys, and Ravensworths, frequently produced wardens of the Middle Marches, and was unchangeably

loyal by right of race. The best of the race was that brave and steadfast Sir George Bowes, who almost alone held out for Queen Elizabeth against the dangerous "Rising of the North," when the powerful Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, with the Dacres, Nortons, Markenfields, Ratcliffes, Tempests, and Swinburnes, raised the banner of the "Five Wounds," and defied the chivalry of the south, with that deplorable result so beautifully painted by Wordsworth in the White Doe of Rylstone, one of the most exquisite of his narrative poems.

Mary Eleanor, the sole heiress of this noble race, was the only daughter of George Bowes, M.P. for the county of Durham, who died in 1760, leaving his vast estates to his daughter, then only eleven years of age. At eighteen the young and pretty heiress was married to John Lyon, ninth Earl of Strathmore, and representative peer for Scotland in the House of Lords, who assumed the name of Bowes on his marriage. The earl, a good-natured, bland, commonplace person, as tradition records, proved probably a too indulgent husband, and did not enjoy any very special happiness with his accomplished, lively, capricious wife. Death, however, took him out of her way in April, 1776, when he died at Lisbon, leaving five children.

The young countess, only twenty-seven, pretty, lively, with literary tastes, and enormous wealth, had a fine house in Grosvenor-square, house, gardens, and conservatories at Chelsea, grand seats at Paul's Walden, Gibside, and Barnard Castle, besides the towers of Streatlam and Hilton, and broad, rich lands in Middlesex. To such a widow, so young, so gifted, so rich, suitors as disinterested as the flies that visit sugar-casks, and quite as pertinacious, came in swarms. A Mr. Grey, a nabob from the golden Indies, at first showed well in the front rank, but in ten months the nabob, with all his wealth, was ignominiously ousted by an Irish adventurer, one Lieutenant Andrew Stoney Robinson, of the County Tipperary, who had come to Newcastle some years before, with his regiment, and carried off a Durham heiress with thirty thousand pounds, whom he had soon tormented and bullied out of existence. The dashing Irish widower sighed, ogled, whispered, danced, and finally won the north country countess, aided no doubt by the flatterers and parasites by whom the widow was surrounded. At this un-

lucky time, Mr. Jesse Foot, a surgeon at Stoney-Bowes, who wrote an account of her misfortunes, says the countess possessed a very pleasing embonpoint, and an uncommonly fine bust. She was rather under the middle height, her hair was brown, her eyes light, small, and near-sighted. Her face was round, her neck and shoulders were graceful, her lower jaw, rather ill-shaped, moved convulsively from side to side when she was in nervous agitation. Her fingers were small, her hands exceedingly delicate.

In person, Stoney Robinson was pleasing; his manner was soft, his height five feet ten inches, his eyes were bright and small, and well under his command. His eyebrows were low, large, and sandy, his hair was light, his complexion ruddy. He had an agreeable smile, and a ready wit, and he usually led off the laugh in a pleasant, genial way, that forced those listening to him to laugh also. He spoke low, and lisped. His conversation was shallow, and his education had been neglected. When he spoke, his long hooked nose moved in a ludicrous way in conjunction with his upper lip. According to Mr. W. E. Surtees, this matchless rascal (as will be presently proved) was showy without learning, cunning without prudence, and ambitious without perseverance; he brought with him, nevertheless, a pleasing address and person, and the eloquence, wit, and assurance which are said to be indigenous to the country of his birth.

Having broken his first wife's heart by the summary process of throwing her downstairs, shutting her up half naked for three consecutive days in a cold damp closet, allowing the miserable woman only an egg a day, Stoney Robinson, cleared out by an exhaustive sequence of cock-fighting and racing at watering-places, and gambling in the more disreputable clubs round St. James's-street, had from the first determined to lure the vain blue-stocking widow of Grosvenor-square into his pitfall. He dug his covered ways towards "that fort they call a heart," with the skill of a veteran engineer. He corrupted and won over by bribes, flattery, and various inducements, Mrs. Parish, the countess's governess, Miss Eliza Planta, the sister to the governess, and the confidante of the countess, and the Reverend Mr. Stephens, a credulous clergyman, who was about to marry Miss Eliza Planta. He also won over the chief visitors at the house—Mr. Matra, English consul in Barbary, Mr. Magin, a botanist, and

friend of that Dr. Solander who accompanied Captain Cook, and who was celebrated for performing solos on the Otaheite nose flute at fashionable musical soirées. These people all became his creatures, and worked for him at the net he was weaving for the foolish and unsuspecting countess. Once introduced to the countess, all would be plain sailing, and that introduction he soon got by his friends at court, and through Durham, his acquaintance. He became interested in rare plants, fond of poetry, romantic and visionary, like the fair widow. He tutored a conjurer of the day, and planned with Miss Planta a party to which the countess was invited, when the linking of the two fortunes was distinctly foretold. He hesitated at no trick, forgery, or stratagem. Letters stamped with the Durham post-mark were sent by him to the countess, purporting to be from a reproachful lady, who complained that, for love of the countess, Stoney Robinson had forsaken her. He spread dark suspicions that Mr. Gray, his rival the nabob, was supported by the late Lord Strathmore's relatives, whom the countess dreaded and detested. Last of all, he tried his crowning master-stroke. He wrote virulent anonymous attacks in the *Morning Post* on the countess; he hinted at intrigues, derided her as a poetess, denied that she was a linguist, analysed and exposed her whole life, heaping up, as Mr. William Howitt says in his admirable summary of Mr. Jesse Foot's book, the most malicious and irritating exaggerations. A violent and angry correspondence ensued, and the public listened, as they will listen to any lie against a well-known person. The friends of the dead lord were delighted, because they hoped that this scandal and vexation would frighten off the fickle countess from a second marriage, and keep the great property undisturbed for the children. Poor creatures, they little knew the arch devil they had to deal with in Stoney Robinson! That worthy gentleman bided his time. The fruit was all but ripe. The touch came, and it fell. One day the pretty widow, stung to the quick by another of those newspaper wasps, stood up, her fair face flushed with anger, her blue eyes bright with tears of rage, and declared, in presence of her little court of parasites, that to the brave man who would challenge and fight "Parson Bates," the obnoxious, cruel, and relentless editor, she would at once give her hand and heart. This paroxysm had been foreseen by the bland scoundrel at

her side. It had been arranged between him and Parson Bates that there should be a sham duel. The blustering challenge was sent, a bullying answer returned, the men met and fought. Both were wounded—at least their doctors called the plaistered-up scratches wounds—and the bandaged Robinson, kneeling at the feet of the countess, rose up her accepted suitor. The needy gambler of yesterday was to-day the lord of a third of Durham, and the wretched nabob shivered over his nauseous glass of Bath water, while Stoney Robinson (now Andrew Bowes, Esquire, if you please) grinned, over the bottle of Burgundy he cracked with Parson Bates, on the way he had duped the rich widow of Grosvenor-square.

Airing himself for a time in the Park and at Ranelagh, holding his levees among crowds of smiling parasites, who a week before would have let him die on a dung-hill, as the veriest leper of London, Stoney Robinson (for we have not the heart to surrender this delightfully appropriate name) then proceeded to the north to taste the full pleasure of his new wealth and power. It was the old story, Hogarth's Scattered gold; the beggar on horseback, bent on the old ride to the old place. He was greedy for heaps of money at once to flourish and squander. Ruthless as death, and rapacious as the grave, he quickly set the axes of the workmen to fell the sumptuous woods of Gibside. That avalanche of trees that rolls from Bryan's Leap to the brink of the Derwent, this wretch did his best to sweep into a timber-yard. "No place but the king's dockyards," he chuckled, "could show such wood." But the fox had a brain of no real grasp after all; he overshot his mark as greedy rascals often do. He felled so much that the timber merchants were afraid of dragging the market, and would not purchase half of it, so the great trunks rotted in the Lady Haugh. Although at once mean and extravagant, sociable and tyrannical, his wealth won Stoney Robinson great influence in the county while it lasted. He got into parliament for Newcastle, and was promised support if eventually he stood for the county. At the very time he was trying (for already he had got involved) to coax loans out of bankers and rich friends, he gave parliamentary dinners at Grosvenor-square, or tried in Durham to outvie the old nobility of the north. He bought the Benwell estate of the Shafto family, and instantly mortgaged it deeply. With iron resolution,

and as black a heart as Satan ever rejoiced over, the man was not a prudent scoundrel. He gambled deeply, but seldom won, and mean as he was, the old treasure of the Bowes and Hiltons slipped through his thievish fingers like witches' money. Deeper and deeper this pirate sank into the slough of debt. He sold the Chelsea house with those rare exotics, which his wife had made her special boast. He locked up the family plate in his own coffers. He raised three hundred thousand pounds upon annuities. He insured the life of the countess over and over again for a year or two at a time. He gave lavish election entertainments at unfortunate Gibside. He kept open house, at the very time when his meanness prevented his purchasing a new carriage and decent horses. He wrote fulsome letters to a friend, from whom he borrowed, declaring, with his stained hand upon the vacuum where in most people there is a heart, he should never be happy till he was out of debt and had money by him, and the next day betted heavily on that green shaking bog, the turf. He flattered his banker, and at the same time, grinding his teeth, wrote to an acquaintance "that he would not leap on the man till he could bite him hard." He sold his best friend an estate cheap, but with such a claim upon it (at first concealed) that Bowes alone gained by the bargain.

At first, during the brief honeymoon, Stoney Robinson was all that was gallant and amiable to the duped countess. He compromised, by a heavy payment, an action for breach of promise commenced by the aggrieved nabob. Lady Strathmore, charmed at her conquest, sat down one honeymoon morning in her Chelsea boudoir, and, with a humming-bird's quill, on the most satin of couleur de rose paper, wrote some charming verses—at least so the toadies thought them—on her brave and chivalrous preserver—Stoney, the knight-errant, who had smitten Parson Bates, that cruel and false slanderer. Here is the romantic poem, with all its nonsense and bad grammar intact:

Unmoved Maria saw the splendid suite
Of rival captives sighing at her feet,
Till in her cause his sword young Stoney drew,
And to revenge the gallant wooer flew.
Bravest among the brave, and first to prove
By death or conquest who best knew to love!
But pale and faint the wounded lover lies,
While more than pity fills Maria's eyes.
In her soft breast where passion long had strove,
Resistless sorrow fixed the reign of love.
"Dear youth," she cries, "we meet no more to part;
Then take thy honour's due—my bleeding heart!"

The sham duel took place on January

the 13th, 1777. On the 17th of the same month the melting widow was married at St. James's Church, Westminster, to her gallant and convalescent champion. For the present the very soul of honour, pure, refined, delicate, Stoney neglected nothing that would please his bride. Soon after their marriage he wrote a letter of graceful apology to his angry mother-in-law, Mrs. Bowes, of Paul's Walden, in Hertfordshire. In this letter, with graceful humility, this modern Tartuffe said: "Deeply impressed with the sense of the impropriety that may appear to you of my conduct, I wish to atone for that breach of duty, and to ask your pardon, under the promise of dedicating the remainder of my life to the honour and interest of your daughter and her family. My grateful heart will make me her faithful companion, and with unremitting attention I will consult her peace of mind, and the advantage of her children."

After all, what did it matter to Stoney Robinson what he promised now the bird was in the cage, now the spring had closed, now the steel fetter lock was round the thin, white wrist, and only law or death could remove it. It was only a sheet of paper less, and his own frank carried it. The two tempers soon clashed; indeed, his life of ceaseless profligacy would have exasperated any woman, however fond, however indifferent. At first he swore at her only; soon he began to threaten and beat her, and subject her to every humiliation malice and contempt could frame or invent: It was now that in anticipation of the struggle that was sure, as he knew, to come, the rascal hit upon one of the most subtle forms of cruelty that ingenious villany ever shaped. He actually forced his miserable wife to write a book of the grossest description, called the Confessions of the Countess of Strathmore, and professing to be a revelation of her life before their marriage. This he held in terrorem, a weapon ready, as Mr. Howitt says, for her throat if she ever sought the protection of the laws. He kept this book, like a talisman, under his pillow by night, and used scraps of it by day, to alarm or persuade enemies or friends with whom he came into contact. He carried it with him, like a palladium, wherever he travelled; as Jesse Foot says, he "hugged it to his bosom, and brooded over it with a rancorous rapture."

A year or two of this death in life, and the countess became an altered woman. She grew pale and nervous, silent and moody,

and always looked anxiously at her husband before she dared reply to the simplest question of social intercourse. One of his favourite forms of giving pain to this broken-spirited woman was bringing home to meals farmers' daughters he had seduced, and whom he loaded with trinkets in the presence of the woman, whom they treated with brazen and ignorant indifference. To his wife he denied all pleasure: the opera, the music party, the flower show, all the delights of her early life, were closed to her. To use the quaint but confused language of Mr. Jesse Foot, "Her person, accustomed only to distress and confinement, found no alleviation of the bitterest sorrow. Mind and body jointly submitted to receive the pressure which Bowes, like a mangle, daily rolled upon them."

But Stoney Robinson had more victims to lure into his den. If he could only get the countess's five children into his hands, he could then better torment their guardians, and bend their mother to his wishes. The sons he despaired of netting, but the two eldest daughters, Lady Maria Jane and Lady Anna Maria, seemed not quite unattainable. To beguile them he now assumed his blandest and most sympathetic aspect. He affected to be alarmed about the decay of his unhappy wife's health, and by her incessant pining for her children. A continuance of these detestable stratagems did indeed at last draw to the house one of the daughters. The other escaped, entirely owing to the firmness and prudence of the guardians. She had been allowed to go to the dangerous house to see her mother, whom Stoney Robinson declared, upon his honour as a gentleman, was ailing but dying. She was snatched from her attendants, but they, throwing up the windows, raised such a speedy and unappeasable alarm, that the child was reluctantly restored. With the other child the father fled to Paris, dragging the countess with him. The black scoundrel knew the human heart, had studied it like an instrument; his favourite stratagem was to place women and children before the front ranks of his attacking force. A long legal correspondence ensued after his flight. He endeavoured in vain to soften the iron heart of the Court of Chancery by hypocritical lamentations and crocodile tears; but, to the intense delight of her mother, was compelled at last to restore the young lady to her rejoicing guardians. In this cause he employed three of the greatest lawyers of his day, Erskine, Law (after-

wards Lord Ellenborough), and Scott (afterwards Lord Eldon), but all in vain; truth, reason, and humanity were against the special pleaders.

The story now begins to darken. With still some faint courage left, the countess, like a frightened deer driven to bay, resolved on one desperate leap for life. She determined at all risks to try and escape from the monster who had tied her up to die. He and his creatures kept remorseless and sleepless watch; but one day when Stoney Robinson went to dine with a Captain Armstrong, in Percy-street, they forgot to guard her close. One of the female servants, whom Robinson had not corrupted, had compassion for her unhappy mistress. The countess, like a frightened bird, flew at once to the open door of her cage. The male servants were lured away on mock errands. Her special turnkey was sent to the library for some novels for the countess to read in her husband's absence. She carefully locked the doors after her, to conceal her flight as long as possible, then the two trembling women crept, muffled, out of the house, and got undiscovered into Oxford-street, where at last they met a hackney-coach. They had a narrow escape. Robinson had rushed back on the news of the escape, and was in full cry after them; indeed, just as they passed Berners-street, they saw him in a hackney-coach, nearly mad with excitement, his hatless head thrust out of the window. Luckily he did not see them; but the sight of that Gorgon head so frightened the countess, who was worn and weak, that she fell into hysterics, and could hardly be persuaded for a time that she was safe and out of the villain's grip.

She was driven straight to Mr. Shuter, a barrister, in Cursitor-street, and an apartment was at once taken for her in Dyer's-buildings. Bowes soon tracked out her humble retreat, but not before the injured woman had exhibited articles of the peace against him in the Court of Queen's Bench, for the ill-treatment of her person, and was put under the protection of the court. How could Robinson be staved off by law or justice? He instantly took lodgings in the same street as the countess, ready to swoop down on her. To his disreputable house in Grosvenor-square flocked spies and base agents of all kinds ready for hire. He cried aloud for justice in the Court of Chancery and the King's Bench, and bought off all the unfortunate women whom he had victimised, and who came

to earn money by helping the countess to a divorce.

The countess had fled in such frightened haste from her tormentor and slow murderer, that she had left her jewels and all her valuables. She, therefore, with the utmost pain and mortification, had to press forward the divorce, and to oppose to the sham confessions forced from her, "beatings, scratchings, bitings, pinches, whippings, kicks, imprisonments, insults, provocations, torments, mortifications, degradations, deceptions, lies, starvation, force, and tyranny." All this time, Stoney Robinson tracked her half-hopeless fittings from obscure lodging to obscure lodging, as the kite follows the screaming chicken. At last, when she removed to rooms in Bloomsbury-square, he resolved on what Mr. Howitt appropriately calls "a grand coup de main." He determined to corrupt the constable whom the court had appointed to guard her. The man's name was Lucas, and he was highly respectable and above ordinary bribes. Bowes saw this at once, so he got at him by a stealthy flank movement. He visited the man's wife and family, gave them money, and read the Confessions to them with tremulous and deprecating voice. One of the children was ill; he nursed it daily, and gave it the medicines with his own hand. The mother began to say to herself, "It is a shame such a man should be so used by his wife. He is mild as a lamb, and as generous as a prince." She half-convincing, half-compelled her husband to help Robinson, and from that moment they became the mere creatures of his will. The abduction was soon planned.

For some weeks previous his spies and agents hung about the marked house in Bloomsbury-square, and followed Lady Strathmore's carriage sometimes in hackney-coaches, sometimes on foot. The countess was not altogether ignorant of this, but still not more alarmed than usual, as she had employed Lucas, in whom she confided, never to be far from her carriage.

On Friday, November the 10th, 1786, the trusty Lucas inquired as usual of the unsuspecting coachman what time his lady was going out, and was told to be ready between one and two in the afternoon. At the time named Lady Strathmore drove to Mr. Foster's, a shop in Oxford-street, taking with her for company Mr. Farrer, a brother of her solicitor, and Mrs. Morgan, her maid. Before they had been five

minutes in the shop she was alarmed by some of the ill-looking men she had seen hanging about Bloomsbury-square following her into the shop. She instantly withdrew to an inner room and locked the door, requesting Mr. Foster at once to go secretly and procure assistance, in case force should be threatened. Mr. Foster had scarcely gone before the cruel plot suddenly matured to action. The trusted constable came, tapped at the door, and, giving his name, was instantly admitted. The countess shuddered when the rascal at once told her that her ladyship was his prisoner; that he was sorry, but still he must do his duty, as a warrant had been put in his hands; but that as her ladyship was to be taken straight to Lord Mansfield's, at Caen Wood, there was no doubt her enemies would be soon foiled, and she would be taken under his lordship's protection. These were Robinson's words; he knew just how she would think, just how the poor frightened, half-maddened creature would infallibly act under such hopes. She immediately consented to get again into her coach, Mr. Farrer accompanying her.

That was all Stoney Robinson wanted. The moment the carriage-door was slammed her servants were dismissed by a pretended order from her, and a gang of Robinson's men, well armed, surrounded their prey. At the bottom of Highgate Hill the arch fiend himself started up, quietly displaced Mr. Farrer, and took his seat by the side of his scared wife. Then the coachman drove furiously on the road to the north. At Barnet fresh horses were put to, and a post-chaise and four, with more accomplices, was waiting to follow and bar pursuit. The windows of Robinson's coach were already broken, and the lady was pale and weeping, but no one interfered to save her. The next day at noon a servant of Robinson's arrived at the Angel Inn, Doncaster, one hundred and ninety-five miles from London, and ordered horses to be ready. In half an hour the splashed post-chaise arrived with the prisoner and her torturer. Mr. Woodcock, the landlord, handed some cakes to Robinson for the lady. Then on they dashed northward. At Bransby Moor the countess alighted, and rested for a few minutes, guarded by the wretch who watched her like a hawk. At Ferry Bridge she walked up and down the inn garden, but Robinson waited immovable at the garden door. All this toilsome and rapid journey her husband had been trying to

induce her by cajolery, threats, and force, alternately, to sign a paper, promising to stop all the proceedings in the Ecclesiastical Court, and to live with him under the name and character of wife; but the poor creature was at bay at last; she refused, unconditionally refused. Then the devil threw off the mask; he struck her on the face and body with his clenched fists, till the blood sprang from her poor bruised flesh and quivering livid lips. When she attempted to cry out he gagged her by thrusting his handkerchief in her mouth. He then beat her with the heavy chains and seals of his watch; and, at last, as she still remained firm, held a loaded pistol to her head, and threatened to blow out her brains if she did not instantly consent to sign the paper. But nothing shook her resolution, for she had tasted freedom, and she had still hope of a rescue.

At Streatlam Castle, in Durham, the man's passion grew maniacal and murderous, as she still refused to condone or to act in any way as his wife, or the manager of the family. In a fit of frenzy he pulled out the pistol, bid her say her prayers, and with a hand trembling with passion, presented the pistol to her head. But that poor weak woman was iron now. She hated him so, that death seemed better than being chained for life to such a corpse of dead and corrupt love. Seeing her immovable, the coward thrashed her cruelly, and left her locked up for a whole day. When he returned and asked her more calmly if she was yet reconciled to a dutiful domestic life, she answered with some sharp retort. He then grew apparently mad, and pulling out his pistol, told her to fall on her knees, and say her last prayers. It seemed then that the end had really come. The poor woman accordingly fell on her knees, repeated a short passionate prayer, and told him to fire, but he turned away sullenly.

Still great and imminent as the danger of murder was, there was hope. The country was up and clamorous. An angry crowd began to gather round the castle, and insist on seeing her. With his usual satanic cunning, Robinson dressed one of his servants as himself and another as the countess, and made them appear from time to time in friendly talk at the windows, to soothe and quiet the populace in the courtyard below. The stratagem succeeded, the people calmed down, and the sheriffs' officers sent to execute the attachment, served it on the masqueraders. In the meantime Bowes dragged the countess out

by a back-way, and, in the dark, brought her towards midnight to a little lonely cottage, where he spent the night threatening her, and beating her with rods. You might kill that woman now, but you would never bend her; she was stone. In the early morning he flung her behind him on a horse without a pillion, and carried her over wild and trackless heaths, covered with snow, to the house of an attorney, a creature of his, at Darlington. There he shut her up in a dark room, and holding a red-hot poker to her breast, which fear alone prevented him using to brain her, threatened her with a madhouse for life, unless she signed the paper, and came once more to his side. She was dumb, she was paralysed, but she was steel now and for ever to him. She defied his rage; she smiled at his threats. She could but die once. One blow more, and he could end the long dispute.

But Heaven has eyes, and God's hands stretch far. Help was near; a keen ear might even at that moment have distinguished the ring of approaching hoofs. That terrible day of her capture, Mr. Farrer had driven hard to London, winged by anger and pity, and had instantly made application to the Court of King's Bench, in order to effect a rescue. On Monday, November the 13th, two of Lord Mansfield's trustiest tipstiffs had posted off to the north. The constables were already scouring the country between Streatlam Castle and Darlington. Bowes was seen riding with his wife from that cottage at daybreak, flying with her over hedges and ploughed fields, going he scarcely knew whither, till in the final paroxysms of rage and despair, he would crush her dead under his feet. Labourers at work spied the wild rider, and cautiously hemmed him in; an old countryman snatched at his bridle. Bowes presented a pistol to frighten him off. Just at that moment a constable in pursuit ran in, and, with a heavy hedge-stake, beat Bowes off his horse. The countess, seeing her husband unable to move, placed herself under the protection of the Persens who had rescued her from this monster, whose enchantments had at last come to an end, and, with a pardonable exultation, bidding him farewell and reform, escorted by the delighted countrymen, she left the wretch soaked in his own blood, riding fast and gaily southwards on the first stage for London, free and once more happy.

On the 22nd, she appeared in the Court of King's Bench, and Mr. Law, her counsel,

moved "that she might exhibit articles of the peace against her husband, A. R. Bowes." These articles were read and signed, and an attachment immediately granted against the cowardly and defeated malefactor. On the 27th, Bowes was produced in court; he looked squalid and emaciated, and was with difficulty kept from fainting. He wore a soiled, drab great-coat, and a red silk handkerchief bandaged his mischief-working head. In the end the punishment fell on him heavy and swift, but not as deadly as the guillotine axe. He was fined three hundred pounds, imprisoned for three years in the King's Bench, being at the end of that time ordered to find security for fourteen years, himself in ten thousand pounds, and two sureties in five thousand pounds each. Lucas, the constable, was fined thirty pounds, with three years' imprisonment in Newgate, and the other four accomplices also received their justly-earned stripes. The countess, as might have been expected, very soon obtained a divorce.

The only revenge the countess took on the torturer of her life was to write an epitaph on him, bitter enough, but hardly equal to those lines which Arbuthnot burnt in upon the gravestone of the infamous Colonel Charteris; these she sent to the wounded man groaning and cursing in the purgatory of the King's Bench. The epitaph began :

HERE RESTS

Who never rested before,
The most ambitious of men,
For he sought not virtue, wisdom, nor
Science, yet rose by deep hypocrisy,
By the folly of some,
The vice of others,
To honours which Nature had forbaded,
And riches he wanted taste to enjoy.

He was the enemy of mankind ;
Deceitful to his friends,
Ungrateful to his benefactors,
Cringing to his superiors,
And tyrannical to his dependants.

He rose by mean arts
To unmerited honours,
Which expire before himself.
Passenger ! examine thy heart
If in aught thou resemblest him.
And if thou dost,
Read, tremble, and reform !
So shall he who living
Was the pest of society,
When dead be, against his will,
Once useful to mankind.

Some villains are reserved for future punishment. This man at least suffered in this world. For two-and-twenty years Bowes mouldered away in prison, growing

daily more and more mean, hypocritical, and viperish. At first he flaunted in the state rooms of the King's Bench, then he was shut within the walls; for the last twelve years he lodged within the rules in obscure lodgings in St. George's Fields. His great passion was to become acquainted with all prisoners of rank, but many of these repelled his fulsome advances. His humour was of a cruel and brutal kind, and consisted generally in making his guests drunk by filling the kettle with which they made their grog with spirits and water. On one occasion he intoxicated a sponging visitor, floured his face, and filling his boots with water, left him at the table with a looking-glass before him, and lights burning. The sponge is not generally of a chivalrous nature, and within a fortnight, as Stoney Robinson had prophesied, the fellow came to dine again with the man who had made a fool of him.

As for Robinson's lawsuits for the recovery of property from the trustees of the Strathmore estate, they were interminable. He had many schemes to deceive the judges and the counsel; he could feign asthma, vomiting or spitting blood, and no one could swoon more successfully in court. He cheated his sister's husband, who guaranteed him annuities on his promise to leave him his Benwell estate, and, to crown all that cunning an accomplish, he actually swindled and fleeced a long series of London attorneys. Each of these acute gentlemen advanced him money for his lawsuits, till their purses one by one ran dry. The force of cunning can no further go.

He even secured another female victim. He seduced the daughter of a ruined country gentleman, then in the Bench, and by her he had five children. He kept her jealously locked up in solitude from 1787 till he died in 1809. At last, mean as he was, he took to drink. To the end he kept no servants, would not even buy brushes, but made his two eldest daughters gather up the dirt and dust in their hands. At last Satan sent for his useful son. Robinson left something to the countess's children; but it was only, by the entreaties of Mr. Silas Foot, the surgeon, and after the tears of his children, that he could be induced to leave the countess a poor one hundred pounds per annum.

Surely of all the men who have ever persecuted and injured women, even by sword or flame, there never existed a greater torturer of the heart than this man. Well did Mr. Howitt close his careful sketch of

Stoney Robinson by Mr. Jesse Foot's bitter line of epitaph, "He was a villain to the backbone."

TWO SIDES OF A STORY.

GRETCHEN'S THIRD CHAPTER. HOW IT ALL ENDED.

THE next morning, however, when ready to quit my room, I found myself at liberty as usual. Mimi was unable to leave her bed, and I went straight to my father without waiting to be sent for by him. I explained to him how it was that I had stayed to nurse his wife, and told him that my letter to Ned had left the house that very morning. He heard me with great composure, which surprised me a good deal. I had expected violent reproaches and threats, but I met with nothing of the kind. He said that the worst had now come, that I had chosen to obey a scruple of conscience rather than be true to my father, and as the thing was done he would calmly await the issue. From Edward Lance's reply to my letter we should learn what he meant to do. He commended me for staying to attend upon his wife, and spoke some feeling words about her, as though he were sorry, and pitied her. I went back then to her bedside, and sat down to wait impatiently for a letter from Ned.

Some days passed, during which I felt a sore compunction for my conduct towards my father, a hatred of myself, and a great longing to see Ned in spite of all that had passed, and was to come. More days went over, and no answer came to that letter. More days still; and I began to feel a keen, terrible pain, greater than anything I had as yet suffered. I had not believed that Ned could have been willing to give me up without a regret. I had thought to be urged and reproached. I had wept over the imagination of Ned's grief at my loss. Now it was bitter to think that he could silently acquiesce in all that I had proposed; that he was so occupied in thinking of his inheritance that he could not even treat as a matter of importance the sad, sad farewell which I had sent him as the ending of our engagement. I wonder now, as I write, how I could ever have so judged him, but my reason was weakened, I suppose, by continued torture of mind. I yearned for even one kind word of farewell from his hand; and the days kept going and coming, and no letter ever came.

Weeks passed away. Mimi was unable to leave her own rooms, and I often met my father alone. He was very gentle with me, and repeatedly asked me if I had heard from Edward Lance. Every day my answer was given to him in a fainter voice, and with whiter lips. He seemed to pity me, I thought; and by-and-bye he quite left off questioning me.

The summer was coming on. The days grew long, and in the warmer weather Mimi was able to come down-stairs again, and we thought she was getting better. My father was attentive to her, and this seemed to surprise and gratify her greatly. Friends came to visit her, for she was a favourite with all who knew her. We had some gay evenings when a few friends met at the Sycamores, and we had some music, or looked over some rare old drawings which Mr. Sutherland had lately bought. It would have been a pleasant time if one's heart had not been breaking; but I look back on it as part of a frightful dream.

It was during this time that I had a proposal of marriage from that agreeable Mr. Field whom I have mentioned before. He was a wealthy man, and important in the county, and he asked for what he wanted like one who did not expect to be refused. I could have imagined a woman very happy as his wife, but as for myself I knew that I could not marry any man unless he had the heart, and the mind, and the features of Edward Lance. My nature is not one that "gets over" things; and I knew that time would make no change. Mr. Field received my firm denial with amazement, and, unable to comprehend it, went to complain to Mr. Sutherland, whom he looked upon as my guardian.

And now, indeed, there was a net of difficulty cast around me. My father was, as I had feared he would be, delighted at this opening through which he could dispose of me so well, so safely, and for ever. During many weeks he strove with me so persistently that I thought he or I must die before the struggle would be over. But I would not yield; for soul and body were yet left to me, though Ned had given me up. I proposed to my father that I should change my name, and go very far away, so that I should not trouble him any more. Then I remembered that I had already done my worst with Ned, and wondered why my father was now so anxious to get rid of me. I could at all times do more than earn bread for myself, and he had not always been so careful about my

fate. The future solved this riddle, but at that time it puzzled me.

At last Mr. Field became satisfied that I was a mad woman, and went away mortified that he had ever thought of such a person as a wife. From that day forth all friendship was at an end between me and my father.

Every day I wondered what Ned could be doing. Was he spending all these months in collecting evidence to prove the fraud that had been practised on him, and might not any day's post bring tidings that the law had been set in motion against Mr. Sutherland? I heard nothing of all this as the summer days deepened. The outer world was a great silence to me, and the only spot of life in the universe was the Sycamores. Yet the life that it held was feeble and ghostly at the best. In the midst of the summer beauty and warmth, Mimi lay dying; creeping every day a little nearer to her grave. My father seemed restless and troubled, watchful and fearful, and never straying far from home. I scarcely ever saw him, being quite engrossed with Mimi. I had long known well that I should have to nurse her to the end.

One evening I was sitting by her as usual; her eyes were closed, and I thought she was asleep. Suddenly I found her looking at me.

"I have a strange idea troubling my mind," she said. "May I speak?"

"Speak at once, Mimi," I said. "No matter how strange it is."

"When I am dead, you must not marry Mr. Sutherland."

I started, and looked at her in amazement.

"Not because I am jealous," she added, "but because you would not be happy."

"Dear Mimi," I said, "tell me what has put such a fantastic notion into your head."

"Is it fantastic?" she asked. "Well, there is no strange idea you could imagine that has not passed through my mind about you and Mr. Sutherland. They have all faded away, except one, that keeps its place. I have been thinking that perhaps he had asked you to marry him, before he knew me, and that you refused him. And I think that when I am dead perhaps he will ask you again. And you have broken off with your lover, though you would not marry Mr. Field. And Mr. Sutherland is much altered, much improved. And the Sycamores is a pretty home."

"Mimi," I said, "listen to me!" and I took her hand and held it. "You will believe what I say, for I take God to witness that I speak only the truth. Your husband never had at any time the faintest wish to marry me. Such a marriage would be impossible, even if you had ceased to live. Are you content?"

"Quite content," she said; and then she turned away and went to sleep. For a moment I had felt tempted to tell her the whole truth; and I should have done so at all risks, if she had shown any further curiosity or uneasiness. But she seemed perfectly at peace, and she was very near her death, and why trouble her with a long tale of grief and wrong?

Some time before this I had begun to notice a great change in my father. He had not the satisfied calm which I had wondered at for awhile, and he had also lost the fearful, impatient manner, and the nervously watchful gleam that had of late made one afraid to meet his eye. He showed a tenderness to Mimi that greatly soothed her last hours, and I fancied that he seemed to shun me with a kind of shame. Whenever I had an errand to him I found him pacing thoughtfully up and down his library, with his hands behind his back, and his eyes on the ground, and with a new expression on his face, which I know not how to describe. Some days before her death, Mimi and he had a long and agitating conversation. I met him coming from her room, looking crushed and grief-stricken, and with traces of tears on his face. I tried to offer him comfort, but he put me aside and passed on. A few days after this Mimi died in my arms.

Now indeed did my term at the Sycamores seem drawn out to its very end; but I could not leave the place, while it held what had been Mimi. I did all that was needful, and then I prepared to go away. I wrote to Mrs. Rice to expect me in London; and on a certain evening I went down to the study to say good-bye to my father.

I had not spoken to him since before Mimi's death. He had shut himself up, and I had not ventured to go near him. He was sitting at the table with his head between his hands, and when he raised his face he looked aged and haggard, feeble and broken-hearted. He looked a poor old man, very lonely and afflicted. I went up to him and stood at his side, and burst into tears.

"Don't cry," he said, "don't cry. I have cost you grief enough. You are right

to go, and I will not keep you with me. You are a good woman, Gretchen, and I have been a very bad man. Things are different with me now, from what they were a few weeks ago. I am not going to vex you any more. Perhaps, in some days hence, you will have reason to think a little better and a little worse of me, than you have yet had reason to do. Good-bye now, child, and be as happy as you can."

I did not understand him. He put me away from him quickly, as if he wanted to get rid of me. I went, weeping, and travelled sadly up-stairs to put on my bonnet for my journey. But something rose in my heart and declared that I must not go. My father was ill and in trouble, and he needed some one to care for him. I put off my bonnet again, and hastened back down the stairs to make an appeal to him that he would allow himself to be comforted. Descending thus, bent on my errand, I heard a commotion in the hall, and saw a knot of policemen below at the study-door. I hurried on and gained the hall, just as the study-door opened: which it did before I had time to ask a question. I saw my father come out and stand on the threshold, and two of the men seize him and put handcuffs on his wrists. It all passed in a moment. My father looked dumbly from one face to the other; struggled to speak, moaned, and fell.

I flew to his side and pushed away the men. They were sorry enough, but said they were forced to do their duty. I was crazed with misery, and scarce knew what I said or did. God forgive me. I thought that Ned had done this thing.

We carried him to bed, and the doctors who had been so familiar to the house of late, wore now recalled to pass their sentence upon its stricken master. They said that Henry Sutherland would never speak again. And he never did. He had got a fit of apoplexy, and he died the next day.

Never shall I forget the utter horror and loneliness of the week that followed his death. I was alone in the vast house, amidst tenantless rooms, with black draped domestic creeping silently about me. I seemed to live in a nightmare, from which I struggled to waken, even to the hard, bitter reality of my future daily life. On the day after the funeral the lawyer desired to speak with me. Poor Mimi had left me many of her pretty things that she was so fond of, from her brilliant piece of tapestry down to the diamond buckles of

her dainty little shoes. I learned from this lawyer one fact, which made me more glad than I had ever thought to be again. He told me that Mr. Sutherland's arrest had been made for some fraud of which he was said to have been guilty very early in his life. And thus I knew that Ned had had no hand in it.

"The heir has been communicated with," said the lawyer, who probably thought I might be eager to get possession of those articles in the house which now belonged to me. "The heir, Mr. Lance, has been travelling abroad, and our letters have scarcely reached him as yet. Till he appears of course nothing can be touched."

I did not notice that he called Edward the heir, or I might have asked the reason why. It seemed only natural that people should speak of him as master at the Sycamores. He had long held this position in my mind. I took it for granted that Ned had already urged his claim, and made known his wrong; but I could not think on the matter, still less could I ask a question.

I got away from the Sycamores as quickly as I could. Mrs. Rice was waiting for me at the London terminus, and was very kind and motherly with me, so that I am still very grateful to her. She had made a neat little sitting-room very comfortable for my reception, but I had been better anywhere else, for it was the same room in which I had been so happy long ago.

There, in Mrs. Rice's hands, I was attacked by the first real illness I ever had in my life. It was a low fever, which kept me suffering for many days, and left me weak and helpless as a child. Mrs. Rice did not venture to ask a question about Ned, though it was evident she was anxious to know why he did not appear. But having made a mistake once she was careful not to make another. When I was able to leave my bed she tucked me up in her great arm-chair by her fireside, and rummaged an antediluvian bookcase for literature to amuse me. Sitting there, trying to be patient, I felt myself to be the feeblest and loneliest little atom in the world.

And having thus arrived at the lowest depths of my sorrow, there burst upon me suddenly the great wonder and happiness for which I was in no way prepared. Three evenings I had spent sitting in Mrs. Rice's arm-chair, and on the fourth I had got up, and staggered to the table, quite proud

that I was strong enough to pour out a cup of tea. But my pride was premature, for a sudden knock at the hall-door made my hand shake so that I spilled the tea over the tray, in trying to raise it to my lips. There was something in the sound that made my heart beat hard. If it had not been Ned's hand that had produced that noise, then it was cruel in Mrs. Rice's lodgers to have learned the trick of his knock. But I had time for no other thought before Ned was in the room.

"Gretchen, Gretchen!" he cried, "oh, my poor love!" And he took me in his arms, and moaned over me like a tender-hearted child over a half-drowned kitten. He was frightened at my haggard face, and I was almost as frightened at his; for he, too, looked as if he had been ill. I could not remember at the moment what had been the barrier between us, and whether I belonged to him or not. Had he been cruel to me, or I had been cruel to him? I only knew the joy of being well loved once more.

But by-and-bye all the story was unfolded. He had never received that letter, the writing of which had cost me so much pain. For a long time my letters to him had been short and strange, and suddenly they had ceased altogether. He had written me very often, imploring me to write, if only to explain the meaning of my silence. At last he had said, in making a last appeal, that if it could wring no answer from me, he would believe I had ceased to love him, and had resolved to shake him off. He heard, at the same time, from an acquaintance who had been in Hopshire, that I was well, and about to be married immediately to Mr. Field. Unable to believe all this without hearing from my lips, he had at once set out for Hopshire, determined to see me. Approaching the house, through the trees he had espied me walking on the lawn with Mr. Field. It was on one of those occasions when that gentlemen had used all his eloquence to persuade me to alter my decision as to his suit. But the picture, as Ned saw it, had been too much for his sorely-trying faith. He had turned away at once, thankful that he had not humbled himself unnecessarily. In another week he had been on his way towards Rome. Thither, very lately, a packet had made its way to him.

"Here is the sequel," he said, and placed this packet in my hands. I opened it wondering, and found first that wretched letter to which I have so often alluded, and next a heap of others written by Ned to me. Lastly, there was one from my father, which explained all the mystery of the rest. This last was to Ned, written only two days before my father's death.

"All my mind seems to have changed within the past few weeks," he said, "and in proof of this I send you the enclosed. I kept back all these letters. I have divided you and Gretchen, but I will no longer stand between you. I acknowledge the fraud which I have practised upon you. Come now and take possession of all that is lawfully yours. For Gretchen's sake, I believe you will not expose me." There was much more in the letter, but this was the substance of it. It was a strange fact, that after having written this letter he had made a will in which he left everything to Edward Lance. By this, it would appear, that he must have had some foreshadowing of his own sudden death. Thus, Ned succeeded quietly as heir to the property which, in justice, ought long since to have been his; and the world knew none of our secrets, and never need know them now.

And thus all the mystery was cleared up. I understand at last the meaning of my father's words, "You will think worse of me, and better of me, than you have yet had cause to do." We sat in silence, clasping each other's hands.

We live now with our children at the Sycamores. Time has worn away all sad recollections, and ours is the happiest home in all England. We do not forget our Fan, and we often speak together about Mimi. We sometimes hear from Kitty. She has married a French count, and leads a very pleasant life. Our greatest regret is that my poor father did not live long enough to let us know his better self. And we thank God for one another.

On the 8th of July will be commenced a New Serial Story, entitled

CASTAWAY.

By the Author of "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN PORT," &c., which will be continued from week to week until completed.

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THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

CASTAWAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN PORT," &c. &c.

PROLOGUE.

CHAPTER I. AFTER MESS.

"JUST fetch my coat out of the commercial-room, Sam, and get my luggage ready for the bus—I am going by the eight-forty-five."

"Is this yours, Mr. Baines?" said the person addressed, the boots of the hotel, pointing to a number of queer-looking packages wrapped in leather, and secured with huge straps and buckles, which were lying in the passage of the George Inn at Cheeseborough.

"Yes," replied Mr. Baines; "you ought to know, you have seen them often enough."

"Well, do you know," said the boots, slowly, "I dare say you may think it odd, but there is a good deal of luggage of the same pattern as is brought to this house. The fancy line ain't what it was, Mr. Baines."

"You are right, Sam," said Mr. Baines, "it's overdone, it's—Hallo! what's that?" he cried, as a roar of laughter rang through the house. "Got a public dinner going on, Sam?"

"No, not exactly," said Sam. "Yeomanry's out, and a fine out they are making of it. There is six hundred of them in one place and another up and down the town; and there has been a review to-day, and the officers has been dining here afterwards. That was them hallooing just now."

"Yeomanry, eh!" said Mr. Baines. "I don't hold much with yeomanry, Sam; my idea is that the proper way to defend this country—"

But Mr. Baines was compelled to post-

pone his intention of imparting his notions for the national defence, as at that moment the omnibus drove up, and seeing in it a representative of the rival house of Peto and Wiggins, Mr. Baines hastened to climb the box with the view of learning all about the intended movements of his brother commercial.

Meanwhile the stout major, whose jokes, principally levelled against himself, had evoked the laughter thus commented upon, had brought his speech to a humorous conclusion, and sat down amidst the applause of his comrades. The disinclination for more oratory, and the desire to smoke, now impelled most of the officers to push away their chairs and adjourn to the billiard-room; no one, however, ventured to move, until the president, Lieutenant-Colonel Goole, a tall, handsome man, wearing the Crimean and Indian medals, had risen from his seat, and bidding his brother officers good-night, and bowing right and left, had left the room.

Then all restraint was thrown off, everybody began talking to everybody else, caps and shakoos were hastily donned, and the doors being thrown open by the waiters, the crowd of young men surged into the passage, and thence into the billiard-room, while some, more highly favoured than the rest, sought the snuggerly behind the bar, and there entertained themselves with flirting with the good-looking barmaids.

Only two men remained in the room where the dinner had been held. Both were middle-aged, but one had retained his figure, and a certain unmistakable soldier-like smartness, while the other, close verging on corpulency, unbuttoned his jacket and flung himself back in his chair, with an air of one accustomed to subordinate everything to his sense of personal comfort.

His companion watched these proceedings with a certain amount of curiosity, and when they were completed said, with a laugh :

"By Jove, Jack, this'll never do! If you go on like this you will have to pay three hundred pounds for a charger to carry you. This all comes of selling out early, and going in for domesticity and gentleman-farming."

"Upon my word I believe you are right, Cleethorpe. I must ride close upon sixteen stone now, and it seems to me that I am putting on flesh every year. I think you are wrong about the selling out though. I could not have stood that confounded "stables" much longer, and as for the domesticity, I was meant to be a home bird, and not a battered old London rake like you."

"Exactly," said Captain Cleethorpe, lighting a cigar and handing his case to his friend; "exactly; the only wonder is to me that you still remain in this regiment."

"Well, you see, Cleethorpe," said his companion, slowly expelling his smoke, "there is nothing that I know of so good that you cannot have a little too much of it, and I find that to come down here to see you, my old chum of so many years' standing, and to talk with the colonel, who is a deuced nice gentlemanly fellow and a man of the world, and to mix with these young fellows, who show me what the present generation is like, does me good by rubbing off the rust—"

He stopped as the door opened, and a young man entered the room. A man a little above the middle height, and apparently not more than eighteen years of age, with a small and singularly well-shaped head and handsome regular features. So handsome was he, with his dark blue eyes and dark chestnut hair, which curled in natural and most unusual ripples over his head, that even men, who are generally accustomed to scorn anything like personal beauty in one of their own sex, were fain to admit that he was good-looking. Artists found his lips too full, and his forehead a little too narrow, but principally admired the shape of his head, and the way in which it was joined to his throat, which they pronounced classical and Byron-like, though they complained that the delicate tints of his complexion were too essentially feminine.

There was, however, nothing effeminate in the young man's manner. He strode into the room without swagger indeed, but

with perfect manly ease, and walked up to the far end of the table where he had been sitting during dinner.

"Come to hunt for my cigar-case," he said, as he passed his two brother officers; "must have dropped it under the table. Oh, here it is. Not coming to the billiard-room, Captain Cleethorpe? Do come, there is great fun going on; just going to get up a pool, Captain Norman, and must have you; capital thing for you after dinner. I'll be your player and take care you have plenty of exercise in walking after your ball." And before either of them could reply, he had laughed and quitted the room.

"That's a cheeky youth," said Captain Norman, looking after him, "cheeky, but deuced good-looking. One of the new lot, isn't it? Which; not Travers?"

"No," said Cleethorpe. "Travers is the great hulking fellow that sat within two of you just now; this lad's name is Heriot. His father is an old army man, now a major-general and a K.C.B., who has been out in India all his life, and has just retired from the service. Goole is an old chum of his, which accounts for the lad being with us, though I think I understood he is going into the regulars."

"The cub is deuced good-looking," said Captain Norman, "but he'll want a good deal of licking into shape."

"I don't think that," said Captain Cleethorpe; "he is only a boy, you see, and cheeky as most boys are, but his manners are generally pretty enough. The sort of boy I think I should be proud of," said the captain, slowly puffing at his cigar. "I wonder what Sir Geoffrey will think of him? The lad hasn't seen his father, he tells me, since he was a baby."

"What was it I heard about this old Heriot?" said Captain Norman; "something, I know; a tremendous martinet, wasn't he?"

"Yes," said Cleethorpe; "when I saw him out in India he was a strict disciplinarian and a first-class soldier. Kimandine Heriot they used to call him out there, from some wonderful exploit of his in either attacking or holding—I forget which—some pass during the Sikh war. But Goole, who, as I say, knows him very well, was telling me some other things about him the other day. It appears when he was last at home he married a goodish-looking woman with money and position, and that sort of thing, and everybody thought he would go on the retired list; but he didn't. After some little time he

went out to India again, leaving her behind him, and she and this boy lived together till she died, about ten years ago, and since then he has been educated in France. That's what Goole told me."

"Devilish interesting story," said Captain Norman, who was very nearly asleep, and roused himself with a start. "Now let's go and have a pool." And he pushed aside his chair, and stretched himself as he rose.

"All right," said Captain Cleethorpe, rising at the same time; and the two officers walked off together.

CHAPTER II. IN THE BILLIARD-ROOM.

"NICE atmosphere this," said Captain Cleethorpe to his companion, as he opened the door of the billiard-room, and walked into a perfect vapour-bath of tobacco smoke.

"Yes," said Captain Norman, waving his hand to and fro before him, in the vain attempt to clear some of the smoke away; "rather glad I am not going home to-night—it clings about you so confoundedly, and the smell of stale smoke is the only one thing that Mrs. Norman makes a row about. She don't mind it fresh, but hates it when it is stale."

"Ah!" said Cleethorpe, "then it won't do for you ever to bring her to see me at the Bungalow; our parson's wife tells me my place smells just like the inside of a pipe, and she ought to know, for the padre can never put his sermon together on a Saturday without his meerschaum in his mouth. It's clearing off now a bit, or we are getting accustomed to it. Let us see who are here."

The billiard-room at the George was a very large one, containing two tables—one at either end, and flanked all round the wall by stout horse-hair seats. Billiards were an institution in Cheeseborough; the town had produced one of the most celebrated professional players; and no matter what might be the season of the year, the room at the George was always well filled. The town itself was split into two political parties, hating each other with undying animosity, and keeping up their antagonism not merely at election times, or other periods of political excitement, but throughout the whole year. Each party had its head-quarters; the Liberals at the George and the Conservatives at the Royal, and all banquets, balls, fancy fairs, and public meetings of any kind in which the

leaders of either party were interested, took place at one or other of their respective houses.

A Liberal elector of Cheeseborough would as soon have thought of smacking his lips over a glass of senna prepared for him by Mr. Tofts, the chemist, as of whetting his appetite with sherry and bitters at the Royal. A Conservative, if he could have imagined himself ordering such a draught, would not have been surprised to find death in the soda-and-brandy mixed for him by the barmaid at the George. But there was no billiard-room at the Royal, and as the game of billiards was a necessity both for Conservatives and Liberals, the billiard-room at the George was looked upon as a kind of neutral ground where they might meet together in friendly union, and where any reference to politics was rigidly tabooed. As happens not unfrequently, some of the keenest local politicians were the most energetic supporters of the game, and it was to their credit that they met night after night, without ever permitting themselves even a reference to the subjects, which they discussed so acrimoniously at all other times and places.

On the evening in question the billiard-room was even more full than usual; both tables were occupied, the one with a game of pool, in which most of the officers, and some of the visitors who had been present at the officers' mess, were engaged, the other by a match keenly contested by four of the best players amongst the townspeople. All along the seats ranged round the wall were men in various lounging attitudes, watching the play, and discussing the merits of the players with perfect freedom, or talking over various occurrences of that day's review, at which most of them had been present.

"Goole's not here, I suppose?" said Norman, as they seated themselves at the upper end of the room; "at least I have not come across him yet."

"No," said Cleethorpe; "he cleared off for home at once; this sort of thing won't do for him."

"Don't he like tobacco smoke?"

"Oh, it isn't that a bit—like most old Indians, he's seldom without a cheroot in his mouth—but the fact is, Goole is a very strict disciplinarian, and, having passed the greater part of his life in the command of niggers and natives, he finds it difficult to understand this kind of material," said Cleethorpe, motioning with his cigar to

some of the yeomanry who were standing at the further table.

"He's like your old friend Heriot, that you were speaking of—a bit of a martinet?"

"Well, yes," said Cleethorpe. "He doesn't seem to understand that this is a quasi-volunteer service, and that these men, who give up a certain amount of their time and money—though I allow it is to them amusement—are not to be treated as mere privates in the Line. For instance, Goole would think it quite derogatory to sit in this room while men in the regiment were so far forgetting the respect due to him as to play billiards in his august presence."

"Perhaps the major thinks so too?" said Norman; "as he has taken himself off, and you are the senior officer left to us."

"The major has taken himself off because he has discussed one bottle of sherry and two bottles of claret, and makes it a rule never to take spirits after good wine," said Cleethorpe; "and, moreover, I do not intend my dignity as senior officer to prevent my enjoying myself. What do you say; shall we join the next pool?"

"No," said Norman, lazily. "I am tired after all that bumping about this morning; besides those young fellows make such a tremendous row. Let's talk to some of these yokels."

"Well, Mr. Martin," said he, turning to a stout man in a suit of dark grey, who was sitting next him; "were you at the review to-day?"

"I were, indeed, captain, and a main fine sight it was."

"How did you think your boy Tom looked, Martin?" asked Captain Cleethorpe. "I told you the riding-master would make something of that seat of his."

"Well, sir," said farmer Martin, "may be 'tis right in the military fashion to hold your heels down and turn your toes out, as if you were at dancing-school, and to jolt about in your saddle like one sack of flour in a large waggon; but that wouldn't do for cross-country work, captain; you must shorten your stirrup-leathers there."

"Ay, ay," said Cleethorpe, nodding. "By the way, didn't you say you wanted to speak to me this evening, Martin?"

"Yes, sir," said the old man, dropping his voice, and edging up confidentially towards Captain Cleethorpe. "It's about Mr. Travers, sir; that tall gentleman with the cue in his hand now."

"I see. Don't point; he's looking at you," said Cleethorpe.

"No offence, sir," said Martin. "But this Muster Travers, Tom's in his troop, sir, and he du worry Tom's life out."

"Stop, stop, Martin, I cannot hear this," said Captain Cleethorpe, hurriedly; "I cannot listen to complaints of this kind, at all events at such a time, and in such a place. If you have anything to complain of, or rather if your son has anything to complain of against Mr. Travers, he must bring it forward in a proper manner before the colonel. Did you hear that?" continued Cleethorpe, turning to his friend. "Not a very popular youth is Mr. Travers, I suspect."

"Ill-conditioned brute," said Captain Norman; "quarrelsome, cantankerous, low-bred lout; a complete specimen of what these young fellows call in their modern slang 'bad form.'"

"He must be a singularly bad lot," said Cleethorpe, "for he even managed to-day to have a row with the major, which I should have thought an impossibility. Hallo! what's that?" He pointed as he spoke to the other end of the room, where a little knot of men were gathered together.

Above the hum arising round them, a thick voice was heard saying, in coarse, common tones, "Can't you stand still? Always jumping about in that infernal French fashion, like a dancing-master! That's the second time you have spoiled my stroke!"

"That's that brute Travers, by the voice," said Norman, raising himself up on his elbow, the better to look at the group. "Whom is he speaking to in that charming, gentlemanly manner?"

"I cannot see clearly, but to Heriot, I should fancy, by that graceful allusion to the boy's French bringing up. Yes, it is. I hear Heriot's shrill voice in reply, and the strong foreign accent which always crops up when he's excited."

"That Travers is just the sort of fellow who would bully and swagger where he thought he could do so unchecked."

"He had better not try on such practices with Heriot," said Cleethorpe. "That young man has, I fancy, a spirit of his own. At all events, if he takes after his father, he would be one of the last to stand any—By Jove, they are at it again."

As he spoke, the little knot of men had formed again in the same place, and again Travers's voice was heard above the others, crying out, this time in louder and more passionate accents, "Keep back, sir, will you? You have spoiled my stroke again."

That time I believe you did it on purpose."

"I didn't," in Heriot's shrill accents.

"You did."

"You're a liar!"

And immediately on the utterance of the words, there followed a dull heavy sound like a thud.

Travers had hit out, and caught Heriot on the cheek. Then with something that was more of a scream than an ordinary exclamation, Heriot was rushing in upon his adversary, when the bystanders laid hold of him, and Captain Cleethorpe rushing up, pushed his way through the crowd, and taking the lad by the arm, cried out, "Mr. Heriot, what is the meaning of all this?"

The boy, who was trembling with excitement from head to foot, stared at him vacantly for a moment, then said, incoherently, "He—I——" and then, to Cleethorpe's intense dismay, burst into a flood of passionate tears.

CHAPTER III. SITTING IN JUDGMENT.

EVERY morning at six o'clock, the bell in the turret of the stables attached to Lacklands, the pretty villa in the neighbourhood of Cheeseborough, where Lieutenant-Colonel Goole resides, is rung for full five minutes, its shrill notes warning all those who hear it, and who are in the colonel's employ, that for them the new day has begun, and that they may at any time expect a visit from their master.

Mr. Boulger, who lives at Valparaiso Villa, the property adjoining Lacklands, and who made his money as a shipping agent at Birkenhead, objects very strongly to this bell, as do other residents in the neighbourhood. Colonel Goole receives their protests, which are sometimes made verbally, sometimes in writing, very politely, and in reply informs them, in a gentleman-like manner, and well-chosen terms, that he finds it necessary to make some such public announcement to the people employed by him, and that as an old Indian officer, accustomed to early rising, he considers the time he has fixed upon as the very latest at which work ought to be commenced. He himself, he avers, is always out of bed an hour before that time; and he might have added, is generally on the spot to see that the warning of the bell is not without its proper attention.

This morning, for instance, he has been through the stables, and looked over the occupant of each of his four stalls, has talked with the gardener about the coming

fruit crop, and consulted the shepherd as to the chances of fine weather; and now, just as the clock is striking seven, is striding about with a spud in his hand, devising certain alterations in the little slips of garden specially set aside for the behoof of his children.

The sunlight is even now sufficiently strong to dazzle his eyes as he looks up from the ground which he has been marking out, and he is compelled to shade them with his hand before he can make out the figure of a man, mounted on horseback, slowly approaching up the valley. Colonel Goole's eyesight had stood him in good stead on many occasions in India, and is good still. "Cleethorpe," he says to himself, after his survey; "Cleethorpe, on that leggy mare which he tried to make a charger of, but which he is quite wise in keeping for a hack. What can bring him here so early this morning? He's not a man to come out merely for the sake of a ride, or for breakfast; there must be something the matter in the regiment, I expect." And without relinquishing his hold of the spud, Colonel Goole started off down the hill to meet his brother officer.

The colonel's apprehensions were by no means set at rest by the captain's manner or appearance. Both, however, were practical men, unaccustomed to heat about the bush, or to attempt to mystify each other, and they came to the point at once.

"Good morning, Cleethorpe," said the colonel, when he was within earshot of his friend; "what brings you out here so early this morning; something has happened, I suppose?"

"You're right, sir," said Captain Cleethorpe, returning his salute, "something has happened."

"Unpleasant?"

"Very unpleasant!"

"I thought so," said the colonel, who had paused until his friend joined him, and who now turned round and walked by the horse's side; "please state shortly what it is."

"A row in the billiard-room of the George, last night."

The colonel's face darkened at these words, and he muttered, "Creditable that, by Jove! Any civilian mixed up in it?"

"No, sir; the quarrel was between Mr. Travers and Mr. Heriot."

"George Heriot?" replied the colonel, quickly; then shaking his head, "I'm sorry for that. Go on."

"Mr. Travers several times accused Mr.

Heriot of unduly pressing upon him, and spoiling his stroke in the game that was being played. At length, in the most marked and offensive manner, he accused Mr. Heriot of having pushed his arm."

"Well, Cleethorpe, well?"

"I regret to say, sir, that upon this provocation Mr. Heriot gave Mr. Travers the lie, and that then Mr. Travers struck Mr. Heriot a blow."

"A blow! struck George a blow?" said the colonel, stopping short, and looking up in horror at his friend. "By Jove, Cleethorpe, I am not a rich man, but I would have given five hundred pounds sooner than this should have happened. Who were present at this scene?"

"Many, sir; quite a crowd. Captain Norman and I, some dozen of the regiment, and several townspeople. One of the waiters and the marker were in the room, too, at the time; in fact, as you will see from the sequel, it is impossible to hush the matter up."

"Sequel! What, have you more to tell me?"

"I have, indeed, and the worst part of it."

"By Jove, Cleethorpe," said the colonel, who had fallen into deep thought, "Lord Okehampton will be furious when he hears of this; and if there's a meeting between these young men——"

"You may spare yourself the trouble of calculating the consequences of such a result, Colonel Goole; there will be no meeting."

"No meeting; that's by your management then, Cleethorpe," said the colonel, laying his hand on the captain's arm; "mutual retractions and apologies, eh? Cleverly managed, my friend."

"I don't deserve your compliment, and I regret that you have quite misapprehended the state of affairs. Mr. Travers distinctly refuses to retract anything that he has said, or to apologise for the blow given to Mr. Heriot."

"The deuce he does!" said the colonel, anxiously. "Well, then, Cleethorpe, the days of duelling are over, and rightly, too, I suppose, but—but a blow is a deuced awkward thing; George Heriot can't sit down under that; he must have him out, sir, he must have him out!"

"That course has already been suggested to Mr. Heriot," said Captain Cleethorpe; "not by me, I am too old to be mixed up in such matters, but by some gentlemen more of his own standing in the regiment; but Mr. Heriot won't fight."

"What!" cried the colonel, so loudly and suddenly as to frighten Cleethorpe's horse; "won't fight?"

"He declines to ask Mr. Travers for satisfaction for the insult passed upon him. The young man is a favourite in the regiment, and his comrades hesitated before accepting his reply. It was pointed out to him that the insult offered to him was the grossest which could be passed upon any gentleman, and one which it was impossible for him to bear, and remain in the society of gentlemen. Mr. Heriot did not attempt to argue the point, he simply declined to send a challenge."

"But didn't he give any reason for this extraordinary conduct?"

"Not the least in the world. He said he had a reason which satisfied himself, but which he could not explain."

"This is very bad, Cleethorpe."

"Very bad indeed, colonel. As I have told you, I thought it better to keep clear of the affair last night, but this morning I went to the young man's room—I knew something of his father in India, as I told you—and tried to represent to him the position in which he had placed himself. It was of no use. He still refuses to take proper notice of Mr. Travers's blow."

"He must go, Cleethorpe," said the colonel, looking up at him.

"Not a doubt of that, colonel. The prestige of the regiment would be ruined if he were suffered to remain. Two or three men expressed that opinion to me last night, amongst them Norman, who is quiet and sensible, and by no means hot-headed. Indeed, I feel it myself."

"So do I," said Colonel Goole, quietly. "You mentioned his father just now; I don't know how I shall be able to break it to Sir Geoffrey, and he intended to make a soldier of the lad."

"Ah!" said Captain Cleethorpe, patting his horse's neck, "it was only last evening that I was half inclined to deplore my bachelor state, and to wish that I had a boy like his, but now I cannot be too thankful for the immense amount of anxiety and possible misery that I have been spared."

"You're right. God help poor Sir Geoffrey! He will suffer frightfully. I must write to him of course, and to Lord Okehampton, and that will be a very pleasant business for me, by the way, for it was principally on my representation that Okehampton gave the boy his commission. However, we will go in and get our break-

fast now, and afterwards I will write the letters, and you shall take them in with you and despatch them. Hard lines for Heriot—frightful hard lines for a man at the close of an honourable career to find his hopes blighted and his name slurred, and that by no fault of his own. By the way, does the young man know that he must go? He had better apply for leave until the matter can be formally arranged."

"I settled that with him this morning, and am the bearer of his application. He knows, too, that he must give up all chance of entering the army."

"How does he behave about that?"

"Very quietly, and not without a certain amount of dignity. In spite of all that has happened, there is something about the young man's manner which one could never find in a coward. If one could only know his reason for this conduct!"

"That you say he distinctly refuses to give?" said the colonel.

"Most decidedly."

"Then," said the colonel, shrugging his shoulders, "we can only act on what is brought before us."

"I suppose so," said Captain Cleethorpe, repeating the shrug, and turning his horse's head in the direction of the stables, while the colonel moved towards the house.

Their talk at breakfast was about other matters, and when the meal was finished, they adjourned to the little study, and there after much cogitation and many alterations, their joint labours produced the following letter:

Chesborough, May 18, 1868.

MY DEAR HERIOT,—I much regret to be compelled to announce to you some ill news, which I fear will affect you very deeply. Like most old soldiers, I am not a very good hand with the pen, but you will understand that it is not for any want of sympathy that I come at once to the point, and tell you that your son must send in his resignation of the commission which he holds in the Cheddar Yeomanry. It appears that last night he and another subaltern, a Mr. Travers, came to high words in a billiard-room in this town. Your son gave Mr. Travers the lie, and Travers retorted by a blow. I need not point out to you that after this, more especially as the affair took place in public, and in the presence of several of the townspeople, there was but one course to pursue. That course, however, Mr. Heriot, although it has been plainly pointed out to him, declines to take, and is content, as it seems,

to sit down patiently under the insult that he has received. Of course his continuance in the regiment under these circumstances is impossible, as henceforward all fellowship with his brother officers, or respect from the men, would be at an end.

I cannot tell you, my dear Heriot, knowing as I do your acute sense of honour, how deeply I sympathise with you under these unhappy circumstances; more especially as I am sure if George had only done what might have been expected of him, the matter could have been easily arranged. This Mr. Travers with whom he quarrelled is an underbred bully, and from what I have heard from Captain Cleethorpe, who was present at the row, and whom I think you know, I could easily have prevented matters from going to extremities. George's refusal to notice the insult has, however, completely taken the matter out of my hands. He says he has a reason for his conduct which is quite sufficient for himself, but declines to impart it to any of us. He is prepared to send in his resignation, and I have no option but to advise its acceptance. I write to Lord Okehampton accordingly by this post. Again assuring you of my deep regret,

I am, my dear Heriot, sincerely yours,
MARKHAM GOOLE.

"There," said Colonel Goole, folding up the letter, "this affair will either break the old man's heart, or cause him to break his son's spirit."

"Do you think so?" said Captain Cleethorpe, doubtfully; "for my part, I look upon the first process as difficult, the last as impossible."

HANDWRITING.

OF course *hand-writing* is meant. Where a man has the exceptional capability of writing with his toes, he must be placed in a separate list. That there have been such men, appears to be sufficiently established. For instance, in the library belonging to St. Paul's Cathedral are two or three manuscript lines, purporting to be written by Roger Clarke with his foot, in 1563. In a manuscript of 1559, preserved in the British Museum, there is a written note to this effect:

Wretyn by me Xtopher Wells
w^h my foot & nothyng els'.

And one Cæsar Decornet, who died at Lille in 1856, had the power of writing

well with a foot which was provided with only four toes.

One's handwriting is interesting for this among other reasons: that many persons believe in the possibility of judging the mental character of a man from his calligraphy. It was Shenstone, if we remember rightly, who said, "Show me a man's handwriting, and I will tell you his character." Cibber, in his life of Andrew Marvell, says: "The person whom he addressed was an abbot [abbé?] famous for entering into the qualities of those whom he had never seen, and prognosticating their good or bad fortune, from an inspection of their handwriting." William von Humboldt once said: "The handwriting always retains something characteristic of a man; but that of Goethe (who wrote a large flowing hand) was, I must confess, not one that could show his individuality. Schiller wrote, according to my judgment, a much more self-showing hand, peculiar to him." We can all of us say, each for himself, what kind of answer experience gives to this problem. We know harum-scarum men whose handwriting is small, neat, and careful; and slow, cautious, methodical men who write a large, bold, flowing hand. Ladies can hardly have any characteristic in this particular: seeing that the fashionable angular hand is pretty much alike in all.

Whether or not we can really determine a man's character by his handwriting, we can most certainly identify him by its means to a large degree. Not knowing a particular person, we may be able or unable to judge what sort of man he is by looking at his handwriting; but knowing both him and his writing, we have a much better chance of determining whether a certain letter or document may safely be attributed to him; or, not knowing him at all, we may judge whether two pieces of writing are by the same hand. Of course, the standard of comparison here is, good composition expressed in perfect calligraphy; the greater the departure from this standard, the more chance there is of identifying the writer, seeing that the departure may be made in an almost infinite number of ways. Good handwriting is not so much attended to now as in past days. The old writing-masters took so much pride in their work as to claim for it a rank among the fine arts. What they could do in this way may be seen in the title-pages of costly books; a writing-master, or professed penman, wrote out the whole title-page in full

size, and a copper-plate engraver then reproduced it. They prided themselves also on the power of writing a great mass of words within a small compass. Peter Hales, a famous penman in the time of Queen Elizabeth, wrote within the compass of a silver penny (in Latin) the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, a prayer for the queen, his posy, his name, the day of the month, the year of our Lord, and the year of the queen's reign; he inserted it, covered with crystal, in a gold ring, which Elizabeth wore on her finger; and he also presented a magnifying glass wherewith to read the tiny writing. Of the writing-masters, down to the end of the last century, some affected the classical or severe style, some the ornate or flowing, but all alike claimed to be artists; and one is said to have died of vexation, because the Royal Academicians would not make him one of their number.

Of course the most direct departure from good penmanship is an intentional production of bad; and this taste has at certain times been in fashion. Hamlet, as we know, says:

Some did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
How to forget that learning.

The Humorist, in 1724, gave (with plenty of initial capitals) the following bit of satire: "The Badness of the Hand put me in Doubt at first, whether the Letter came from a Man of Wit or a Man of Quality." It is certain that, during a long period in the last century, good penmanship was regarded as vulgar and underbred.

Watch narrowly the habits of persons whom you know, in regard to peculiarities of calligraphy, and you will acquire much more power of identification than might at first appear attainable. The wits of the last century used to say that Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, carried her penuriousness to such a degree as to dispense with dotting her i's and crossing her t's, in order to save ink; but this smart bit of scandal comes to nothing when tested by the fact that such omissions are frequent in letter-writing, as a result of sheer carelessness. Making one sheet of paper serve for two, by crossing the writing up and down as well as from left to right, is often adopted in women's gossiping notes, though less frequently by men. It no doubt had its origin in the days when the postage of letters was charged per sheet instead of by weight, and was costly under any circumstances, especially for long distances; but

why the plan should be adopted now that postage is so low and paper so cheap, those must explain who indulge in it; at any rate, such a habit might tend to identify the writer of a particular letter. The same may be said of the use of the P.S. Jokes and skits without number have been pointed at fair letter-writers for their profuse use of postscripts; and theories have been advanced for explaining how it is that the most important part of a lady's letter often comes when the letter itself has been finished and signed with her name; but whatever fanciful explanations we may adopt, certain it is that some persons are more prone than others to this habit. Again; if one writer be more heedless than another, the fact is likely to show itself in omitted letters, or letters shaped like numerals—vices due to inattention, and not to real ignorance. Hence the well-known story of a merchant who bought up and transmitted no less than a ton of capers; having been misled by the careless way in which the word copper had been written by his correspondent. And hence the less known story, told in the Verney Papers, of a London merchant, who wrote to his agent abroad to send him 2 or 3 apes; the r was omitted, the o was made nearly as large as the numerals, and the quantity looked very much like 203; the agent wrote back to say that, in obedience to the commission, he had transmitted fourscore apes, and would send the rest by next ship. In proportion as a writer is liable to perpetrate little *gaucheries* of this kind, so will they form one among many means of guessing whether a particular letter is written by him. Another test is, a want of attention to syntax in composition; the spelling and the grammar may be correct, but the arrangement of the phrases and clauses into a sentence may be wrong; and the sense may either become nonsense, or be made obscure. The pronouns his, her, its, and their, are awkward tools to use, unless some circumspection be employed. A farmer, for instance, wrote to say that he and his neighbours were at a certain fair; and he added: "We had a splendid show of horned cattle. They were sorry you were not amongst them."

The experts or decipherers are constantly on the watch for these and other peculiarities; and the results are sometimes very striking. One of the most remarkable attempts ever made to pin a man down by means of his handwriting, is in connexion with that never-ending subject,

Junius. Readers of ALL THE YEAR ROUND need not be alarmed. We have no intention of going over the old ground in this place. The subject only interests us so far as it concerns handwriting.

Those who are known as the Franciscans, the believers in Sir Philip Francis, always contend that the handwriting of Junius was the handwriting of Francis disguised, and tends to corroborate the evidence obtained in other ways. Not very long ago the Honourable Edward Twistleton came into possession of two letters, one a note, and the other a copy of verses, addressed to Miss Giles, at Bath; the date was either 1770 or 1771. They were not signed, and the writing was not quite alike in the two cases; but circumstances led Mr. Twistleton to a belief that they were both written by Sir Philip, at that time Mr. Francis. They were placed in the hands of Mr. Netherclift, an expert, whose knowledge of writing is admitted as authoritative in courts of justice; he made each piece of paper bear witness against the other; he stripped the masks from both, and gave his verdict that both must have been written by the same person. Then came another battle of calligraphic deciphering. The note was in the handwriting of Junius, of which specimens are still preserved with great care; the verses were, although in a disguised hand, pronounced to be written by the same person as the note; Francis, by another train of reasoning, is believed to have sent the note to Miss Giles—therefore, was or was not Francis the one person who had written Junius's Letters, and the verses, and the note? Mr. Twistleton, to put his own decision to a further test, retained the services of another expert, Mr. Chabot.

Mr. Twistleton obtained access to original letters written to Francis by Mr. Tilghman, at the time when Francis was at Bath; also numerous letters written by Francis to his brother-in-law, or to his wife between the years 1767 and 1771; also the original manuscript Letters of Junius, now possessed, some by Mr. Murray, some by the British Museum. All were placed at the disposal of Mr. Chabot, who examined them with the hundred eyes of Argus multiplied a hundredfold: the eyes of the mind and those of the body. And what a result it is! A quarto volume containing two hundred pages of reports, with numerous fac-similes taken by photo-lithography from the veritable letters themselves—all to determine whether the same hand which

wrote Francis's letters also wrote the famed Letters of Junius!

Politicians and literary men may feel interested in knowing that Mr. Chabot answers this question in the affirmative. But, for the purpose of this article, it will suffice to notice the flood of light which Mr. Chabot throws on the mode of proceeding adopted by experts in their professional labours. To prove that two documents were written by the same hand, coincidences must be shown to exist which cannot be accidental; while to prove that two documents were written by different hands, discrepancies must be pointed out which cannot be accounted for by accident or disguise. Persons who wish to hide their handwriting, to make it seem as if written by some one else, generally resort to one of three methods, or two out of three, or all three: that is, to alter the slope, the size, or the fineness of the letters. But it is more difficult for a writer to maintain a disguise in their form; indeed, our practised expert declares that he has never met with a writer who could do so, and sustain a consistent and complete disguise throughout a piece of writing of moderate length.

The connecting links between the letters of a word, consisting usually of fine strokes either near the top or near the bottom, appear to furnish a great clue to the experts. The down-strokes can be altered or disguised with comparative ease: the fine up-strokes not so easily. It is very curious to see how Mr. Chabot amalgamates Francis and Junius into one person in this matter. The word "the," of course repeated over and over again, differs considerably in the thick or down-strokes of the two writers; but a peculiar approach to horizontality in the thin strokes connecting the letters, is observable in both; and he dwells on the great difficulty of a man being a hypocrite on this particular point, except for a few words at a time. The word here just used, "time," happens to be apropos to another clue explained by Mr. Chabot. There are four varieties observable in writing, in regard to the roundness and sharpness of the tops and bottoms of letters. Some specimens are round at top and bottom, much used in law-writing; some are sharp or angular at top and bottom, in favour among ladies; some are round at top and angular at bottom; some just the reverse—all these being tendencies, irrespective of the proper shape of the letters themselves. Now Mr. Chabot

counted up the number of instances in which the word "time" occurs in the several documents; in order to show that both writers adopted the peculiarity of making the letter "i" in "time" round at the top and angular at the bottom, the reverse of the plan followed by most persons.

The habit of using a magnified small letter for an initial, instead of a proper capital A, M, or N, is another thing which the experts appear to have narrowly scrutinised. Some writers use this substitution largely; they could not readily get out of the habit; and an inadvertency on this point might defeat an attempt to disguise one's customary handwriting.

Besides the shape, size, fineness, slope, roundness, angularity, and connecting links of the letters in a word, and the mode of initialising first words and proper names, there is an almost infinite number of points of difference between the handwriting of different persons. Some differ from others in emphasising their words by numerous capitals, a style which the imitators of Carlyle know something about; a much larger number underline the words to which they wish to draw attention; some make abundant use of single quotation marks, ' '; others of double, " ", although no actual quotation is given; some rely greatly on dashes (—), others on notes of admiration (!), others on parentheses (); a few precise people try to observe the proper gradation of , ; : . in a sentence; some content themselves with commas and full-stops alone; while others seem to think that punctuation is a meaningless formality. Other habits which persons more or less acquire, tending to associate them with a particular kind of handwriting, relate to the mode of arranging sentences into paragraphs; the mode of correcting mistakes or supplying omitted words; the tendency to spell certain words in an erroneous way, the abbreviation of words wherever possible, such as don't, won't, couldn't, tho', &c.; a tendency to make short work with all such terminal syllables as ing, ment, ation, ful; a habit of making all the down-strokes of the i, n, u, and m, as nearly alike as possible, reducing such a word as minimum to fifteen similar down-strokes, &c. In writing letters, whether of business or friendship, men differ in these among other points: putting the date and place at the bottom instead of the top of the letter; omitting the address of the writer whenever possible; placing the day before the month in the date;

writing the names of all the months at full length, and a multitude of others.

One's handwriting is, in fact, a part of one's self to a greater degree than most of us suppose.

A WRESTLE WITH NIAGARA.

I WAS standing about thirty or forty yards in advance of the Clifton, that is, thirty or forty yards nearer to the Horseshoe along the brink of the rocks, and opposite the American fall. The ground must have been about the same height as the opposite fall, but, owing to the immense hill down which the rapids rush, it was possible to distinguish any object of the size of a boat a considerable distance above the fall, so that, now it was pointed out to me, I saw, in the middle of the rapid, a huge log of wood, the trunk of a tree, which had lodged there some years before, and upon it a black speck. This, after some observation, I perceived to move. It was a man. Yes; he and his two companions had, on the previous night, been rowing about some distance above the fall. By some means or other they had ventured too near the rapids, had lost all command of their boat, and had been hurried away to destruction. It was supposed that about half a mile above the fall the boat had upset, and, with two wretched men still clinging to it, went over the fall at about nine or ten o'clock at night, while the third man was driven against this log of wood, climbed upon it, and sat astride of it through the darkness of the night, amid the roar, the turmoil, and the dashing spray of the rapids.

I crossed the river, ascended the rock by the railway, and hurried to the spot, where I found him so near that I could almost distinguish his countenance. He was then lying along the log, grasping it with both arms, and appeared exhausted to the last degree. He was evidently as wet from the spray, as though he had been standing under water. By this time people were assembling, and different plans for his rescue were proposed and discussed on all sides; already, indeed, one effort had been made. A small boat had been firmly lashed to a strong cable, and dropped down to him from the bridge, which crossed the rapid between the mainland and Goat Island, about sixty yards above the log.

This boat had proceeded a few yards in safety, was upset, spun round like a piece

of cork at the end of a thread by the force of the water, which finally snapped the cable in two, and the boat disappeared over the fall.

But now a despatch had been sent to Buffalo (a distance of little more than twenty miles) by electric telegraph, desiring that a life-boat should be sent by the first train, nine-thirty A.M., and this in time arrived, borne on the shoulders of about twenty men, and a splendid boat she was, large, built entirely of sheet iron, with airtight chambers; a boat that could not sink. She was girt round with strong ropes, and two new two-inch cables brought with her. All this arrangement naturally took up much time, and the poor wretch's impatience seemed extreme, so that it was thought advisable to let him know what was going on. This was done by means of a sheet, upon which was written in large letters in Dutch (his native language), "The life-boat is coming." He stood up, looked intently for a minute, and then nodded his head. When the boat was at last launched, the excitement was intense. Two cables, each held by many men, were let down from either end of the bridge, so that they might have some command in directing the course of the boat down the river. She seemed literally to dance upon the surface of the water like a cork.

The rapid consists of a number of small falls distributed unevenly over all parts of the river, so that there are thousands of cross currents, eddies, and whirlpools, which it would be utterly impossible to avoid, and in which lies the danger of transit for any boat between the bridge and the log. The life-boat's course was steady at first: she arrived at the first fall, she tripped up and swung round with a rush, but continued her course safely, only half filled with water. Again she descended with safety, but at length approaching the log she became unmanageable, swinging either way with immense force, spinning completely over, and finally dashing against the log with such violence that I fully expected the whole thing, man and all, to have been dislodged and hurried down the rapid. But, no, it stood firm—the boat had reached its destination. Yet, alas! how useless was its position. It lay completely on its side above the log, and with its hollow inside directed towards the bridge, played upon by the whole force of the current, which fixed its keel firmly against the log. It seemed immovable. The man himself climbed towards it, and in vain tried to pull, lift, or

shake the boat; nor was it moved until both cables being brought to one side of the river by the united force of fifty or sixty men, she was dislodged, and swung down the rapid upside-down, finally pitching headlong beneath an eddy, entangling one of her cables on the rocks, and there lying beneath a heavy fall of water, until in the course of the day, one cable being broken by the efforts of the men to dislodge her, and the other by the sheer force of the current, she went over the falls—the second sacrifice to the poor fellow, who still clung to the log, swayed between hope and fear. The loss of this boat seemed a great blow to him, and he appeared, as far as we could judge at a distance, at times to give way to the utmost despair. A third boat was now brought—wooden, very long, and flat-bottomed. Its passage was most fortunate, and as she floated down, even alongside of the log without accident, hope beamed in every countenance, and we all felt the man might be saved. Hope also had revived in him. He stood for some time upon the log making signals to those who directed the boat.

He now eagerly seized her, drew her towards him, jumped into her, and made signs to them to draw him up. This was commenced, but some of the tackle had caught, and it was deemed necessary to let it loose for an instant. This was done; the boat floated a few feet down the rapid, swung round the lower end of the log, entangling the cable beneath it, and there remained immovably fixed. Once more the poor fellow's work began. He drew off one of his boots and baled the boat, he pushed at the log, climbed upon it, and used every possible exertion to move the boat, but in vain! An hour was spent in these fruitless efforts—an hour of terrible suspense to all who beheld him. He worked well, for he worked for his life. Three months after, this boat retained its position, nor will it move until the rocks grind its cable in two, or the waters tear it piecemeal into shreds.

Another plan must be devised, and this, with American promptitude, was soon done. A raft of from twenty to thirty feet long and five feet broad was knocked together with amazing rapidity. It consisted of two stout poles, made fast, five feet asunder, by nailing four or five pieces of two-inch board at each extremity; thus the machine consisted of a sort of skeleton raft, with a small stage at either end. On one of these stages—that to which the cables (of which there were two) were lashed—was tightly fixed a large empty cask, for the sake of its

buoyancy, on the other a complete network of cords, to which the man was to lash himself; also a tin can of refreshments, he having taken nothing since the evening before; three or four similar cans, by the way, had been let down to him already, attached to strong pieces of new line, but the cords had in every instance been snapped, and the food lost.

The raft was finished, launched, and safely let down to the log. The poor fellow committed himself to its care, he lashed his legs firmly, and then signalled to draw him up; thus for the second time the ropes had begun to be drawn up, the raft advanced under the first pull, but its head, owing to the great light cask, dipped beneath it, and as the raft still advanced, the water broke over it to such a depth that the man was obliged to raise himself upon all fours, keeping his chin well elevated to avoid being drowned. We expected at every pull to see his head go under, but, alas! they pulled in vain, for the front of the raft, pressed down by the weight of falling water, had come in contact with a rock, and would not advance. The ropes were slackened, she fell back, but again hitched in her return. It was then determined to let her swing to another part of the rapid, where the stream did not appear quite so impassable. This was done, and a second attempt to draw it up was made, half-way between the log and the opposite shore (a small island). This also failed from the same cause, therefore it was proposed to endeavour to let the raft float down and swing round upon the island. This was commenced, but with the old result, the cable was caught in the rocks, and the raft remained stationary. However, she was floating easily, and the poor fellow could rest.

Early in the day, for the afternoon was now far advanced, one of the large ferry-boats (built expressly for crossing beneath the falls) had been brought up, but had lain idle. This was now put into requisition, and nobly she rode down towards the raft, whilst in breathless silence we all watched her as she dipped at the various falls, and each time recovered herself. I shuddered as she was launched, for I began to see that the man could not be saved by a boat; a boat never could return against a rapid, however well able to float down it. No sooner would her bow come into contact with a fall than it would dip, fill, and spin round, as did the first skiff which was lost.

The poor fellow himself was getting impatient—visibly so. He untied his lash-

ings, stood upright upon the raft, eagerly waiting to seize the boat, and jump into her. She had but one more fall to pass, and that fall was situated just above where he stood; she paused at the brink of it, swung down it like lightning, and, as he leaned forward to seize her, she rose on the returning wave, struck him in the chest, and he struggled hopelessly in the overwhelming torrent.

The exclamation of horror, for it was not a cry, which burst from the thousands who by this time were assembled, I shall never forget, nor the breathless silence with which we watched him, fighting with the waters as they hurried him along upright, waving both arms above his head. We lost sight of him at intervals, yet again and again he reappeared, and I thought hours must have passed in lieu of one brief half-minute. But the end came at last; once more I saw his arms wildly waved above his head, and, in an instant, the crowd turned from the spot in dead silence. The man was lost.

KING ALFRED'S WILL.

["I give to my wife Ealswith, three manors: Wantage, because I was born there; Lamborne, because I dwelt there; and Wickham, because I fought there."]

Thus, very near a thousand years ago
Willed Alfred, unto whom we English owe
Noble achievement and a high example.
Defeat could never lay his courage low;
Patient he was until he smote the foe,
And his reward was ample.

Great King was Alfred, though his folk were few;
To heroic thought and deed is greatness due;
And the Truth-teller was an absolute hero.
No despot he, with acts of sanguine hue,
Surrounded by a fulsome, flattering crew,
No sensual scoundrel-Nero.

His will's a poem. See, he leaves his wife
The Berkshire manor where he entered life.
Under the chalk downs, ancient lazy Wantage.
He leaves her Lamborne, where his memory's rife,
And Wickham, where with the Dane in deadly strife,
He won no mean advantage.

Ten centuries have passed; but Alfred still,
The man of perfect truth and steadfast will,
Among us it is easy to discover:
Who fights his foes with tranquil, patient skill,
Knowing that justice must its weird fulfil,
Who is a loyal lover.

CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

SERLE'S PLACE, TEMPLE BAR.

TURN sharp round to the right northward, by the little cave of the hermit barber who has skilfully fortified himself for several generations (indeed ever since Steele's time) in a crevice of Temple Bar, and you find yourself in that dingy defile, once known to wits, poets, and geniuses of all kinds as Shire-lane, and latterly (since

July, 1845), as Serle's-place. When we say you *will* find yourself, we stand corrected; we mean rather, you would, once upon a time, have found yourself, for one step beyond the barber now is chaos. Serle's-place, where Steele once lived, and where the great Kit-Cat Club disported, in those palmy days when poets were ministers of state, has gone to return no more; it has melted into that air—that not very thin air—that now floats over the yawning space devoted to the Law Courts of the future. It is now, in a word, part of the great vacuum that London abhors, which is bounded westward by Clement's-inn, northward by King's College Hospital, and eastward by Bell-yard. So old London is vanishing while we write.

The whole reign of Queen Anne used to rise before our eyes when we ventured into that very shy lane, at whose Fleet-street entrance, in the Kit-Cat times, Whig dukes and earls by the half-dozen, not to mention Whig lyrical poets, satirists, and epigrammatists of the highest rank in Parnassus, have descended from their coroneted coaches and their swaying sedan-chairs, venturing boldly into the defile, and laughing till the old gable ends echoed again. Oh, for one gleam of the flambeaux of Halifax or of Dorset on the statues of Temple Bar! Oh, for one moment's eaves-dropping at the lattice of the Trumpet, to hear Dorset repeat his gay farewell song, To all you Ladies now on Land, or Halifax enunciate one of his wise axioms, true as Rochefoucauld's, yet far more kindly!

The origin of this King of Clubs no one seems clearly to establish. Ned Ward talks of the City Mouse and Country Mouse—written by Prior and Charles Montague (afterwards Earl of Halifax), to banter Dryden's Hind and Panther, and published in 1687—as having “stole into the world out of the witty society of the Kit-Cat.” But then who was Ward? The keeper of a punch-house in Fulwood's-rents, Gray's-inn, a reckless party writer, careless about facts, and indifferent to truth; a writer of no more value than the author of Tom and Jerry, who indeed painted with staring colours the London of the Regency, just as Ward did the London of the last years of William of Orange. His London Spy was written in 1699, and his testimony about a disputed matter in political literature twelve years before, is next to worthless. We therefore settle down to the old decision (disagreeing with Mr. Charles Knight) that the grand club arose, as nearly as possible, about the year 1699,

and flourished till about 1720. It was held at the Trumpet in Shire-lane; not in Gray's-inn-lane, as Ned Ward says, or in King-street, Westminster, as a later heretic is inclined to have it. It originated, in all probability, in a weekly dinner given by Jacob Tonson, the great bookseller, who published Dryden's Virgil, purchased a share of Milton's works, and first made Shakespeare accessible to the multitude. This great bookseller, "the left-legged" Jacob of the Dunciad, had a shop at Gray's-inn-gate, in Gray's-inn-lane, from 1697 to 1712, and then removed to opposite Catherine-street in the Strand. Now Ned Ward, who asserts that the first Kit-Cat meetings were at a pudding-pie shop in Gray's-inn-lane, and were then removed to the Fountain Tavern in the Strand, may surely be wrong also in the date of the club's starting. Malone, however, seems inclined to believe the Kit-Cat Club to be synonymous with "the Knights of the Most Noble Order of the Toast," to whom, in 1699, Elkanah Settle, one of Dryden's butts, and the lord mayor's laureate, addressed some complimentary verses. It seems doubtful whether it was the Trumpet (where Steele's club of country twaddlers afterwards met) which was kept by Christopher Katt, the mutton-pie man, at the sign of the Cat and Fiddle. Mr. Diprose, the latest writer on the antiquities of St. Clement's parish, decides that it was, and we like to think it was. The club derived its name, according to the Spectator (No. 9), not from Kit Katt, the pastrycook, who kept the house where the club dined, but from the pies, which derived their well-known London name from the maker. Pope treats the derivation as doubtful in the following neat and witty epigram upon the club:

Whence deathless Kit Katt took his name
 Few critics can unriddle.
 Some say from pastrycook it came,
 And some from Cat and Fiddle;
 From no trim beaus its name it boasts,
 Grey statesmen or green wits,
 But from that pell-mell pack of toasts
 Of old Cats and young Kites.

The fact is simply this, that the name of the alliterative sign, representing the name of the owner, amused the town, and was chosen to designate the pies, and from the pies the club was christened. It seems very doubtful whether Dryden was ever more than a visitor at the club, as he died in May, 1700, and the club cannot be clearly traced back beyond 1699. Dryden's portrait, by Kneller, was certainly among those likenesses of the members painted for

Tonson's cottage at Barn Elms, and now preserved by Mr. R. W. Baker, a representative of the Tonson family, at Bayfordbury in Hertfordshire. To judge by the engravings of them by Faber (1735), the year before Tonson died, the club had consisted of forty-eight poets, wits, noblemen, and gentlemen. The proud Duke of Somerset, who was said never to allow his children to sit in his presence, and who gave his orders to his servants by signs, came early. Then followed the Dukes of Richmond, Grafton, and Devonshire, the great Duke of Marlborough, the Duke of Kingston, and, after the accession of George the First, that strange blundering prime minister, the Duke of Newcastle. Of earls there was Dorset, the patron of Prior and Dryden, whom the latter poet absurdly ranked with Shakespeare as the first of English satirical poets, and dubbed "the restorer of poetry, the greatest genius, the truest judge, and the best patron," and whom Rochester described as

The best natured man with the worst natured muse.

Sunderland, Wharton, that half madman, and the Earl of Manchester, were also members. Among the lords it counted Halifax the wise, and Somers, the good lord chancellor. Bluff, brusque Sir Robert Walpole was of them, and so at various times were Vanbrugh, the wit, dramatist, and architect; Congreve, the most courtly of gentlemen; Halifax's protégé, Granville, "the polite," as Pope calls him, a poet and secretary-of-war to Queen Anne; Addison, the greatest of our English essayists; Steele, that kindly humorist; Garth, the worthy poet and physician; Maynwaring, a poor writer but great conversationalist of the day; Stepney, a second-rate versifier and diplomatist, Arthur Attie, of whom we know nothing; and Walsh, another small bard and a friend of Dryden, and patron and early adviser of Pope. Prior could hardly have belonged to the club after his perversion.

Of the poets in the Kit-Cat Club, Pope used to say that Garth, Vanbrugh, and Congreve, were "the three most honest-hearted real good men." The club in summer dined either at Tonson's villa, at Barn Elms, previously the residence of Cowley, or at the Upper Flask Tavern on Hampstead Heath. It was the smallness of Tonson's rooms at Barn Elms that led to Kneller's inventing that reduced half-length size for portraits still called by artists Kit-Cat. The club-room was standing in 1817, but was soon after joined to a barn and

turned into a riding-school. Sir Richard Blackmore, the poetical physician whom Pope and Dryden ridiculed, and who wrote to the rumbling of his carriage-wheels, describes the Kit-Cats on their way to Hampstead:

Or when Apollo-like thou'rt pleased to lead
Thy sons to feast on Hampstead's airy head,
Hampstead that towering in superior sky,
Now with Parnassus doth in honour vie.

The club gradually grew more and more political; the members became louder over their claret for Protestant ascendancy and the glorious House of Hanover. Gradually the wits fell out, and mere rank rose to the top. Pope says the club broke up soon after Lord Mohan, a dissolute rake and duellist of bad reputation, and Lord Berkeley, joined it, to the horror of sober old Jacob Tonson, the club secretary, who saw "they were just going to be ruined." Mohan, perhaps drunk, wantonly broke the gilded emblem off his chair; and Jacob told his friends with a sigh that "the man who would do that would cut a man's throat." In 1725 (George the First), the club had gone. Vanbrugh, in 1727 (George the Second), writing the year before his death to Tonson, says, in his gay pleasant way, "You may believe me when I tell you, you were often talked of, both during the journey and at home, and our former Kit-Cat days were remembered with pleasure; we were one night reckoning who were left, and both Lord Carlisle and Cobham expressed a great desire of having one meeting next winter if you can come to town—not as a club—but as old friends that *have* been of a club, and the best club that ever met." There is a pleasing tone of regret about this, as if Vanbrugh himself felt the sand run low in the glass, and there is a touch of pathos in the idea of the three fashionable club men in the country, sitting down at night, and counting who were left of the friendly tontine.

It was the gallant custom of this club once a year to elect by ballot a reigning beauty as a toast. To this queen of their choice the poetical members wrote by turns verses, which were etched with a diamond upon the glasses. The most celebrated of these toasts were the four beautiful daughters of the Duke of Marlborough, Lady Godolphin, Lady Sunderland, generally called the "Little Whig," the pride of that party, Lady Bridgewater, and Lady Monthermer; Swift's friends, Mrs. Long and Mrs. Barton, the niece of Sir Isaac Newton; the Duchess of Bolton, Lady Carlisle, Lady Wharton, and Mrs. Di. Kirk. A few of these epigram-

matic verses have been preserved, but they are, to tell the sober truth, for the most part flat as yesterday's champagne. Those written on the "Little Whig" and Lady Mary Churchill, by Lord Halifax, in 1703, are the most tolerable:

THE LADY SUNDERLAND.

All nature's charms in Sunderland appear,
Bright as her eyes, and as her reason clear;
Yet still their force, to man not safely known,
Seems undiscovered to herself alone.

The one on The Lady Mary Churchill is weaker, and even whiggier:

Fairest and latest of the beautiful race,
Blest with your parent's wit, and her first blooming face,
Born with our liberties in William's reign,
Your eyes alone that liberty restrain.

The words "Little Whig" were foolishly inscribed on the first stone of the new Haymarket Theatre, built by subscription in 1706, and placed under the management of Vanbrugh and Congreve.

But the prettiest story of the Kit-Cat toasts is that related by clever, eccentric Lady Mary Wortley Montague, of her own adventure as a child. On the night of the annual election, when lords and wits were proposing this or that beauty, and "dark eyes," "blue eyes," "swan neck," "bosom of Juno," "bust of Dian," and such phrases from the poets were flying about the best room at the Trumpet—as the flasks of Florence and Burgundy were being loudly uncorked, and the guests drew closer for the business of the evening—a whim suddenly seized Evelyn Pierpoint, Duke of Kingston, to nominate his little girl, then not eight years of age, declaring that she was far prettier than any lady on the day's list. The other members demurred, because the rules of the club forbade the election of any beauty whom the members of the club had not seen. "Then you shall see her," cried the duke, and instantly sent a message home to have the little lady dressed in her best, and brought to him at the tavern. She presently appeared from her sedan, shy at first, and wondering. She was received with acclamations, and her claim unanimously allowed, her health was drunk up-standing by all the Whig gentlemen, and her name duly engraved with a diamond upon a drinking glass. She was then passed round, like a bouquet, from the lap of one poet, patriot, or statesman, to the arms of others; was feasted with sweetmeats, overwhelmed with caresses, and, what perhaps already pleased her better than either, heard her wit and beauty loudly extolled on every side. Pleasure, she said, was too poor a word

to express her sensations; they amounted to ecstasy; never again, throughout her whole future life, did she pass so happy a day. She thought of that innocent time, perhaps, when Pope lashed her with scorpions; and again in her miserable old age, in Florence, when malice and scandal had mangled her reputation, and rioted on her good name.

It is difficult to realise in Jacob Tonson, the friend of Congreve and of Halifax, of Addison and Steele, that hard, grinding bookseller, who complained bitterly to Dryden that he had only got fourteen hundred and forty-six lines translated from Ovid for fifty guineas, instead of, as he had expected, fifteen hundred and eighteen lines for forty guineas, and who eventually paid him in bad silver. In the faithful secretary, who treasured his forty-eight portraits of club friends at Barn Elms, we lose sight of the little pudgy dealer in books at the Judge's Head at the south-west corner of Chancery-lane, whom Dryden is said to have etched in aqua-fortis and catalogued with "two left legs, leering looks, bull face, and Judas-coloured hair," a rough caricature not forgotten, be sure, by Tonson's Tory enemies of later years. We rather recognise him as Rowe, that solemn writer but merry liver, sketched him in 1714, in an imaginary dialogue between Tonson and Congreve, the author who wished Voltaire to look upon him simply as the fine gentleman. According to Rowe, the indestructible English passion of tuft-hunting spoiled Jacob, for he says:

While in your early days of reputation
You for blue garters had not such a passion,
While yet you did not live, as now your trade is,
To drink with noble lords and toast their ladies,
Thou, Jacob Tonson, were, to my conceiving,
The cheerfullest, best, honest fellow living.

To judge by a letter of Stepney to Tonson, "three o'clock in the morning" was no unusual Kit-Cat time, so that Addison must have had time to melt into geniality there, and Steele must have had Burgundy enough to send him home with eloquence sufficient to excuse himself to Prue, his somewhat vixenish wife. Nor was the Tory lampooner altogether wrong when he made Tonson say:

I am the founder of your loved Kit-Cat,
A club that gave direction to the state,
'Twas there we first instructed all our youth,
To talk profane, and laugh at sacred truth;
We taught them how to boast, and rhyme, and bite,
To sleep away the day, and drink away the night.

Many as were the wise things spoken in Shire-lane, countless as were the jokes that were cracked, there are not many anecdotes extant of the Kit-Cat nights. Tho lights

are extinguished, the glory passed away like the morning cloud, or a dream when one awakens. One story, however, survives, that is highly characteristic of Steele's amiable weaknesses. One grand night, the great Whig festival of the celebration of King William's anniversary, Doctor Hoadley, the worthy Bishop of Bangor, father of Hogarth's great friend, went with those friendly comrades, Steele and Addison, to solemnly drink "the immortal memory." Steele, in his anxiety to preserve William's memory lost his own, and the invisible spirit of wine beguiled him into folly. Presently John Sly, an eccentric hatter of the day, and a most zealous politician, especially when drunk, crawled into the room on his knees, in the old cavalier fashion, to drink a tankard of ale to the immortal memory of the Dutch hero. No one laughed, so Steele, tender even in his liquor, kept whispering to the rather staggered bishop, "Do laugh, it is humanity to laugh." By-and-bye, the bishop prudently withdrawing, Steele, altogether overcome by sympathy with the immortal memory, was discovered among the dead men, packed into a chair, and sent home. Late as it was, nothing would satisfy the wilful man, but being carried to the Bishop of Bangor, no doubt to apologise. At last, by quiet and steady resistance, the chairmen got Steele home, and, with considerable coaxing and difficulty, up into his bedroom; but there a qualm of kindness and courtesy came over him, and he would insist on seeing them down-stairs. Having done this, with the most tipsy complacency, he returned quietly to bed. Next morning, penitent Steele sent the tolerant bishop the following admirable couplet:

Virtue with so much ease on Bangor sits,
All faults he pardons, though he none commits.

One night, when the good-natured Garth lingered at his club wine, Steele reproved him. Garth had before then, on his first arrival, been talking of the patients who were waiting for him. "Well," said Garth, pulling out his list of fifteen, "it's no great matter, Dick, after all, whether I see them to-night or not, for nine of them have such bad constitutions not all the physicians in the world can save them, and the other six have such good constitutions that all the physicians in the world could not kill them."

In 1817, that clever bookseller, Sir Richard Phillips, made a pilgrimage to Tonson's old villa at Barn Elms, to see the room where the great club had met. The people had never heard of the Kit-Cat, but

showed him a club-room in a detached building in the garden. It was eighteen feet high, and forty feet long by twenty feet wide. The mouldings and ornaments had been grand. The faded red hangings still remained on the walls, and on the faded squares where Kneller's portraits had been hung the numbers and names still remained, written in chalk, for the guidance of the hanger.

The Trumpet (afterwards the Duke of York), No. 86, Middle Serle's-place, was, if not the stronghold of the Kit-Cat, at least a tavern sacred to the memory of Steele, for there, in No. 86 of the Tatler, he makes old Isaac Bickerstaff (the character he himself assumed), on Thursday, October 27, 1709, receive that distinguished deputation of Staffordshire country gentlemen, and delightful, pompous old fogies, Sir Harry Quickset, Baronet, Sir Giles Wheelbarrow, Thomas Rentfree, Esquire, justice of the quorum, Andrew Windmill, Esquire, and Mr. Nicholas Doubt, of the Inner Temple, Sir Harry's grandson, wait upon him at the unconscionable hour of nine in the morning. Nine arrives, the chairs are set. The tea equipage is fixed. A knock comes at the front door. Steele opens it; there is a long silence, and no one enters. At last he hears the punctilious old fellows saying: "Sir, I beg your pardon. I think I know better." "Nay, good Sir Giles." Steele looks out slyly, and sees the worthy people, every one with his hat off and arms spread, offering the door to each other. After many offers they enter with much solemnity. "I met my old friend Sir Harry," Steele says, "with all the respect due to so reverend a vegetable. I got him with great success into his chair by the fire, without throwing down any of my cups. The knight bachelor told me he had a great respect for my whole family, and would, with my leave, place himself next to Sir Harry, at whose right he had sat every quarter sessions these thirty years, unless he was sick." Steele offends the justice by asking him to sit down after the simple squire, but this error he promptly corrects, and requests the gentlemen who have done him this great honour to drink a dish of tea. They all declare they never drink tea of a morning, and the young Templar winks at Steele, and puts out his tongue at his grandfather, as much as to say, "Tea, indeed."

The steward, "in his boots and whip," after an ominous silence, then proposes that they shall at once all adjourn to some

public-house, where every one can call for what he pleases, and enter upon business. There is then a good deal of stiff ceremony, and filing and countermarching, the justice taking good care to duly cut in before the squire. On the first landing, a maid, coming up with coals, disturbs the procession, which gets locked by aid of the mischievous young Templar, and but for a noise in the street, which Steele wickedly suggests is a fire, upon which they run down anyhow, the checkmate would have been interminable. But, says the delightful chronicler, "we drew up in very good order, and filed off down Shire-lane, the impertinent Templar driving us before him as in a string, and pointing us out to his acquaintances who passed by." Slipping between the justice and the squire, Steele hears the latter whisper to the steward, "that he thought it hard that a common conjuror should take place by him, though an older squire." At Temple Bar, Sir Harry and Sir Giles get safely over, but a row of coaches cuts off the rest. At last they all land, and draw up in very good order before Tooke's (a bookseller), "who favoured our rallying with great humanity." From there, with equally serious ceremonies of precedence, they proceed to Dick's Coffee-house, where, repeating their civilities, they mount to the high table, "which has an ascent to it, enclosed in the middle of the room," the whole house being much moved by the entry of persons of so much state and rusticity. Sir Harry at once calls for a mug of ale and Dyer's Letter, and, on being told the letter is not taken in there, cries, "No? then take back your mug. We are like, indeed, to have good liquor at this house." Here the Templar gives Steele a second wink, and would be confiding did not Steele look very grave. The gentlemen not seeming inclined to begin business before a morning draught, Steele calls for a bottle of Mum, soon for a second, then for a third, and at last Sir Harry tells him, in a low voice, that the place is too public for business, and he would call upon him on the morrow morning and bring some more friends with him.

In No. 132 of the Tatler, the same delightful humorist sketches a club of fogies at the Trumpet, with whom he says he is in the habit of spending two or three hours every evening to unbend his mind after study, and to prepare himself for sleep. This club of heavy, honest men originally consisted of fifteen members, but "the severity of the law in arbitrary times," as

Steele slyly says, and the natural effects of old age, had reduced the society to five persons. Sir Geoffery Notch, the patriarch of the club, had sat in the right-hand chair time out of mind, and was the only man of the set allowed to stir the fire. He was of an ancient family, and had run through a great estate with hounds, horses, and cock-fighting. He looked upon himself as a worthy, honest gentleman, who had had misfortunes, and he regarded every thriving person as a pitiful upstart. Major Matchlock, the next senior, had served in the civil wars, and knew all the battles by heart. He thought nothing of any action since Marston Moor, and was much esteemed in the club for his nightly story of how he was knocked off his horse at the rising of the London apprentices. Honest old Dick Reptile (an ill-chosen name) was the third. Dick was a good-natured, robust man, who spoke little, but laughed at other men's jokes. He always brought his nephew, a youth of eighteen, with him, to show him good company, and give him a taste of the world. This youth was usually silent, but whenever he did open his mouth or laugh, his uncle constantly made the same jocular remark: "Ay, ay, Jack; you young men think us fools, but we old men know you are." The wit of the club was a bencher from the Temple, who in his youth had frequented the fashionable ordinaries round Charing-cross, and pretended to have known Jack Ogle. He knew by heart about ten distiches from Hudibras, and he never left the club till he had applied them. If any modern wit was mentioned, or any town frolic spoken of, he would shake his head at the dulness of the present age, and tell a story of Jack Ogle. This Trumpet Club met precisely at six o'clock in the evening, and at three-quarters past six the major usually began his story of the battle of Naseby. On Steele's arrival, Sir Geoffery, to show his goodwill, offered him a pipe of his own tobacco, and stirred up the fire. In common gratitude, Steele drew him on to the story of old Gantlet, a favourite gamecock, on whose head the knight in his youth had won five hundred pounds, and lost two thousand. Gantlet's generations, diet, battles, and manner of life, roused the major to spur to Edge Hill fight, and a duel of Jack Ogle's naturally followed. Old Reptile was extremely attentive to all that was said, though he had heard the same every night for twenty years, and upon all occasions winked to his nephew to mind what passed. This innocent con-

versation was spun out till about ten, when the maid came with a lantern to light home old Bickerstaff. So, with a humour half like Goldsmith, half like Cervantes, Steele sketches an old haunt in the dingy London lane that has just melted into air.

Shire-lane, mean and obscure in its youth, splendid in its middle life, grew infamous in its old age. It had been christened "Rogue's-lane" in the reign of James the First; latterly it became vile and squalid, and swarmed with thieves and their female companions. Nos. 1, 2, and 3, Lower Serle's-place, were infamous dens, that once possessed a secret communication, as the latest chronicles of the lane record, with No. 242, Strand, through which thieves could escape when they had beaten and stripped the fools they had decoyed. Nos. 9, 10, and 11, were beggars' houses, and known as Cadgers' Hall; not long since, several bushels of eleemosynary bread, thrown scornfully aside by professional beggars, were found there by the police. No. 19, a double house, was known as the Retreat, because thieves could run through it and dodge down Crown-court into the Strand. No. 13, a printing office, had formerly, says Mr. Diprose, been the Bible public-house, a house of call for printers twenty years ago. Jack Sheppard used to frequent this, and there was a trap in the middle of one room by which the agile young carpenter used, it was said, to drop through into a subterraneous passage and so escape into Bell-yard, and from thence into his old Clare Market haunts. Jack died for the good of his country in 1725. Yet in 1738 the lane had not improved, for, on January the 18th of that year, Thomas Cave and Elizabeth Adams were hanged at Tyburn, for having robbed and murdered a certain unfortunate Mr. Quarrington, at the Angel and Crown Tavern in Shire-lane. In the days of the blundering old watchmen, a man was one night thrown down-stairs and killed in one of the dens in Shire-lane. The frightened murderers acted like the men in the Little Hunchback story in the Arabian Nights, for they took the stiff body and propped it up against a neighbour's door, where the lumbering watchmen, turning on their lanterns, soon after found it. Many years passed without a clue. At last, two dangerous fellows confined in the King's Bench were overheard, during a quarrel, accusing each other of having had a hand in the Shire-lane murder, and Justice stretched out her sword. The Temple Bar Stores, formerly the Sun Tavern, had been a notorious house for Tom and Jerry

frolics in the reckless times of the Regency. Strype, in 1720, speaks of the lower part of the lane as being filled with houses inferior to those of the Carey-street, or northern end. A tavern named the Antigallican in Shire-lane, was the great resort at the beginning of the century of sporting and fighting men. It was kept by Harry Lee, the father of Alexander Lee, the first and original "tiger," brought out and invented by the notorious Lord Barrymore, the eldest of the worthy kinsmen Cripplegate, Newgate, and Billingsgate.

During the Chartist times, says a local antiquary, a policeman was sent disguised as a shoemaker to join a violent democratic club in Shire-lane. At last, during a meeting, a hatter suddenly rose, angrily told the chairman there was a spy in the room, and proposed to throw him at once out of window. A more humane member, however, proposed as a milder measure to open the door, and if the spy did not immediately depart, to carry out the original proposition. The sergeant lost no time and made straight for the door, but his comrades, whom he had ordered to occupy the ground floor, not knowing him in his disguise, knocked him down with their truncheons as he tried to slip down-stairs. In Ship-yard, close to Shire-lane, once stood a block of houses, one of which was used by coiners, and was called in their slang "the smashing Lumber." Every room had a secret trap, and from the upper story, where the smashers worked, there was a shaft reaching to the cellars, into which, by means of a basket and pulley, the whole apparatus could in a moment be conveyed. The proprietor made his fortune, but soon after the establishment of the new police, the manufactory was rummaged out and destroyed.

The Trumpet stood midway on the left side of Shire-lane as you ascended from Temple Bar. It was a substantial red brick house, with four windows abreast in the two first stories. The sign of the Trumpet used to be below and between the windows of the first floor. Elias Ashmole, the great antiquary, from whom the Ashmolean Museum derives its name, lived in Shire-lane in 1670. Old Anthony Wood dined there with him on May the 1st of that year, and after dinner the two old virtuosi went over to Wood's lodgings in the Middle Temple, and spent nearly two cosey hours over Ashmole's coins, medals, pictures, and astrological manuscripts.

In a sordid sponging-house in Shire-lane, witty, worthless Theodore Hook, when

he returned to England after those careless and unsatisfactory defalcations at the Mauritius, fraternised with poor, clever, sunken, hopeless Maginn. Here Hook joked and woke up the old echoes of the Kit-Cat Club merrily over his claret as he and his worthy companions roared out his own song :

Hang him, and curse that perfidious pernicious
Rascal who cleared out the till at Mauritius.

So much has local history recorded of the sunshine and the darkness, the glory and the shame of the degraded alley that has just been swallowed up by ever-hungry Time.

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LX. ARRIVED.

"WELL, what is it, Mr. Darkdale?" inquired Maud, eagerly, as soon as he had reached the side of the carriage.

"Two bailiffs, miss, in charge of an officer, arrested for debt, and something worse; they have had a bit of a row in the coach; he's a troublesome fellow. I knew something about him; he has been up before, and I think there's a criminal warrant this time."

"Was he hurt?"

"A scratch, I fancy. It isn't easy always keeping those dangerous cases from hurting themselves; he's very strong, and always slipping away if he can. But they have him fast enough this time; and the road's clear of them now; so I suppose I had best tell our post-boys, miss, to get on?"

"Please do; it is growing late. How long will it take to reach Carsbrook?"

"About an hour, miss."

Maud leaned back in the carriage, the unpleasant excitement of their recent adventure still tingling in her nerves.

Could it be that Captain Vivian had got into a scrape, and was really in the hands of bailiffs? A sad hearing for poor Ethel Tintern; rather a shock even to Maud.

"Do you know anything of that officer—those people were taking away in the carriage?" inquired the young lady, suddenly, of her attendant, so soon as they were again in motion.

"I may, miss, or I mayn't. I could not say for certain, unless I was to see him," answered the servant.

"Have you ever seen an officer named Vivian, who is tall, and has light hair; a young man, rather good-looking?" persisted Maud.

"Well, I—I think I did," she replied,

watching Maud's face. "I have seen some one like that. Veevian? Yes. He used to call hisself Veevian."

"The person who passed us by, who said they were murdering him—how horrible his voice was!—said his name was Vivian. You heard him, of course?"

"Well, I made shift to hear; but there was a noise, you know," answered Mercy Creswell, evasively.

"Oh, you must have heard him call out that his name was Vivian; you are not at all deaf," said the young lady, irritated.

"I did hear something like it, for certain," she replied.

Miss Mercy would have been very glad to know, while under these examinations, what the extent of Miss Vernon's information actually was, for however willing she might be to tell stories, she was especially averse to being found out at this particular juncture. The sense of this inconvenience a good deal embarrassed her accustomed liberty of speech.

All this time Maud was possessed by the suspicion that, for some reason or other, Mercy Creswell was deliberately deceiving her, and that she knew just as much as Darkdale did about this Mr. Vivian. More than ever she disliked being assigned this particular attendant, and more and more puzzled she became in her search for her mother's motive.

For awhile she looked from the window. The wood had gradually thinned, and now but a few scattered and decayed firs stretched their bleached boughs under the moonbeams, and stooped over the peat.

"Why should you try to deceive me?" said Miss Vernon, suddenly turning to Mercy Creswell, who, with her mouth screwed together, and her cunning eyes looking from her window upon the moonlit prospect, was busy with her own thoughts.

"Me deceive you? La, Miss Maud! Why should I deceive you, above all? I would not, for no consideration, miss. I hope I have a conscience, miss. I'd be sorry, I assure you, Miss Maud."

"Why, then, did you not tell me, at once, that you knew something about that gentleman, Mr. Vivian? You know as much about him as Mr. Darkdale does."

"Well now, indeed, I do not, miss, no sich thing. I may 'a seen him, and I think I did at Lady Mardykes; he's a cousin, or something, to her."

"Oh, really? A relation of Lady Mardykes."

"Yes, miss. If it be the same I mean." Maud mused for a minute or two.

"How far are we now from Carsbrook?" she asked.

"Well, miss, I'd say little more than three mile. Here's the finger-post, and down there, among the trees, is the Red Lion, and there we'll get into the right road, without another turn, right on to the house."

"I'm not sorry," said Maud, looking from the windows with more interest than before. "It has been a long journey. You were at Carsbrook this morning?"

"Yes, miss," said the maid, who had gradually grown to look careworn and pallid, as they neared their destination.

"Was Lady Mardykes there?"

"No, miss," answered Mercy.

"She was expected there, wasn't she?"

"Expected there?" repeated Miss Creswell. Let me think. Oh, la! yes, to be sure, she was expected."

"How soon?"

"How soon?" "Twill be to-morrow morning. Oh, yes, to-morrow morning. To-morrow's Tuesday? Yes, to-morrow morning, for certain."

They were now driving through a pretty wooded country. On the left was a great park wall, grey and moss-streaked, mantled here and there with ivy, and overlapped by grand old trees. On the right were hedge-rows, and many a sloping field; and, a little in advance, the chimneys and gables of a village, and the slender spire of a rural church, white in the moonlight.

"We're near home now, miss," said Mercy.

"Oh," said Maud, looking out more curiously. "What wall is that?"

"The park wall, miss."

"It would not be easy to climb that; higher, I think, than Roydon wall."

"It is very high, miss."

"And how soon is Miss Max expected to arrive?"

"Miss Medwyn?" exclaimed the maid, laughing, all at once, in spite of herself.

"Why do you laugh? Miss Medwyn is coming here, and I thought she would have been here to-day," said Maud, a little haughtily.

"Like enough, miss," said Mercy, drying her eyes. "La, ha, ha, ha! it is funny—I beg your pardon, miss. I suppose she will—time enough. But she was not here when I left this morning."

"We'll hear all about it when we reach the house. I suppose there is nothing like a dance, or anything of that kind, while Lady Mardykes is away?"

"Oh, la! yes, miss. No end of dancing and music and everything that way," an-

answered Mercy, with a great sigh, and a haggard look, after her brief merriment. "There's a—what do you call it?—of singing and music to-night.

"A concert?"

"Yes, that's it, miss, a concert. A concert of music. La! they does it so beautiful, you wouldn't believe. I wish Miss Medwyn was here to try her pipe at it. Hoo, hoo, hoo—la! I beg your pardon—she's so staid and wise, miss!"

Mercy was stuffing her handkerchief into her mouth to stifle her laughter. But this time it was over quickly.

At this moment the postilions wheeled their horses to the left, and pulled them up, calling lustily, "Gate, gate!"

"So we have arrived," said Maud, letting down the window, and looking out with the curiosity of long-deferred expectation.

The leaders' heads seemed almost touching the bars of a great iron gate, over which burned a solitary lamp, acting, light-house fashion, rather as a warning than as an effectual light.

They were under the shadow of gigantic elms, that threw their branches from side to side; the carriage-lamps dimly lighted a few clusters of their dark foliage, and the light over the gate showed, for a few feet round and above it, the same moveless leafage.

"We shan't be long reaching the house?" she inquired of Mr. Darkdale, who was walking by the window toward the gate, for she remembered "approaches" three miles long after you enter the gate, deceiving you with a second journey before you reach the hall-door.

"Not five minutes, miss," said the man, hardly turning his head as he passed.

Was he growing a little gruffer, she thought, as they approached their destination?

Darkdale was talking earnestly in a low tone with the man who had come to the gate at their summons; and then he called:

"Be alive, now—open the gate."

In a minute more they were driving up the approach at a rapid pace under rows of trees. Suddenly the shadowy road they followed turned to the right, and took a direction parallel to the high road; about a hundred yards on, they drove up to the front of the house, along which this road, expanding before it into a court-yard, passes. And now they pull up before the steps of the hall-door. And the horses stand drooping their heads, and snorting, and sending up each a thin white vapour, through which the metal buckles of their harness glimmer faintly in the moonlight.

Mr. Darkdale was already on the steps ringing the bell.

CHAPTER LXI. IN THE HOUSE.

MAUD was looking at the house—a huge structure of the cagework sort, which stood out in the light broad and high, its black V's and X's and I's traced in black oak beams, contrasting like gigantic symbols with the smooth white plaster they spanned and intersected, and which showed dazzlingly in the moon's intense splendour, under which also many broad windows were sparkling and glimmering.

A footman in livery stood before the open door, in the shadow of a deep porch, and Maud observed that Mr. Darkdale seemed to speak to him as one in authority, and by no means as one servant to another.

Maud was looking from the carriage window; and the hall was full of light, which came out with a pleasant glow, showing the gilt buttons and gold lace on the servant's livery, flushing the white powder on his head, and making Mr. Darkdale look blacker against its warm light. Some figures, gentlemen in evening dress, and ladies in brilliant costume, passed and repassed a little in perspective.

There came from the interior, as the hall-door stood partly open, the sounds of violins and other instruments, and the more powerful swell of human voices.

Mr. Darkdale turned and ran down the steps, and at the carriage window said:

"There's a concert going on, and a great many of the people moving about in the hall. Perhaps you had better come in by a different way?"

"That is just what I wished," said Miss Vernon.

But Darkdale did not seem to care very much for her sanction, and in fact had not waited for it. He was now talking to the drivers, and the hall-door had been shut. He returned, and said, at the window:

"Your boxes shall be taken up to your room, Miss Vernon, and as the night is so fine, you will have no objection, I dare say, to walk round to the entrance to which I will conduct you and Mercy Creswell."

He opened the carriage-door, and the young lady got out and found herself in the court-yard. Looking along the face of the great house to the right, a mass of stables and other offices closed the view, behind a broken screen of fine old elms; and to the left it was blocked by dark and thicker masses of towering trees.

In this latter direction, along the front

of the house, Mr. Darkdale led the way. In the still air his swift steps sounded sharp on the hard ground. He did not seem to care whether she liked his pace or not.

As she hurried after him, from the open windows, whose blinds, transparent with the lights within, were down, she heard, it seemed to her, very fine voices singing, as she thought, that brilliant staccato air, *Quest un' Nodo, &c.*, from *Cenerentola*, and so unusually well that she was almost tempted to pause and listen.

But Mr. Darkdale did not consult her, but glided on to the extremity of the house, where a high wall confronted them, and with a latch-key opened a door, beside which he stood, holding it wide, for Miss Vernon and her attendant, and shutting it immediately on their passing in.

They were now in the great quadrangle which lies against the side of the house, with the quaint Dutch flower-beds, like fanciful carpet pattern, surrounding it, and the tall yew hedges giving it a cloister-like seclusion. Miss Vernon easily recognised this by the description; the trim yew hedges were visible, overtopped by a dense screen of trees at the other side, every distance marked by the thin mist of night; and in the centre stretched the smooth carpet of grass, in the midst of which stood the old mulberry-tree.

"Oh! This is the croquet-ground?" said Miss Vernon to her attendant, as they passed on.

"Ay, that will be the croquet-ground," answered her maid, a little absently, as if a gloom and suspicion had come over her. Her fat face had grown more than usually putty-coloured, and she was screwing her lips together, and frowning hard.

Mr. Darkdale spoke never a word until he had reached the door through which *Antomarchi*, some nights before, had admitted himself and Doctor Malkin to the self-same house.

A servant, not in livery, stood by this door, which was ajar, and opened it wide at their approach.

Darkdale whispered a few words to him, the purport of which Maud did not catch, and was not meant to hear, and in this same tone the man replied a word or two.

It was rather a chill reception. But then her hostess was absent, and certainly was not accountable for the uncomfortable ways of the odd attendants whom it had pleased her mother to assign her.

The servant hied away into the door; it seemed to execute some behest of Dark-

dale's in haste; and Darkdale himself stood at it instead, to receive them.

"So, in *Carsbrook* at last," said Maud, with a smile, as she placed her foot on the oak flooring of the very long passage with which we are already acquainted.

Mercy Creswell screwed her lips harder, and raised her eyebrows, "pulling," as they say, in her abstraction, an old and dismal grimace.

"Now, miss? Oh, ay to be sure," said Mercy Creswell, as it were, half awaking, and looking vaguely about her.

Mr. Darkdale shut the heavy door, which closed by a spring bolt, with a clang that boomed through the long passage, and then, with an odd familiarity with internal arrangements, he drew the bolts with noisy rapidity, and turned the key which was in the lock, and drew it out.

"Now, miss, you'll not be long getting to your room," said Mercy Creswell, her eyes wandering along the wall, and something sunken and weary in her unwholesome face.

"Well, I should hope not," thought Maud, a little surprised.

Darkdale was walking along the passage with rapid strides, having merely beckoned to them to follow.

Miss Maud was a good deal disgusted at this procedure. She was obliged, in order to keep this man in view, to follow at a rapid pace, and as he turned a corner, which she had not yet reached, Maud saw a person emerge from a side-door in the perspective of the passage, the sight of whom very much surprised her.

It was Doctor Malkin who stepped forth under the lamp which overhung that door, his bald head flushed, and his disagreeable countenance smiling grimly.

With the smile still on his thin lips he turned his head and saw Miss Vernon.

He thought, I dare say, that she had not seen him, for he instantly drew back into the recess of the doorway.

Perhaps he had not recognised her, perhaps he did not choose to be recognised in this part of the house. But a few days ago he certainly was not even acquainted with *Lady Mardykes*. But he had a good many friends, and she an infinitude, and an introduction might, of course, have been very easily managed.

This all passed in her mind nearly momentarily, as she walked quickly into the side passage after Darkdale, Mercy Creswell keeping hardly a foot behind, and a little to the other side.

The impression this odd little incident left upon her mind was, notwithstanding, unpleasant.

Having turned to the left she saw the large screen I mentioned on a former occasion, that protected the door at which Darkdale was now tapping. It was hardly opened when Maud reached it.

"Can my room be on this floor?" she wondered.

No, it was no such thing. Mr. Drummond, short, serious, and benevolent, with rosy cheeks and brown eyes, and bald head, and a pen behind his ear, was standing in a short office coat at the threshold.

"This is Miss Maud Vernon, daughter of Lady Vernon, of Roydon Hall," said Darkdale, performing this odd office of introduction in a dry, rapid way.

"Half an hour later than we expected," said Mr. Drummond, pulling out a large old-fashioned silver watch by the chain, from which dangled a bunch of seals and keys on his comfortable paunch; and then glancing back, it was to be presumed at a clock, in the interior, "no, twenty-five, precisely five-and-twenty minutes late," and he turned from the corners of his eyes upon Miss Vernon a shrewd glance, and quickly made her a respectful bow.

"I'll tell you about that by-and-bye," said Darkdale.

"I hope the young lady will find everything to her liking, I'm sure."

"Miss Vernon's come for a short visit to *Lady Mardykes* here, a few weeks or so," interrupted Darkdale. "And there are two boxes, largest size, and two middle size, and a dressing-case, and a bonnet-box, and here's Lady Vernon's list of the jewels she's brought; and—come here Miss Creswell—she's to wait on Miss Vernon. Which is Miss Vernon's room?"

He dived into the room, and returned in a moment with a big book like a ledger.

"Miss Vernon? Yes. Here it is. This will be it—A A, Fourteen."

"A A, Fourteen," repeated Darkdale, musing. "That is at the west side of the cross-door, eh?"

"Yes, so it is."

"I—I didn't think that," said Darkdale, drawing nearer to him, with an inquiring glance and a dubious frown of thought.

"Yes, it's all right; and here's the voucher and 'question' wrote with his own hand across it."

Darkdale read the paper, and returned it to the plump fingers of the secretary.

"It is—that's it," he said.

"I'm a little tired. I should like to get to my room, please. I suppose my maid knows where it is?" said Miss Vernon, who was beginning to lose patience.

"In one moment, presently, please, Miss Vernon." Darkdale whispered a word in the ear of Mercy Creswell. "Now, Miss Vernon, please, we have only a moment to delay on the way, and then your maid shall show you to your room."

At the same quick pace he led her through a passage or two, and opened a door, which she entered after him.

"You shan't be detained a moment here, Miss Vernon," he repeated.

It is a spacious oval room, panelled massively up to the ceiling, and surrounded, as it seems, with doors all alike in very heavy casings. It is rather bare of furniture. A thick Turkey carpet covers the floor. There are four enormous arm-chairs on castors, and a square table, covered with stamped leather, and with legs as thick as cannons on castors, stands in the centre of the room. A ponderous oak desk lies upon the table, and is, in fact, attached to it, the whole heavy structure forming one massive piece. Except these articles of furniture, there is not a movable thing in the room.

The chamber is lighted from the ceiling, over the table, by a small oval line of gas-jets, which looks like a continuous ribbon of flame.

There is something queer, and almost dismaying, in the effect of this bare and massive room, with its four huge, modern, purple leather chairs.

The immense solidity of the mouldings and panelling that surround it, as well as its peculiar shape, would reflect back and muffle any sound uttered within it. And, somehow, it suggests vaguely the idea of surgery, the strap, the knife, and all that therapeutic torture.

The effect of the mild equable light is odd, and the monotony with which the doors, or the sham doors, match one another all round, has something bewildering and portentous in it.

While she looks round at all this, Mr. Darkdale has left the room; and turning about she finds that Mercy Creswell, perhaps, never entered it. At all events, she certainly is not there now, and Maud is quite alone.

One thing is obvious. It certainly is pretty evident that Lady Mardykes is not at home. So at least Maud thinks.

"There must, however, be some servant,

I think, who can show me my room. I'll try," she resolves.

Maud accordingly tries the handle of the particular door through which she thinks she had entered, but it will not turn; then another, with the same result. It is rather a disconcerting situation, for by this time she cannot tell by what door she had come in, or by which of all these Mr. Darkdale had gone out, each door is so like its neighbour.

She looks about for a bell, but she could discover nothing of the kind.

Before another minute had passed, however, one of the doors at the other side of the room opened noiselessly, and a marble-featured man, with strange eyes, and black, square beard, stood before the panel, like a picture. It was Automarchi.

"Oh, I'm afraid the servant has made a mistake," said Miss Vernon, who was vexed at her absurd situation. "He showed me in here as a room where I was to wait for my maid, till she returned to show me the way to my room."

"She will be here in a moment, Miss Vernon; there has been no mistake. I hope your head is better?"

"Thanks, a great deal better."

She was surprised at his knowing that she had complained of a slight headache on her journey.

"I'm glad of that. My friend, Lady Mardykes, will be here in the morning. I am a doctor, and I am held accountable for the health and spirits of all the inmates of this big house."

The pallor and stillness of his face, the blackness of his hair and beard, and the strange metallic vibration of his bass tones, produced in Maud a sensation akin to fear, and made even his pleasantries formidable.

"Your maid must, by this time, be at the door."

He opened a door, beckoned, and Mercy Creswell came into the room.

"If you permit me, Miss Vernon, I'll try your pulse." And he took the young lady's wrist before she could decline. "You don't often drive so far. You'll be quite well in the morning; but you must not think of coming down to breakfast."

"Is Miss Medwyn here?" inquired Maud, before committing herself to stay in her room all the morning.

"No, Miss Medwyn is not here"

"I wonder what can have happened. Lady Mardykes wrote to me to say she would certainly be here, to stay some time, this morning."

"An uncertain world!" he observed, with a hard smile. "But Lady Mardykes is seldom mistaken. Whatever she said one may be sure she believed; and what she thinks is generally very near the truth. You had an alarm on the way? But you did not mind it much?"

"It did startle me a good deal for the moment; but it was soon over. I think the whole party were startled."

"I dare say; but you don't feel it now? It won't interfere with your sleep, eh?"

"Oh, no," laughed the young lady; "I assure you I'm quite well—I'm not the least likely to be on your list of invalids, and so I think I'll say good-night."

"Good-night," said he, with his peculiar smile, and a very ceremonious bow, and he opened the door and stood beside it, with the handle in his fingers.

Mercy Creswell took the bedroom candle that stood, lighted, on a table outside the door. The young lady walked on. Automarchi's smile was instantly gone, and the stern, waxen face was grave as before.

Automarchi's eyes rested for a moment on Mercy Creswell as she passed. He nodded, and made her a slight sign.

You would have judged by her face that she stood in great awe of this man. She positively winced; and with a frightened ogle, and very round eyes, and mouth down at the corners, made him a little curtsy.

He shut the door without waiting for that parting reverence, and she saw no more of him or the oval room for that night.

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PROLOGUE.

CHAPTER IV. SENTENCED.

"GLAD you have come in, Mr. Riley; the general has rung twice."

"And why didn't you answer the bell?" asked Mr. Riley, a tall, weather-beaten, grey-haired man, of soldierly appearance.

"No, I thank you," replied the butler; "when I have known him as long as you, perhaps I will, but our acquaintance is much too short at present, 'and never let me see you before lunch time,' he says to me the other day, and I made up my mind that I would act accordingly."

"The general's rather short tempered in the morning," said Riley, with a grim smile as he left the room to answer the bell, which pealed out for the third time.

"Short tempered," said the butler to the footman, who entered the pantry at the moment, bearing a tray of glasses; "short tempered! He thinks he's among the niggers still, I suppose, but he'll have to alter all that now he's come over here."

"Of course he will, Mr. Johnson," said the footman; "I don't hold with blacks, which is good enough to sweep crossings and sell tracts, but not figures enough for in-door service."

Meanwhile, Riley rapidly made his way to the library, opened the door, closed it carefully behind him, and stood upright at the attitude of attention, waiting for his master to address him. The room was empty at the moment, but through a doorway at the further end of it came a man with quick, hasty footsteps, bearing two letters in his hand. A man above the

middle height, and considerably past middle age, thin almost to gauntness, upright in his carriage, rapid and nervous in his movements. His iron-grey hair, worn without parting or division, curled in a thick crisp mass on his head. His small grey moustache shaded his thin lips, but his cheeks were whiskerless, and no beard softened the outlines of the strong and heavy jaw, which plainly indicated the owner's possession of a quality characterised by his friends as firmness, by his foes as obstinacy.

Such outward appearance had Major-General Sir Geoffrey Heriot. As he entered the room, he looked somewhat vacantly at the servant, then seating himself at his writing-table, spread his letters open before him, and commenced the perusal of one of them. Riley waited until his master again looked up, when he said, "You rang, general?"

Sir Geoffrey roused in an instant. "Three times, Riley. Where were you?"

"Gone to the stables, general, to look at the horse that came last night. It's against your orders for any of the servants to come to you in the morning, and I thought you would like to hear news of the horse. He'll make a fine charger, general, and will carry Mr. George splendidly."

"How can you tell that?" said Sir Geoffrey, quickly; "you never saw Mr. George!"

"No, general, that's true," said Riley; "but——"

"You never will see him," said Sir Geoffrey.

"Never see Mr. George," cried the man in astonishment; "why I thought in a month's time he was coming here?"

"Mr. George Heriot will never come here," said Sir Geoffrey, looking up sternly

at his servant; "more than that, there is no such person."

"No such person as your honour's son?" cried Riley, who, like most of his countrymen, when excited favoured his sentences with a vast amount of brogue.

"I have no son, Riley."

"Is Mr. George dead?" asked the man, dropping his voice.

"He's dead to me," said Sir Geoffry, in the same tone; "do you understand?"

"That's just what I don't do," said he, looking up in despair.

"All that you have occasion to know," said Sir Geoffry Heriot, coldly, "and you should not know even so much, if you had not served me faithfully so many years, is this: that the person whom I have hitherto been accustomed to think of as my son, and to whose companionship and affection I have been looking forward as the solace of my life, has done something which renders it necessary for me not merely to discard and disown him, but to forget that he ever existed."

"Your honour," said Riley, involuntarily taking a step nearer to his master, and speaking with trembling lips and outstretched hands, "to discard and disown—is it Mr. George, your son?"

"Have I any other son, that you need ask?" said Sir Geoffry, unmoved. "Understand, too, that henceforward his name will never pass my lips, and must never be mentioned by you. I am aware, Riley, that silence is one of your qualities, but have you ever spoken of my son's expected visit here to any of your new associates in the servants' hall?"

"Never, Sir Geoffry."

"Never even mentioned his existence?"

"Never, general. Mr. George's name has never crossed my lips save to your honour, since we left the regiment."

"That's right; now attend to me. I expect a visitor to-day. You will have timely notice of his approach, by seeing the carriage coming up the avenue, and you will take care to be in the way to open the hall-door. Mind that this is done by you, and none of the other servants; let them know if they ask anything about it, that it is by my special orders. You will not ask the gentleman his name; if he gives it, you will keep it to yourself, and not even repeat it to me. You will simply announce him as a gentleman, send the carriage to the stables, and bid the driver come round again in half an hour's time. When I ring the bell you will see the gentleman to the

door, and show him out, without a word. You understand me, without a word."

"I understand, general," said the man, with his head bent down, and in a low tone of voice.

"Now go!" and Sir Geoffry pointed to the door.

"It's Mr. George," thought Riley to himself, as he went slowly down the passage; "it's Mr. George! He's coming to see his father for the last time, and not all the angels in heaven, or all the other things anywhere else, would make the general budge an inch when he has made his mind up to do even so cruel a thing as this."

When Sir Geoffry was left to himself, he took up the longer of the two letters which lay before him, and read it again attentively. As he read, the blood flushed in his bronzed cheeks, his teeth were set firmly together behind his thin lips, his eyes kindled, and at length crushing the letter in his hand, he began pacing the room with hasty strides.

"A coward!" he muttered, in short, broken sentences; "a coward, that is it, neither more nor less. To think, after all I have gone through and all I have anticipated, that I should come back to this; that flesh and blood of mine should receive a blow, and, as Goole phrases it, 'sit down patiently under the insult.' A coward, eh? Gave this other man the lie, and when he hit out, naturally enough—what else could have been expected of him?—refused to call him out, but sits down patiently under the insult. That's the tailor's blood cropping up in that—you can never get rid of the taint; like gout it will skip one generation, but it comes out in the next; it passed by me and shows itself in him. Just like your low-bred cur, who will fly out and bark and growl, but runs away directly a stick is shaken at him. To think that he should have received a blow, and—What does Goole say?" Here he referred to the letter. "'Townspiece present.' I am thankful to Providence that I did not obey my first impulse, and go up to Cheeseborough to see this lad and his regiment directly I landed. With the exception of Goole and this man—what is his name?—Cleethorpe—whom he refers to, they know nothing of me except my name, and they are not likely to remember that for long after their drill meeting is over. They were all county men, I recollect Goole telling me, and Cheddar is a long way off, and has not much communication with London, so that I am not

likely to be brought across any of them. "This reason for his refusal to fight," continued Sir Geoffrey, again referring to the letter, "'this reason he declines to impart to anybody.' Declines to impart! What does Goole mean by writing such stuff as that to me, even if he be taken in by it himself? Reason—a man has no reason for being a coward save that he is one. And here I am, with this word 'coward' ringing out in every sentence, and knowing that it is applied to my own son!"

He stopped suddenly, and threw up his arms in the violence of his rage and grief, then let them drop by his side, and continued mechanically pacing to and fro with his chin resting on his breast.

After about an hour had passed away in this manner, Sir Geoffrey's quick ear caught the sound of footsteps in the passage close to the door. He had only time to throw himself into a chair at the writing-table, and to assume the appearance of being engaged with his pen, when the door was opened, and Riley appeared. Close behind him Sir Geoffrey saw the outline of another figure, and it required all the self-command he possessed to subdue the nervous shivering, which ran through him at the sight, from head to heel.

Riley studiously averted his eyes from his master as he made the announcement. "A gentleman, Sir Geoffrey!" Sir Geoffrey replied, "Show him in;" but, after the first glance, did not look up from the writing in front of him until he heard the sound made by the closing door. Then he raised his head, and rose from his chair, but as his glance fell upon the young man standing before him, his thoughts leaped back over the abyss of twenty years, and a woman's face, which he had not seen during that period, but which, when he last looked at it, bore just the same strange, proud expression, rose before his fancy. He sank back in his chair again, and shut the vision out with his hand.

"Father," cried the young man, stepping forward.

In an instant Sir Geoffrey was himself again.

"Son," he replied, rising to his feet, and putting forth his hand to check the young man's advance, "this is the first time we have ever interchanged these terms, and it will be the last."

"Father!" again cried the youth.

"I am Sir Geoffrey Heriot, if you please, to you as well as to everybody else. Whom

you are now I know, but what you may be for the future is for your own decision, and utterly without any reference to me."

The young man looked up as though doubting the evidence of his ears.

Presently he said: "You have had a letter from me, sir?"

"I have had a letter from Colonel Goole, stating what occurred on Thursday night in a billiard-room at Cheeseborough," said Sir Geoffrey.

"But from me, I ask," said the young man, impetuously; "had you not a letter from me, stating that I was coming to you forthwith, and that I would explain that occurrence?"

"I had," said Sir Geoffrey, quietly; "but there was no occasion for you to have troubled yourself to have come on such an errand. I have no doubt Colonel Goole states the circumstances correctly; you can take his letter and judge for yourself." And he threw the letter across the table.

George Heriot took up the letter and read it through, Sir Geoffrey watching him intently, muttering as he did so, "And he can read of his own disgrace without turning a hair!"

"The facts are correctly stated, sir," said George, folding the letter, and handing it back to his father.

"Of course," said Sir Geoffrey, contemptuously; "gentlemen are no more in the habit of perverting facts than of submitting tamely to insult. We will go through the statements seriatim if you please. You and this Mr. Travers," said the general, referring to the letter, "had this quarrel at a billiard-table?"

"We had."

"He accused you of obtruding on his stroke, and of purposely pushing his arm?"

"He did."

"You gave him the lie?"

"Yes."

"And he then struck you a blow?"

"He did."

"That blow you have not attempted to avenge. You remain, as it were, with a red mark of his buffet on your cheek. You have not demanded satisfaction for this insult that has been put upon you?"

"I have not."

"On the contrary, you have refused to call this man to account?"

"I have."

"And you dare, sir, to come here and confront me with such a decision as that in your mouth?" cried the general, almost shrieking with rage.

"I dare," said George Heriot, very quietly.

His son's coolness had a subduing effect upon the elder man. His look was still disdainful, and his manner imperious, but his voice was considerably moderated as he said:

"Your daring to do so proves more plainly than anything else that we have never met before, and that you have been brought up in complete ignorance of my character."

"I certainly was not brought up to regard you either as an idol whom I was to worship, or as a bully from whom I was to run away," said the young man, still very quietly.

Sir Geoffry's face darkened, and he seemed as though about to again give vent to his passion. But he checked himself, and said:

"I am indebted to those to whom your early days were confided for having failed to represent me in the last objectionable character. As to the former," he added, grimly, "they were not likely to make any mistake about that. However, that is not relevant to the subject at present under discussion. You allow that all that is said by Colonel Goole in this matter is true?"

"Perfectly true."

"Then it only remains with me to announce the determination which I have come to in the matter. Stay, though. Colonel Goole tells me that you announce yourself as having some reason for refusing to demand satisfaction of this man."

"Of any man," interrupted George.

"Of any man," repeated the general. "I beg your pardon, and accept your correction in its wider sense. This reason you declined to state to Colonel Goole, or to any of your brother officers. Does your objection to mention it apply equally to me?"

"It does not."

"No! Then you can give me your reasons?"

"I can."

"And will?"

"Certainly."

"I confess I shall be curious to hear what can have been your motive for sacrificing a very promising career, almost before you had entered upon it."

"My sole motive for refusing to fight a duel—that is the right way to put it, as even had I been challenged, I should have declined the meeting—was, that I had sworn a solemn oath never to engage in such an encounter."

Sir Geoffry laughed aloud. "The old story," he cried, with a sneer; "the coward's never-failing plea. So tender of his word, so regardless of his honour. And to whom, pray, and under what circumstances, was this oath given?"

"To whom? To your wife: my mother."

Sir Geoffry started, and shook himself as though he had received a cut from a whip. He steadied himself quickly, and then, placing his fingers upon the table, remained standing.

"And you ask under what circumstances," continued the lad. "I will tell you. The first time I can recollect any allusion to it was when I was quite a little child. We were living then at Saumer, a little village within a short distance of Boulogne. We used to go into Boulogne in a kind of omnibus, drawn by one horse, and driven by a man named Joseph. It used to start very early in the morning, that the countrywomen might be betimes at market with their fruit, and flowers, and vegetables. And one morning, just as we were skirting the sands, we saw a little knot of men gathered round something which they were slowly carrying away. Joseph stopped his horse, and ran to see what it was, and coming back told us that it was the body of an officer who had been just killed in a duel. That night I spoke to my mother about it, and asked her what a duel meant, and why the officer had been killed. After she had explained this, she cried a great deal, I recollect, and made me promise never to allow myself to be mixed up in such matters. The subject was never alluded to again between us until"—and here the lad's voice broke a little—"until she was dying. We had had a long, long talk, and she had told me of all that she wished me to do. I was sitting by her; her eyes were closed, and I thought she was sleeping, when she suddenly roused up, and clutching me by the arm, reminded me of the scene which we had witnessed from the Saumer omnibus, and of the promise which I then made. 'You were very young then,' she said, 'and you are but a mere child now, but you will have sense enough to understand me, and to do what I bid you, when I tell you that it is my urgent wish, and that I am going away from you, and you will never see me again. Say after me these words: "I swear by my hopes of salvation, and by the love I have for my mother, that I will never fight a duel, or take part in one in any way."' I repeated the words after her, then I laid

down beside her, and she put her arms round my neck, and kept them there till she died."

The boy ceased. The vivid recollection of what he had described had excited him somewhat as he proceeded, and his narrative had, he imagined, had some effect upon his father, who sat with his face averted, and his head resting on his hand.

But whatever emotion Sir Geoffry might have felt, he was careful to let no sign of it escape him. After a pause he looked up, and said, in hard, dry tones :

"It is a pity you did not think of all this before you gave the lie to your brother officer, or that, having done so, you did not suffer the fact to escape your memory. The circumstances being as they are, I do not allow for a moment that your statement is a sufficient excuse for your conduct. But it has had a certain effect. When I received your colonel's letter this morning, I determined upon disowning and discarding you on account of your conduct as described to me by him, without entering into any parley as to the past or the future. That determination I adhere to, but in consequence of what you have said, I feel it due to myself to let you know something, at least, of the history of the past. When you have heard it, you will more readily comprehend your mother's horror of duelling, and what may perhaps have been a mystery to you—the reason that the latter portion of her life was passed away from me.

"Your grandfather was a tailor named Causton, residing in a small hamlet near London, where there was a good foundation school. To this school he sent me, his son, and there, when quite a child, I formed an intimate friendship with a lad named Heriot. This lad died when he was about eleven years old, and his father, who was a clerk high up in the India House, adopted me in his place, on condition that I should bear his name, and give myself up entirely to his direction. My father was dead at that time, and I never cared particularly about the tailor's connexion, so that I gladly accepted Mr. Heriot's offer, and, under my new name, I was sent to Addiscombe, and thence into the Indian army. I stuck resolutely to my profession, never asking for leave of absence during twenty years. Then I obtained a long furlough, and came home to England. All traces of the Causton name and the tailor parentage were obliterated by this time. I was Major Heriot, well

known and highly respected throughout the Indian service; and, as I had lived frugally, I had been enabled to save ample means.

"I met your mother in society, and admired her immensely. She was one of two sisters, both of whom were raved about; but your mother's was the softer beauty of the two, and in manner she was much the sweeter and more innocent. My attentions pleased her, my position was thought an eligible one by her friends, and we were married. Within a year of our marriage, and shortly after your birth, your mother presented to me a gentleman named Yeldham, whom she had known before she made my acquaintance. He was an Englishman, but had lived most of his time abroad, had foreign manners, and was accustomed to foreign ways. He was a dilettante artist and an amateur musician, and was supposed to be particularly fascinating to women. Your mother took great delight in his society, and he was so much at our house that I spoke to her about it. She laughed at the time, and told me if I used my eyes I could see that it was her sister, who was living with us, that was in reality Mr. Yeldham's attraction. I thought no more of it, and shortly after we all went abroad, loitering up the Rhine to Baden, where Mr. Yeldham joined us. I again fancied I perceived an understanding between your mother and this man, which was anything but agreeable to me. I spoke about it in confidence to her sister, Miss Rose, and although she strove to make me believe I was wrong, I was not satisfied with her explanation. Finally I watched their conduct at a grand fancy ball given by a French banker, who was staying at the place, and, in consequence of what I saw, I sent Mr. Yeldham a challenge. Twenty-four hours after that we met at one of the small islands on the Rhine, and I shot him through the chest. With his dying breath he declared that I had been in error throughout, and that it was not even your mother with whom I had seen him at the ball. He was a man of honour, and did his best to save a woman's reputation, but of course his statement was false."

"What did my mother say?" interrupted George.

"She corroborated Mr. Yeldham in every particular, and accused me of being a murderer," said Sir Geoffry, bitterly, "and as we held such very unpleasant opinions regarding each other, I thought it best that we should separate, and I accordingly re-

turned to India. Her horror of duelling, and the reason of my separation from her, are now, I think, sufficiently explained."

"Perfectly," said George, "but——"

"One moment," interrupted Sir Geoffrey; "I have given you this explanation, which I was by no means called upon to do, and I now proceed to state to you my determination with regard to yourself. You have disgraced the name which I have raised, and for the first time that I have borne it have caused me to blush at its mention. The name is yours, and I cannot forbid your bearing it, but you shall never again be acknowledged or treated by me as my son. From this moment I discard and disown you. You are entitled, when of age, to your mother's property; I am willing to anticipate that event, and allow you to enjoy the income arising from it now, on condition that you assume another name and pledge your word never in any way to reveal your identity, or claim relationship with me."

"I am much obliged to you, sir," said the young man, struggling to repress his emotion, "for your very generous offer, which does you equal credit as a gentleman and as my father! I will not touch one penny of my mother's fortune until I am legally entitled to it. But, meanwhile, you need have no fear of my degrading that name by which you set such store, but which, after all, does not belong to you."

"Sir!" cried Sir Geoffrey.

"Be good enough to hear me out," said George, quietly. "You cannot forget that you are my father, more readily than I will rid myself of every recollection that I am your son. No intrusion of mine shall ever remind you of my existence. I shall leave you to the enjoyment of the reflections which cannot fail to arise when you look back upon your estimable conduct, both as a husband and a father. But I anticipate the pleasure of seeing you once again. I shall make it the business of my life to discover the real history of Mr. Yeldham's acquaintance with my mother, and when I find, as I am certain I shall find, that you were grievously deceived by your own vanity and jealousy, I shall have the pleasure of coming and proving it to you, as some slight return for your noble conduct towards my mother and myself. And now I must trouble you to ring the bell and order the carriage to be brought round."

With this and a slight bow, the young man turned on his heel, and quitted the room.

For a moment Sir Geoffrey was speechless, his rage choked him, then he said, "What an insolent rascal! but after all it was better than whining. It shows he has some pluck left. And I was afraid he would whine."

HOW PARIS MOURNS.

WE are a large party of joyous people bound from Paris for Versailles, this bright Sunday morning. The train is crammed; the tramway omnibuses are in such demand, that to travel by them would involve an hour's waiting at the ticket office; the Paris cabmen are demanding five times their usual fares; so we take up our position on the roof of a second-class carriage, gratified at having found a place at last, and determined to enjoy ourselves to the utmost. "We" are French people for the most part. Papa, mamma, two neatly dressed children, and a nurse with a basket, from which the neck of a wine-bottle and a snow-white napkin protrudes; Jules, with a flower in his button-hole, a pair of tightly fitting ladies' boots upon his feet, protects Antoinette tenderly from the wind which cuts sharply through the second-storied carriage, while she arranges her shawl coquettishly, and turns from side to side as he directs; two grim-looking old men, who indulge in infantile merriment at Antoinette's airs; and the ruck and file of our company, workmen from Belleville, shopkeepers from the Boulevards, gargons from the cafés, soldiers in uniform on leave, all rejoice exceedingly at what they have come out to see. There are several first-class passengers among us; but this arrangement on the second-class roof resembles the upper deck of an American steamer, and is so convenient for sight-seeing, that there is a positive rush for places there. The two Englishmen present are the only marplots of the party. They heave sighs, forsooth, and look horror-stricken, and draw doleful comparisons between the appearance of the country side now, and when they last visited Versailles, and comport themselves generally, as if they were visiting some scene of horror instead of a merry show. The French people see this, and with characteristic politeness endeavour to rouse them from their insular gloom. These ruins are pretty, but there are better to be seen than these. Has monsieur, the stranger, beheld the Tuileries, the establishment of the minister of finance, the

Hôtel de Ville? What pretty sights are they! But here, look you, is Fort Issy; there, is a whole suburb reduced to ruins; here, are heaps of stones which were country houses a few months ago; there, over the trees yonder, is the crumbling Palace of St. Cloud; and (with mingled pride and playfulness this), "None of the damage was done by the Prussians, it was all the Versaillists and the Commune!" This it is which has crowded the trains with pleasure-seekers, and has been the moving cause of many a picnic. When the train stops at Sèvres a cloud of gaily dressed, chattering people alight, and push their way through the wicket with that mixture of docility and impulsiveness which distinguishes railway passengers in France. Many of them carry tasteful, well-filled baskets, which will be opened about noon, and will furnish forth the modest feast of the day. "There are most pretty ruins at Sèvres," it is explained to us; "whole streets of houses have been demolished, country mansions have been made mere skeletons, and the entire place is one grand ruin." There is so much beaming animation in the speaker's manner, that you ask yourself if he is, by any possibility, connected with the building trade, or can in other ways be likely to benefit by repairs. But it is obvious that the train cannot be filled with masons and their sons, daughters, mothers, aunts, and hangers-on, and, as every one is in equally high spirits, it is clear that the love for an outing and for something new has overridden and quenched sorrow at national abasement and shame. Shame did I say? Why, the people we were travelling with seemed proud of disaster and defeat. They implored us, as it were, to probe their wounds, and to rejoice over their depth and width. It reminded me of the first sounds I heard on the morning of my arrival in Paris. The Commune had just fallen, the blood-stains had scarcely been removed from the streets, arrests were taking place every hour. I looked for sombre faces, and listened for the sound of lamentation and woe. I found neither.

Let us dance and sing, with a tra, la, la!

If sorrow comes I laugh the more, with a tra, la, la!

came hastily from the throat of a house-painter, who, with a score of fellow-labourers, began his work of redecorating the hotel (the proprietor and employer is a German, who has just resumed the charge of his own business, after nine months' enforced absence) at six A.M.

I never saw more industrious or better workmen. The one I have quoted sang the loudest, but there was a jest on every lip, and smiles on all the faces, and when the vocalist-in-chief told the world that, for his part, he had found that, whatever happened, it was wise to sing and dance with a tra, la, la! and that while the wine-flask was full, and Jeannette smiled, it mattered little what came next, there was a general hum of appreciation, as from convivially disposed bees. This happened in a wing of the hotel which had only been reopened a few days, and was occupied for the first time since the siege; so that when a bedroom door opened, and "Are ye goin' to stop that infernal row now?" was given in stentorian tones by an Irish visitor, indignant at being roused so early, the light-hearted house-painters were as much astonished as I was amused. There was a fine burst of laughter, I promise you. Not a syllable of the protest was understood. But its style and manner were unmistakable, and the word went round how Pierre was singing, and how a large English gentleman had been made angry. There were some other painters at work a few doors off, and an hour later, when one of these looked into our court-yard for a brush which had been borrowed of him the day before, the story was told again, with amplifications and suggestions, and by him related to his fellows on his return. It is more than probable that every one of these men were implicated in the deeds of the Commune, that their immediate friends and brothers are buried in quicklime beneath where they fell fighting, that others of their immediate connexions are in durance vile at Versailles, to be shortly transported to Cayenne, and that they have each secrets of their own, which it would endanger their necks to tell. Talk to them, try to gain their confidence, and a lowering look comes into their eyes, and the tigerish nature which lies beneath this veneer of playfulness betrays itself. But meanwhile they have lost the cast, you see, so it is tra, la, la! until the turn comes again, and they shall do their part, to make the red flag wave over the barricade and public edifices once more.

There were men in blue blouses patiently carting away the rubbish from the government offices which have been destroyed in the Rue de Rivoli, and others gazing up at the shell of the Tuileries, and wondering audibly "when the little Thiers would order the rebuilding," most of whom, it is

fair to conclude, were Communists at heart, and had a share in the devastation they would be employed to remedy. There was neither sympathy nor sorrow, either among them or the shifting crowds of sight-seers. Nor was there—and this appeared the most extraordinary feature of all—any of the dejected, sullen look which seems appropriate to defeat. This may have been partly policy, for it would have been dangerous to liberty, if not to life, to show, by word or gesture, approval of the destruction wrought by the Commune; but there was a reality about the merriment, a universal frothiness which could not have been assumed. The statues on the Hôtel de Ville on the side nearest the Rue de Rivoli have, with one exception, escaped injury. While the ruined outer wall stands alone, like a stage front, and, with nothing behind it, its ornaments remain intact, save one of the allegorical figures, which has been snapped off at the shoulders. A world of witty sayings was expended over this incident by the gibing crowd. "Is it Faith, look you, or Prudence which has lost her head?" "Whose head shall we put on here?" provoked an endless number of laughing replies. "Badinguet," "Trochu," "Roche-fort," and a score of less-known names were given in succession, until a man, in cap and bells, and with a performing monkey, was seen to take up his position in the street close by, when the crowd turned at once to the new amusement.

"Plans of Paris, sir! five feet by three, and with all the recent burnings coloured so as to represent real flames, for seventy-five sous! Buy a plan, sir? It is the bird's-eye view taken while the city is blazing in twenty places at once, and only seventy-five sous. They charge a franc for the same thing on the Boulevards—see, sir—published at the office of the *Moniteur*, and authentic. Only seventy-five sous for a map of Paris in flames."

This is a street appeal to the multitude. More elaborate illustrations of the burnings are to be had in the shops. Here is a beautifully executed little map for the pocket, by a military officer of rank; there, an equally elaborate performance, glazed, and on rollers, and on a much larger scale. Both show the injuries inflicted on the city. One kind of mark denotes burning, another partial burning, a third whether it is public or private buildings, or both, which have suffered, a fourth where damage has been done by shells, a fifth where the houses have been pierced by cannon-balls. One of

these maps lies before me as I write, and it is plain that as much pains and trouble have been given to it as is bestowed upon any other kind of survey. The extensive districts of Montmartre, La Villette, and Belleville, defy the minute classification which is given to the rest of the city, and the legend, "Some parts struck by shells, and others burnt by incendiaries," runs in great red letters over them all. There is a terrible display of red elsewhere, and, as the urbane shopman explains to me, there is an appropriateness, a touch of humour on the part of the draughtsman, in making the colour of the Communist party mark out its evil deeds. Water-colour drawings of the representative characters among the insurgents are offered for sale in the best shops. The *Petroleuse*, a wretched object, half monster, half lunatic, and with a diabolical grin on her withered face, stands with one hand in her pocket, and a petroleum bottle in the other; while under the generic title of the *Barricade*, a collection of male wretches are depicted, whose appearance marks them as objects to be arrested and shot, or there is no truth in physiognomy. These pictures are beautifully executed, are full of artistic merit, and one hundred francs each is asked for them. They are for the portfolios of the rich, for the tourists who will flock through Paris as usual this summer, and they have already met with a ready sale.

The next print-shop on the Boulevards attracts a crowd which extends half-way across the pavement. Two drawings, each five feet high, and handsomely framed, are the objects of attraction here. In one a beautiful young woman, who is displaying rather more leg and bust than is customary in polite society, is being led forward by a figure whom it would be profanity to name in this connexion. The woman has the word *Liberty* inscribed upon her cap, and there is a halo of glory on the other head. She is erect, courageous, strong, and the wreck of empires, crowns, thrones, and monarchs is being crushed beneath her feet. This young lady is intended for regenerated and republican France. The companion picture is inscribed *Despotism*, and portrays a repulsive hypocrite, in an ermine cloak, and with a heavy white moustache, kneeling devoutly to the theatrical Mephistopheles who is crowning him. This elderly gentleman is the Emperor of Germany, depicted as ruling by satanic arts; and if our popular conceptions of Mawworm, Mr. Pecksniff, Joseph

Surface, and Mrs. Brownrigg could be fused, the result would be very like what is here given as Kaiser Wilhelm. These are serious productions, as is the photograph labelled "Sedan," which hangs close by. Here the dethroned Emperor Napoleon, the late elect of the people, is portrayed. A bluff gentleman, in robust health, lounges at his ease in a luxurious open carriage, smoking a cigarette. His mien and bearing indicate a luxuriously selfish nature, profoundly satisfied that its own comforts are secure. The chariot containing him is drawn by eight spirited horses, ridden by postillions in the imperial livery, and its road is over the dead and dying on the field of battle. Awful figures with heads bandaged, as if with grave-clothes, rise from the ground to shake their clenched hands menacingly. Maimed soldiers implore that they may be spared, and that the hoofs of the horses and the chariot wheels may be directed elsewhere than over their wounded limbs; and the soldier nurses, who are tending them, shrink in horror, or utter curses loud and deep at the only reply vouchsafed. For the postillions beat back the wounded with their long whips, and urge the horses over their prostrate bodies at a furious pace, while the smoker puffs away, as calmly indifferent as if he were in his easy-chair at home. Following the carriage is a troop of Prussian calvary—more as a protection than a guard—and the whole is given as a veracious representation of what followed the capitulation of Sedan. It is a horrid picture. You can almost hear the groans and shrieks of the wounded soldiers, whose agonies are being wantonly increased; while the active brutality of the menials on horseback, the iron indifference of the occupant of the carriage, and of the foreign troopers who follow in his wake, and with their horses' hoofs give the torture a final stroke, are so vividly rendered, that it is impossible to contemplate them without a shudder. The crowd lingers over this picture fascinated. No one cares to tell them that it is wickedly and maliciously false, or that its one object is to pander unscrupulously to the French passion for vilifying the fallen. The "man of Sedan" is shown in his true colours. So they say and think, poor people, and this photograph of a lying picture has also an extensive sale.

The cannon-balls and shells which have been converted into ornaments, or into articles of use, attract plenty of customers, too. In the course of an hour's stroll I

counted seven shops, in which these were among the articles displayed in the gay windows. Broken shells, with miniature views of Paris painted in oils upon their fractured sides; ponderous iron balls, to which lids have been fitted and bottles let in, and which are now inkstands, tobacco-boxes, snuff-cases, paper-weights, candlesticks, flower-pots, rings, pins, and brooches, all made out of the missiles by means of which Frenchmen were sent to their account by Frenchmen—command exorbitant prices. If the second siege of Paris, and the destruction of its noble national monuments by incendiaries, were matters for congratulation, there could not be greater joyousness, or more apparent pleasure in vaunting the evidences of what had been done. When we passed into the region of caricature, and set ourselves to collect specimens of the political cartoons which have been published in Paris during the last nine months, our task was envied with difficulty. It was dangerous to ask for, and still more dangerous to display and sell some of these. But we peered below the surface and persevered. We scoured the districts of La Chapelle, Belleville, and Montmartre, and whenever we found a print or newspaper shop, endeavoured to establish confidential relations with its proprietor. We frequently failed. Our noble British accent might be assumed—though I flatter myself an average Frenchman is far too sharp-witted to think that possible; or we might be English spies in the pay of Thiers; so the prints offered for sale were, as a rule, either of to-day, or of a period anterior to the Commune. The Emperor Napoleon in every attitude of ignominy: as a shoe-black at work on the boots of William; as a mendicant with pockets turned inside out to attract pity; as a thief making off with millions of the nation's money; as a traitor handing France over to murderers for pay; all these, and scores of others in the same vein, were produced without hesitation, whenever the shopkeeper had any of them remaining in stock.

The caricatures of the siege time were, we found, much in the same vein. Monsieur Jules Favre weeping copiously, and at the very same moment pocketing Bismarck's gold; Monsieur Thiers, negotiating at foreign courts on behalf of the Committee of National Defence and slyly offering for sale a crown, for which the Orleans princes and the Count de Chambord are bidding; General Vinoy suppressing

half a dozen journals, and being bribed by the editors of others to let them alone; General Trochu studying his plan, and handing a large metal key over the walls of Paris to a figure in a Prussian helmet in exchange for a bag of gold—are specimens of the tone and taste of the comic draughtsmen whose productions were most widely appreciated by the people of Paris.

"Albums of the Siege" are to be bought in plenty, at all the best print-shops. They consist of highly coloured engravings, in which imaginary incidents of the siege are told; and where the Prussians, horse-flesh, the absence of gas, the coarseness of the bread, and the straits to which fashionable people were reduced, are told comically and broadly. There are albums, too, of the imperial menagerie, showing the late emperor and empress, and the ministers and favourites of their court, in the guise of the beasts and birds to which their public or private character is popularly supposed to give them affinity; as well as of the same people in the pillory, and with exaggerated and distorted heads. But these cost some francs each, and are intended for the libraries of those who are curious in such matters, and who can afford to collect. I wanted the back numbers of the cheap publications issued for and bought by the million, as reflecting day by day the passions, prejudices, and feelings which were uppermost. It was when we asked for those which appeared under the Commune that our difficulties began. They were all sold. There had never been any. The speaker was too much grieved at the infamies being perpetrated by the scoundrels in power (he himself having probably been the hero of a barricade) to think of his trade; and he was in consequence entirely ignorant of the prints and publications we spoke of. At last, after many protestations in bad French, after producing our passports and asking jocularly if we looked like spies, or emissaries of Monsieur Thiers or his police, we succeeded in some cases in establishing confidence. Then and not till then did the shopkeeper invite us to his dwelling room, and produce from far-away cupboards, and in one instance from the mattress of his bed, bundles of printed and pictorial matter. These were not for sale. We were to understand that clearly. They were part of the private collection of the speaker, and shown to us, his friends, as curiosities. He would, for his part, be sorry, indeed, to vend such atrocious ca-

lumnies on the administration, and so forth. It was odd to note how thoroughly it was understood that these things were literary curiosities, commanding a fancy price. A small bundle of halfpenny prints representing a daily publication of infamous character, which appeared and was suppressed under the Commune, could not be bought under two napoleons, or about two thousand per cent more than its cost.

The political cartoons of the same period, when the International ruled Paris, and while the Versaillists were kept at bay, were only parted with as a personal favour, backed up by a substantial consideration. These last were the only ones we met with which gave evidence of the serious purpose we are accustomed to see in our own great draughtsmen in times of national crisis. "The People learn their strength," is a giant Samson squeezing the lives out of the pigmy rulers he holds in each hand; while the Philistines in the persons of the leaders of the National Assembly are crushed beneath his feet; the "Departure of the Commune," is a figure of Death on the White Horse, waving a red flag, and leaving fire, blood, and destruction in his train. Others are blasphemous adaptations of the most awful incidents in sacred history to the purposes of the hour. Priests are the objects of special derision, as are the governing classes generally; but amid much that is indecent and much that is profane, it is impossible to deny that the popular caricatures published under the Commune have a reality and force about them which may be looked for in vain in other periods of France's recent agony. They are savage but earnest, and as such show with advantage against the miserable gibes against the emperor, and the personal calumnies which have been levelled against every other public man in turn. As we look over folio after folio of caricature, it seems as if we read the real history of this unhappy nation. Later, at the theatre where Therese sings, attracting greater and merrier audiences than ever; at the café chantants, re-opened in the Elysian Fields, where the painted and bedizened women make their brave show upon the stage, and a comic Frenchman, dressed as a monthly nurse, favours us with his views on the relations of the sexes in France; by the ruins of stately edifices which crowds visit as a festal treat; in the gardens where toes are raised higher than ever, and the laughter is as the crackling of thorns under a pot;

in the streets, in the houses, on the Bourse, on the omnibuses, and in the cafés—you see Caricature. It is the mockery of woe, indeed; and remembering who these merry people are, and what they have just gone through, you think of the *Bals à Victime* of the first French revolution, and pronounce those around you to be worthy of their sires. In those dances, as Mr. Carlyle tells us, “the dancers have all crape round the left arm: to be admitted it needs that you be a victim, that you have lost a relative under the Terror. Peace to the dead; let us *dance* to their memory. For in all ways one must dance.” The thing which has been is the thing which shall be, and Paris and the Parisians have not altered a jot since then.

READING MADE EASY.

OVER the entrance of the great reading-room of the British Museum is appropriately placed the bust of the late Mr. Panizzi—the Founder, as he may be called. The huge domed hall behind him, his work and monument, is one of the wonders of Europe, now reaching to a considerable number.

The entrance to this hall is beset with difficulties. At the gate of the Museum, on a day when the reading-room only is open, the policeman and warders challenge the visitor with a “Reader, sir?” Allowed to pass, he crosses the open space, ascends the steps, enters under the portico, and finds himself at the great hall, with more police and warders. Any signs of indecision, and he is sure to be challenged, “Reader?” If he crosses boldly, and makes for the glass-door, where there is another janitor with a list, he is stopped once more and made to show his passport, unless he have what is called at the theatre, “a face admission.” Down the long passage he goes, gives up great-coat, stick, umbrella, parcels; passes through glasswinging doors, past other detectives, and finds himself in the monstrous cathedral dedicated to learning, and, as some say, also to idleness.

It would be hard to give an idea of the first coup d’œil; for there is literally nothing like it. It has the look nearly of a cathedral, with all the comfortable, furnished air of a “snug” library. Colouring for the sides is furnished by rows of the books themselves which run round the walls to a height of some forty or fifty feet, and are reached by two light galleries.

In the centre of the room is a round counter, within which sit the officials, and which communicates with the library outside by a long avenue shut in by glass screens. Outside this counter is another, which holds the enormous catalogue, reaching to some hundred volumes; and from this second counter radiate the desks for the readers. Nothing more comfortable or convenient can be conceived. You have a choice in seats even: hard smooth mahogany or softly cushioned; both gliding smoothly on castors. In the upright back of the desk is a little recess for ink and pens, steel and quill; and on each side a leathern handle. One of these pulls out a reading-desk, which comes well forward, and swings in any direction, or at any height: the other forms a ledge on which books can be piled up and be out of the way. A blotting-pad, paper-knife, and convenient pegs under the table for putting away hats, &c., complete the conveniences. There are over five hundred of these, each having a number and letter. There are, besides, a number of what might be called “research” tables—small, low, flat, and broad, which an antiquarian may have add to himself; and the lid of which lifting up, he finds a convenient repository where he can store away all his papers, notes, and books until he returns the next day. Some of the more retired of the long benches are reserved “for ladies only;” but they do not seem very much to care for such seclusion.

Round the room, and within easy reach, is a sort of free library, where every one can help himself. This, as will be imagined, consists of books of general reference, and is very judiciously chosen. It comprises dictionaries of all languages, the best, newest; encyclopædias of every conceivable sort; long lists of the old magazines, like the Gentleman’s, Annual Register, &c.; ambitious collections of universal science and knowledge, such as the Pantheon Littéraire, and Diderot’s Encyclopædia; histories of towns and counties in profusion, and the best and most favourite text-books in the respective classes of law, theology, medicine, mathematics, physiology, &c. The only weak place is the class of English belles-lettres and biography, which is ordered after a very random and arbitrary fashion, comprising such poor books as Beattie’s Life of Campbell, but not Moore’s Life of Sheridan, having Twiss’s Life of Eldon, and no Life of Sterne, and being without Mrs. Oliphant’s remarkable Life of Irving.

In fact, it would be hard to say on what principle the choice is made.

Having chosen a seat—and if you come late in the day you have to take a long, long walk seeking one—go to the catalogue for your book. And here we may pause to survey this wonderful catalogue, a library of folios in itself. Every volume is stoutly bound in solid blue calf, with its lower edges faced with zinc, to save wear and tear from the violent shoving in of the volumes to their places. On every page are pasted about a dozen neatly lithographed entries, and between the pages are guards, so as to allow fresh leaves to be put in, as the catalogue increases. As the guards are filled up the volume is taken away and rebound with fresh guards, so it becomes an illustration of the famous Cutler stocking, with this difference, that the stocking is gradually increasing in size. Nothing can be fuller than the arrangements for this catalogue, as it even refers you for a biographical notice of a well-known man to some of those little meagre accounts prefixed to collections of their poems, and to biographical notices and reviews. It also, to a great extent, helps the student to the real names of those who have written under assumed ones. This is the new catalogue, but there is an old one partly in print and partly in manuscript, and both must be consulted if you wish to make your search exhaustive. Periodical publications make a department in themselves under the letter P, filling some twenty folio volumes, to which there is an index, also in many folio volumes. London has nearly one folio to itself, Great Britain and France each several. Every entry is complete, title in full, date, place of publication, and a press mark, such as $\frac{645 \text{ a } 10}{3}$, which

is to be copied on a little form like the following:

Permission to use the reading-room will be withdrawn from any person who shall write, or make marks on any part of a printed book or manuscript belonging to the Museum.

Press Mark.	Heading and Title of the Work required.	Place.	Date	Size.
10864. b.	{Memoirs of Mrs. } {Piozzi Hayward.}	London.	1862	Octvo.

John Smith (Signature).

Date, Feb. 9, 1871.

K. 2 { Number of the }
{ Reader's Seat. }

Please to restore each volume of the catalogue to its place as soon as done with.

On the other side are these directions:
READERS ARE PARTICULARLY REQUIRED

1. Not to ask for more than *one* work on the same ticket.
2. To transcribe from the catalogues all the particulars necessary for the identification of the work wanted.
3. To write in a plain, clear hand, in order to avoid delay and mistakes.
4. To indicate, in the proper place on each ticket, the number of the seat occupied.
5. To bear in mind that no books will be left at the seat indicated on the ticket unless the reader who asks for them is there to receive them.
6. When any cause for complaint arises, to apply at once to the superintendent of the reading-room.
7. Before leaving the room, to return each book, or set of books, to an attendant, and obtain the corresponding ticket, the reader being responsible for the books so long as the ticket remains uncancelled.

N.B. Readers are not, under any circumstances, to take a book or manuscript out of the reading-room.

Having given in the ticket, the reader may return to his place, certain of having to wait at least half an hour, and he may amuse himself watching the smooth running carts laden with volumes, which arrive every moment, and the attendants who are seen hurrying along through the glass screen, each with his pile of books, with their labels fluttering. Considering that some of these have to walk three-quarters of a mile along passages and up steep stairs to fetch some remote book, and that often the forms are imperfectly filled, the delay is not surprising. A more intelligent, willing, and obliging class of men cannot be conceived, always ready to volunteer assistance, even outside their special duty. It is pleasant to see how they exert themselves for novices, or for certain old veterans, filling up their forms for them.

The readers are a very singular and motley class. And here it is that some reform is wanting. A great deal of the time and trouble of the staff is taken up with supplying the wants of young boys and girls, and general idlers, who come to read novels and poetry, and take up the places of others who have real business. It cannot be supposed that the nation meant to pay for books and attendants, merely to wait on this useless class. A reform in the way of classification would be useful, the putting these drones in a department of their own, and with one attendant only to wait on them all. Every book ought to be procured within ten minutes, and by a system of speaking tubes and small lifts, the matter could be much simplified. The Museum would run fewer risks from the abstraction of books, by limiting the number of readers. There are many traditions in the Museum of these robbers, some of whom were always

suspected, but to whom the matter never could be brought home: while there was a "gentleman" who was not suspected, but was at last discovered. A Museum book is fortunately very unmarketable, it is so stamped all over; and if a volume had two hundred illustrations, every one would bear this mark. To all libraries come people with a mania for cutting out prints, and at this one, on a stand made purposely, are exhibited two maimed and defaced books, thirty or forty leaves torn out, with an inscription explaining how they were placed there as a warning, &c. This exhibition is a little undignified, and it seems quite purposeless. The evil-doers would only chuckle at it, while the well-conducted have no need of such reminders.

The habitués are a curious class. Some, as we have seen, are mere idlers, who come to read story-books in a comfortable room, but the true bookworm is found here in perfection. There is the shabby man, who has read himself blind over old Latin and French books, and who, at this moment, has his face bent to the table over a tiny duodecimo, the print being about an inch from his eye. Here is the mouldy old antiquary, very dirty, with metal spectacles, delving and grubbing in a very pit of books, with bleared eyes, wrinkled cheeks, and toothless gums, and yet he will work on till he tumbles into the grave. A familiar figure is that of the tall Don Quixote-looking man, who wears jack-boots and a black serge "sontane," or gown. He has a table to himself, covered with little vellum-bound books in all languages, and with notes and little manuscript books, all in the neatest penmanship. Here is a dapper man, with a sale catalogue and pencil, who is comparing books he is about to purchase with the copies in this national Museum. Here are men copying old music, sketching from the print books, tracing maps, handwriting, what not. But what strikes us especially is the diligent book manufacture going on, proofs being corrected, and manuscript set in order on every side. Not less characteristic are the ladies; and here we shall find in perfection the strong-minded woman, with spectacles and curls, and a determined bearing. There are also many nice-looking girls, who go fluttering about fearlessly, fetching their own books. They are fond of coming and working in company with a husband or sweetheart, when a deal of whispering and comparing notes goes on. But considering that there are often five or six hundred people in the room, the be-

haviour of every one concerned is wonderful for propriety, and the room is for the most part as quiet and orderly as if it were a church.

SAINT SWITHIN.

THE green ears droop, brown are the leaves,
The dust is thick upon the eaves,
The babbling brook has long been dry.
Parched is the earth; the glowing sky
Shows not one cloud athwart the blue,
The unbent rays pierce through and through
The thickest covert. All in vain
The dying flowers sigh for rain,
For rain, sweet, freshening, balmy rain.

No more from larch the throstle sings,
Even the skylark folds his wings;
Mute are the reed-birds in the fen,
Mute in the willow bole the wren,
The jay in hedgerow makes no stir,
The magpie shelters in the fir,
The kingfisher and heron in vain
Seek river-bank, and pine for rain,
For rain, sweet, blessed, balmy rain.

It comes, it comes! Life-giving shower!
Chirps every bird, expands each flower;
It comes, the long-wished boon divine,
Dew pearls upon the gables shine;
It sparkles on the glistening leaves,
It wipes the dust-blight from the eaves,
All earth revives, and sings again,
Glad pean for the gift of rain,
Rain, rain, sweet, freshening, balmy rain.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

(SECOND SERIES.)

THE WRECK OF THE JUNO.

WHEN the second canto of Don Juan appeared, some of the minor critics accused Lord Byron of having stolen his fine description of the wreck of the Spanish vessel. Some of the most pathetic incidents were, indeed, as Tom Moore confesses, discovered in a little pamphlet entitled *Narration of the Shipwreck of the Juno on the Coast of Arracan in the year 1795*, which had been favourite reading amongst the boys at Doctor Glennie's school at Dulwich, to which Byron went in 1799. But Byron assured Mr. John Murray and Mr. Hobhouse that the various incidents of the loss of the vessel were taken from the narratives of various wrecks, to wit, those of the Juno, the Hercules, the Centaur, the Abergavenny, the Sydney, the Wellington transport, the Pandora, the Lady Hobart, the Betsy, the Thomas, and the Peggy. But the following account of the wreck of the Juno, with the preservation of fourteen of the crew during twenty-three days of entire famine, will show that for all that was most extraordinary and most touching in such narratives, Byron was indebted to Mr. William Mackay's intelligent and thoughtful account of the loss of the timber

vessel, in which he was second-mate on the coast of India.

The *Juno*, having at Rangoon taken in a cargo of Burmese teak wood for Madras, set sail on the 29th of May, 1795. She was a ship of four hundred and fifty tons burthen, very much out of repair, and in all respects badly provided for sea. The crew consisted of fifty-three men, chiefly Lascars, with a few Europeans, and there were also on board the captain's wife, her maid, a native girl, and some Malay sailors; in all seventy-two souls.

From the first everything went ill. Beating out of the Sirian river with the young ebb, in five to seven fathoms water, with soft mud, the cranky vessel shoaled suddenly about six P.M., to a quarter less five fathoms. Immediately ordered about, the helm was scarcely alee when she struck (out of Scylla into Charybdis) on a sand bank. All was hove back to get her off, but in vain. Both bower anchors were then let go to prevent her driving; one cable parted, and the second anchor she dragged, but the sheet anchor being let go, it bit, and the ship brought up. It was the last quarter ebb, so with struck top-gallant yards and masts, although she lurched over dangerously at low water, the *Juno* floated off with the flood. The anchors were hove up, and the unfortunate ship stood away under a press of sail into deep sea, and, as she made no water, every one hoped the rickety craft had not received any mortal injury. Unfortunately for her shaky timbers, a south-west gale commenced the next day (June the 1st), with a very high sea. She laboured and strained, and very soon sprung a leak. This gale lasting six days, it needed the incessant labour of all hands, working in alternate gangs, to keep the ship free, the pump-gear being overworked, and getting frequently out of order. To add to the misfortunes of the *Juno*, the owners had been so disgracefully and blindly careless of the ship's safety as to put no carpenter on board; and scarcely even any carpenter's tools; the sailors, however, contrived to repair the pumps, which, in spite of all expedients, kept constantly choking with the sand ballast. The captain and officers held several consultations about whether or not to return to Rangoon; but the danger of that low lee-shore (not visible at all till ten or twelve miles off, when the water was only seven fathoms), made the majority decide, as long as any hope remained, to keep her well off the Burmese coast. On the 6th the gale abated, the

ship made less water, only one pump was kept going, and every one, though anxious, grew hopeful. It is true there was a palpable hole between wind and water along the stern-post, but the first calm day some men got out in the jolly-boat and nailed some tarred canvas and oakum over it, with sheet-lead over all. This at first succeeded so far that, in smooth weather, the *Juno* required pumping only about once in a watch. The crew congratulated each other on having effectually stopped a threatening leak, and proceeded cheerfully on their voyage. Hope is blind: how could a mere piece of canvas keep out the seas of the Bay of Bengal in the very middle of the south-west monsoon? Better ten such lee-shores at Rangoon than that. They were, however, soon to be undeceived. The pump-gear was scarcely repaired when, on the 12th of June, a fresh south-west gale commenced with renewed fierceness; all went wrong again, the ship relapsed and made more water than before, the pumps rapidly choked, and the gear was spoiled. The men worked for their lives at three pumps, a bucket also was kept hard at it baling, and those who knew anything of carpenter's tools worked with them, and at the pumps, alternately. Towards the 16th, almost exhausted with fatigue and want of rest after the toil of four days and nights, the captain and officers, now painfully alive to their extreme danger, determined to set all the sail they could carry to keep her away, so as to fetch, if possible, the nearest coast of Coromandel, proposing afterwards to coast it along to Madras, or to bear up for Bengal, as should then seem safest and best. They accordingly set the close reefed topsails and courses and bore up, but the pumps required such close labour to keep down the deadly leak, that it was not in the men's power to properly watch and guard the sails. The natural consequence was, that before the 18th they were all blown from the yards, except the foresail, with which they contrived to lay to till the 20th, being in latitude seventeen degrees, ten minutes, north, and, by reckoning, nine miles west of Cape Negrais.

The ship now pitched so deeply and heavily, that it was with difficulty the frightened men could be persuaded to keep their stations. About noon, however, there was a gleam of hope, for she wore, and the foresail being hauled up she kept before the wind under bare poles. Great and united efforts were then again made with the pumps and buckets, in hopes to clear her, but all in vain. About eight the men

came up from below, pale and hopeless, bringing the news that the water had reached the lower deck, upon which the Lascars abandoned themselves to passionate despair, and even the Englishmen grew silent. The idea was now general that the ship would soon sink to the bottom, owing to the weight of the wet sand ballast under the timbers, and there was one universal cry among the sailors to at once get out the boats.

The boats were, unhappily, useless; for both the old jolly-boats and the six-oared pinnace were shattered and leaky. The captain therefore ordered the mainmast to be cut away to lighten the ship, and, if possible, to delay her sinking till daybreak. About nine o'clock the mast was felled, but unfortunately the hamper of it fell on deck, and in the scramble and confusion the man at the helm let the ship broach to, and the furious sea made a clear breach over her. At this critical moment Mrs. Bremner, the captain's wife, who had been in bed below, ran up the hatchway; Mr. Wade, the chief mate, and Mr. William Mackay, a brave and intelligent young Scotchman, the second officer, helping her to the quarter-deck rail. They were in the act of making the poor frightened woman fast in the mizen rigging, when the ship came to her utmost bearings, and instantly, without more warning, began to settle down. All hands scrambled up the rigging to escape instant death, moving gradually higher and higher as the ship sank deeper. Captain Bremner, his wife, Mr. Wade, and Mackay, with a few others, clustered in the mizen-top. All the rest, but one man, who stuck to the foretop, clung about the mizen rigging. Mrs. Bremner, having no covering but a shift and petticoat, complained much of cold, so Mackay, being better clothed than her husband, pulled off his jacket and gave it her. Finding the vessel did not sink, the survivors now pulled out their knives and began to cut away the yards and rigging from the mizen-mast, to lessen the dangerous weight it had to carry. Though the ship rolled so violently that it was with difficulty these miserable men on the very edge of the grave could hold themselves fast, many of them, worn out with fatigue, went to sleep before day broke.

Mackay, from whose family Dr. Charles Mackay, the poet, is descended, has written a sensible and unaffected narrative of this interesting shipwreck. He says: "At first there did not appear to me the smallest ground of hope; yet, after two or three

hours' reflection, it occurred to me that some vessel might heave in sight in the morning. I felt perfectly resigned to my fate, which seemed inevitable; but from the moment I indulged a hope of being saved, I could not endure the idea of an untimely death, and listened the remainder of the night in anxious expectation of hearing a gun, several times imagining I actually heard one; and whenever I mentioned this to my companions, each fancied he heard the same report." At daybreak, one of the men calling out what he wished he saw, and therefore believed he saw, the Mussulmen began to shout "Allah! Allah!" which, reminding the Englishmen of the thanks due to God for the deliverance apparently at hand, they endeavoured to fall to prayer. But hope had deceived the man's sense of sight, as it had deceived Mackay's sense of hearing. This was the most exquisite pang in all their sufferings.

Day broke on a scene which seemed like a glimpse of purgatory. The wind had risen to a furious gale, the turbid sea was rolling mountains high. The miserable Juno, tormented by wind, wave, and all their invisible spirits, was threatening every moment to part in pieces. The upper deck and the upper part of the hull were rapidly separating, and the fragile rigging, to which seventy-two miserable wretches still clung, was fast giving way. The shrieks of the women, and of the Lascars, even more helpless than they, rose higher than even the screaming and mocking wind. Some let go their hold in paralysed despair, while others, resolute but weak, were washed one after the other from the rigging.

The rest were reserved for trials yet more dreadful. Three days the gale raged with unabated fury, and each day's sun brought fresh misery to the starving men. They all felt now that they would remain there clinging to the wreck till famine, with its withered hand, should pluck them off. A horrible thought now rose in every mind, though for a long time confessed by no one, not even in whispers, that the time must soon come when the survivors must prolong their lives by eating the flesh of those who died before them. The gunner (a Roman Catholic) was the first to ask Mackay, if he thought there would be any sin in having recourse to such an expedient. The mizen being dangerously crowded, some of the men left it, and trying to swim forward to the foretop, three or four perished in the endeavour.

Mackay, the well-educated son of a clergyman in Sutherlandshire, maintained a magnanimity worthy of his staunch and steadfast race. His agitation of mind and his regret at having encouraged false hopes, he tells us, gradually, after a time, lapsed into a sort of callous, or rather sullen, indifference. "I tried," he says, "to doze away the hours, and wished, above all, for a state of insensibility. The useless lamentations of my fellow-sufferers provoked me, and, instead of sympathising, I was angry at being disturbed by them. During the first three days I did not suffer much from want of food, the weather being cool and cloudy, but on the fourth the wind abated, the clouds dispersed, and left us exposed to the scorching heat of a vertical sun, which soon roused me to the keenest sense of my situation." In Mackay the sensation of thirst soon began to be exquisitely painful, and he feared he was approaching the agony that some around him seemed already suffering. Having read, in Captain Inglefield's account of the wreck of the *Centaur* (seventy-four gun ship) in 1782, that the boat's crew had derived comfort from lying down by turns in a blanket dipped in sea water, he and many of his companions resorted to this expedient, and found that it refreshed them, the pores of the skin absorbing and filtering the sea water, and leaving the salt on the surface. This ingenious plan also served to occupy the men's minds, and kept them from despondency. The night of the fourth day Mackay had a most refreshing sleep, and dreamt of his good old father and the manse in Sutherlandshire. He dreamed he was in a raging fever, and that his father, dressed in lawn, and with a mitre like a bishop, was praying by his bedside in the well-remembered room in the bleak, friendly old house. Whilst his father continued praying the fever ceased, but whenever the prayer stopped the burning and pain returned. Then he thought his father came up, with a solemn air, to his bedside, and brought the sacrament, and just as Mackay rose, and stretched his fevered hand towards the blessed cup, he awoke, with a pang of horror, imagining that his father was dead, and now, even in heaven, was looking down in sorrow and in pity on the sufferings of his son. He remembered also how an uncle of his had once lost a son, and the misery that ensued, and the thought of what his own family would all suffer on his account made his heart heavy. Then he called to mind the old Bible, and all he had read in it, and the lessons his father

had taught him; that calmed his mind, and now stronger to suffer, he endeavoured to make his peace with God, and felt reconciled to death.

On the 25th (five days after the wreck of the *Juno*), two men died of hunger, which greatly affected the survivors. Hitherto the horrors had been chiefly those of imagination, now the terrible reality had them in its remorseless fangs. The first went off suddenly, the other languished some hours in great agony, being seized with violent vomitings, then with strong convulsions, which, in most of the cases, presaged a struggling death. The day was very hot, and the sea smooth as glass. The captain and chief-mate having always expressed great confidence in rafts, some of the men, faint as they were, set to work to construct a raft from the fore-yard, spritsail-yard, and some other small spars still towing to the wreck. It was finished next day about noon, and the seamen began to get upon it; the captain, observing their movement, hurried down from the mizen-top with his wife and Mr. Wade, the first-mate. Mackay, though not believing in the plan, followed the example of the rest; the raft being too small, the strongest men had the cruel necessity of forcing the weaker off and compelling them to return to the wreck. Just as the rope that held the raft to the wreck was about to be cut, Mackay asked Captain Bremner in what direction he supposed the land lay, and what probability he thought there was of their making it. The captain giving no answer, Mackay again endeavoured to persuade him and his wife to return to the wreck, but finding that no one would even listen to him, Mackay remained, and the sailors paddled the raft before the wind with pieces of plank which they had shaped into rude oars with their knives. They had not gone far when, finding the raft still overloaded, Mackay again renewed his remonstrances, and persuaded Wade to put back and return with him to the mast-head. The crew of the raft, quite willing to lighten the load on their frail barque, put back, and again pushing off, faded down below the horizon by sunset. While the raft was building Mackay had sometimes resolved to go upon her, believing that death in twenty-four hours would be the inevitable result; but he had at last vanquished the temptation, and God had sent him patience and resignation to bear the will of Providence.

At daybreak of the 27th the watching men were astonished to see the raft again

alongside them on the opposite quarter from which it had set out. The crew had paddled all night, till their scanty strength was gone, then they had drifted at random, and at daylight, finding themselves still near the ship, had resolved to return to the mast-head. Soon after his return Captain Bremner began to be delirious, which so alarmed his wife that she fell into convulsions as he clasped her violently in his arms. He was a strong, vigorous man, rather past middle age, and his wife was a delicate young woman, to whom he had not been married more than eleven months. At first the sight of his wife had seemed to have given him great pain, as he reproached himself with having brought one he loved so much into such danger, but now, in his frenzy, it required force to tear her from his arms. He raved about a table he saw covered with all sorts of choice meats, and stormed because his comrades in misfortune did not give him this or that dish. Fearing the consequences, Mackay abstained as long as possible from salt water, though the furious heat seemed to burn him internally. At last, thinking death to be at hand, he went down from the mast and drank nearly two quarts. To his great astonishment, however, and delight, the supposed poison, instead of injuring him, revived his strength and spirits. He fell into a sound, peaceful sleep; the inward heat for a time abated. It is true the water purged and griped him, but the benefit he received was great.

On the morning of the 28th, Mr. Wade, in a sudden fit of desperation, declared he could bear his sufferings no longer, and would start on the raft if Mackay would accompany him; any death, he said, was preferable to that they were enduring. Mackay, more resolute and self-contained, refused to go, and tried to dissuade the doomed man. Wade then prevailed on two Italian helmsmen, two Malays, and three or four Lascar sailors, to join him. They pushed off the raft; in a few hours they were out of sight. In the evening a squall came on with the darkness, and in that, in all probability, they perished. This squall, that brought death to the men on the raft, brought life and hope to those on the wreck, for Mackay and the rest, spreading out their clothes, from which the heavy rain soon washed the salt, squeezed the fresh water out of them, and gained such life and vigour, that for a time, cheered as if by draughts of wine, they almost forgot their misery and their despair. After this there was a shower nearly every forty-

eight hours, and in the intervals, when the men had not strength enough to descend below, they lowered their jackets or pieces of cloth, with which to wrap round their fevered bodies. The poor wretches clinging thus desperately to life, also contrived to increase their saliva by chewing pieces of canvas, or of lead. They would no doubt have eaten their shoes, had they not partly adopted the Lascar habit, never wearing shoes when it rained, as leather dressed in India is soon spoiled by wet. The few pieces of leather about the rigging were too loathsome in smell and taste to be eaten even in that dire necessity.

After all Mackay suffered, he confesses that the imagination far exceeded the reality. At first, not thinking it possible to live more than a day or two without food, he was astonished to find his life protracted, and every hour expected the commencement of his mortal agonies. A few hours more, he thought, looking round silently at his groaning fellow-sufferers, and we shall be tearing the flesh from each other's bones. This terrible dread of the future reconciled him to the agony of the present. Many of the men died delirious, and it was Mackay's constant prayer to God that his reason would be spared to the last. He longed for death, yet dreaded the moment of soul and body parting, and trembled at being the last survivor. Every moment new horrors arose, as if to torture those unhappy men clinging forlornly to that half-sunk wreck in the lonely sea. The dead body of one of the Lascars got jammed among the ropes, and could not be disengaged for several days.

On the morning of the eleventh day, July the 1st, poor Mrs. Bremner woke to find her husband dead in her arms, and so weak were the survivors by this time that it was with the greatest difficulty they could contrive to throw the body overboard, after stripping off some of the dead man's clothes for his unhappy wife. During this fatal day two more men died in the mizen, and two more in the foretop. Death was looming nearer and nearer now. For some time Mackay and the men in the mizen had been too weak, to either descend the rigging, or to shout to their comrades on the foretop. Some of the Lascars had gone forward; the total number of survivors was so few that the two tops held them all, and there the poor fevered, starving wretches clung.

It grew worse and worse. Mackay remembers little after that; the sensation of hunger was lost in that of weakness, but

when rain fell the men were comparatively easy. The nights grew more chilly, and the weaker the men grew the more they suffered from the cold. The cold heavy rains after sunset benumbed them, their teeth chattered, and they sometimes feared they should all perish together from exposure. When the sun rose, however, the heat gradually rendered their limbs pliant; the spirits of these staunch seamen revived, they indulged in conversation, and sometimes became even cheerful. Then gradually the heat increased to a meridian furnace, and in that furnace of burning air and scorching blindness, their purgatorial torments began again, and they wondered how they could ever have wished the cold and paralysing night rains to have ceased.

Kind death stole in, and hurried off more victims. Some struggled hard, wrestled for life, and died in bitter agony. Nor, as Mackay shows in his narrative of a most affecting instance, did the weakest always seem to die the easiest. Mr. Wade's cabin-boy, a stout, vigorous lad, died easily, and almost without a groan. Another boy of the same age, but paler and more weakly, held out long. The fathers were both together in the foretop. When the first boy died, the father, told of his son's illness, replied, with torpid indifference, "I can do nothing for him." The other, touched to the quick, hurried down, weak and starving as he was, and, watching long for a favourable moment, crawled on all fours along the weather gunwale to his son in the mizen rigging. Only three or four planks of the quarter-deck just over the weather quarter-gallery remained, but to this spot the father brought the lad, making him fast to the rail, lest he should be washed away. Whenever the boy was seized with a fit of vomiting the father lifted him up with all a woman's tender care, and wiped away the foam from his lips; if a shower came he made him open his mouth to receive the cool drops, and softly squeezed them into it from a piece of rag. In this situation both remained four or five days, till the lad expired. The unfortunate father sat gazing long and wistfully at the pale face, as if unable to realise the fact, and so remained watching it in silence, till a sea came, and carried the corpse, as if in pity, away. Then he rose, wrapped himself in an old sail, sank down, and rose no more, though he lived four days longer, his limbs being seen to quiver when a wave broke over him. This scene made an impression even on men now dead to the world, and familiar with misery in every shape. Byron, who,

ashamed as he was to own the fact, after all had a heart, has sketched this incident with an irresistible pathos. It forms the eighty-ninth verse of the second canto of Don Juan:

And o'er him bent his sire, and never raised
His eyes from off his face, but wiped the foam
From his pale lips, and ever on him gazed;
And when the wish'd-for shower at length was come,
And the boy's eyes, which the dull film half glazed,
Brighten'd, and for a moment seem'd to beam,
He squeezed from out a rag some drops of rain
Into his dying child's mouth—but in vain.
The boy expired; the father held the clay,
And looked upon it long.

On the evening of July the 10th (twenty days, as far as they could calculate, since the luckless Juno was wrecked), some one muttered he saw something like land in the horizon to the eastward. The assertion was heard without emotion, and no one for a time woke from his torpor of despair to look east or west. Yet only a few minutes after, Mackay languidly raising his head to observe the faint grey line in the horizon, saw every eye turned towards it. They all continued looking, though not very earnestly, till night closed in, then all, after comparing observations, agreed that it was land.

Mrs. Bremner and others now eagerly asked Mackay his opinion, and if he thought there was yet a possibility of escape. Mackay had little hope; he replied that the line on the horizon to the east did not appear to him to be land; if it was, there was at least one comfort, that it would most likely soon put an end to their sufferings, as the wreck would certainly ground, and would be beaten to pieces in a few hours. On that account Mackay had been long dreading the sight of land, but now he had grown indifferent to anything, and incapable of any acute sensation either of joy or sorrow. "I remember," says Mackay, "that on waking at daybreak next morning I did not think of looking to see whether there was land in sight or not, till some one in the foretop waved a signal with a handkerchief that it was so. I then felt an inclination to get up and look; but happening to be in an easy position, with my arms folded so as to press my stomach, I was too indifferent to turn myself round. My neighbours were more affected; some one got up and declared it was land, which roused another, and, by degrees, all of us. It appeared to me like land, but still I was neither sure nor much interested about it." Mrs. Bremner then asked Mackay, who hitherto had kept such a brave heart and such a firm trust in God, if he thought it was the

coast of Coromandel. He replied sarcastically, thinking the question foolish: "If it is, you and I should be sent to the Long Room at Madras, and be there exhibited as curiosities, at so much a head, under the pictures of Cornwallis and Meadows." But as day grew on, the land rose so clear that no one could deny its existence, and Mackay began at last to feel some glimmering of hope, only alloyed by the horrible dread that they might only have been hitherto saved to now perish in sight of a friendly shore. In the evening they drifted so near as to perceive, with inexpressible anguish, that the coast was only a wild jungle, without any appearance of human beings. Mackay, expecting the wreck would strike every moment, then lay down to die. Sleep, however, soon closed his weary eyes, and at daylight he was woken by the ship striking a rock so violently as to shake the masts at every jolt. He had foreseen this, and prepared for death at last, the motion being so violent that no one could keep himself fast. The tide had now, however, fallen several feet. More beams of the upper deck being out of water, the survivors with some difficulty got down from the masts upon them. The gunner and Mackay endeavoured to save Mrs. Bremner, but she was too weak to help herself, and they were so weak that they were obliged to leave her.

By this time the tide sank lower. The ship no longer moved; the gun-deck was almost dry. The Lascars, descending from the foretop, were groping among the rubbish for money. Mackay instantly proposed to two of the strongest of these men to help down Mrs. Bremner, but they refused to do it for less than eight rupees, and that sum to be paid on the spot. This was the first time they had shown any want of feeling, but the sight of land had brought back all the greediness and vices of their daily life. After resting for some time on the orlop-deck, Mackay observed that the rudder-head had been knocked off, leaving a hole into the gun-room. As soon as the tide had left the orlop-deck, therefore, he and his friend rummaged the gun-room, but only found three or four rancid cocoa-nuts jammed under the timber. These were equally divided, the finder only claiming the oily juice as his reward. Mackay's constant thought now was of lemonade, not a short quick gulp, but a huge bowlful, to quench his thirst and fever, and when he thought of solid food, he longed for what he could swallow at once without any delay in chewing. There was still no pro-

spect of reaching the shore, and, of the two deaths, it seemed better to die quietly on the wreck, than to struggle to the land to be instantly torn to pieces by tigers. Now for the first time Mackay began to think there was yet hope for them if they remained on the wreck, and that God had prolonged their lives to send relief at last, since none had died since they first saw land. That very afternoon they observed something like men walking on the shore, but they took no notice of the shouting or of clothes waved from the taffrail, and passed on. This, however, roused the stronger of the Juno's crew, who, with infinite fatigue, lifted six spars from the gun-room into the water, and on these six of the younger Lascars, it being the young flood, through a heavy surf, gained the beach. Mackay saw them find a stream of water and drink, then lie down in despair. Next morning, however, they were seen again, but the survivors, two women, three old men, an invalid, a lad, and Mackay, were too weak to lower any more spars. About noon, to Mackay's joy, he saw some natives come on the beach, light a fire, and wave handkerchiefs to the wreck. Between hope and fear the survivors became half delirious. The gunner and serang were unable to lift a spar, but Mackay and a ship's boy at last tumbled one into the water. With much regret Mackay then overcame his fears of the surf, bade farewell to Mrs. Bremner, who was too weak to move, and leaping into the sea, clung to the spar. It being square, it kept rolling him under. Several times in utter despair he let go the timber, only to clutch at it again as he was sinking. Once a tremendous sea washed him from the spar, then washed him back upon it. At last, bleeding from the sand and shells, the poor fellow was thrown violently on the rocks, and, clinging to them fast, contrived to crawl on all fours, perfectly naked, beyond the reach of the surf. Chilled to the bone, he laid down under the lee of a rock and fell asleep, just as he observed some natives coming towards him. He was saved at last. Where he had been washed ashore was only six days' journey from Chittagong. The peasants tied a turban round him, and bore him to a stream, in which he fell and drank furiously. At the natives' fire he found six Lascars, the gunner, and a boy. In joy at seeing them safe, and at hearing of the Hindoos' humanity, Mackay grew for a time delirious. When the rice was boiled, Mackay could not at first swallow it, his lips and inside of his mouth being cracked and bleeding

with the heat. When he awoke from a refreshing sleep, he found that the natives had rescued Mrs. Bremner and her maid. There was great uncontrollable joy at the meeting round the fire. That very night the wreck parted in two, the bottom remaining on the rocks, the upper part floating so near the land that the two men left on board waded to the beach.

The conclusion of this interesting narrative must be briefly told. The Hindoos who conveyed the survivors to Chittagong, deserted Mackay, who walked slower than the rest, and he would have died but for the charity of a Portuguese pedlar going to Arracan, who gave him rice, onions, chillies, and tobacco, and taught him how to produce fire, to scare the tigers at night, by rubbing together pieces of bamboo. Eventually an English officer, commanding at Ramoo, hearing of his countryman's distress, sent a havildar and two sepoy to escort him safely to the settlement, where he was loaded with sympathy and kindness.

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LXII. MAUD'S BEDROOM.

MERCY CRESWELL led the young lady by a back stair. She was interested; everything was so unlike Roydon. As they traversed the passage leading to the hall, the sounds of music again swelled faintly on her ear; and she saw servants going to and fro, in the corridor, in the fuss and jostle of trays, ices, and claret-cup and glasses, soup and tea-cups.

Up the stair went Maud and her *femme de chambre*, and the sounds died out. The stairs and passages were lighted, rather dingily, by small muffled lamps, which seemed to be fixed in the ceilings. Only at two points, on the level which they had now reached, a yard or two apart, did they encounter a living being. They were a pair of strong middle-aged housemaids, who, each in turn, stopped and looked at Maud with a transitory and grave curiosity as she passed.

"Isn't she pretty, poor little thing?" said the fatter of these two to her companion.

"Pretty and proud, I dare say; 'tis a good house she's come to; it won't do her no harm, I warrant you," answered the darker-visaged and leaner woman, following the young lady with a half-cynical smile.

They were now in the long passage through which, a few nights before, Doctor

Malkin had approached his room. A man in a waistcoat with black calico sleeves to it, seemed to be awaiting them at the other end, leaning against the great door that closed the perspective, with his arms folded, and one leg crossed over the other, an attitude in which we have seen ostlers smoking in inn-yards at stable-doors.

Seeing them, the man stood erect, with the key in his fingers.

"This way, please, Miss Maud," said Mercy, pushing forward, as she observed the young lady hesitate, as if doubtful whether she was to pass that barrier.

"Miss Vernon, A A Fourteen," said Mercy, briskly, to this janitor, who forthwith opened the heavy door.

They saw now before them the continuation of the long gallery which is interrupted by this massive door.

The man held out his hand as she gave him a little printed check; he looked at it, and said:

"Yes, all right, A A Fourteen." And he opened the first door to the left.

On a little disk of ivory sunk in the door-post, were the number and letters, but so small that you might not have observed them.

At home at last! There was Miss Vernon's luggage on the carpet. A muffled glass lamp, the same as those she had observed in the lobbies, only much more powerful, shed a clear light over every object in the room, from the ceiling.

It was the same room which had been assigned to Doctor Malkin, a short time before; but some alterations tending to improve the style and convenience of its arrangements had been made; and now it looked not only a spacious and comfortable, but even a handsome bedroom.

"Heaven defend us! What an awful picture that is!" exclaimed Maud, as she stood before the picture of the abbess, that was placed over the chimney-piece. "What a deathlike, dreadful countenance! Who is it? No relation of Lady Mardykes, I hope?"

"I don't know, indeed, miss," answered Mercy, thus appealed to. "I was never in this room before."

The *kreese*, no suitable decoration for a lady's apartment, had been removed.

Maud turned away.

"I wonder why Lady Mardykes lights her rooms and galleries so oddly," she pursues, talking half to herself, as she looked up at the lamp in the centre of the ceiling; "I fancy myself in an immense railway carriage."

A dressing-room opened from this apartment, to the right, and beyond that lay Mercy Creswell's room, accessible in turn by a door from the dressing-room. Each of these rooms was lighted in the same way.

"Are all the bedrooms in this house marked with numbers and letters like this?"

"Every one, miss."

"I can't say I admire that arrangement, nor the lighting. One thinks of an hotel. If Miss Medwyn were here," she added, more merrily. "I should certainly, late as it is, dress and go down to the concert. I should like to see the dresses and the people. I fancy the house is very full."

"It is always that, miss; I never knew it otherwise."

"And a very gay house?"

"Too gay for me, miss. Always something going on. A too much of a racket. I don't think it's good for no one," said Mercy, half stifling a dreary little yawn. She had not been laughing since their approach to the house, even at mention of Miss Medwyn's name; but on the contrary, as she would have said herself, was "rather in the dismals."

"Lady Mardykes's aunt is here; Mrs. Pendel, of Pendel Woods? You have seen her often, of course?"

"The Honourable Mrs. Pendel? Oh, dear, yes, miss, hoftentimes."

"She was here a day or two ago, certainly. Can you tell me whether she is here now?"

"No; she's not here now, miss."

"That's very odd, for Lady Mardykes wrote to beg of her not to go away. You had better go down and ask."

"No use in life, miss; I know she's not here—she's gone. We was talking about her this morning, before I left here."

"Well, it doesn't so much matter. Lady Mardykes will be here in the morning. Don't mind those dresses to-night; you can do all that in the morning; just lay my dressing-case there, and give me my dressing-gown. Thanks; and I think I'll go to my bed."

"Would you, please, like a bit of supper or something first, miss?"

"Nothing, thanks; but perhaps you would, Mercy."

"I had my supper, miss, thanks, at the Pig and Tinder-box. Servants never sups so late here, miss; it is against the custom of the house."

The young lady, in her dressing-gown and slippers, sat before the glass, with her

long, thick hair about her shoulders; and Mercy Creswell stood by, brush in hand, arranging it.

When all this was over the young lady, beginning to feel a little sleepy, was glad to get to her bed.

A double cord, with a ring like an old-fashioned handle of a bell-rope, hung by her bed, and the use of this Mercy Creswell explained. Drawing the cord in one direction had the effect of moving a shade under the lamp in the ceiling, and of thus reducing the room to darkness, and in the opposite direction of removing this shade again, and readmitting the light. Having tried this two or three times, and found that she could manage it perfectly, she dismissed her maid, lay down, and drew the shade; and the room being in total darkness, she addressed herself to sleep.

But there is a tide in the affairs of men other than that which Shakespeare wrote of at least, and which, taken at the flood, leads on to slumber, but which once passed may never come again for half a night; and Maud soon began to fear she had suffered it to escape her; for after lying for some time still, with eyes closed, she felt more wide awake than when she had first tried to sleep.

She turned on her other side, and lay still; but in vain she tried and exhausted all the common expedients for inducing sleep; they all failed.

An hour had passed, and sleep seemed further than ever.

Perhaps a question which mingled unbidden in all her speculations had something to do with the postponement of her sleep. Was she likely to see Mr. Marston next morning among the guests?

She was listening now with excited attention for far-off sounds of music; but the house was too vast, and if the concert was still going on, which was not indeed very probable, its harmonies were lost in distance long before they could reach her ear. The silence was intense, and more unfriendly to sleep than some little hum of distant life might have been.

Now and then came one of those odd creeks or cracks in the woodwork of the room, which spiritualists assign to mysterious causes, and more sceptical philosophers simply to a change of temperature; and ever and anon a moth would bob against the window-pane with a little tap. But these sounds were far enough between to be a little startling when they did come; and the silence of the long intervals was intense.

She listened; but not a footstep could she hear—not a distant barking of a dog, not a sound of life anywhere.

It was an oppressive and melancholy silence. At length she thought she heard a distant clock strike two, and the sound died away, leaving the silence deeper.

It continued. Some time passed. She lay in the dark with her eyes open, her head on the pillow, without a stir, but awake and excited.

But on a sudden her ears were startled by a loud and horrible sound.

Close to her door, in the gallery, there arose a howling and weeping, and a clang at the bolts of the massive cross door. This was followed by ironical laughter. Then came a silence, and then more of the same slow, jeering laughter, and then another silence.

Maud had started up in her bed, and sat with her heart throbbing violently, almost breathless, listening with the chill of terror.

To her relief this horrid sound next time was heard at a comparative distance. She heard other men's voices now in low and vehement dialogue, and sounds of shuffling feet, of gasping, tugging, and panting, as if a determined struggle was going on; once or twice, a low laugh was heard; and then came a yell loud and long, which seemed passing further and further away, and was soon lost quite in the distance; a door clapped, the place was silent.

For some minutes Maud was afraid to stir. But summoning courage she sprang from her bed, venturing to lock the door. But she could discover neither lock nor bolt; but, to her comfort, found that it was nevertheless secured. She made her way to the window; drew the curtain, opened the shutter a little, and looked out.

CHAPTER LXIII. MORE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS.

THE moon was low now; all was motionless and silent. Long shadows were thrown from the tall hedges and trees upon the misty grass; and the croquet-ground and flower-garden, with all the pleasant anticipations associated with them, lay fall in view beneath.

Encouraging the cheerful train of thought to which this prospect gave rise, she sat in her dressing-gown and slippers for some time at the window, and then, intending to question Mercy Creswell on the subject of the uproar that had so scared her, and no doubt her maid also, she tried the dressing-room door; but the handle at this side was gone, and the door fast shut.

So she must be content to wait till morning, for an explanation of the noises that had startled the unusual quiet of the night.

I dare say she would soon have grown drowsy, for she really needed sleep, and the healthier associations that were by this time, again, uppermost in her mind, would have prepared the way for its approach, had she not again been disturbed, just as she was about to return to her bed, by noises which she could not account for.

This time they proceeded from the quadrangle under her window; men's voices were talking low, and steps were audible on the gravel walk that runs along that side of the house.

She placed herself close to the glass and looked down.

The terrace that passes under the windows, the same along which she had that night approached the house, is very broad, affording a wide belt of grass between the gravel walk and the wall of the house. This distance enabled her without difficulty to observe the people who were now on the path.

The elevation of this terrace raised it above the level of the shadows, and in the vivid moonlight, she saw the figures that appeared, distinctly. The window from which she was looking was as nearly as possible over the door through which she had entered the house.

Some half-dozen men, with their hats on, were waiting on the broad walk before it. Two or three more in a short time came out from the house and joined them. Then three gentlemen dressed in those black cloaks, with which undertakers drape chief mourners, entered the terrace walk, from the point at her left, at which the door from the court-yard communicates with it. They were walking very slowly side by side, and he who was in the middle had a handkerchief in his hand, and appeared to be weeping.

They passed the window, and the group of men on the walk drew back toward the house as they did so; and the three gentlemen in black continued to walk slowly up and down that portion of the promenade that lay to her left.

The group of men who are standing before the door breaks up: some half-dozen go into the house, and only three remain where they were.

Maud is becoming more and more curious.

A man whose square build looks squarer, as she looks down upon him, steps out. He looks along the terrace after the three men

who are walking down it. He looks up towards the moon. There is no mistaking that pale still face, with the jet-black beard. He is Antomarchi.

The three gentlemen turn about, and are now approaching him. He advances two or three steps toward them, and takes off his hat, and makes a particularly low and ceremonious bow. One of these gentlemen advances at a quick pace, makes him a bow in return, and they talk together. The other two continue to pace, as before, slowly up and down the walk.

Antomarchi approaches the door, and the gentleman who joined him a few minutes before is at his side. They stop. The three men who were lounging near the door are suddenly, as it were, called to attention. Antomarchi waves his hand slightly towards the door, and says something to his companion, who turns about, and at his quickest walk rejoins his two friends.

These gentlemen, hearing what he says, stop and turn about, and slowly walk towards the door. There is some little fuss there; first one and then another man emerges from it and returns, and now, with white scarfs and hat-bands, bearing a long coffin on a bier, come forth the men who had gone in. A man steps out last, and shuts the door softly. Is it Darkdale? She can't be quite sure.

It is not easy to distinguish colours, at any distance, by moonlight; but Maud thinks that this coffin is covered with red velvet, and that the large plate and big nails upon it are gilded.

Immediately behind this coffin the three gentlemen walk, and Antomarchi after them, till it disappears round the corner of the house, away to her left, at which the door she had passed that night gives access to the court-yard.

A strange feeling of disgust and fear now, for the first time, steals over her. What is she to think of a house in which, while an inmate lies dead and confined, all the fiddling and singing, and vanities and feasting of a banquet, proceed unchecked? What is she to think of the right feeling and refinement of a hostess who can permit so extraordinary a profanation?

The sombre images summoned to her fancy by the scene she has just witnessed, gave for the time a sickly character to the moonlit prospect, and the now solitary walk so lately traversed by the scanty and mysterious funeral procession.

Maud left the window, and drew the shade from the lamp, and in a moment the warm light filled the room cheerily.

Closing the shutters, and drawing the curtains, she now bethought her seriously of the necessity of getting a little sleep, if she did not intend looking like a ghost next morning, which certainly was very far from her wish.

So into her bed she got again, and drawing the cord once more, the light vanished, and she lay down determined at last to go to sleep.

All was profoundly silent again, and Maud was now, after the lapse of some eight or ten minutes, beginning at last to feel the approaches of sleep, when she fancied she heard something brushing very softly by the great arm-chair near the side of her bed.

Was she ever to get to sleep in this unlucky bed? Even the idea that a cat had got into her room was not pleasant; for nursery tales of the assassin-like propensities of the tribe (especially of black cats, and why should not this one be black?) when their tendency to throttle and murder sleepers in the dark was favoured by opportunity, crowded upon her recollection.

She listened intently. She heard in a little time a slight click, as if a trinket or coin was stirred on the table near. There was no other noise, and nothing very formidable in that. But still she could bear the uncertainty no longer. The darkness and silence were oppressive; she put her hand out and drew the cord, and in an instant the soft light from the lamp in the ceiling filled the room, and disclosed every object.

She was not alone. A figure, perfectly still, was standing about a yard from the side of the bed, toward the foot. She stared at it for some time, hardly believing that what she saw was real, before she recognised in the short squat person in a woollen night-gown, Mercy Creswell, her ugly femme de chambre.

"How on earth did you come in?" at length Maud exclaimed.

"La! miss, how?" repeated Mercy, who gained a little time for reflection by such repetitions. "How did I come in? I came as quiet as I could, through the dressing-room door, please, miss."

"What do you want here, please?" demanded Miss Maud, a little preemptorily, for she was losing patience. "I did not call for you, and I think I should have been asleep by this time, if you had remained quietly where you were. What do you want?"

"I? I came, miss—what I wanted was—I came to see was you sleeping comfort-

able, having been, as you was, complaining of your head."

"Well, don't mind trying to see in the lark any more please. I wonder you did not tumble over the furniture. You'd have frightened me out of my wits if you had; I have been made so awfully nervous. There were such horrible noises in the gallery, just outside my door; and I had hardly got over that, when, of all things in the world, a funeral passed out of this house."

"La! though *really*, miss?"

"Yes, *really*, such a grisly idea! Didn't you hear the people under the windows? What are you made of? But you *must* have heard the person who made such a hideous uproar in the gallery."

Maud paused with her eyes upon her.

"Well, I wouldn't wonder if it was, miss, that might easy be," said Mercy.

"But didn't you *hear* it; what can you mean by affecting to doubt it? You won't allow that you know, or see, or hear anything. You *must* have heard it."

"Yes, I did hear it," said Mercy, who resolved, at length, to be candid; "a man holloing and crying, and laughing, and I think I should know pretty well what it was, miss."

"That's just what I want you to tell me."

"Well, I heard this morning there's a servant of one of the great people here that's got fits and raving, saving your presence, miss, from drink."

"My gracious! that horrible complaint that Doctor Malkin told me about! And why don't they send him to an hospital?"

"So they will, miss, I'm told, in the morning."

"But what about the funeral? You were here this morning, and know the servants. It was evidently some person of rank, and you must have heard of it. A person of that sort could not have been lying dead in the house, without your knowing something of it."

"Well, no—*really*, miss, I knew there was some one, I forget his name, a lord, I do believe, lying very bad, some days ago, and gave over—and most like it is the same—but Lady Mardykes, she'll be here in the morning, she can tell you all about it."

"But do you mean to say that such things happen, in the midst of balls and concerts, in Lady Mardykes's house? Do you mean to say that if I had a fever and died here, Lady Mardykes would not suspend her gaieties till I was buried?"

"Oh! miss, la! you know, miss, Lady

Mardykes does things her own way. She's not that sort, neither; but there's a part of the house down at that end farthest from the hall-door, there is sometimes people in she does not know from Adam, saving your presence, miss."

"I don't in the least comprehend you," said the young lady, in unaffected amazement.

"I mean this, when people is ordered the waters here for a week, miss, there being no hotel, miss, nor inn, nor nothing of no sort, near Lady Mardykes's, if it should 'appen to be a lady or gentleman of consequence, a lord or a countess, or sich like, she would give them the use of a room or two in the house, you see, and so, now and then, of course, it can't be helped. There will be a lady or gentleman die, seeing all as comes to drink the waters is more or less sick and ailing always; and I have known a many a one die here."

"And without any interruption of the amusements—the music and dancing?" persisted Miss Vernon.

"La! none in life, miss, why should there? Let them go out as they come in, private. When you have seen as many corpses as I have, here, laid out in their caps and sheets, you'll think no more of them than you would of so many yellow wax statutes—what's a coffin but a box of cloth? If there's no one I don't care for in it, why should I fret my eyes out? Not I. I wouldn't look over my shoulder to see corpse or coffin; I wouldn't think twice about it; 'tis all fancy, miss."

"Well, as you say, I shall probably know all about it from Lady Mardykes to-morrow, and now, *really*, you must go; and pray don't return till it is time to call me in the morning. Good-night."

"Good-night, miss."

And the maid withdrew.

"Well," thought Maud as she lay down, "I have heard that Lady Mardykes keeps an odd house; but anything like this, could any one have conjectured?"

And very soon after this reflection Maud Vernon was fast asleep.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN FORT," &c. &c.

THE BOOK.

CHAPTER I. MISS CAVE'S LODGINGS.

Out of the bright and busy High-street of Wexeter, parallel with the narrow little court leading to the cathedral, there runs a small street of small houses, leading into an open space, and flanked on either side by a crescent. Big, heavy, old-fashioned red brick houses, speaking of bygone times, when the gentry who have now established themselves in various country seats thought it no disgrace to dwell within the walls of the city, and when the peaceful and aristocratic quarter of South-Hedge, in which such as are left of them now reside, was by no means sufficient to contain them. At the present time, however, a different set of people is to be found in the crescent, and an eruption of brass plates has broken out amongst its heavy railings. Doctors are there, and even dentists, agents for insurance companies, and solicitors; some of the houses in the middle of the Eastern Crescent have been transformed into a chapel, and one at the westernmost corner has only narrowly escaped being converted into a shop. The half-glazed door with the word "office" on its window-pane has prevented this degradation; but when you have passed this Rubicon you find yourself in a place furnished with a counter, and shelves, and other appurtenances of a shop, shabby.

How the builders of the theatre ever ventured to select a site for that structure in such a grave and decorous neighbourhood, it is difficult to imagine; but there it is at the other end of the crescent, and, truth to tell, not very far from the chapel. A square

building with medallions of the tragic and comic muses let into its front, and with an overhanging portico, on one side of which is situated the box-office, while on the other, during the daytime at least, Miss Bult, the milliner, plies her trade. Whether the situation and the surroundings have anything to do with it or not it is impossible to say, but it is a fact that the theatre at Wexeter always has stood high, not merely in the opinion of those engaged in it, which is of common occurrence enough, but in the estimation of those who dwelt around it, and on whose patronage it was greatly dependent. Great actors have been bred and educated on the circuit of which Wexeter was the principal town; the management of this circuit has been in one family for several generations, bequeathed from sire to son, and has always been carried on after the same regular, respectable fashion. These facts were of course known to the townspeople and the neighbourhood, but no stranger, wanting to engage a seat, could possibly have walked into the box-office, without being at once convinced of the respectability of the entire concern.

For in the box-office, with the box plan spread out before her, while she occupied herself either with knitting or berlin-work, or some humbler employment for her needle, sat Miss Cave during the whole of the day, looking, with her silver-rimmed spectacles, her pepper-and-salt "front," consisting of two large flat curls over each eye, and an impossible parting in the middle, her neat cap, and her muslin handkerchief crossed over her shoulders, the embodiment of respectability. There in the box-office she sat, as a guarantee for the style of entertainment for which she would sell you a seat. No one with such an appearance could have any connexion with burlesques, breakdowns,

or comic singing. The Highland Fling, in character, by Miss M'Alpine, the One Horse Shay, by special desire, on the occasion of his benefit, by the low comedian, or a variety of singing and dancing between the pieces when the bill was short, might be looked for; otherwise Shakespeare or Sheridan, with a staid, old-fashioned farce, formed the staple of the entertainment.

Miss Cave was an elderly lady, so old that none of the inhabitants of Wexeter had ever recollected her as anything else; tradition reported that her father had been in the choir, and had been specially noticed for his fine voice by George the Third, when that old monarch and Queen Charlotte paid their visit to the city. And it is certain that Miss Cave always maintained amicable relations with the authorities of the cathedral, attending divine service regularly every Sunday, and never meeting canons, deans, or even the bishop himself, without receiving a pleasant greeting and a few words of salutation. Indeed, on the occasion of Miss Cave's annual benefit, a large number of the resident clergy not merely sent their families, but were themselves to be found, seated in the dress-boxes of the theatre. The entertainment then provided never varied, commencing with one of Shakespeare's tragedies, concluding either with the Critic or the Trip to Scarborough. Miss M'Alpine knew that at such a time it would be useless for her to attempt to interpolate the Highland fling, and the low comedian perfectly understood that he would not be called upon to exercise his vocal powers.

Miss Cave lives in a bright little house, one of the row just beyond the theatre; a little house just high enough for its top windows to look over the old red brick wall of the deanery garden. With Miss Cave lived her brother Samuel, who had been for years unnumbered the recognised barber and perruquier of the theatre, and the temporary attendant on such of those great actors visiting it as did not bring their own servants. It was Mr. Samuel's boast that he had "wiggid and painted" more "stars" than any other man out of London, but that he was getting a little tired of it now, a statement which, considering that most of his anecdotes were personal reminiscences of the elder Kean and his competitors, might, as regards the latter portion of it at all events, be deemed veracious.

The brother and sister occupy the parlours and the attics of the little house; the drawing-room floor is generally let as lodg-

ings, either to the permanent members of the theatrical company, or to any distinguished artist engaged as a temporary attraction. At the present time they are occupied by a leading lady of the company, Miss Pierrepoint, and her younger sister. Miss Cave has the highest opinion of Miss Pierrepoint, not merely professionally, but privately. The old lady admires her lodger's appearance, voice, manner, and style of elocution, thinks she is a credit to the company, which has sent up some of the first leading ladies to the metropolis, and is only anxious lest any London theatrical manager should get a hint of the hidden treasure and come down to bear her away. But, above all, she admires Miss Pierrepoint's modesty and the propriety of her private life. Some of Miss Cave's former lodgers have been given to "gallivanting" and "carryings-on," proceedings never explained by the old lady in other terms, but generally believed by her intimates to be in relation to the other sex, and too horrible to mention. Miss Pierrepoint is given to none of these atrocities; she has very few visitors: none indeed beyond Mr. Dobson, the manager, Mr. Potts, the prompter, and young Mr. Gerald Hardinge, the scene-painter. She never goes out to supper, has no anonymous letters or flowers left for her, but spends all her time in working at her profession and finishing the education of her sister Rose.

Not that Miss Pierrepoint might not have had admirers in plenty, bless you; Miss Cave knows that; gentlemen are constantly inquiring at the box-office who she is, and where she comes from, and the admiration evoked by her powers of acting is by no means confined to applause, but forms the topic of much conversation between the acts, as Miss Cave, hidden away in the little pay-box on the top of the landing, can hear very well through the pigeon-hole in front of her, where she takes the money and gives the change. The old lady has heard, too, that when Miss Pierrepoint went to the party at Mrs. Probus's—Probus was a carriage builder and a Shakespearean enthusiast—she was made more of than any other woman in the room, which naturally accounted for her never having been asked again. But "nothing came of it," the old lady used to say, although she had expected that on the night after Probus's party, all the eligible young men of the town would have called at No. 9, The Precinct, prepared to lay their hands and fortunes at Miss Pierrepoint's feet.

No, there was no one actually in love with her that Miss Cave could point to, unless it was Mr. Gerald Hardinge, the scene-painter, who was a mere boy, much too young for her. As the old lady remarked, she did not hold with making a great outcry about disparagement (by which she probably meant disparity) of years, but Miss Pierpoint must be at least six years older than Mr. Hardinge, and there were temptations enough for a man in the profession, without his having a wife so much his senior. And he was a deal too handsome, Mr. Hardinge was, to be exposed to temptations of any sort more than could be helped, Miss Cave thought; "having one of those heads, my dear, which would look so well cut off just above the shoulders, and without any shirt-collar, on a medalion at the south end of the choir." He was a kind-hearted lad, too, Miss Cave allowed, and generous with his money, when he had any, and gave little Rose Pierpoint lessons in drawing for nothing, and the elder sister was agreeable to him, and liked him very much, though the old lady "did not think there was anything between them."

It was a hot night, towards the end of June; the heat had been stifling and oppressive all day, and the windows of Miss Cave's lodgings were thrown wide open, for the admittance of as much air as could be found. This was little enough, but such as it was it came laden with a thousand odours from the flowers in the deanery garden, rejoicing the heart of Rose Pierpoint, the sole occupant of the room, who was seated at a table, drawing, by the light of a shaded lamp, and who raised her head from time to time, and glanced now at the open window, then at the closed door. As far as could be seen of her in her sitting position, a girl slight and small in figure, with a small head, delicate features, and large dark eyes. Her age was about sixteen, and she looked even younger, and the manner in which she wore her hair, taken off her forehead, and kept back by a comb, rendered her appearance still more youthful. Her hands were thin and delicate, as was especially noticeable when from time to time she drummed them impatiently on the table before her, while the frequent expression of anxiety or irritability discomposed her otherwise handsome face.

At length she seemed as if she could bear her occupation no longer; she threw down the pencil and walked to the window. The whole sky was darkened by an enormous purple cloud, save on the horizon

immediately opposite the window, where one fading streak of yellow light was reflected on the girl's face. Dazzled by this, after the darkness in which she had been sitting, the girl shaded her eyes with her hand, and bending out of the window, looked down the street in the direction of the theatre. Instantly she drew back, and crossing the room resumed her seat at the table. She had hardly done so, taking up her pencil again, and becoming apparently engrossed in her work, when a light step was heard on the stairs, the door opened, and a young man entered the room. The girl looked up from her drawing in the direction of the door. "Is that Mr. Hardinge?" she asked.

"It is," was the reply.

The man who said these words was known to the small world in which he lived (and consequently must henceforth be known in these pages) as Gerald Hardinge, but when the reader saw him two years ago he was called George Heriot.

In those two years a considerable change had taken place in the young man's appearance. He was darker and stouter, his figure was more set, while the growth of a light, curling, brown beard had rendered him much more manly-looking. He was dressed in a light grey suit of clothes, much worn, and carried a soft felt hat in his hand.

"All alone, Rose?" was the first exclamation, in a tone of disappointment.

"Yes, Mr. Gerald," said the girl, quietly.

"Madge is not come back from the theatre."

"The piece is over," said Hardinge. "I heard them ringing in the orchestra for the last piece as I came away from the painting-room. What's the last piece to-night?"

"The Warlock of the Glen," said the girl, "and Madge don't play in the Warlock."

"I should think not," said Hardinge, with a sneer.

"But she won't be home yet," continued Rose. "She told me she had something very particular to do, which would detain her perhaps for a couple of hours after she had finished. I was not to sit up for her if I was tired, and I was to tell you or Mr. Potts, if either of you came, that you were not to wait for her, as she would not be home till late."

"All right," said Hardinge, discontentedly enough; "her commands must be obeyed." He was moving towards the door, when, thinking he had been somewhat ungracious, he turned back to the

table, and, pointing to the drawing on which the girl had been engaged, said: "At it still? What an industrious little woman it is. Let me look, Rose?" And he put out his hand, as though to take it.

But Rose threw a sheet of cartridge-paper over the sketch, saying, "Not to-night, Mr. Hardinge; come to-morrow, and you shall see it."

"Right," he said; "I will come to-morrow morning, and we will have another lesson. Good-night, little one. Tell your sister I called." And he nodded and left the room.

When she heard the street-door close behind him the girl stole softly to the window, and watched his retreating figure down the street. When she could no longer distinguish it she turned sadly away.

"Was there ever any one so handsome? was there ever any one so fascinating?" she murmured to herself.

An hour afterwards, and the girl's mind was still filled with visions of Gerald Hardinge, in her dream-haunted sleep, while Gerald Hardinge himself was pacing up and down the street, with rage and jealousy at his heart.

CHAPTER II. BEFORE THE STORM.

THE streets of Wexeter, save during the period set apart for the militia training, or other times of festivity, are left solitary and deserted at a comparatively early period of the evening. The railway omnibuses, bound for the different hotels, roll from the great central station up the High-street at stated intervals up to ten o'clock, and about that hour small parties of pleasure-seekers may be seen here and there wending their way homeward from the theatre, or from the little social gatherings where they have spent an unmistakably quiet evening. But, by that time, such places as in the day are the busiest haunts of traffic—if any region within the limits of the dull and decorous old city can be so spoken of—have relapsed into quiet, while in the precincts of the cathedral, in the still aristocratic region of South-Hedge, and in the straggling suburb of villas which has grown up thereabouts, all symptoms of life have died out at a much earlier hour, and the entire neighbourhood has long since been hushed into repose.

At half-past nine o'clock on the night when Rose Pierrepoint, sitting over her drawing, was interrupted by a visit from Gerald Hardinge, a tall woman issued from

the stage-door of the Wexeter Theatre, and was suddenly confronted by Mr. Gonnop, the hall-keeper, who was smoking a long clay pipe, and patrolling the measured space of pavement outside, and to whom she wished "good-night."

"Good-night, Miss Pierrepoint," responded the hall-keeper; "it looks amazing thick over there," he added, pointing with his pipe in the direction where a large black cloud was spreading over the city, "and we'll have rain before long, I reckon. Let's hope it'll come down, miss, and get all clear again before next Friday."

"And why particularly next Friday, Gonnop?" asked Miss Pierrepoint, in a clear voice.

"Your benefit night, miss!" said the man, looking up at her in wonder; "can't have forgotten that, surely?"

"I had, indeed, for the moment, but now I remember it, and thank you for your good wishes."

"Not that fine weather always does it," said Gonnop, slowly emitting his smoke and looking steadily at her, "being good for tea-gardens, and steam-boat excursions, and ridiculous things of that sort, as is by their very nature contrary to theatres. For, look you when the sun is shining—good-night," said Gonnop, bringing his sentence to a hurried conclusion as the lady moved rapidly away.

When Miss Pierrepoint reached the end of the cul-de-sac in which the stage-door was situated, she turned to the right, and looking straight before her, could have seen Miss Cave's house, conspicuous by the brightness of its knocker and the shining cleanliness of its door-step, within fifty yards. Their proximity to the theatre was indeed almost as great a reason for the popularity of Miss Cave's lodgings as their comfort and respectability; but on this occasion Miss Pierrepoint had no intention of proceeding direct to her residence, but after looking carefully round to see that she was not followed or watched, she turned off at an acute angle, and quickening her footsteps speedily found herself in the aristocratic quarter of South-Hedge.

The quarter before the hour chimed out from the cathedral clock as she passed into South-Hedge, where the lights were already beginning to appear in the bedroom windows, and where her footfall was the only sound breaking the solemn silence. Past the newly-built almshouses, whose Gothic proportions, which were the delight of the surrounding gentry and the fashionable

local architect, stood dim, and black, and blurred against the background of thick purple cloud behind them; over the railway bridge, in the hollow beneath which the huge engines destined to the service of goods traffic, apparently undecided as to what was best for them to do, were called upon now to progress a little, now in an equal degree to retreat, and were ever and anon shrieking out their doleful lamentations at the indecision of their drivers.

Breasting the hill now, and now on the top of it in something like open country, villas scattered here and there, perched in grounds where the landscape gardener had sought to rival the handiwork of nature, and for the most part had signally failed; a brand-new stucco church, built in imitation of a celebrated prototype in stone, but looking pale and unhealthy, of the complexion of a slack-baked, ill-toasted muffin; then, very much out of place, a squat, dumpy toll-gate, the sole remnant of the pre-suburban locality, of the pre-geetee day, when, teste the weather-beaten sign-post still extant, Manor Mead was known as Dumpington, and the almshouses and the villas, and the slack-baked church, had no existence.

The turnpike-gate was closed, and no light was to be seen in the toll-house, as Miss Pierrepont, winding her way at the back of it, turned into a narrow lane which was shaded and screened by the high growing hedges on either side. Here, after a hasty glance round to assure herself that there was no one nigh, she relaxed the swiftness of her pace and threw back her veil, holding up her face to catch whatever air might have found its way into the quiet little retreat. Then she peered long and anxiously into the darkness, and turned her head towards the quarter from whence she had come, as though listening for approaching footsteps. But she heard nothing, save the first dull, long rumble of distant thunder which immediately preceded the striking of the cathedral clock.

"Only just ten," she said to herself. "I am here before my time then as usual, and, as usual, he will be after his. What could have brought him down here, I wonder, now? Not that I need wonder, when I know well enough that the want of money, or the idea that I can be of use to him in some scheme for raising it, are the only things now which induce Philip to break off, for ever so short a time, from the life which exercises such a fascination over him, and to come to me."

She listened again, but after a minute resumed her pacing to and fro.

"I wonder if he ever thinks for a minute how and where it will all end? Whether, in the easy-going current of his life, the idea ever comes across him of the position I occupy, not merely by his tacit consent, but by his express desire? If he ever does think of it, he must be a very different man from the Philip Vane of two years ago, to allow it to continue, or to bear it calmly. Why then the mere notion would—What a fool I am to trouble myself with such memories! Whatever may be the change in him, it cannot be greater than it is with me, and all I have to do is to accept the present state of things, and to make the best of it. This must be he at last!"

She turned swiftly round, as she caught sight of a man's figure coming round by the toll-house. The next minute a tall man joined her, and after a hasty glance around, put his arms round her, and bending down kissed her cheek.

"You need not have looked, Philip, to make sure that we were unobserved," she said, with a short laugh. "There was no one near to see you take the unwarrantable liberty of kissing your wife! You are generally prudent enough to select as our place of meeting some spot where there would be no chance of interruption."

As he heard these words, and marked the tone in which they were spoken, a dark savage look crossed the man's face. It was gone in an instant, and his big black eyes were laughing merrily and his white teeth were gleaming brightly between his smiling lips, as he said:

"Savage to-night, old lady! Upset, eh, Madge? Don't like to be kept cooling her pretty heels in this particularly cut-throat-looking lane waiting for me, is that it?" And once again he placed his arms about her and kissed her cheek.

"No," she said, "that isn't it particularly. I don't know that I am savage, and I do know that I am accustomed to wait my lord's convenience."

"Well, there, don't say any more about it," the man said, in a sharper tone. "I could not get away before, and that's enough. You got my telegram all right?"

"Of course, or I should not be here."

"How confoundedly sharp you are to-night, Madge; down upon every word I say! Nothing gone wrong has there? How's the booking for the benefit?"

"Very good, indeed; the house will be more than full, I think."

"That's right, the money will just come in handy. I made rather a mess of it at Taunton yesterday."

"Have there been races at Taunton?"

"Yes, of course; that's why I came on to see you. Shouldn't have been in the neighbourhood for some time to come, and, therefore, thought I had better take advantage of the chance."

"Then it was really to see me that you came this time, Philip?" said the girl, nestling towards him, and looking up into his face.

"Of course it was, my dear!" he replied. "What did you think it was—not business? There is no information to be got, no money to be made out of you."

"Isn't there?" she said, quietly; "I thought there was."

"You know what I mean," he said.

"By the way, don't forget to send me that benefit money as soon as you get hold of it. You could send it to the club, you know. What do you think the figure is likely to be?"

"The figure?"

"Yes, the amount, the sum total. Heavens on earth, Madge, how slow you are!"

"Yes," said the girl, quietly, "I am thoroughly provincial; you see I have not had the chance recently of having my wits sharpened, by contact with the clever people in London! You want to know the sum to be realised by the benefit? I should say forty-two or forty-three pounds."

Philip Vane gave a low whistle.

"That's a very mild amount," he said.

"I was looking for something much higher than that! By George, Madge, this will never do! Three pounds a week, and a benefit producing under fifty pounds; those are starvation prices! I must take you up to London. I suppose you would do there, though it's a confounded pity you can't sing and dance!"

"Yes," said the girl, bitterly, "those are qualifications, the absence of which, in his wife, every man ought to regret."

He looked up at her under his eyebrows, but it was too dark for him to catch the expression of her face. There was, however, no mistaking the sneer conveyed in the tone of her voice. It was the second time during their short interview that she had thus offended him.

"What ails you to-night?" he said.

"What do you mean by sneering and gibing at me in this manner?"

"What do I mean!" she cried. "I will tell you plainly what I mean—I mean that

I am sick of the manner in which you treat me! You think that I am dull and stupid, but I am neither so stupid nor so dull that I cannot see plainly enough the value you put upon me, without the necessity for your insulting me by explaining it in words. I am your wife, which means your drudge, your bread-winner. Be it so; I don't repine, I did not expect to be made a fine lady of, or to live in idleness after you married me; but I did expect that you would be content with me and my talents, such as they were, and would not complain while I worked my hardest, even if my earnings might be small."

She paused and stood confronting him, her head erect, her hands nervously clasped together beneath her cloak.

"Have you anything more to say?" he asked in a low voice.

"Yes," she continued. "I want to know when there is to be an end to this deception? When you intend to acknowledge me openly as your wife, and take me out of my present position, which is inexpressibly painful to me, and, mark my words, infinitely perilous to you? I do not want rest, or ease, or luxury. I did not expect what most women are led to expect, that they are to look to their husbands for support; God knows, I am willing to work, and not merely willing, but delighted. I do not know that I should be happy without my work, but I want you to give me my position as your wife, and to be content with what I earn in that position."

As she ceased speaking, the low rumble of the thunder, this time much nearer, was again audible. There was a pause for a moment as its last faint mutterings died away, then Philip Vane said:

"You're right, Madge, in what you say, and I was a brute to grumble, knowing how hard and how cheerfully you work. And you are right, too, about your position. It is hard lines for you to have to come out here to meet me on such a night as this is going to be; to have to tramp all along the road after playing——"

"It is not that, Philip," interrupted the girl. "I don't mind that. I don't mind the hardship; all I hate is the deceit, the having to hide the fact of our marriage even from Rose, the having to nod and smile at the kindly prophecies of the old landlady at the lodgings as to my future, the having to receive attentions from honourable men, which would be naturally gratifying to an unmarried girl, which are degrading to me as your wife."

"Yes," said Philip Vane, "I understand all that, of course, and as soon as I can I will put it right. I cannot do it just now, but I hope in a few months to make that all square. By the way, Madge, talking about attentions, what about the scene-painter—is he still here?"

"Yes, he is still with the company."

"And still as spoony as ever?"

"I don't know about being 'spoony;' I think he is very fond of me, but he's a mere boy, you know, and——"

"Yes, I know! And have you still got that notion that you told me about his being a swell?"

"I have no doubt that he is a gentleman by position and education; beyond that I know nothing."

"Exactly; that's quite enough! I shouldn't discourage his spooniness if I were you, Madge; something may turn up out of it. Don't you fear my being jealous. I can trust you, old woman; and if this man ever came into any money, or was received back by his friends, from whom you seem to suppose he has run away, we may make something out of him. He's written you some letters, I suppose?"

Madge hesitated for a moment. "Yes, some," she said.

"Ah! I don't want to see them, bless you," cried Philip Vane; "I can trust you perfectly, only I think you had better keep them, not tear them up or destroy them in any way; they may be useful one of these days. By Jove! here it comes," he cried, as, after a few thick drops, a heavy peal of thunder broke right above their heads. "We had better make a bolt of it at once. I've got a cab waiting the other side of the turnpike, and can set you down where you like. Don't be afraid, Madge; the driver doesn't know me, and I'll take care he doesn't recognise you."

The storm was sharp while it lasted, but was soon over. Miss Cave, who had sat up for her lodger and "gone round the house," as was her wont no matter how late the hour, after every one else had retired to rest, knocked at Miss Pierrepont's door to inform her that the clouds had quite cleared away, and that the moon was shining brightly.

"A good omen for Friday, my dear," added the old lady, as she retired to bed.

"I hope so," said Madge to herself, "I hope so, for then Philip will get this money that he says he wants. Oh, my God!" cried the girl, as she seated herself on the edge of the bed, "how rapidly the

romance is dying out of my life! Never has he spoken so plainly as to-night, never striven so little to disguise himself! The money, and the money, and the money! To take what I can earn down here, to wish that I could earn more in London, to bid me gull the boy and lead him on, and take care that I keep his letters, of which something might be made! All this Philip did not scruple to do, and then he pats my cheek and tells me 'he trusts me!'"

About the same time Philip Vane, the sole occupant of the smoking-room at the Half Moon, was moodily puffing out the last fragment of his cigar. "Forty pounds," he muttered to himself, "and I looked for at least seventy. Rode as rusty as a nail when I said I wished she could sing, and was cantankerous about everything! Worrying about her 'position,' too. I thought I had settled that question, but to-night she chose to revive it. I shall have to put my foot down upon one or two of these things, and upon Miss Madge herself if she doesn't mind."

So saying Philip Vane threw the butt of his cigar into the empty fireplace and strode off to bed.

INELEGANT EXTRACTS.

SOME amusing, and I think not altogether uninteresting chapters might be added to the *Curiosities of Literature*, in the direction indicated by the words at the head of this paper; by collecting specimens, that is to say, of the sort of literary production which may be looked for when the half-educated mechanic, or the almost uneducated ploughman, applies

His hard unpliant finger at the pen;

or when the servant girl (becoming for the nonce one of "all ye ladies now at land") gives us ocular demonstration "how hard it is to write." During the many years I was corresponding clerk in the great Anglo-Scandinavian shipping firm of N. Listem, M. Barkham and Schippemhoff, of Londerpool (who were agents for the forwarding of passengers to every part of the inhabited globe), there passed through my hands some wonderful specimens—wonderful in a variety of ways—of popular composition. Having retained a large selection of these, and having found them the cause of much amusement in their manuscript dress, I see no reason why a few of them should not be promoted to the dignity of

print, for the benefit of the readers of this journal.

Let us take our "modern instances," almost at random, from a collection of isolated words, which bear testimony to the severe mental struggles of the writers to reproduce on paper the ideas they have had it in their hearts to express. Here is "achertion" for "assertion;" "inyough" for "enough;" "Auck-phault" for "Oxford;" "youthchels" for "utensils;" "assetcreaty" for "assistant secretary;" "shatersphaction," "ekskitement;" "foyegh" for "voyage;" "shut abel parson" for "suitable person;" "post boned" for "postponed;" "noshing" for "notion;" "veakens" for "vacancy;" "aniticous," "anksguhs," and "angchguhs" for "anxious;" "cignuteire" for "signature;" "sockamstances;" "athara" for "other" (this is by a Welshman); "sudesfide" for "satisfied;" "ciness" for "kindness;" "op jection" for "objection;" "affetchable" for "affectionately;" "necrey" for "necessary;" "meakines" for "mechanics," and so on ad libitum.

Here are some additional phonetic oddities: "I request a fever of you;" "all our araingments are mad;" "i am un paisont (impatient) to know did he landed safe." This is a very fine specimen: "Anxiously" (doubtless after intense cogitation) comes out "ain'cheasuley." "If you require marrid cuples i can obligue you by Marring a Domestick servant." "I am poor arfin boy, aged 29, with a willing heart, a strong arem, and a loose leg." "I and my wife hear vearey Dercierish to emergrunt. I can give you everey satters-phactshun." "I desire a kind recast (request) of you," &c. &c.

Here are a few odd phrases. A cockney says, "I have a good charchester, if such a thing is wanted." "I enclose a stamped enwollop." "My husband, although I says it as shouldn't, was as fine a man as you would meet with in a day's march: why, sir, he took a coffin six foot long." Another woman, recounting the advice she had received to go abroad, says she was told "you're just the kind of woman; you are so wiry." An Irish teacher, writing on behalf of some proposed emigrants, says that "they are sober, industrious, moral, honest, well conducted, and rather exemplary in every laudable way." "My name is Lorer Jones, and I lives at Nothing Hill;" and Laura Jones wants, "if ele-gable, to go to colonans at the arlest oper-ainty." "To young men from one to to

and 20" (that is, from 21 to 22 years of age) wish to become "himagramphs." This reminds me of a letter from "the undersinged Police hossifer," as he described himself, who asks if "heny more male hemmegrunters" are required, because he would "like to go hout, as the force is going to Brake hup."

Let us take some extracts a little more connected. An Irish girl writes, "That reluctantly to state, petitioner's mother died lately of a sickness which prohibited her from emigrating. Alas! in accordance with the Adage 'Seldom one misfortune comes alone,' the death prohibits poor petitioner from going; but if your honour, from feelings of charity, humanity, gratitude, and clemency," &c. The following comes to hand the very day I am writing: "I hav thaken the liberty to hask of you now Mr. (So-and-so). Ef you kinley enform me as sown as possible you will werre much ablige me. Should you not know that purson prups you will infurm me wear I cold apley. With manney theanks" (from Bristol). The next specimen makes use of words after a very miscellaneous fashion, reminding one of the Scotchman who, after a course of reading in Doctor Johnson's Dictionary, said that he found it full of interesting matter, but that it was "rather unconnectit." My present correspondent says: "I beg attention concerning the circumstance of pity that acquainted me on receiving your letter of presentation. I was in the act of removing when my misfortune demanded an obstruction owing to the above mentioned," &c. A poor boy says: "I am parent Less & house Less & a compleat starveing youth." The following is rather involved in style: "In consequence of meeting with a mistake that I have to deplore the unexpected recovery (I think he means the expected non-recovery) of my dear mother whose illness is so bad I do not know the minute she may depart," &c.

Perhaps the following extracts will be more readable if we give them in separate paragraphs:

"Dear Sir,—I have been ansusley A whiten (awaiting) for A hansure has I ham hout of work. I hope you will not be Angre whith me for I am so misurhupbel. I hope I shant be long before I goise.

"Your A fetchnet friend."

"I beg to inform you that I am not in a fit state to preeseide (proceed) on the

voyage: me two children are infested with the checoff" (query, "chin cough?")

"Pat C—— is dangerously ill, and in a bad state of health."

"A Por norphon" says he can "pedus a nockalodgement" of having paid so and so.

"Dear Sir,—“i take Lipete of Riter thes fur of Line to informed you that i a suth (query ‘I should’) Like to go to Colambine—i am a hagutel (agricultural) work man as tha is too hovis (of us?) that wood like to go. Won hage 23 and the hod (other?) 26.”

"Sir i see

“by lloyd’s newspaper that you are aisiaten (assisting) a few larban man & theare waifes (wives) aboard.”

“Being seduced by persons of repute I wish to obtain a passage. I know all serts of labor, very understanding in a gentleman’s employment, & my wife equally so & knowledgeable in every sort of house business.”

“To the Mangen (manager), &c.

“Have you eyeney ships fo Victori. I am very health. I blon (belong) to Winser. I lived at Honsey lane Higit ill—Plese a dres to Baker wored (ward?) —Huspitell.”

“September 191870.

“Dear friend, we are tow young man want tow Emigration tow Anstralia for tow shapards age of the tow one 21 of age the other four and 24 of age.” (This is from a Welshman).

“Myself & chister in or about 18 years old—we are domestive servants—Testamianal charresters.” (From County Clare).

“Deated this 3 Oct 53.

“I feel much happy in being capable of addressing your most kind letter here represent before the Public in migrating Europeans to Anstrila” (from a Dundee man).

“I wis to inforn you that i wis to goo with won of your Amagraction Ships i se in your Advrtisments you wis to know the oxapaction we fowly * * ples to rit me,” &c.

“Plais te send Plais te sende Mee sadele as I intend to Jaine in hir Magesty serves as an Emagrant Te Astrile * * Your evir umbill servant” (not “umpel serpent,” as another man subscribed himself).

“I wish to cross the Equinoxial line and make my habitations in Ocetrilla.”

The gentleman who achieved “sockamstances” and “caracketer,” says, “you mite if you ples gave me the fal fol partikleys.” What he means by “fal fol” I am quite unable to make out.

I hardly think it is necessary to assure the reader of the authenticity of these extracts. They appear to me to carry proof of their genuineness on the face of them, and to contrast very strikingly with the specimens of misspelling which we frequently meet with in books. Here are a couple of such concocted instances I have met with today:

“Deer Jeames,—Hive bin werry unfortnight with They pigs won have bin cornfind with the cat-tell plage and tother with a familiee of 3 lade up, with mizzells hopping this Wil find you, Wel as it leves me, At presen, sow No moor from me at present. Yore troolie R. H.”

The other case is in a recently published book, where an acquitted thief is represented as telling his “pals” that Mr. So-and-so, his advocate, “was the werriest cleverest lawrer hin the ole hof Hengland,” and advising them “never to hemploy hany hother hif they vished to get hoff.”

I confess these do not seem to me to have the true ring about them; indeed, I doubt if many fiction writers have succeeded in manufacturing bad English, as well as it is constantly being done by those who are “native and to the manner born.”

Compare these two last samples with the following:

“pleas, G. H, Labor in Sheffield, Yorkshir, in 43 years of ag wichs to emmygrate into Cap or Canade. I have got my register from the Parsh wear I was born—pleas send the full pettluas &c. pleas dredced” (direct), &c.

Or this:

“my respective sir, I am excusing my trouble To you And to all gentlet That Joines your Sosity That a little accident happened Me igot hurted in the Irenwork,” &c.

Or this:

“Hearing that there is acuractical Labourels Wanted for Sadme (Sydney) i want to go there,” &c.

Or again this:

“I am a person of hie respect in character & can undergo any thing you propseed.

I am 205 years of adge and be hily recommended," &c.

This form of mistake in stating ages is not uncommon, nor indeed very much to be wondered at. One instance, by way of sample, may be worth reproducing. A man states his family thus :

"Sons 118 122 115, daughters 117 119," meaning one eighteen, one twenty-two, and so on.

The following are amusing, not so much from anything grotesque in the spelling or the diction, but as descriptive of the writer's pursuits.

"I am at present compelled to tramp from town to town in sarch of employment, or I may say work, with my wife, and I am that poor that I am often compelled to seek shelter in a barn or cart lodge, and sometimes I am lucky enough to scrape sixpence together by singin a song or selling a ballard, for wich I obtain a lodgins at a common lodgin house, wheair tramps and travelers of the lowest order resort to * * You may prehaps like to know what trade I am—I am a Jack of all trades. I can guild a picture frame & I can mend a boot or shoe—I can paint a cart or glaize a shach (sash). I can stand two houres trick at the elm (helm) or reef a topsail—I can cook a dinner or wait at table—I can wash a gig & groom a horse, and I can do a bit of gardonging" (garden- ing).

Surely a handy man like this should be able to get some sort of employment to enable him to live. Another man thus describes his qualifications :

"I write you this in the name of the Lord * * I ham a minar, but If there is anything else to do in farming ican do it, or ican fix any work In the mining scale for pomping watter or hall up staf from a shaft * * thank God I can make almost anything beloning to any mind (mine) in the contry—and where I go I will do my masters good as well as myself by God's help. Sir, I ham no Intoxingcating drinker. I and all my father's family are teatolars and my Intended wife is a teatolar too * * Sir, as long as our Queen take the law of this contry from the bibel I shall go by it, and no fals names or reports shall come out of my mouth if I now it. Sir, I must conclude hoping to join your servis by the help of the Lord. Good by Sir. I ham of to work—If possibal I can go I will do you good by the Lord's help—Good by,

Sir. I ham of. Good by. God bless you and all that is around you and me. Good by. I ham of."

The writer gets somewhat tautological towards the end, and is altogether, I think, just a trifle conceited, pragmatism, and profane. Our next extract is from a man of a similar, but somewhat superior class :

"I purpose in June to cast my bread upon the Australian waters. My avocations for some years have been divided between those of Assistant Schoolmaster and Commercial Clerk—salary averaging from £20 to £50—never more—yet still obliged to keep up an appearance in broadcloth and boots, vegetating from year to year in expectation of some improvement. I have been used to depend on my own resources, as a sort of 'Caleb Quotem,' and am not ashamed to dirty my hands. I have a knowledge of gardening, kitchen and parterre—a smattering of the healing art—can sew and mend my own clothes, &c., if required—cook and make puddings in a plain way—can use my tools as a carpenter, smith, painter, whitewasher, &c. My habits are simple. I never exceed 2 glasses of beer per day, & have a dishke of spirits, which I do not taste twice in a year, & smoke very little. I cannot ride, but am reckoned a decent shot, if the dingoes (?) can appreciate such a qualification."

And here is what an Irish lad says of himself: "i must travel and see life—i am clever at many things—i am handy at cart-penting—also able to play many instruments of music, moreover the scotch and irish pipes—am counted the best at them." This young fellow is in love. He says: "i once loved a girl—i never loved one but her;" and, alas! she has already emigrated.

This follows suit very well :

"i tak the oportunity to ast you to pleast to grant mee the faver taking a laful bride with mee, for shee dos fill in clind to go with mee, and when i first send up to you i did not now has shee was alive, for i havent had any conaction with her this two years until last Thursday, & i and shee wish to go together—if you hould oblige mee to have 3 weeks for the purpose of maring i should be very much thankful for it, & i shall be published tomorrow the first time * * & if required i will send the stiftic of marage & carite—i whould rathaa you did diserve mee of a voyage then of my true bride for i never should not be conted

(contented) which thou shalt see & I hope & trust you will grant us both the favor so no more at present from

The Gay Plough man."

Reverting to letters descriptive of the writer's pursuits, I come upon this: "Me being a Laderbing man, that is to say such as a carman, tricklears Lobour, labair in a blocksmith shop or a Labouring Gardner and wishing to go to Austsalia." It is remarkable how this person "labours" to get the right spelling of that word, and at last actually reaches it, though I think only by accident.

Again, under this head, an Oxfordshire man says: "I have a famaley of 8 children—3 ofe them young wiming servants—1 of my sones a very active youth—the other 4 very active children—the youngest 5 years old—I myself hame now a Backer—I was Bread to agricultural labor—for nearly 20 years I have Bean a shoue maker—for several years I have Beane a Wheelwright, a Bricklayer, and I could be a Carpenter if required, and my delight would be in Culteavaten land, &C." We have been obliged, in transcribing this gentleman's effusion, and in some others, to insinuate a comma or a dash to make them legible to the "hignorant hupper classes," to quote the words of an orator of Clerkenwell Green, otherwise the quotations are exact.

To make a great stride from the wants of the really destitute class, we come to a list of superfluities which some apparently well-to-do people wish their protégé to be allowed to take with him. These are some of the things they want to provide him with, over and above the full supply of necessaries which the law compels every emigrant ship to carry; he wants, as "he is a very big healthy lad for his age," to take—

"1. A few tin loaves—two of them in slices toasted, and strained, and dried.

"2. A little soft sugar, about 4 lb.

"3. Mixed tea, about 1 lb.

"4. Hard parkin, 6 lb. (Whatever is 'Parkin?')

"5. Sound green apples, 6 lb."

Then follow, two boxes of sardines, twelve pots of preserves, two bottles of pickles, thirty pounds of flour, one bottle of lemon kali, one bottle of hair-oil, some figs, and baking powder, and "a score of sound potatoes"—"a list of things of which he" (the said "very big healthy lad") "is very fond." His animal wants being thus attended to, his intellectual or aesthetic proclivities are not forgotten, for "he has also

a Base Fiddle which he desires to take with him."

Let us conclude with a few additional specimens of grotesque phoneticisms and quaint forms of expression. One man says, "I was sent out to Jameca where I took Aricles" (erysipelas). Another, that he has been employed in the "Geoligae" Department in one of the colonies. A third, "I hav a witch to emigrate." Another has a turn for "mechanicism and works of artfulness." A woman says that "she is a thorough servant & a needles woman." The father of a family says, "Let me know how to Perced and what it cost for Etch a Dult and for childring as I have Got Six of famly. I Wood Lick to tuck them if that I could Dow so. Ples to leter us kow the Port your emegrating tou; if tou Port Natle I Wood Lick to go thar." Thus proving himself to be as fine a specimen, for our present purpose, as the man who assured us that he was "a beautiful scrivenger & well skilled in Leterature."

NATURE'S COMFORTING.

No, not to the April lilies,
Though fair be their moonlight sheen,
No, not to the July roses,
Though each be a radiant queen.
Not to the sweet spring loveliness,
Not to the summer glow,
Not to autumn's gorgeous parting smile,
Nor to winter's royal snow.
The world is rich in its varying dress,
Its seasons are full and fair,
It can brighten, gladden, or dream for us,
But oh, mourner, go not there!

The young leaves flaunt their fresh green life,
Though they wave o'er the coffin-pall,
The young flowers blossom in beauty bright,
Though our heart-buds fade and fall.
The birds' gay carol jars the ear,
That thrills to the death-bell's note,
Drearly into the darkened room,
Sweet accents of the jasmine float.
If our hopes are blighted, our prizes naught,
Are the fruits less rich and rare?
Weans the laughing sky one cloud for us?
Nay, mourner, look not there!

Who would have nature's comforting,
I rede them seek the shore
Wherever and aye through sun and shade,
The great waves rise and roar.
The mighty thunderous music
Will lull the fevered brain,
The low melodious monotone,
Breathe patience unto pain.
The whisper of the ebbing tide
Answer the passionate prayer,
With "wait, hush! wait for a little while,"
Oh, mourner, linger there!

The glorious, vast, unchanging sweep,
The long unceasing boom,
Carry the saddened spirit on
To the world beyond the tomb.
Nothing of fading and coming back,
In the great eternal waves,

Nothing of horrible contrast mocks,
Like flowers on tended graves.
Deep as love is, and solemn as faith,
Tender and strong as prayer,
The sea has solace for every mood,
Oh, mourner, seek it there!

CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

SOUTHAMPTON BUILDINGS (HOLBORN END).

A LITTLE above where Holborn Bars once stretched, and a little south-westward of Middle Row, that vexatious Thermopylæ now removed, that for centuries the resisters of London improvement defended tooth and nail against all comers, a narrow street winds by several eccentric and devious turns till it weds itself with Chancery-lane. Like the life of some great men, the obscure street begins in an unnoticed, humble kind of way, and it is not till half-way through that it breaks into bloom and genial blossom. Just where hurrying lawyers' clerks turn sharp off westward into Chancery-lane, the intelligent London explorer, looking eastward, sees a frontage and terrace of Jacobean architecture. Below that spreads a quiet, tidy little garden with well-ordered, close-shaven turf, on which the grave clock of Staples Inn Hall looks down with a calm and contemplative face, that seems almost to smile (as a lord chancellor's grim visage sometimes softens at a legal joke) whenever a slant ray of errant sunshine brightens its gilt figures. That slip of turf, and those casual shy-looking flowers, are descended from a good old stock. The plants spring from flowers which Shakespeare himself may have picked and chatted over. Yes, those "daffodils that come before the swallows dare, and tempt the winds of March with beauty," violets blue as the lid of Cytherea's eyes, and sweeter than her breath, are children of those he once looked upon. For here, in the great Elizabethan times of poetry and heroism, stood the gardens of Shakespeare's great friend and first patron, Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton.

The proud order of the Templars had on this site, in 1128, their first Preceptory (Henry the First), not moving to the banks of the Thames till 1184 (Henry the Second). Here on the shore of Holborn (if we may be allowed to use an original metaphor) these stalwart smiters of the turbaned infidel first settled. The Templars and their rivals, the Hospitallers (who had originally at their starting fed and supported them),

and who originally settled at Clerkenwell, both came to England in the same reign. The first Templars were Frenchmen, the first Hospitallers Italians. The latter began by tending sick pilgrims, the former by escorting pilgrims to the Holy City. It is difficult to say which order became first corrupt, or which finally became the most detestable. In the desert and on the battlements of Acre, Jerusalem, and Damietta, the Templars fought like Turks, and their shirts of twisted mail covered lion hearts; but in Fleet-street, and in the English towns, they fell rapidly into degradation. When they had had enough of fighting they tried less dangerous, but more satisfying pleasures, and like Samson, their strength, which was their glory, then passed from them.

After the failure of the second crusade, when Europe was busy reviling good St. Bernard, who had encouraged it, Henry the Second, hoping to wash his hands of Becket's blood, paid the expenses of two hundred Knights Templars for a year in Palestine. In this reign the Grand Master of the Temple came over to England with Heraclius, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and the Grand Master of the Hospitallers, to urge forward the English crusaders, whom Prince John (afterwards the usurper) wished to command; and, while in London, Heraclius dedicated the church of St. John, Clerkenwell, and the church of the Temple in Fleet-street. This was in 1184 or 1185. In the flames of their funeral pyres the Templars at last cruelly expiated their sins. The monks declared that they had become idolaters, and practised unlawful rites. One thing is certain, and that fact may, perhaps, better explain the haste with which those false priests built up for the knights the Paris fagots, and that is, that the Order had grown too rich. It was plethoric, and needed to be bled. But enough of the Templars. Suffice it to say that Stow, in Elizabeth's time, mentions that Master Ropar, building much at Southampton House, came upon the ruins of the round buildings of the old Templars' house, which had been built of Caen stone. Mr. Peter Cunningham says, in his book on London (1849), that in May, 1847, Mr. Griffith, a whip-maker, 322, Holborn, told him "that when digging the foundations of a workshop, he had seen portions of a circular building resembling the ruins of the Temple described by Stow."

The Wriothesleys seem to have been preceded by the earls and bishops of Lin-

coln, from whom the present Inn and Fields derived their name. The house came to the Wriothesleys in the time of Edward the Sixth. The first known Wriothesley, according to Burke, was a plain John Wriothesley, who was Falcon Herald in the reign of Edward the Fourth, and Garter King-at-Arms to Richard the Third. This herald's grandson was the first titled dweller in the turning out of Holborn. Whether he could break a lance fairly, woo a pretty lass feately, or refute a shaven priest roundly, we know not; but this is certain, Henry the Eighth sent him to Denmark to bid for the Princess Christiana, who, however (luckily for her), never came to hand; he was also constable of the castle of Southampton, and having been sent to negotiate with that astute emperor, Charles the Fifth, was made Baron Wriothesley of Tichfield, in Hampshire, a monastery recently gutted by Henry. Soon after this, floating with the tide, the new peer became Lord Chancellor of England, a Knight of the Garter, and subsequently one of the jealous, wife-slaying tyrant's executors. Three days before the coronation of that "royal imp of fame"—Edward the Sixth—Wriothesley was created Earl of Southampton. But here the tide turned; he crossed the plots of the Protector Somerset, who, watching an opportunity, denounced him to the council for having, without permission, and to gain more time for further business, put the Great Seal into commission. For this he forfeited his grand office, and was fined and imprisoned in his own Holborn house. In spite of this venial fault, and the hostility of Somerset, which to a virtuous man was the highest honour, the earl seems to have been a wise and learned chancellor, and a good man. He died eight years before the ascension of Elizabeth. Two of his favourite aphorisms have been preserved. One was, that "Force awes, but justice governs the world;" the other, "I love a bishop to satisfy my conscience; a lawyer to guide my judgment; a good family to keep up my interest; and an university to preserve my name." The next earl was a friend of the Duke of Norfolk, dabbled in the Roman Catholic plots for the unwise duke's marriage with Mary Queen of Scots, and seems himself to have been more than half a papist. His only daughter married Lord Arundel, of Wardour, in Wiltshire, a Catholic nobleman. But it is to the son of this man of wrong proclivities that our sympathy chiefly attaches, and his name

invests the street for ever with a special dignity and interest.

Henry Wriothesley, the third earl, was that generous and impulsive young nobleman to whom Shakespeare dedicated his first poems, *Venus and Adonis*, and *Lucrece*. Big-wigged history chiefly values the earl for being the brother officer and fellow conspirator of the unfortunate and hot-headed Essex, whom he followed in that insane dash through Temple Bar, that led the hero of Cadiz by quick stages to the scaffold on Tower Hill. In those shaking morasses of doubt, the biographies of Shakespeare, a few pieces of dry ground are traceable. The first and firmest of these sure spots is the fact that in 1593, seven years or so after Shakespeare arrived in London to seek his fortune, he dedicated his *Venus and Adonis*, avowed by him "the first heir of my invention," to the Right Honourable Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, and Baron of Tichfield; and the next year his *Lucrece*, published at the White Greyhound, in St. Paul's Churchyard. As we know at least this for certain that in 1598, twelve years after he left Stratford, Shakespeare had already written his *Love's Labour Lost*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Richard the Second*, *Richard the Third*, *Henry the Fourth*, *King John*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, it is almost certain that even in 1593 he had produced one or two plays. Perhaps to Lord Brooke, a nobleman of his own county, the new poet may have been indebted for an introduction to that generous and amiable earl who lived in Holborn, so near Lord Brooke. The dedications of the two poems are interesting, because they hand down to us Shakespeare's own words, in simple and sincere prose, and mark the kind of relationship existing between a young Warwickshire poet (then twenty-nine) and a young nobleman who encouraged poets and actors of genius. We have no letters of our great poet, no diary, no personal records left, nothing but these two short dedications. That to *Venus and Adonis* is addressed

To the Right Honourable Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton and Baron of Tichfield.

RIGHT HONOURABLE,—I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolished lines to your lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a prop to support so weak a burden; only if your honour seem but pleased I account myself highly praised, and vow to take advantage of all idle hours till I have

honoured you with some graver labour. But if the first heir of my invention prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a godfather, and never after ear (till) so barren a land for fear it yield me still so bad a harvest. I leave it to your honourable survey, and your honour to your heart's content, which I wish may always answer your own wish and the world's hopeful expectation.

Your honour's in all duty,

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

Several things strike us in this dedication. It contains too many "honours," it is pitched in just a little too low a key, and the final quibble of the words "wish" and "wish," reminds us of the somewhat tedious equivoques in *Love's Labour Lost*, and other early plays. The phrase "idle hours" seems to us also worthy of note, as indicating that verse writing and play patching were not yet the staple occupations of Shakespeare's London life. In the last line the poet alludes of course to the youth of his patron. The poem came to a second edition in 1594, and in May of the same year appeared *Lucrece*, with the following dedication to the young earl. It is in a warmer and more avowedly ambitious vein than its predecessor, but also wants simplicity:

THE love I dedicate to your lordship is without end; whereof this pamphlet without beginning is but a superfluous moiety (this almost smacks of a lawyer's office). The warrant I have of your honourable disposition, not the worth of my untutored lines, makes it assured of acceptance. What I have done is yours; what I have to do is yours; being part in all I have, devoted yours. Were my worth greater my duty would show greater; meantime, as it is it is bound to your lordship, to whom I wish long life still lengthened with all happiness.

Your lordship's in all duty,

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

Rowe quotes a story of Sir William Davenant, who liked to be considered an illegitimate son of the poet, that the earl once showed his regards and admiration for Shakespeare by giving him a thousand pounds, "to enable him to go through with a purchase he heard he had a mind to." If this tradition be true, Shakespeare must indeed some bright day or other have felt his heart leap up as he turned into Chancery-lane, and walked fast towards the Blackfriars Theatre (close to where Printing House-square now is), or taken boat at the Temple Stairs for the Globe (his summer

theatre), built the very year *Lucrece* was published. This munificent gift, Mr. Collier thinks, was made soon after *Lucrece* appeared; it might have been to purchase a share in the Globe, but we would rather refer it to the purchase of New Place at Stratford in 1597 (an extraordinary proof of wealth in a young adventurer who had been only eleven years in London). The generous sympathy with a gallant soldier like Essex, driven, as he declared, by Raleigh and Cecil from the queen's presence, led the Holborn earl into treasonable meetings with discontented Puritans and factious officers, that led at last to that insane rush to Paul's Cross to rouse the City, February the 8th, 1601. At the trial Essex accused Cecil of upholding the Infanta of Spain as the successor, and appealed to Southampton as having heard the same report. Cecil at once rose, and conjured Southampton by their former friendship, and as a Christian man, to name the informer. Southampton then named Sir Robert Knollys, uncle to Essex, and comptroller of the household, but it appeared he had misunderstood him. The earl had refused to give the name till the court had pronounced such a revelation consistent with his honour. Southampton eventually escaped, though his friend Davers was beheaded. It seemed certain to all that he had imperilled his life from friendship, not from a love of treason, and though condemned and attainted, he remained unharmed in the Tower till the queen died. When King James the First came, the warm-hearted but imprudent earl was restored to his rights, and made captain of the Isle of Wight and castle of Carisbrooke. This friend and early patron of Shakespeare died 1624, the year before the accession of Charles the First.

In old Southampton House Shakespeare must have spent many a pleasant hour, and the earl's three daughters may have been the prototypes of his teasing Beatrice, his pretty Anne Page, and his tender Imogene. There Moth may have taken his sword and cap, Malvolio have shown him his chain of office, Lancelot have given him the pert answer. In the court-yard there, dogged Sampson and sturdy Balthazar may have frowned at rival serving-men, and Juliet's nurse have bustled by, hot and fuming at some incivility shown her by my Lord Brooke's mistress of the Starchery. For these reasons, therefore, if for no other, we hold, and shall ever continue to hold, the buildings of Southampton in high regard.

Thomas, the fourth earl, a grave and wise man, became a great personage at the courts of Charles the First and Charles the Second. Lord Clarendon, who had a fine Roman hand, when he wrote the character of an honest and loyal man, has done justice to Southampton in his great work on the civil war. He describes the earl as a younger brother, staidous, and as a boy disliking ceremony, and being called my lord. Having been hardly treated by the court, the Puritans courted him at the outbreak of the war, and he joined them against the Earl of Strafford, till it came to his trial, which he vigorously opposed. "He was a man," says Clarendon, his firm friend, "of a great sharpness of judgment, and very quick apprehension, and that readiness of expression upon any sudden debate, that no man delivered himself more advantageously and weightily, and more efficaciously with his hearers, and that no man gave them more trouble in his opposition, or drew so many to a concurrence with him in opinion. He had no relation to or dependence upon the court, or purpose to have any, but wholly pursued the public interest." The earl did not become a privy councillor, or of the king's bed-chamber, till the parliament had declared no man capable of office who had not signed their protestation. He went with the king to York, was with him in the rush at Edge Hill, and stayed at Oxford with him till the end of the war, always fulfilling his duty, always dreading the issue, always eager to advance peace. "The earl," says Clarendon, warmly, "was indeed a great man in all respects, and brought very much reputation to the king's cause." So much we should have hoped and expected of the son of Shakespeare's noble friend, who must often have sat on the poet's lap, and heard him utter wisdom and wit. He was one of those true men the king wished to be round him at the Isle of Wight, and, faithful to the last, he was present when they bore Charles's coffin, white with snow, to the vault at Windsor. After the Restoration, the magnate of Holborn was installed a Knight of the Garter, and was made Lord Treasurer of England. He strove, side by side with his old friend Hyde, to restore the shattered finances of Charles, and to store money for the future: but spaniels, pimps, cardinals' nieces, and mistresses of all ages and ranks, soon snatched away the savings of the thrifty minister, and the good-natured, shameless king only laughed at the greediness of

these rapacious creatures, and the old nobleman's anger and dismay. The earl died at Southampton House, "near Holburne, in the suburb of London," May, 1667, seven years after "the glorious Restoration," when all his honours, including the earldom of Chichester, became extinct. The earl's house was taken down about 1652. Howell, in 1657, describes Southampton House as lately taken down and turned to "several private tenements." Probably the loyal earl,

True as the dial to the sun,
Although it be not alone upon,

had, during his weary exile, been obliged to part with some of the property. Rachel, the daughter of the last earl by a French lady, the first of his three wives, married that estimable nobleman, Lord William Russell. She is that grand and noble woman whose memory shines like a star above the sin and corruption of an evil age. No wonder that Lord William Russell, on his way to the scaffold, gave a mournful look at the turning to Southampton-buildings. He remembered that he had wooed there her of whom he spoke when he was called for trial for high treason at the Old Bailey, and the Lord Chief Justice offered him any of his servants to assist him in taking down the evidence:

"My wife is here, my lord, to do it."

In 1664, Pepys describes walking to "my Lord Sandwich's through my Lord of Southampton's new buildings in the fields behind Gray's-inn;" but still, as we have seen, the earl died in Holborn.

Southampton-buildings seems to have been the first street frequented by coffee-drinkers; for Antony Wood, the Oxford biographer, says that in 1650 (two years before the Restoration), Jacob, a Jew (probably from the Levant), opened a coffee-house in St. Peter's parish, Oxford, and when he left the learned city he sold coffee in old Southampton-buildings in Holborn, near London. He was living there in 1671. Here, too, in the quiet turning out of Holborn, Ludlow, the regicide, hid away till he could escape to Switzerland.

MATTHIAS THE GHOST QUELLER.

"Did you ever hear of such a thing as the ghost of a living person?" inquired Maximilian.

"Well," replied Laurence, "I have often heard of the Scotch wraith, which appears at the moment of a person's decease, and thus indicates the death of that person, per-haps to a distant friend." Digitized by Google

"No, that is not what I mean," explained Maximilian. "Stories of the wraith are common all over the world, but I imagine that in the case of this particular species of phantom, the death of the person is supposed to precede, if only by a second, the appearance of the spectre."

"Well," remarked Laurence, "there is the death-fetch, which Baynim once made so famous. This is represented to be the spectre of a living person, of whose approaching death its appearance is an infallible sign."

"Something like a banshee," interposed Edgar.

"Not at all," said Laurence. "Unless I have dipped into Irish mythology to very bad purpose, the banshee is not the spectre of a person that ever lived at all, but a sort of fairy, who is attached to ancient families alone, and announces the death of any of their members by perpetual lamentations."

"I perceive that I did not put my question with sufficient accuracy," observed Maximilian. "When I asked if you had ever heard of such a thing as the ghost of a living person, I was not thinking of a spectre predicting death, as in the case of the fetch, but of the appearance of the preternatural likeness of a person, without any reference to death at all. However, I may as well narrate the story by which my question was suggested. Matthias Lüssau, a pastor at Rathenow, on the river Havel, during the time of the Thirty Years' War, stood one evening at the window of his house, whence he perceived two persons, busily digging as if they were in search of some hidden treasure. One of them looked exactly like his churchwarden, and to this one he addressed himself, asking what was the object of such zealous toil. The digger explained that in the days when the town had been occupied by the Swedes——"

"That occupation, I suppose, was one of the events of the Thirty Years' War?" interrupted Egbert.

"Precisely," said Maximilian. "In those days, as the spectre explained, a general pillage had been expected, and consequently he and his comrade had buried the sacred vessels of their church in some neighbouring spot, the exact situation of which had, perhaps, through the effect of panic, entirely vanished from their recollection. Matthias Lüssau went to bed, pondering on this conversation, and on the following morning sent for his churchwarden, whom he questioned respecting the hidden treasure. The man started, as if aroused from a dream, and honestly confessed that such

a treasure had been buried by him and his associate in office in the time of the Swedes, that the place where they had hid it had been completely effaced from their memory, and that after much fruitless search, they had given up every thought of making good their loss, and had forgotten the affair altogether. Satisfied with this explanation the pastor conducted his churchwarden to the spot, where the diggers had been occupied the evening before, and as this was at once recognised by the churchwarden, good earthly substantial diggers were set to work, and the vessels, duly discovered, were restored to the church.

"That," gravely remarked Laurence, "is a very curious story. The churchwarden neither dies, nor is about to die. Simply his memory has become defective with regard to one particular event, possibly, as you say, through the effects of panic, and the loss occasioned by his forgetfulness was made good by a spectre, who assumed his likeness."

"We may almost say," suggested Edgar, "that the apparition was the ghost of the churchwarden's departed memory. Those who would give a rational turn to this odd tale would substitute somnambulism for supernatural agency. I perfectly recollect a short French drama, the plot of which much resembled the story of your worthy pastor. A perfectly honest man, intrusted with a large sum by a friend, has put it away in a place of safety. When the friend, after a long absence, returns, producing the receipt for the deposit, the treasure is missing, and the man to whom it has been confided is in despair. Falling asleep, he proceeds, still sleeping, to his garden, and there he digs up the lost casket. He had hidden it in a state of somnambulism, and in a state of somnambulism he finds it, the act of concealment having left no impression on his waking mind. Put a sleep-walking churchwarden in the place of your spectre, and you will at once perceive the analogy between your legend and my plot."

"Ah, I perfectly perceive the analogy and the insinuation," said Maximilian, smiling; "and, as Matthias Lüssau was famous in his day for laying perturbed spirits, I will tell you another story about him, which, though less singular, shows him in a less equivocal character. You must know that in those days of Swedish occupation referred to by the spectral churchwarden——"

"Spectral or sleep-walking?" interposed Edgar.

"In those days," pursued Maximilian, "the city of Rathenow was found too small for its intrusive visitors. One company of Swedes seemed destined to remain without shelter, the only place in which it could possibly be quartered being universally stigmatised as a haunted house. To all warnings on this score the soldiers, however, turned a deaf ear, and they accordingly took possession of the awful edifice, providing themselves, not only with abundant meat and drink, but likewise with a few fiddles, in the determination to pass a merry night. At the hour of twelve, while they were in the middle of a dance, a man like a farmer, with a whip in his hand and a bundle of deeds under his arm, walked into the room, and was followed by a lady, who wore a great bunch of keys. These unbidden guests made no attempt to interrupt the merriment of the party, but remained near the door, quietly watching their proceedings. The dancers came to a sudden stop, an awkward pause ensued, which terminated in a roar of laughter from the soldiers."

"Were the ghosts gratified?" inquired Edgar.

"On the contrary," answered Maximilian; "they were highly incensed, and manifested their wrath to some purpose. So vigorously did the man use his whip, and the lady her keys, that the soldiers were only too glad to get out of the house, the majority escaping by the windows, the minority by the doors. One only remained, a dunder-headed fellow, who had fallen asleep behind the stove, and had there lain in blissful ignorance of the defeat of his comrades. When at last he awoke, and saw the spectral virago with the keys, he also retreated, though she begged him to remain, assuring him that, as he had not been guilty of the impertinence of laughing at her and her companion, no harm would be done to him."

"Why should these extremely muscular Christians be called ghosts at all?" inquired Edgar.

"Oh," answered Laurence, "the ghosts in Brandenburg and thereabouts are by no means destitute of physical strength, nor must they be associated with anything shadowy or ethereal. Why, the story is told of one Martinus Schoock, an old professor at Frankfort-on-the-Oder, who was, for awhile, very proud of his disbelief in spirits, but was cured of his heresy by most substantial reasoning. Putting up one night in a strange inn, he gave no heed to the host's warning that the only empty room was haunted."

"Therein resembling the Swedish soldiers in Maximilian's tale," interposed Edgar.

"He boldly ordered his bed to be made," continued Laurence, "and retired to rest. About midnight a most unseemly noise began; and at last in came somebody with an enormous crash, who, heavy of foot, stalked up to the professor. Had the learned gentleman preserved his usual courage, he would have noticed with curiosity that his visitor was dressed in an old German military fashion; but as he instantly drew his head under the clothes, his powers of observation were nullified. Sight, however, was not the sense to which the ghost especially appealed. It deliberately pulled the clothes from the trembling Schoock, thrust him under the bed, and quietly lay down in his place. After having reposed for about an hour, it took its leave, the professor, uncomfortably situated as he was, having passed the time in fervent prayer. On finding himself alone, Schoock dressed himself with all possible speed, hastened down-stairs, and paid his reckoning to mine host, who, observing that he looked exceedingly pale, asked if he had seen anything unpleasant. The professor, though his voice faltered, had the presence of mind to say he should like to know who had been playing tricks upon him, and departed accordingly."

"He had hit upon the truth, however," exclaimed Edgar. "A plainer case of playing at ghosts was never recorded."

"If all accounts be correct, Schoock's convictions were not the same as yours," said Laurence. "If he kept up his character for the moment of talking about tricks, he was never afterwards heard to speak sceptically or disrespectfully about ghosts. But to show you further the substantial character of the Brandenburg spectres, let me tell the anecdote of a distiller of Stendal in the Old Mark, who, hoping to make his liquor particularly attractive, obtained the head of a thief who had recently been hanged."

"Was the notion his own?" asked Edgar.

"No," replied Laurence. "There was an old superstition that the skull of a thief, properly distilled, yielded a spirit which might advantageously be mixed with brandy."

"I think we had better keep the knowledge of that fact to ourselves," suggested Edgar. "So many modern ways of adulteration have been tried over and over again, that an extraordinary method, unknown to the present generation, might be

snapped up with avidity, to the manifest detriment of the public. On the other hand, I admit that the superstition might easily furnish the subject for a story in favour of total abstinence. The teetotal moralist might say that Stephen of Stendal (not a bad name) was an honest, industrious man, until an unlucky glass of schnapps, followed by many others, weakened his veneration for the laws of property. A robbery, accompanied by a murder, resulted in his execution. Nor did the mischief done by his first glass end even here. After his death, his skull was used for the production of that very liquor which had brought destruction upon himself, and who shall say that the miserable pedigree of crime and retribution was not carried down, in one unbroken line, through many generations? The brandy makes the thief, and the thief's skull makes the brandy. Thus we have a complete circle, a very serpent of wickedness, with its tail in its mouth. Mind you, this is no legend, but my own invention."

"My legend in the meanwhile stands still," remarked Laurence; "but let me proceed. At night, while the distiller and his assistants were engaged in the unholy work of improving the brandy, who should walk in but the thief himself. For some time he stared at the party in silence. At last he said in a solemn voice, 'Give me back my head.' Now, what say you to that?"

"Why, I say," answered Edgar, "that the thief was very unreasonable. He evidently had a very good new head, or he could not have stared at the party, so he had no occasion for the old one, which had been justly forfeited to the offended laws of his country."

"Pardon me," interposed Maximilian, who had long preserved a modest silence, "I have been much amused by Laurence's two stories; but I would observe that my tale of the ghosts of Rathenow is not ended yet."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Edgar. "Well, I thought it had ended brilliantly with the defeat of the Swedish soldiers."

"So did I," added Laurence.

"If you remember," said Maximilian, "I promised to give you another chapter of the biography of the famed Matthias Lüssau, and I had not yet brought him upon the scene. That, with your consent, I will do now." (Both bowed with a somewhat contrite air.) "Having heard of the victory achieved by the two ghosts, Matthias felt that an adventure was before him quite

in his own way. He had no disbelief in spectres, like your braggart Schoock. On the other hand, he believed in them as thoroughly as Jack-the-Giant-Killer believed in giants, and he was likewise convinced that he was a match for the best of them. So with the permission of the magistrate he took possession of the house one fine night, having first armed himself with a pen and other writing materials, and in the room, which seemed to be the battle-field, he seated himself at a table, on which two candles were placed. He had handsomely offered his clerk a share in the adventure, but the prudent man preferred to remain in the street outside the house, and to act as a sentinel. At twelve o'clock the door opened and the man with the deeds and the whip walked in, and took his place in a very becoming manner, though it should be observed that immediately after his appearance one of the candles went out. The undaunted pastor at once rekindled it with the other, whereupon the lady with the keys appeared, and out went the other candle. Having rekindled this with the first, Matthias thought that the time had arrived for serious discussion; so fixing his eyes on the two spectres, and beginning with a pious address, he boldly asked what their business might be. With every appearance of respect the man with the deeds unfolded a narrative of considerable length, and not a little intricate. He had once been owner of the house, and of much landed property besides, as he proved by his deeds; but what with a fraudulent steward, and a disobedient nephew, and a designing son-in-law——"

"Skip the details," suggested Edgar. "We'll assume that somehow or other a wrong, that required to be rectified, had been committed."

"Right," said Maximilian, "and the case of the lady was much the same as that of the gentleman. Well, Matthias put down in black and white all the particulars, which I pass over, promised to set matters straight, and bade the ghosts retire to rest, and not trouble the world any more with their presence. He kept his promise, the cases were submitted to the proper authorities, the rightful heirs were put into their proper places, and the house, no longer troubled, was presented to Matthias Lüssau as a free gift, and long afterwards bore his name."

"Was the gallant pastor always equally victorious?" asked Laurence.

"No," replied Maximilian; "I regret to say that the courage with which he pursued

his vocation of ghost queller brought him to an untimely end. He heard that a subterranean burial vault was haunted by a troop of noisy spirits, and resolved to encounter them. He accordingly descended into the vault, but was saluted with a diabolical howl, the spirits violently assuring him that, while they were underground the right was on their side, and that if he did not speedily retreat, some mischief would befall him. He took the hint, but the terror he had felt, and possibly also the humiliation of his defeat, threw him into a sickness, which resulted in his death. But he lived long in the memory of his fellow-townsmen. He was an able negotiator with men as well as with ghosts, and when Rathenow surrendered to the Swedes, he arranged the capitulation so much to the satisfaction of the citizens and of the Swedish general, that the latter presented him with a box shaped like a book, but filled with gold coins. For many years his portrait was preserved, representing him as a stern, resolute man, with a book under his arm, which was commonly taken for a Bible, but which was meant for the Swedish present."

"As he negotiated the capitulation equally to the satisfaction of both parties, what present did he receive from the citizens?" asked Edgar.

"None, of which I have heard," answered Maxamilian.

"Ha!" said Edgar, gravely, "I wonder whether the affair was conducted with the strictest impartiality."

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LXIV. AT THE TERRACE DOOR.

NEXT morning, when Maud awoke, she saw Mercy Creswell sitting near the window, playing a "devil's tattoo" on the window-stool, and staring out with all her eyes, and a strained neck, on the scene below.

"Oh! Mercy, you are there?" said the young lady, drowsily, with her head still upon her pillow.

"Yes, miss, please," said Mercy, standing up promptly with a grave countenance.

"What o'clock is it, do you know?" inquired Miss Vernon.

Miss Mercy consulted the big silver watch which she wore at her belt, and which, if not quite so pretty as some little gold ones we may have seen, had the advantage of keeping time a good deal better.

"Half-past ten, miss."

"Half-past ten! And why did not you call me before? Breakfast over, I suppose, and—and Lady Mardykes, has she come?" she added, recollecting that if her hostess were still absent, she would not after all have cared to go down to the breakfast-room.

"Yes, ma'am—yes, miss, half an hour ago, Lady Mardykes harrived."

"Oh? I'm so glad, that is quite charming; now if Miss Medwyn were here, I think I should have nothing left to wish for."

And in high spirits, notwithstanding the alarms of the night before, Miss Vernon addressed herself to her toilet, while her breakfast came up on a pretty china tray to the adjoining dressing-room, which was a large and comfortable apartment, commanding precisely the same view of the croquet-ground as she saw from her bedroom window.

As Miss Vernon entered the dressing-room, a dark-featured, low-browed housemaid, standing by the gallery-door, with a pale frown, and in low tones was saying to Mercy Creswell, who was listening with a dark gaze, and compressed lips, with the corners of her mouth drawn grimly down:

"An oak stool, all in that," and she clapped her hands. "You never seed sich another smash in the dead-house. Tom Rose was nothing to it. Lauk! it was a turn! I couldn't eat not that big o' breakfast!"

Mercy saw the young lady coming in, and shifting her place, she said in a quick aside, "Here's Miss Vernon."

And with a glance at her, the broad-shouldered lass in housemaid's uniform withdrew and closed the door.

"What was she talking of?" asked the young lady, when she had gone.

"An old story, miss; a man that was killed here years ago; poachers I dessay, or the like."

"Oh, a keeper?"

"Well, yes; something that way, miss. Shall I pour you out tea or coffee, please, miss?"

Her breakfast equipage Maud thought a great deal handsomer than was required for the careless service of a bedroom. The china was old and quite exquisite; and the silver, an antique Dutch miniature service, was covered with grotesque figures, trees, windmills, cocks and hens. Every detail in the little breakfast service was pretty and even elegant, a great deal prettier, certainly, than her mamma would have allowed her at Roydon.

Looking down she saw from the window a very animated scene, people in gay dresses were walking on the terrace, and upon the gravel walks that surround the croquet-ground, on which were already assembled some lounging groups, who were knocking the balls about in a desultory way. The cheerful sounds of talking and laughing filled the air. Some of these people, foreigners she supposed, were very demonstrative in their talk and gestures. And a dozen or so of the heterogeneous company who were making the large square, with the background of old Dutch hedges, and lofty timber, as amusing for her to look at as a fair-green, or a race-course, were dressed extremely oddly, not to say grotesquely. There were at least ninety or a hundred people in that pretty enclosure. Some might possibly be merely visitors for the hour, but still the number assembled testified to a very splendid hospitality.

As Maud was looking out, she saw Lady Mardykes enter the terrace from the door in the side of the house, almost directly under her window.

This, you may suppose, was a very welcome sight to her.

Antomarchi was walking at her side, and they seemed to be talking incessantly, as they walked slowly round the croquet-ground, and sometimes with very earnest gravity.

Did it strike her that Lady Mardykes was distinguishing this stern and striking man, in a very marked way? He seemed to engross her. She stopped and spoke to but one other person, as she walked round and round the quadrangle. She had seen her guests, no doubt, since her arrival, before now; but she seemed, at present, to have neither eye nor ear for any one but Antomarchi.

He seemed very devoted, she thought. Might he not possibly entertain hopes which she had not suspected before, respecting this rich and brilliant widow? What was the meaning of her delegating to him, as he had said she did, even playfully, a commission to see after the health and spirits of her guests, during her absence?

And now Maud remembered a laughing warning given to her by this same Lady Mardykes, in answer to some speculations of hers about mesmerism. She said, "Don't allow any one to mesmerise you, unless you want to fall in love with him." Then came her special mention of Doctor Antomarchi, in the letter in which she pro-

mised to have him at her house, to meet Maud, as a potent mesmeriser.

Was this clever foreigner really on the high road to fortune and social position? Things as strange had happened.

Some illustrated papers had been sent to her at the same time with her breakfast, and Maud, taking one of them up, looked into her room, intending to take her paper-cutter from the table beside her bed, but it was not there.

She had left it on the table herself, beside her book, and she had seen it there afterwards; and by one of those accidents that sometimes fix trifles in the memory, she had remarked it as it lay in the same place, on her return, after her long look-out from the window, the night before, to her bed.

"Mercy, did you take my paper-knife from the table beside my bed? I did not remove it; look for it, please, and fetch it to me."

"Me move it! Certainly not me, miss. La! miss, I would 'av' knewed you put it there, but I wasn't a step nearer than the window, till you woke up and called me."

She was fidgeting about the table by this time.

"No, miss, I don't see no sign of no knife, paper or hotherwise. No, miss, nothing."

"But I would not lose that pretty little paper-knife on any account, and it *must* be there; no one has been in the room to take it, and you really *must* find it."

But nowhere could the paper-knife be found. It was hardly the sort of thing which a thief would have selected for a prize, seeing on the table close by all the rings and trinkets that might have been as easily picked up.

"It was given me by a person I was very fond of, who is dead, and I won't lose it," said Miss Vernon, joining in the search, after an interval; but it did not turn up.

"La! miss, it must be a mistake. Where could it go to? If it was there, miss, last night, 'twould be there still; there's no signs on it; 'tis only worriting yourself, miss, to suppose it was ever there at all."

"I happen to know it was," said the young lady, nettled at this irritating line of reply, "and you must find it. I shan't go down-stairs till I am satisfied about it."

"What was it like, please, miss?"

"It is a small mother-of-pearl paper-cutter, that answers as a marker beside, and it has my initials, M. G. V., on the side."

Maud was really vexed, and having a

regard for this trifle, was resolved not to lose it; her attention was, however, called to another quarter by a gentle but distinct knock at the dressing-room door. A visit from Lady Mardykes, she thought, with a smile, as she stepped into the dressing-room, and called to her visitor to come in.

It was Doctor Antomarchi who opened the door, and made her a grave and very ceremonious bow. Maud was a little surprised.

"I fancied it was Lady Mardykes who knocked at my door," she said; "I was thinking of going out; I saw her from the window."

"Oh? I'm commissioned to make this little visit, to inquire how you have passed the night. Your nerves were a little more disturbed than you would allow by the shock of that unlucky rencontre on the road. I'll try your pulse, if you don't mind. Yes—yes—still nervous. You can have your walk quite safely in the croquet-ground, but don't think of taking a drive to-day, and you had better lunch and dine quietly up-stairs; to-morrow you will be, I hope, all right, and then, of course, you command everything."

Antomarchi remained for a few minutes, and chatted on agreeably upon other things. He is apparently anxious to please; nothing could be more polite; but his smile is not winning. There is something in it she can't describe, deathlike and cruel. In his manner, soften it all he can, there is a latent sternness that might be prompt and terrible.

His large strange eyes, as if conscious of their power, he has not turned upon hers. In this slightly but studiously averted gaze, there is a hinting of treason.

When he is gone, Maud says to herself:

"Well! is it possible that nice creature can have taken a fancy to that horrible man? She certainly can't see him as I do. However, I suppose there is a charm, if one could only see it, in the sinister as there is in the beautiful."

"Well, miss, I have looked everywhere, and high and low, and I can't find no sich a thing; you couldn't have forgot it at Roydon, unbeknown to you?" said Mercy, returning from her search for the paper-knife.

Maud extinguished this theory peremptorily, and asked:

"Are you quite sure that no one was in that room except you and me?"

"Not a living soul, miss. Who could?"

Maud was now putting her things on

for her little walk, and she called for her scissors from her dressing-case.

"You can have mine, miss, please."

But the young lady preferred her own.

"I don't see no scissors there, miss——"

"Well, my penknife must do."

"Nor no knife, miss; only a few things."

Now came another alarm, another search, and a new disappointment.

"I can't understand it!" exclaimed Maud. "It is just possible, to be sure, as you say, that Jones may have left them out, and forgotten them. I'll write to her. But it is so unlikely, that I can't believe it. I really don't understand all this. I can't account for these things."

Maud's fiery eyes were upon Mercy Creswell as she thus spoke.

The fat freckled maid, with her chin rather high, tossed her head, with an air rather of defiance, and an assumption of offended dignity. But her eyes could not bear the frank gaze of her young mistress, and were unsteady and confused. She looked, in fact, extremely put out.

"I hope, miss, you don't suppose there's no one about you, miss, as would do any sich a thing as to make free with a lady's dressing-case. There never was none in this house but honest servants, nor none, I expects, as would so much as think of any sich things, no not for the minds of Peru! And as for myself, I hope, miss, you don't think or imagine you're not as safe as the queen's jewels with Mercy Creswell, which I can get a character, as many as I likes from Lady Mardykes, or from your own mamma, miss, Lady Vernon of Roydon, not to mention a many a lady besides, as would travel a many a mile to say the same for me, if so it was I stood in need of any sich a thing."

But Maud, not a bit daunted, had nothing more satisfactory to add.

"Charming!" thought Maud, "if in addition to her other accomplishments she should turn out a rogue! I wonder when mamma will allow me to have poor Jones back again."

The young lady, with her hat and jacket on, was now ready to go down.

"I'm not sure, Mercy, that I should know the way; you must come with me to the top of the stairs. I shall find out the rest of the way myself."

So they set out together, and Maud looked about her with some curiosity.

It was a vast house, and the gallery, the flooring of which was warped and ridged with age, was dark and dismal enough almost for an ogre's dwelling. On the way

to the head of the stairs other passages crossed, in gloomy perspective, and in them they passed, here and there, several housemaids, with something, she could not exactly say what, a little unusual about them. They were in a sort of uniform; all wearing exactly the same strong, plain, dark-blue dress, white aprons, and neat caps. Lady Mardykes, she thought, enlists her servants and rules her house with a military eye. Those servants looked reserved and thoughtful, but, for the most part, good-natured; they were all above thirty, and some past forty, and all looked remarkably firmly knit and strong; an extremely serviceable corps.

Finally, Maud and her guide had to make several zigzags.

In one respect, among others, before reaching the great staircase, these lofty and sombre galleries differed very pointedly from those of Roydon; from end to end, not a single picture hung upon their dark panelling, and Maud felt relieved when she had escaped from this monotonous gloom, and stood at last at the broad stair-head.

She heard voices in the hall, and when more than half-way down the stairs, she saw a footman near the foot, and asked him:

"Can you tell me whether Lady Mardykes is in the drawing-room?"

"No, please, my lady. She's not there. I think her ladyship's in the croquet-garden.

"Will you please show me the way?"

So the servant preceded her deferentially, and led her at last to the door in the side of this great house, and opened it.

Maud paused for a moment. The spectacle before her was very different indeed from that which she had seen issuing from the same door, by moonlight, on the night before.

As a mere picture nothing could be gayer or more amusing. Such brilliant costume, so much animation, such curious contrasts! Such very odd people.

CHAPTER LXV. MAUD WALKS IN THE CROQUET GROUND.

MAUD descended the steps, and took the direction of the door opening into the court-yard. She looked at the people as they approached, lest by accident Lady Mardykes should pass her by on the broad gravel walk. People who had made their mark in the world no doubt, many of them. She longed to meet her hostess, and learn who was who, in this curious assembly.

In this distinguished and multitudinous company she was glad to perceive that she seemed to excite little or no attention. She was now near enough to the corner to be certain that Lady Mardykes was not upon this walk; at the end of it she turned to the right, down a new side of the square. Many groups, and many people walking singly, passed her. But neither did she see Lady Mardykes upon this walk.

She paused for a minute at its further angle, and looked across the croquet-ground, where two or three games were by this time in full activity, and the hollow knock of the roquet, and the bounding balls, and all the animated sights and sounds that attend the croquet game, for a moment drew her thoughts from Lady Mardykes, and her eyes from the search.

Among the players or spectators about the hoops, Lady Mardykes was not visible. Maud was beginning to feel a little uncomfortable. If Ethel Tintern had been there, or even Doctor Malkin, whom she had seen the night before, not to mention Maximilla Medwyn, she would have felt comparatively at her ease. But it was very awkward finding herself among such a crowd, without seeing a single face she knew.

She turned about. A very tall yew hedge, clipped in the old Dutch taste, rises there like a dark wall (those at the sides are comparatively low), and traverses the whole length of the quadrangle, opposite to the side of the house, high as the arcades of a cathedral aisle, with lofty and narrow doorways here and there, cut in this dark and thick partition. Possibly there is a walk within its shadow, and there she may at length discover her hostess.

As a little anxiously she is beginning to explore, intending to resume her search, she is accosted by a person whom she has observed before, as about the most singular if not the most grotesque of the figures she has passed.

He has been making a short promenade in the sun, backward and forward upon the walk close by, like a sentinel. He is one of the few persons there who seem to have observed her. He has bowed slightly, but very ceremoniously, as he passed her, but without raising his hat.

He is a man tall and well formed, with a short black cloak thrown Spanish fashion, in spite of the heat of the weather, across his breast and over his shoulder. He has a broad-leafed black felt hat, looped at the front with something that looks like a little buckle of brilliants. His face is dark and

handsome, with an expression of the most ineffable pride and self-complacency. His chin is high in the air, his movements are slow and graceful, he wears white kid gloves, and carries in his hand an ebony walking-cane, with a gold head, formed something like a crown, in which glimmers a brilliant. He is evidently dressed in "shorts," for the more advantageous exhibition of his handsome legs; so far as they are visible, that is, nearly to the knees, they are cased in black silk stockings, and he turns out his toes as he walks like Sir Christopher Hatton.

In Spanish first, which Maud understood not at all, and then, with better fortune, in French, in which she had no difficulty in conversing, he, with a lofty but smiling courtesy, asked the young lady whether he could direct her, or give her any information which she might require.

Maud thanked him, and asked if he had seen Lady Mardykes, or could say where she was.

He had seen her a little time ago, but he deeply regretted he could not say whether she was now in the garden or not.

"May I now," he said, drawing himself up to his full height with a smile of haughty urbanity, "venture a question in return?"

"Certainly," said the young lady. They were conversing still in French.

"It is this. Have you observed, I entreat, any peculiarity in me? I anticipate your reply. You have. You remarked that in accosting you I merely touched, without removing, my hat. The reason of that is not dishonourable. I have the very great honour to represent her majesty the Queen of Spain" (there was such a personage then) "at the court of St. James's. I cannot therefore uncover to a subject. You understand. It is alike my painful prerogative and my loyal duty. I must in all but a royal presence retain my hat. I need not say more. I see, with infinite satisfaction, how fully you assent. My servants, if indeed they were in attendance, as they ought to be, I should send with pleasure in quest of Lady Mardykes; but, alas! here, in the country, they always claim a privilege of irregularity, and are never to be found."

He made another stately bow, drew back a step or two to indicate that the audience was over, folded his arms, threw back his head, and smiled, with half-closed eyes, haughtily.

Misa Vernon passed under the tall arch in the dark green wall of yew, and found herself in a long and sombre walk, fenced

in by two solemn hedges of shorn foliage, between which but a few groups were now to be seen in the perspective. Some were walking before her in the same direction, diminished in the distance; others slowly approaching. The people who made their promenade in this walk were, possibly, of a graver turn of mind than those who kept the sunnier haunts. Nevertheless, now and then they would pause in their sauntering walk to stand before one of the open archways, and look out upon the croquet-ground and its amusing vicissitudes and garrulous players.

A gentleman walking with two ladies, and conversing gravely, seemed to observe her solitary state and evident search for some missing friend, and politely inquired, taking off his hat, whether he could do anything for her. In reply to her question, he told her that it was more than half an hour since he had seen Lady Mardykes, and rather thought she had left the croquet-ground, but could not be quite certain. If she would permit him, he added, perhaps prompted to this heroism by her striking beauty, he would have pleasure in assisting her in her search—an exertion which Maud, with many thanks, declined.

Mr. Darkdale, in a long, ungainly black coat, such as she thought she had seen Jesuits wear, and with a book under his arm, passed her by, a few moments later, at a brisk pace. His stern mouth and dark face were thoughtful, and his broad forehead lowered, and as he passed her, from their corners, his penetrating brown eyes for a moment fixed on her face; he made no sign of recognition, however, but glided with a light tread, in a straight line, upon his way.

"That man never was a servant," thought Maud, as she passed him with a chill feeling of suspicion. "I thought he said, or mamma, or Mercy Creswell said, *some* one did, I'm sure of that, that he was simply to take care of me here, and then to go—I forget where—to some other place, and yet here I still find him domesticated! And I am nearly certain I saw him directing the men who were conducting that funeral last night. He is not what he pretends. A Jesuit, I dare say, he is. He is one of the first persons I shall ask Lady Mardykes to explain."

As she reached the further end of this cool and shadowy walk she saw, at her left, the walls of what had been an old-fashioned square tea-house, two stories high, such as used to fill an angle in the wall of a Dutch garden. Roof and floorings were now

gone, and the brick was covered with ivy, and looked very dark under the spreading branches of the tall trees that overhung the outer wall.

She turned aside to peep into this ruin. She had expected to find it empty; but it was no such thing. Inside was a thin old gentleman, with stooped and narrow shoulders, and a very long and melancholy face; he had a conical fur cap on, and large tortoise-shell spectacles, and was seated at a table, with an enormous ink-bottle beside him, totting up figures in a mighty book like a ledger. There were innumerable sheaves of papers, neatly folded and docketed, placed in order, upon the table at each side; and under it, and beside him, on the ground, was a huge litter, consisting chiefly of files stuck up to the very hooks with papers, and several leather bags stuffed, no doubt, with old balance-sheets and account-books. On a row of nails along the wall were hanging a series of "stock-lists," with the sparrows twittering above, and bees and flies buzzing about them in the ivy.

With a grimace as if he had suddenly crunched a sour gooseberry, this sage rose, with a stamp on the ground, and, jerking his pen behind his ear, gazed angrily at Maud, and muttered:

"Is not the garden wide enough for you and for me, madam? Saints and angels! How is it possible for an overworked old man to get through his business, interrupted as I am? Pray don't go for a moment; on the contrary, wait; the mischief is done. I claim this, because I want to prevent this occurring again. It is something to keep the complicated and never-ending accounts of this enormous house. It is something to make and direct all the prodigious investments that are going on, and to be able at an instant's notice to tell to a fractional part of a farthing what the entire figure is, and each item stands at, every day of the week. It requires an arithmetical secretary such as England does not see every day, to get all that within the circle of his head, madam. But when you are ordered to make up a tot of forty years' figures on pain of losing your splendid rights, at a single voyage, between morning light and setting sun, it screws too tight, you see, on an old fellow's temples." He pressed three fingers of each

hand on his temples, and turned up his eyes. "It is enough to make them burst in or out, by Heaven, like a ship. I remember the time I could have done it like *that*" (he snapped his fingers), "but we grow old ma'am, non sum qualis eram; and always interrupted, never quiet. Some one looks in; just as I have it, some one laughs, or a cock crows, or the light goes out; and I, simple as you see me, entitled to all that stock, unclaimed dividends, if I could only finish it, and bring my tots into court. It is a hard, *hard* thing with all that, and so exquisitely near it, to be still doomed at my years to a life of slavery! Always so near it, always so near; always interrupted. Here I came out to-day to take the fresh air in this place a little; shut up perpetually in my office, and just as I had got midway in the tot you look in, and—immortal gods! blessed patience! hell and Satan!—all is lost in one frightful moment of forgetfulness! Always so near. It makes one's thumbs tremble! Always blasted. It makes one squint. It is enough to make a man stark, staring mad! Pray make no excuses, madam. They waste time; you looked in; do so no more, and I'll forgive you."

He made her a short bow, placed his finger on his lip, turned up his eyes, and shook his head, with a profound groan, and addressed himself forthwith to his work again.

With a mixture of compassion and amusement, she left the den of this old humorist, into which she had unwittingly intruded, and continued her search.

A prepossessing young lady, dressed in very exquisite taste, walking slowly, and looking about her with an air and smile of quiet enjoyment and hauteur, hesitated as Maud approached, stood still, looking on her with a gracious and kind expression, and a countenance so riant that Miss Vernon hesitated also in the almost irresistible attraction.

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CHAPTER III. JULIET.

MR. PHILIP VANE was up early the next morning, intending to go off to town by the first express train, which left Wexeter soon after nine. He always travelled in first-class carriages and by express trains, always went to first-class hotels, asked for the best rooms, and lived on the most luxurious fare. He was one of those self-indulgent scoundrels, who always found it necessary to make an excuse for the manner in which they pet and pamper themselves. Mr. Philip Vane had a stock of these excuses, which he had used so long and so frequently, that he actually began to believe in them. Thus, in regard to his travelling, he was in the habit of saying that time was money, that it was important for him to waste as little as possible of the day upon the road, and that, travelling by express, he was enabled to transact business up to the last minute at the town which he was leaving, and to be ready to commence afresh, the instant he arrived at his destination. Also in regard to his selection of the best hotels and his luxurious habits generally, he would remark that as he depended entirely upon his own exertions for his income, it was necessary that he should keep himself in good condition, and obviate as far as possible the ill effects of the constant mental strain, by attention to his bodily comforts.

Listening to this style of conversation, one would have imagined that Mr. Vane was a professional man in large practice, a busy merchant, or a gentleman holding in his own hands the control of several large estates; instead of being, as he was, a very

common sharper, living on his wits. On those very rare occasions, when he permitted any of his more intimate associates to think that he was taking them into his confidence, he would speak of himself as "a kind of modern Ishmael, sir; a sort of fellow whose hand has been against every man, and who consequently has had every man's hand against him, but who has managed to get on tolerably notwithstanding!"

Those assertions, like most others emanating from the same source, were wholly and entirely false. Mr. Philip Vane's hand, instead of having been raised against every man, had generally passed its time in patting the shoulder, or gently insinuating itself under the arm of every man from whom he thought he could reap the smallest benefit. All things to all men was Mr. Philip Vane; specious, sly, frank, cunning, outspoken, reticent, just as suited the occasion. This hazy comparison of himself with Ishmael arose from the fact that he had never enjoyed the advantage of parental rearing. His earliest recollections were of the preparatory school in the suburbs of London, where, smallest among the small denizens of that little world, too small even to be placed in the lowest class, he roamed about the house and garden, and learned his alphabet from some elder pupil inclined to gratify his dignity by teaching him. There he remained for some years until old enough to be removed to a grammar school. Previous to this removal, he, for the first time, experienced that greatest of all delights of a schoolboy, the charm of "going home."

Home, as realised by little Vane, was a large house in a fashionable square in Brighton, belonging, as the child understood, to his uncle, his father's brother, a

leading physician of the place. Doctor Vane Philip remembered as a quiet little man with white hair and a thoughtful face, who used to pat the boy's head, and surreptitiously give him half-crowns — surreptitiously, that is to say, as far as concerned Mrs. Vane, a full-blown handsome woman, whom Philip always remembered with flowers in her cap, and a very red complexion. From the first, Philip had a dim, childish notion that the doctor was afraid of Mrs. Vane, whom, as the child learned in the course of time, he had married when a widow, and who had two sons, one with very large whiskers, and the other with a black and white dog. When the child came back for the next holidays, he learned that the dog-owning son had gone to Spain, which was a long way off, as he understood, to fight for something or somebody not clearly defined; but the other son with the whiskers was still there, and took Philip up to his bedroom, which was at the top of the house, and made him very sick by insisting upon his smoking a pipe, a proceeding which seemed fraught with great delight to the whiskered gentleman. When Philip came home six months afterwards, at Christmas, he found the house in sad tribulation, for the son with the dog was dead, and the son with the whiskers had gone to Australia, not, as the boy gathered from the talk among the servants and the visitors to the house, without having distinguished himself by squandering a vast amount of money and running very deeply into debt. The doctor, Philip noticed, was thinner, whiter, and more thoughtful than ever; and though Mrs. Vane wore as many flowers in her cap, she seemed to have dropped suddenly into an old woman, and shed her teeth as he had heard of deer shedding their horns, while her fresh complexion was, he noticed, muddled and streaky.

The boy never saw his uncle alive again; he was sent home from school to attend the funeral, and formed one of a very small procession, which, in the roaring wind and drifting rain, struggled up one of the back streets of the town to the little evangelical chapel, at which, at his wife's command, the kindly old doctor had given regular attendance, and in the burying-ground attached to which his remains were laid. After the ceremony the little funeral party broke up, the well-known yellow carriage of the physician who had paid the last respects to his old friend, stood at the churchyard gate, ready to bear him off on

his round of visits; an old school friend of the deceased, who had come down from town, jumped into a cab to catch the return train, and Philip and the lawyer got into the mourning-coach to return together. On their way back the lawyer told the boy that Mrs. Vane was not well enough to see him, but that he was to go back to school that evening as soon as he had had his dinner; then, to Philip's great wonderment, asked him whether he had read Robinson Crusoe and Philip Quarll, and whether he did not think he should like to be a great traveller like those heroes. The meaning of these questions was explained a few days afterwards, when the schoolmaster called him into the apartment which was alternately a reception-room and a torture-chamber, and instead of, as the boy expected, bidding him prepare for immediate punishment, told him that he was to leave school the next day for Plymouth, where his passage had been taken in one of the steamers immediately starting for the West Indies, he having been bound apprentice to a cousin of Mrs. Vane's, who was a merchant and planter in the island of St. Vincent.

Philip Vane went to Plymouth, and to the West Indies, but not to St. Vincent. Indeed, he carefully avoided that island, having, while on board the royal mail steamer Shannon, made the acquaintance of several young gentlemen who were going out to join Her Majesty's land forces, then quartered at Jamaica; and by whose aid the lad, quick at games of skill and lucky at games of chance, turned the fifty pounds, with which he had been presented by Mrs. Vane's agent on sailing, into a sum worth four times the original amount. For two or three years he remained in the colonies enjoying the hospitality invariably extended there to every one who makes himself agreeable, living at the different messes, riding races for the officers, staying with the merchants at their up-country villas, and providing himself with pocket-money by bold and lucky card-playing. By the time that the desire to return to his native country became too strong to be denied, Mr. Philip Vane had mixed so much with the military, and was so thoroughly conversant with their manners and customs, that, on his arrival in England, he deemed it expedient to announce himself as Captain Vane. It was as Captain Vane, ostensibly fly-fishing for his amusement at Chepstow, but in reality hiding from the officers of the sheriff of Monmouth, acting in conjunction with their brother officers of Middlesex, that he made the

acquaintance of Miss Pierrepont, who at the time was acting in that ancient town. His intentions toward that young lady were at first strictly dishonourable, but finding that she was not to be won by anything short of the marriage ceremony, and believing that he saw in the development of her talent the foundation of a future income for himself, he honoured her by making her his wife. Captains becoming somewhat common, he gave himself a kind of billiard-room brevet, and appeared as Major Vane, under which title he was favourably known in a shady fifth-rate little club, composed of adventurers like himself, and their victims, calling itself by the high-sounding name of the Craven, and locating itself in a dingy little street in the neighbourhood of Piccadilly: had his presence "remarked" by the reporters of sporting newspapers as a regular attendant at the principal turf meetings, and led that odd sort of flashy, swindling, disreputable existence which has so many votaries in the present day. Though two years had passed since his marriage, he had never introduced his wife to any one, and had insisted upon her keeping their connexion secret, even from the little sister who was her sole relative. From time to time he appeared at places where she was acting, as he had just appeared at Wexeter, giving her the benefit of his society sometimes for a longer, sometimes for a shorter period, but invariably insisting, whether present or not, on receiving two-thirds of the salary which she earned by her exertions, and leaving her and her sister to subsist on the remainder.

Had the salary thus earned been tolerably large, it is not improbable that Major Vane's conjugal attentions might have been greater than they actually were, but the major confessed to himself that his matrimonial speculation, as a speculation, had been a failure. In confidential communication with himself, the major did not scruple to own that he had not much regard for his wife. Even when he perpetrated marriage, it was from the commercial aspect that he regarded the step, and from that point of view it had been a decided failure. It ought to have turned out right; he himself could check off a score of instances in which worthy gentlemen, friends of his own, were deriving large sums from the theatrical earnings of ladies who were their acknowledged or unacknowledged partners: but these ladies were spirited persons, with little clothing and less grammar, whose portraits were in the photographers' windows, and

whose Christian names, affectionately diminished, were in the mouths of London generally.

More than once he had suggested to his wife that an equally glorious career lay before her if she only chose to embrace the opportunity and accept an engagement which, without his connexion with her being at all known, he could procure for her, but she invariably shook her head and refused, remaining at Wexeter, or some such dreary place, "doing her spouting," as he pleasantly but ironically called it, for a salary of three pounds a week and a benefit, which did not realise more than forty pounds.

Major Vane, however, was a philosopher. His marriage had been a mistake; he owned it to himself, but to no one else. And by the time that he had descended to the coffee-room to breakfast on the morning after the meeting in the lane behind the turnpike, he had thoroughly determined on ridding himself of the connexion at the first available opportunity. Meantime, he should receive the money for the benefit and the two-thirds of the week's salary, and when an opportunity offered itself, he should grasp it, and Miss Pierrepont would hear of him no more.

While the omnibus containing this large-souled gentleman was moving towards the railway station, Miss Pierrepont emerged from her lodging and made the best of her way towards the theatre. It was very early for a rehearsal, even at such an unconventional theatre as that of Wexeter, but with a view to see whether she could not make some effect in other than merely "spouting" parts, and thus please her husband, Miss Pierrepont had determined on playing for her benefit the part of Phœbe in Paul Pry, one of those waiting-maids known only to the stage, who carry their hands in the pockets of their little black silk aprons, who are the chosen recipients of their young mistresses' secrets, and the terror of the lives of the elderly gentlemen, their masters. Phœbe has songs to sing, and the leader of the band, who like every other person in the theatre would have done anything for Miss Pierrepont, was coming early to try them over with her; Phœbe has a certain amount of interchange of repartee with the principal character, and the low comedian, whose notion of repartee consisted in making faces at the gallery, and whose "dry humour," so often landed, resolved itself into forgetting his part, and substituting the slang sayings of the day, was coming to "go through

their scenes." After that there was a full rehearsal of *Romeo and Juliet*, which was to be the leading piece on the benefit evening, so that it was tolerably late in the day before Miss Pierrepoint's work was over.

Just as she was moving toward the stage-door, she felt her arm touched, and a low voice said in her ear:

"Won't you speak to me?"

Turning round she saw Gerald Hardinge; he was dressed in his working garb, a loose canvas jacket and trousers, spotted here and there with great daubs of paint.

"Mr. Hardinge!" she cried, putting out her hand.

"No," he said, drawing back, "I cannot shake hands with you now; I have been at work and have not had time to wash the traces of it off. I looked down from the 'flies' and saw you were going away, so hurried down to stop you, as I have something to say to you."

"I am very glad you did; I was sorry to have missed you last night——"

"Yes," interrupted the young man, "but we cannot talk here in this passage with the wind blowing in, and old Gonnop listening to every word. Come down on to the stage, there is no one there now, and we can have it all to ourselves."

She turned back, and passing through the littered mass of disused scenery stacked up against the walls, they went down on to the stage, now but very partially illumined by a faint gleam of light, coming through the window at the back of the distant gallery. For a minute neither of them spoke, then Miss Pierrepoint said:

"What has kept you at work so late to-day, Mr. Hardinge? I have heard of no new piece in preparation."

"No," he said, "there is nothing new, only I think it would be a disgrace to the theatre if we put on that worn and ragged old pair of flats for the garden scene in *Romeo and Juliet*, and I persuaded old Potts to let me touch it up afresh."

"Was it only for the credit of the theatre that you did that?" asked Madge, looking softly at him.

"Well, no, perhaps not," he said. "I dare say I should not have done it if it had been Miss Delamere's benefit, or if Miss Montmorency had been playing *Juliet*. You know well enough why I did it."

"You are a kind, good boy, Gerald," said Miss Pierrepoint, softly laying her hand on his arm, "and never mind giving up your time, or taking trouble for me."

"Kind, good boy, am I?" said he,

petulantly; "it is very little I am able to do, but even that don't meet with much return."

"Gerald!" said Miss Pierrepoint, "what do you mean?"

"Where were you last night?" asked he, turning suddenly on her; "where did you go to after you had finished here?"

"You have not the slightest right to ask me that question at all, Mr. Hardinge," said Miss Pierrepoint, drawing herself up and looking straight at him, "and certainly not to ask it in that tone."

"I know I have no right," interrupted Gerald.

"But as I have no reason to be ashamed of what I did," continued Miss Pierrepoint, without heeding him, "I do not mind telling you that I went to meet a person on important private business of my own."

"And you did not get back until nearly midnight," said Gerald.

"How do you know that?"

"How do I know it? Because I saw you return. I walked up and down the street in front of your door, from the time Rose told me you were out, until I saw you safe once more within the house."

"What, were you there during all that terrible storm?" asked Miss Pierrepoint.

"Yes, I was! I did not mind that; there was far too great a storm going on within my breast for me to pay much attention to the thunder and lightning; I thought, perhaps, you had gone to meet some man, and I was nearly mad."

"My poor boy," said Madge, soothingly.

"Oh, Madge! Madge! if you only knew what I suffer through jealousy; all this morning I have been like a lunatic, looking down on to the stage, and seeing that old Boodle make love to you at rehearsal."

"But Mr. Boodle plays *Romeo*, Gerald!"

"Yes, I know all about that; of course he must do it; and he is fifty years old, and wears a wig and false teeth, but still I hate to see him or any one else come near you, or touch you."

"But why are you so jealous, Gerald?"

"Why? Because I love you. You know it, Madge, you know this, you are certain of it, and yet you ask me why I am jealous."

"Yes, Gerald," she said, in a low voice, her hand again falling softly on his arm, "I think you are fond of me; you have shown that you are, indeed, more than once."

"No, I have not!" he burst out; "I have no chance or opportunity of doing so! I only want to prove to you how much I love you! I hate the life you are leading,

and I want to take you away from it—I hate to see you stared at by a lot of senseless gabies, who think they are patronising you by clapping their hands and thumping their infernal umbrellas. I hate to see these brutes of officers—we shall have them all here on Friday night, I suppose—haw-hawing about the passages, and talking of you in their idiotic manner. I want to take you out of all this, I want to marry you and make you mine, and mine alone!”

“To marry me!” she said with a very sad smile; “you forget, Gerald, that I am six years older than you, and that I shall be an old woman——”

“I knew you would say that! I hate it; you shouldn’t say that,” he broke out, impetuously. “How many hundreds of men are there who have married women older than themselves, and lived perfectly happy lives! You make yourself older than you are by the hard work you do. I want to work for you, to slave for you, to make money that you may share it, to make a name that you may be proud of me, and I will do it yet. I am not always going to remain a drudge in a country theatre; I shall get the chance some day, and then, oh, Madge! how proud I shall be of you as my wife!”

“You are a foolish boy,” she said, bending her deep hazel eyes full upon him, “and must not talk to me in this way.”

“No,” he said, curling his lip and shrugging his shoulders, “such talk is idle now, I know; I know I have nothing to offer now. If I ever had the chance of attaining a position I would ask you to marry me, for then the knowledge that I was fighting for you would nerve me in the struggle, and you would not say ‘No’ to me then, would you, Madge?”

“You shall ask me when the chance arrives, Gerald,” said the girl in a low tone, “and I will answer you then.”

“That time may be nearer than you imagine,” said the young man. “Now, you have had a long day, and will have to begin again shortly, let me see you to your home.”

It was Miss Pierrepont’s custom to lie down on her bed for an hour every afternoon before proceeding to the theatre, and thus prepare herself for the exertions of the evening. Visitors were refused admittance, perfect quiet reigned throughout the house, and Rose Pierrepont sat in the drawing-room with the door open, ready to rush out and scare away any chance irruption of cackling poultry, barking dogs, or

grinding organ men. On this day, however, though the house was as quiet and Rose as vigilant as ever, Madge Pierrepont could not sleep. She lay outside the bed, her long brown hair unloosed, hastily combed off her face and floating over her shoulders, her head resting on her hand, and an odd, wild gleam in her brown eyes.

“How wonderful,” she said to herself, “how wonderful that Gerald should choose to-day, of all days in the year, to say what he just said to me. I knew that he was fond of me, of course, I could not help knowing it, but he had never spoken so plainly as he did just now. What a contrast between what I heard last night and what I heard to-day! Philip grumbling at me for not making more money, grumbling at the sum, little enough but hardly earned, which I am able to send to him, dissatisfied because I have none of those accomplishments which, as he seems to think, alone go down with a London audience! And then this boy, hating the mere fact of my being compelled to appear in public, writhing under the notion that my name is banded about in men’s mouths, and that I am a subject of discussion, however complimentary; anxious only to give me rest, and quite contented, as he says, to slave for me, and desirous only of fame that I may share it with him! And Philip tells me he ‘trusts me,’ and bids me dally with the boy’s affection, and see how much money can be made out of him! To that baseness I will not stoop! I will put an end to this nonsense altogether, I will no longer listen to—and yet how wonderfully soft and tender his manner is! Heaven knows my life is hard enough, a grinding servitude with only this one gleam of affection to light it up! And that I will not deny myself. No! the chance that Gerald talks of will never come. He will weary of me as Philip has wearied! Meanwhile, until he does so weary, I will not deprive myself of his society—no, nor of his worship—the only sunshine in my life!”

A BOOK FOR BRIDES.

I COULD fill, in a few minutes, an imperial bushel with French books specially and directly treating of marriage; the volumes discoursing of it indirectly are as numerous as the grains of wheat in an incalculable assemblage of imperial bushels. The majority of these, as far as I know them, are melancholy-inspiring works, sad to the heart, and repulsive to the moral feeling

of all who hope for elevation in human nature. I have fallen upon one,* however, which might be translated with advantage, for the perusal of English-speaking maidens.

It opens with the betrothal, a ceremony which, amongst civilised and Christian peoples, has dwindled down to a few consultations between families (even when it amounts to that), and a few words exchanged by the future husband and wife. But the Bible tells us how seriously it was regarded by the Hebrews, and to what an extent it bound the contracting parties. Breaches of promise of marriage, except for good and valid reasons, were things unheard of. The Israelites, faithful to their traditions, practise at the present day the ceremony of betrothal with the same solemnity as in olden time; or at least, if they do not take to the synagogue the very same presents that Joseph and Mary carried to the Temple, they still make their offering by breaking a vase before the altar.

To mark the importance and validity of a betrothal, the Council of Trent declared clandestine betrothals to be null and void. It required them to be celebrated before the curé, in the presence of two or three witnesses at least. Greater weight was afterwards given to this article by an ordonnance of Louis the Thirteenth, which forbade any notary (that is, any civilian) to sanction or receive any promise of the kind. Before the first French Revolution, such was the importance attached to this pious custom, that, except with an express dispensation from the bishop, a priest could not betroth and marry a young couple in the same day. It was requisite that a certain lapse of time, as a test of their fidelity, should intervene between the one ceremony and the other. The old French canon law had provided for the case in which a faithless fiancé should marry any other than his betrothed bride. The marriage, consecrated by a sacrament, was more binding than the simple engagement of betrothal; but if the culprit became a widower, and his first love required it of him, he was obliged to purge his guilt by taking her to wife.

The pervading thought of *Le Livre des Fiancées* is that Love and Duty are brothers, and not enemies. The great secret is, not to separate them. To those who love, everything becomes easy and agreeable. Our authors think they have dis-

covered the means of preventing married love from flying away. If that be true, their book may fairly claim to be called the *Book of Happiness*. Let the reader judge of its quality.

Before marriage there is unclouded sunshine. The young woman, adorned with the charms of her spring-tide, is kind and artless; she is careful not to err in her slightest actions. A good and provident genius, her mother, is always at hand to watch her movements, divine her thoughts, and to rectify whatever might tend to lead her astray.

The young man, captivated by those pleasing qualities which are heightened by his own enthusiastic imagination, ardently longs for the blissful moment when so charming a companion shall become his own. He loves, he hopes, he does his very utmost to please. Any defects he may have, like those of his fair one, are completely hidden. Each party is enchanted with the other.

Fear, then, the inevitable moment when illusions shall be dissipated, and commonplace daylight succeed to the hues of the prism. Meet it rather by preparing the means of avoiding successive falls from deception to deception. The ideal flowers which embalm the soul frequently fade for want of proper culture.

In the first place, fair readers, in order that unchanging love may take possession of your hearts and gain your husbands', you must trample underfoot the paltry ambition which has undone many charming women, who otherwise would have been adored, namely, the spirit of mastery.

To fulfil one's duties properly, it is necessary, above all, to know them thoroughly, and then to lay down a strict rule to oneself never to fail in their observance. Weak people are frightened at such a notion, and weak people suffer the consequences. A rare merit, for example, is to take a strict account of one's exact position, and then to conform oneself to it. How many young wives have created for themselves deception after deception, for want of having had the good sense to accept cheerfully certain rules laid down by their husbands! Which brings us back to the relative positions of husband and wife.

Civil and religious laws, which are not the work of arbitrary caprice but the consequence of the laws of nature, require that the wife should be obedient to her husband. She undertakes, in France, a solemn engagement, both before the magistrate and

* *Le Livre des Fiancées*, by Octave Féreé and Vallentin.

before the minister of God. Twice she makes that promise on oath. No constraint is put upon her. Up to the last moment she has only to say "No," and the marriage does not take place—of which there are not infrequent instances. Why, then, should she revolt against this authority, thus freely accepted? Remain single, mademoiselle, if you have no inclination for the duties imposed on a wife. Many brides, while promising obedience, make a sort of mental reservation, which is equally offensive to honesty and to good sense. In all times, and in all countries, a chief is absolutely necessary. Attachment to a worthy prince thus becomes a virtue, because his person represents the country, which is the image of the common interest. In a family, which constitutes a little state, a chief is equally requisite. That chief is the husband, and all the members of the family owe him respect, submission, devotion.

Never persist in useless discussions with your husband. Should such begin, remember J. P. Richter's saying, "Many men resemble glass, which is smooth and inoffensive so long as it is unbroken; but which, once broken, cuts and pierces with every edge and angle." Doubtless, there are moments when it is difficult to restrain oneself—which increases the merit of self-command. By repressing any utterance of displeasure or acerbity, you will be better able to have a satisfactory explanation with your husband. There is great art in choosing the propitious moment. Remember, also, the words of Daniel Stern, "The vulgar complain of being hated, calumniated, or rejoice at being cherished, beloved. The wise man cares less about the sentiments he inspires, than about those he feels. He knows that what is really bitter and painful is, not to be hated, but to hate; that what is pleasant, noble, and great, is, not to be loved, but to love."

To sustain love a long time and transform it eventually into a warm and lasting friendship, it is requisite to keep one's heart above all weakness. The first thing is to inspire esteem; and esteem is not heedlessly bestowed, but must be won by an irreproachable conduct. Nor does this solid quality alone suffice; the form must be added to the substance; that is, you must be at the same time estimable and attractive. In the efforts you make with that intention, remember that "a woman has often more wrinkles in her temper than on her face."

It is not so easy as young wives imagine

to keep their husbands within household bounds. That is to say, those gentlemen often feel the wish to seek amusement elsewhere without their spouses. It is hanging matter; but it happens only too frequently. Recollect that men, by marrying, renounce their most valuable possession—or, at least, what they consider such—namely, their liberty. Eh bien! women in general hardly appreciate the sacrifice sufficiently, and refuse to believe that their condition is at all changed in that respect. Nevertheless, you cannot help allowing that if men, by marrying, give up their liberty, your sex on the contrary (in France) gets married for the sake of acquiring more liberty. In exchange for this liberty which he valued so highly, a man expects some different kind of satisfaction. If he does not find it at home, he seeks compensating pleasures elsewhere. From that day the wife's existence is embittered. Her heart is full; and a brimful heart is as hard to carry as a brimful cup. The slightest shock causes it to overflow.

Whenever your husband returns to his home, invariably receive him with a pleasant smile. Accost him with warm and open cheerfulness; let your countenance express the delight you feel at seeing him again; let a day's absence appear, for you, as if it were a separation of a quarter of a century. It is the surest way to make him cheerful in return. Do not take the trouble to examine whether his countenance be anxious or no; above all, not to inquire whether he be good or ill tempered at the moment; drive from your thoughts the idea of ascertaining whether he is disposed to make himself agreeable; but display instinctively your expansive affection, and contrive cleverly to chase any dark clouds from his mind, if your warm reception has not sufficed to do so. Accustom yourself to address your husband with such frankness that he must see your soul is on your lips. Do we not all feel a natural sympathy for countenances which beam with cheerfulness?

If you say to yourself, "To-day I mean to be happy," it is a rash promise, a hasty project. But if you say, "To-day I mean to give some one pleasure," it is an amiable intention, which will rarely deceive your hopes. Such conduct is generous and delicate in the extreme, and cannot fail to bear good fruit. Delicacy, moreover, is the combined expression of the best qualities of the head and the heart. "The first fault committed by

married people," says Madame de Puisieux, "is the want of sufficient mutual respect and deference."

Observe, therefore, great consideration and deference for your husband's tastes and opinions. Such proofs of affection will both touch his heart and flatter his self-esteem. To have even the air of doubting your husband's judgment, capacity, and ability, will not only offend his allowable confidence in his own opinions, it does worse; it makes him suspect that your confiding love for him has ceased. Have we not enormous faith in those whom we really love? And do we not stand up for their personal merit as much as, or more than, we would for our own? Love forgiveth all things, hopeth all things.

Never lose sight of the principle that your duties to your husband ought to take precedence of all other duties. Let no excuse or pretext induce you to fail in them. Better, a hundred times better, to sacrifice every acquaintance, every friend, than to sacrifice one's own dear husband.

Carefully avoid appearing to despise your husband's friends. If you perceive that they are insincere, warn him of the fact with great precaution. If you believe it contrary to your interest that he should continue to frequent them, take great pains not to offend his self-esteem by the measures you adopt to wean him from them. It is a great humiliation to be obliged to confess that one has set one's affections on unworthy persons. If you can lead him to make the discovery himself, your object will be gained, with offence to no one.

Never strive to have the last word. Say what you want to say, and then change the conversation with tact and cheerfulness. The reverse of this too often takes place. A witty Englishman pleasantly remarked, "Two sets of men attempt a labour in vain. The first set try to have the last word with their wives. The second set, after they have had it, try to make them own that they have been in the wrong."

There are topics which must not be neglected because they are far from pleasant to treat of; amongst these is jealousy. Jealousy is the sister of Love, as Satan is the brother of the angels. Weep with love, but never with jealousy. Cold rains do not produce beautiful flowers.

To manifest the desire of possessing, to the exclusion of all other women, your

husband's affections; to display affectionate confidence, boundless devotion, and a preference for him above all other men, is no more natural than honourable. Such conduct inspires, and merits, a complete reciprocity of love. But to take offence, to become suspicious, and give way to ill humour, is to render oneself at once unjust and ridiculous. Coarse and violent jealousy is mistrust of the beloved object; subdued and smothered jealousy is mistrust to oneself. "Suspicion," says J. P. Richter, "is the base coin of truth." "When love turns jealous," says M. Müller, "he has a hundred eyes like Argus, but not two of his hundred eyes see clear." If your husband makes himself agreeable in society, and you impute it to him as a crime; if, on returning home, you pout, sulk, and treat him coldly, the consequence will be to make you insupportable, and you will pay dear for it before very long.

Domestic happiness is a work of patience; its continuance depends on moderation and prudence. It is only slowly and by degrees that we reach the summit of the ladder, whilst one false step suffices to precipitate us from the top to the bottom. It is certainly strange that, for years, young people are taught their grammar, "to enable them to speak and write correctly;" but no one has yet compiled a grammar, within the reach of ordinary capacities, to help them to lead a happy life. The *Livre des Fiancées* makes the attempt, relying mainly on the conjugation of the verb *aimer*, to love.

One thing which people do not always manage to avoid in a new-established household is monotony. It is, nevertheless, possible to combat this dangerous enemy, who has furnished the subject of unnumbered jokes, amongst which "toujours perdrix" stands conspicuous. A grand resource is to acquire a good store of conversation, to be augmented continually by reading and reflection. The quality called "esprit" by the French—cleverness, intellect, mental vigour, wit—is certainly improved by practice, quite as much as piano-playing is. The woman who exercises her conversational powers, polishing and repolishing them day by day, takes the sure steps to arrive at perfection. It will greatly help her, if she can lay down clear ideas and fixed principles respecting certain subjects. She can then speak of them lucidly and decidedly, which will not prevent her adopting a modest tone, and will also bring into greater relief the caution she will exercise, in giving

her opinion on questions she has not yet fathomed.

Practice, which produces the sharp debater, also makes the ready converser. It also gives the presence of mind which enables the exercise of repartee, and the faculty of parrying inconvenient observations in a manner which shall be amusing instead of offensive. Often, in the course of their lives, have women need of this useful power, of which men are so proud, when they possess it. And it really is no trifling advantage to be able to decide instantaneously, under difficult circumstances, what is best to say or do.

Young married women must expect their trials. There is no concealing the fact that men are not always perfect. They have their faults, like—everybody else. One of the worst is giving way to passion; and the great danger of this failing is that it tends to go on increasing; in which case, it would ruin the happiness of the household. If your husband unfortunately be so inclined, endeavour to check him at the very outset. A sensible woman has her arms ready at hand—amiability, gentleness, persuasion. Inspire your husband, whatever be his temper, with confidence, and, above all, with esteem and affection, and you will exercise over him a powerful influence. But beware of letting it appear that you are proud, or even conscious of that influence. The slightest symptom of such a feeling would inevitably offend your husband. The merest trifle would shake your empire. Moreover, by ignoring the authority of the head of the family, you make your husband ridiculous and lower your own consideration.

After the charms of your pretty person, what, think you, were the qualities which attracted your husband? Were they not the favourable opinion he conceived of your good management, your economy, the orderly life you led, your fondness for home? Henceforth and immediately let your actions prove that if you practised those virtues under your parents' eyes, it was because they were intimately bound up with your nature. It follows that a young wife's first care should be to render her home agreeable. Let her apartments be kept in perfect neatness, with order in the slightest minutiae, and abundant taste. When the eyes are flattered, the imagination easily yields to the charm. Let her also remember that simplicity is the coquetry of good taste.

If the poetic aspect of the household

offers great seductions, the material details of life must not be neglected; and to attend to these properly, great patience is often requisite. The most reasonable of men—pity they should—have their moments of irritation. The wife ought to keep to herself all the worries and troubles that spring from cooks, domestics, and seamstresses. All the husband wants is the result, which the wife will render as satisfactory as possible without disturbing his mind by recounting at length the difficulties she has had in accomplishing the feat.

Time has two wings, with one of which he wipes our tears, and with the other sweeps away our joys. Keep that second wing at a distance as long as you can. Happiness also has wings; and he is a bird who, having once taken flight, seldom perches twice on the same branch.

After this pretty little allegory we take leave of our Book for Brides, which contains a good deal of common sense, although it will not commend itself greatly to the strong-minded sisterhood.

OUR STUDIO IN THE WEST INDIES.

I "ROOM" with Napoleón Rodriguez y Boldú. We are both "followers of the divine art of Apelles"—at least so the local papers describe us—and we have pitched our tent in a Cuban town. Our tent is a Roman-tiled dwelling, consisting of six rooms on a single floor, with a wide balcony in front, and a spacious patio, or courtyard, at the back. We have no furniture worth mentioning; furniture in Cuba being represented by a few cane or leather-bottomed chairs, some spittoons, and a small square of carpet. But our walls are well hung with works of art in various stages of progress, which, in a great measure, compensate for the otherwise barren appearance of our apartments. Our studio is a spacious chamber on a level with the street which it overlooks. The windows occupy more than half of the wall space, are guiltless of glass, and are protected by iron bars. The accessories of our strange calling lend an interest to our domestic arrangements, and form a kind of free entertainment for the vulgar. To insure privacy, we have sometimes curtained the lower half of our enormous windows; but this contrivance has always proved ineffectual, for in the midst of our labour, the space above the curtains has been gradu-

ally eclipsed by the appearance of certain playful blacks who have clambered to the heights by means of the accommodating rails. Gentlemen of colour have little respect for the polite arts; they look upon our sanctum as a sort of permanent peep-show, and upon us as a superior order of photographers. Primed with these delusions our Spanish Sambo comes for his carte-de-visite at all hours of the sunny day, persuaded that we undertake black physiognomies at four dollars a dozen; and when we assure him that ours is the legitimate colouring business, and that we have no connexion with Señor Collodión up the street, our swarthy patron produces a ready-made black and white miniature of himself, and commissions us to colour it in our best manner.

My companion has a weakness for bird-painting, and it pleases him to have the living originals on the premises. Therefore does our spacious court-yard contain a goodly collection of the feathered tribe, with one or two animals without feathers. A large wirework aviary is filled with fifty specimens of tropical birds with pretty plumage and names hard to pronounce. A couple of cocos—a species of stork, with clipped wings—run freely about the yard, in company with a wild owl and a grulla, a tall crane-like bird five feet high. In a tank of water are a pair of young caymanes, or crocodiles. These interesting creatures are still in their infancy, and at present measure only four feet six inches, from the tips of their hard noses to the points of their flexible tails. We have done our best to tame them; but they have not yet fallen into our domestic ways. Nor does time improve their vicious natures, for at the tender age of six months they have already shown signs of insubordination. If they persist in their evil courses, we must needs make a premature end of them, which is no easy matter, for their scaly hides are already tough as leather, and the only indefensible parts about them are their small eyes and open mouths. The cocos, male and female, are meagre-bodied birds with slender legs, and beaks twelve inches long. They are an inseparable couple, and wander about our patio and rooms in a restless, nervous fashion; rattling their chop-stick noses into everything. Now they are diving into the mould of flower-pots for live food, which they will never swallow till it has been previously slain. One of them has spied a cockroach in a corner, and in darting towards the prey a

scorpion crosses its path. The venomous reptile hugs the belligerent beak in the hope of conveying to it some of its deadly sting; but the tip of Coco's horny appendage is a long way from his tender points, and Scorpio must travel many an inch before he can make the desired impression. Meanwhile the stork has teased Scorpio's life out, and jerked his remains into that bourn whence no defunct reptile returns. Our coco's chief delight is to play with our painting materials, where much amusement may be derived by upsetting a bottle of varnish, or by distributing our long brushes in various parts of the room.

The tall grulla struts about with a stately step, and her ways form an interesting study. At night she is as serviceable as the best watch-dog, warning all trespassers by her piercing shriek, and by a furious dash at them with her strong neck and sharp-pointed beak. Grulla abominates all new-comers, and it was long before she was reconciled to the presence of her crocodile companions. When first their objectionable society was thrust upon the huge bird, she became nearly beside herself with vexation, and made savage onslaughts on the invaders' impenetrable hides. Once Grulla was in imminent danger of losing her neck whilst taking a blind header at the enemy's beady eye; for in a moment the reptile opened his yard of jaw for the easy accommodation of the bird's three feet of throat. My lady's behaviour at table leaves nothing to be desired. At the dinner hour she strides into our apartment without bidding, and takes her allotted place. The bird's two feet six inches of legs serve her instead of a chair, and her swan-like neck enables her to take a bird's-eye view of the most distant dish. But she never ventures to help herself to anything till the meal is actually placed on the plate before her; nor does she bolt her food like a beast, but disposes of it gracefully like the best educated biped. Jerking the article for consumption neatly into her beak, and raising her head high in the air, she waits till the comestible has gravitated naturally down her throat. The grulla's favourite dishes are sweet bananas, boiled pumpkin, and the crumb of new bread; but she is also partial to fresh raw beefsteak whenever she can get it. More than once have Grulla and her feathered companions formed subjects for fancy pictures by my artist partner. But productions like these have no attractions for the Cuban picture buyer, whose pictorial requirements are in-

deed rarely connected with the legitimate in art.

Assuredly high art does not pay in our part of the tropics, as we find after giving it a fair trial. Regardless of posterity, therefore, we abandon this branch of our avocation, and offer our art services for anything that may present itself. A *bonâ fide* painter is a rarity in the town I am describing, so Napoleón and I are comparatively alone in the fine art field. Our patrons are numerous, but we are expected by them to be as versatile as the "general utility" of theatrical life.

Most of our portrait work is connected with defunct people, for we cannot induce our patrons to believe that a living person is a fit subject for our brush. And so it often happens that we are summoned from our homes, doctor-like, at all hours of the night, to hasten to the house of a moribund, for the purpose of making such notes as shall afterwards serve as guides for a replica of the late lamented in his habit as he lived.

Happily, portraiture is not our only resource. We hold important professorships in colleges, schools, and ladies' academies, where we impart every accomplishment in which drawing-paper and pencils are used, including the art of calligraphy, mural-painting, and designing for fancy needlework.

Whenever a strolling company of Spanish players encamp for the season at the theatre, our services are required as the company's special scenic artists. The demand for scenery at the Teatro Real Cuba is, however, small; a divergence from its standard repertoire being considered as next to an infringement on public rights; so our labours rarely extend beyond an occasional property, or "set" in the shape of a painted "ancestor," a practicable piece of furniture, or a bit of bank for introduction into the elegant saloon, the cottage interior, or the wood scene. Once only are our scenic services in special request for a fairy piece, which the manager has announced with "entirely new decorations." Though the public believe that four months have been employed in the preparations, we have barely as many days for the purpose, and during this short space we produce that gorgeous temple which is destined to form a conspicuous feature in the well-worn wood scene, and we add to the native charm of the elegant saloon and the cottage interior with suitable embellishments. Dutch metal and coloured

foils, lavishly administered, cover a multitude of imperfections, and we have still the red fire and an indulgent public to fall back upon. Our efforts are rewarded by thunders of applause on the part of the audience, and eulogistic paragraphs in the local papers.

Upon another occasion we are required to adorn the principal thoroughfare in the town in honour of his excellency the captain-general, who is expected to visit us on his way to the Havannah. All the native talent is summoned to our standard, and helps us to disguise the streets through which his excellency is to pass. A couple of triumphal arches are to form important items in the decorations. Napoleón undertakes to erect one of these while I officiate as the other. Many "hands" are pressed into the service, and a whole month is devoted to the work. My companion's arch is to form a painted imitation of marble architecture of the Doric order, with trophies, flags, and mottoes suitable to the occasion. Mine is to represent part of an old feudal castle in the Norman style, and stands fifty feet above the pavement. The contrast produced between these formidable-looking buildings, and the primitively constructed Cuban houses of one story, is singular enough, and fills the native negro with wonder. His excellency the captain-general approves of the elaborate preparations for his reception, and communicates favourably with his government upon the progress and prosperity of our part of the colony.

Perhaps our greatest professional achievement is the decoration of the interior of a chemist's shop. An enterprising botecario applies to us one day, and offers us a large amount to paint and adorn his new shop in what he terms the Pompeian style. We have the vaguest notions on that subject, but so have also the chemist and the Cuban critics. We accordingly undertake the work, and manufacture something in which the Etruscan, the Rafalesque, the Arabesque, and the French wall paper equally participate. In the centre of the ceiling is to be placed a large allegorical oil-painting, representing a female figure of France in the act of crowning the bust of Orfila. In the four angles of the ceiling are to be painted portraits of the Spanish physician, the Marquis of Joca, the English chemist Faraday, the Italian anatomist Pagannuci, and the French chemist Velspeu. It takes exactly seven months to carry out our design, in the execution whereof we are

assisted by the native talent already alluded to. Amongst our staff of operators are a couple of black white-washers for the broad work, a master carpenter with his apprentice for the carvings, and an indefatigable Chinese, whom we employ extensively for the elaborate pattern work.

The chief objects of attraction in this great undertaking are without doubt a pair of life-sized figures of two celebrated French chemists, named Parmentier and Vanquelin, destined to stand in a conspicuous part of the shop. As there are no sculptors in our town it devolves as usual upon the "followers of the divine art of Apelles" to try their hands at the art of Phidias. Confident of success, the chemist provides us with a couple of plaster busts, representing the French celebrities in question, and bids us do our best. The fragments of drapery exhibited on these gentlemen enable us to decide on the kind of costume which our figures should wear; the one being indicative of a robe somewhat clerical, and the other evincing without a doubt that the original belonged to a period when knee-breeches and top-boots were much in vogue. The resources of Cuba for the making of statues are limited, so the material we employ is slight. We construct our figures upon the principle on which paper masks are made, and by painting them afterwards in imitation of marble, a very solid appearance may be obtained. I will not describe the many difficulties which we encounter at every stage of this process; but when the hollow effigies are complete, and we have fixed them to their painted wooden plinths, we are vain enough to believe that we have produced as goodly a pair of sham statues as you would see if you travelled from one extremity of Cuba to the other.

It is the night which precedes the opening of the chemist's shop, and we have retired to our dormitories after giving a final coat of marble-colour to our paste-board productions. I am about to tumble into my hammock, when my progress is arrested by a strange sound which seems to emanate from an adjoining chamber. I re-ignite my extinguished lamp, and take a peep within the studio. Something is certainly moving in that apartment. I summon my companion, who joins me, and we enter our sanctum.

"Misericordia! One of the statues is alive," I exclaim, horrified at what appears to be a second edition of Frankenstein.

Monsieur Parmentier—he of the periwig

and top-boots—is sinking perceptibly, though gradually. We advance to save him, but, alas! too late; the worthy Frenchman is already on his bended boots. The wooden props which supported his hollow legs have given way, and his top-boots are now a shapeless mass. We pause for a moment to contemplate the wreck before us, and immediately set about repairing the damage.

But how? A brilliant idea suggests itself.

In a corner of the studio stand the leather originals which have served us as models for the extremities of the injured statue. These same boots belong to an obliging shoemaker who has lent them to us. But what of that? The case is urgent, and this is not a time to run after our friend and bargain with him for his property.

To fill the boots with plaster-of-paris, to humour them, while the plaster is yet wet, into something which resembles the human leg divine, is the work of a few moments. To fix them firmly to the wooden plinth, and prop over them the incomplete torso by means of laths cunningly concealed, occupies little more than an hour and a half. A coat of thick white paint administered below completes the operation, and Parmentier is erect again, and apparently none the worse for his disaster. One more layer of paint early next morning, and the statue is faultless, and ready for being borne triumphantly from our studio to its destination. There it is placed in its niche, and no one suspects the mishap. Evening approaches, and with it come crowds of Cuban dilettanti and others who have been invited for the occasion. The ceremony of blessing the new undertaking is now solemnised according to custom by a priest and an assistant, who sprinkle holy water from a small hand-broom upon everything and everybody, while a short prayer in Latin is chanted. Then the guests proceed to examine the various embellishments of this singular shop, pausing to refresh themselves from the sumptuous repast which the chemist has provided for his guests and patrons in an adjoining chamber.

The statues form a subject for wonder with everybody, and no one will believe that they are constructed of other than solid material. Even the incredulous, who are permitted to tap one of Parmentier's boots as a convincing test, cannot help sharing the popular delusion. But our friend the shoemaker is not so easily de-

ceived. From certain signs, known only to himself, he recognises in the statue's painted extremities his own appropriated goods. We swear him to secrecy, and offer to pay him liberally for the loss he has sustained; and it pleases him to discover that in the pursuit of the fine arts—and as regards statue-making in the West Indies, we echo the sentiment—there is nothing like leather!

A JULY TWILIGHT.

Falls the grey mantle of the twilight soft
Upon the cottage thatch: the rose-ald porch
Is fragrant with the coming dews of eve,
And distantly there glimmer in the sky
Rich veined streaks of crimson and of gold,
That mark the bright track of the setting sun.
The sheep-bell tinkles from the distant hills,
Where the white flocks upon the clover wold
Are folded for the night.

From bosky dell
The sweet clear clarion of the nightingale
Sounds forth his vesper hymn. Dies slowly out
The last faint gleam of light; with mellow ray
The silver star of eve peeps palely through
The clusters of the sweet-breathed jessamine,
What time, her white blooms, to the dewdrops yield
Their fragrant incense.

Yonder from the lake
Falls on the ear the muffled plash of oar,
The deep refrain of fishers, as they sing,
And homeward row from toil. The white moth skims
The surface of the pool; the dun bat flies
Swift round the ivied tower; the barn-owl hoots
Along the hedgerows; and the bark of fox
Sounds from the blackthorn copse:

And one by one
The lights go out within the lattices;
Drawn are white curtains gently o'er the pane,
Sounds the last glad "Good-night," and simple folk
Commend them to their slumber and their God!

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THE IRELAND FORGERIES.

In February, 1795 (ten years after the death of Doctor Johnson), the literary and dramatic world of London was convulsed by the news of the discovery of many important deeds and letters relating to Shakespeare. Malone, in his celebrated edition of the poet, published five years before, had introduced to the public much fresh material (of more or less proved authenticity) relative to the great genius, and the insatiable public, still hungry, was craving for more. It had been hitherto supposed that the fatal fire at the Globe Theatre (the poet's summer theatre in Southwark) had destroyed most of the manuscripts of his plays, and that all that was then left relating to the Swan of Avon had been swallowed up by the ruthless fire at Warwick, that burnt down the house of Doctor Hall, the husband of Susannah,

Shakespeare's favourite daughter. The joy and exultation were therefore all the greater; and in spite of the unaccountable incredulity of such great authorities as Malone, Steevens, and Isaac Reed, the eagerness to see and read the drift from the ocean of oblivion was extreme.

The lucky finder was S. W. H. Ireland, a clever young lawyer's clerk in New Inn, only eighteen years of age, the son of a Mr. S. Ireland, originally a Spital-fields weaver, who had turned seller of curiosities and writer of illustrated tours. He had, it appeared, met at a coffee-house a country gentleman, who, finding him curious in autographs, had taken him to his chambers, and given him leave to rummage over a heap of old deeds and papers, which had descended to him from his father, a lawyer who had retired on a fortune. The first lucky dive into the lumber-room brought up a pearl indeed, no less, in fact, than a lease from Shakespeare and John Heminge to Michael Fraser and Elizabeth his wife. The old curiosity seller, who had two years before travelled through Warwickshire, and had just published that tour, was in raptures, feeling sure there were more Shakespearian papers wherever that lease came from. He was right, there were dozens more. The young clerk had, indeed, struck what the mimers call "a champion lode." The next find was a Profession of Faith by Shakespeare, Protestant to the last degree, and quite exploding the foolish tradition that he had died a Roman Catholic; next came a most charming good-natured letter of the great poet to Richard Cowley, the player, with a portrait in pen and ink of "the Bard" himself enclosed. After that appeared a note of hand and receipt from Heminge. Then followed a delightful love-letter from Shakespeare to Ann Hathaway, with some inestimable verses, and a priceless braided lock of his hair.

On being pressed by his father, the young clerk owned that a Mr. Talbot, then a clerk also in New Inn, since that an actor at the Dublin Theatre, had first introduced him to Mr. H., the gentleman who possessed the papers. The coffee-house story had been a mere playful fiction. After ransacking the closet several days, the two keen-eyed clerks had been lucky enough to discover a deed which secured to the owner of the deeds landed property, his title to which had previously been unknown. In gratitude for this, Mr. H. had given Talbot and Ireland all papers

and documents they should be lucky enough to find relating to Shakespeare. Mr. Talbot being written to by Ireland, senior, bore testimony to the truth of these curious facts, and explained with delightful frankness and candour the real reason why Mr. H. had so carefully concealed his name and address. Mr. H. was, it appeared, "a man somewhat known in the world and in the walk of high life." Shy and proud, he did not wish it known that an ancestor of his had been a brother actor with Shakespeare, who in a deed of gift still existing, and lately found, had left him all the furniture of a certain upper room in New Place, Stratford-upon-Avon, together with cups, a miniature of himself, also preserved, and various papers, the majority of which, alas! had been lost. The old curiosity seller was in raptures. Providence had thus permitted him to be the father of a lad who had discovered more Shakespearian papers than had ever yet been found. The mine seemed, indeed, inexhaustible as the faith of an antiquary. Soon there appeared a remarkable letter from Queen Elizabeth, requesting Shakespeare to come with his actors to Hampton and play before "my Lord Leicester," and to this most remarkable document was appended a loyal memorandum in the hand of Shakespeare.

After that the young diver brought home to Norfolk-street engraved portraits of Bassanio and Shylock, that had belonged to Shakespeare. But at this point these astounding disclosures assumed a still more interesting aspect. Considering everything, it was almost touching to think that this young zealot lover of Shakespeare should have struck a path that at last led him to traces of his own ancestors. Working among clouds of dust, he emerged one day dirty as a scavenger, but smiling, with a deed of gift of certain property in Blackfriars, from Shakespeare to a person named Ireland, who had saved him from drowning, a view of Ireland's house and coat-of-arms, and a greater treasure still, some tributary lines to W. H. from W. S., not strong verses, but still not more diluted than the occasion that produced them seemed to have warranted. After that the digger in this Golconda discovered agreements between Shakespeare and John Louin and Henry Condell, the players, and manuscript notes in about fifty books. All that the world had been longing for, for a hundred and fifty years or so, seemed to pour from the cornucopia in shy Mr. H.'s lumber-closet.

In dust and grime the good fairy had hidden away and guarded the treasure, but the daring lawyer's clerk had at last blown his own trumpet and dissolved the enchantment. At last a corrected manuscript of King Lear was found, free from all the ribaldry foisted in by players and printers. The diver next fished up from "the slimy bottom of the deep" a few leaves of Hamlet, and still more glorious to relate, a play, a real unpublished play, founded, like Cymbeline, on fabulous ancient British history, and entitled *Vortigern*. There were also found a few leaves of a play entitled *Henry the Second*, and a deed alluding to a lost play of Shakespeare's, entitled *Henry the Seventh*.

In a state of almost hysterical rapture the old curiosity seller proceeded to publish the great Shakespearian find. The dreams of so many men had to him become a reality. It is true the keystone of the evidence was imperfect till shy Mr. H. should come forward; but this very break in the case freed his mind of all suspicion of fraud, for it was evident to the meanest understanding that no practised forgers would have left that part of their plot imperfect. The number and variety of papers removed all possibility that any one forger could have produced them. The chuckling old gentlemen therefore instantly constituted a committee of twenty-one literary men, including one or two noblemen, Doctor Parr, the great Whig divine, the celebrated Boswell, Pinkerton, Pye, the laureate, Valpy of Reading, the Reverend Nathanael Thornbury (grandfather of an author of the present day), and other celebrities of the day, to inspect the documents. The committee met three times, at No. 8, Norfolk-street, where the papers had been found, and each time the members were more rapturous than the last. At the first meeting, February, 1795, Boswell (who died in April, 1796), full of the new wonder, and as usual outdoing every one in his foolish admiration, previous to signing with the rest a certificate recording his belief, fell upon his knees, and in a tone of submission and exultation, vociferously thanked God that he had lived to witness the astounding discovery, and protested his readiness after that to depart in peace. Doctor Parr and Doctor Warton having heard Shakespeare's *Profession of Faith* read, exclaimed: "Mr. Ireland, we have very fine things in our church service, and our library abounds with beauties, but here is a man has distanced us all."

At the next meeting, stuttering, arrogant Doctor Parr declared, with his usual energy, that Mr. Boswell's certificate was far too feebly expressed for the importance of the subject, and at once dictated another, which he himself first signed. In March, 1796, another certificate was signed by twelve literary men, to testify that the Shakespearian deeds had been compared with Shakespeare's three signatures to his will, and to a deed in the hands of Mr. Albany Wallis, of 21, Norfolk-street, Garrick's executor, and that they all believed in their authenticity. In January of this year, young Ireland had drawn up a tempting schedule, in presence of Mr. Chalmers and another gentleman, of Shakespearian documents, which he solemnly protested he had seen. They were enough to make a bibliographer commit felony, and an antiquary break twice ten commandments. The list included the manuscripts of Richard the Second, Henry the Second (an unpublished early play) Henry the Fifth, sixty-two leaves of King John, forty-nine leaves of Othello, thirty-seven leaves of Richard the Third, thirty-seven leaves of Timon of Athens, fourteen leaves of Henry the Fourth, seven leaves of Julius Cæsar, a catalogue of Shakespeare's books in his own manuscript, a deed of partnership in the Curtain Theatre, two drawings of the Globe Theatre, verses to Queen Elizabeth (only think!) verses to Sir Francis Drake (better still!), verses to Sir Walter Raleigh (best of all!), and his own miniature set in silver—silver! it ought to have been enormous diamonds! Other treasures Ireland had heard of, but had not yet seen. There were also a Chancer with manuscript notes, a book about Queen Elizabeth with ditto (all Golconda would not buy it), Emphases with ditto, Bible with ditto (stupendous!), Boccaccio's works with ditto, Barclay's Ship of Fools (ah, indeed!) with ditto, Hollinshed's Chronicles with ditto (as we all expected); to crown this, discovery of discoveries, a whole length portrait (said to be of the Bard) in oil (said, why of course it was his, and hundreds of eager hands full of gold were stretching ready for it!), but better, grander still, a brief autobiography of Shakespeare in his own hand.

As the malice of Malone and the other opponents of the Ireland party continued still, however, strangely enough, to develop, and as Malone was said to have boasted that he had discovered the papers to be all forgeries, and was about to publish a conclusive work examining the whole evidence,

young Ireland, with very manly and chivalrous feeling, wished to publicly exculpate his father from all share in the great discovery. He drew up, therefore, a formal deposition to that effect on stamped paper, intending to swear it before a magistrate. This was a lawyer's clerk's natural way of proving a thing, but Mr. Albany Wallis, as a friend and a lawyer, disliking a formal deposition, drew up instead an advertisement, which was inserted, after the failure of Vortigern, in the True Briton, the Morning Herald, and other papers. It was signed S. W. H. Ireland, legally witnessed, and began thus:

"In justice to my father, and to remove the reproach under which he has innocently fallen respecting the papers published by him as the manuscripts of Shakespeare, I do hereby solemnly declare that they were given to him by me as the genuine productions of Shakespeare, and that he was and is at this moment totally unacquainted with the source from whence they came."

In April, 1796, Mr. Talbot wrote from Dublin, offering to join in an affidavit of the elder Ireland's innocence of any forgery, the secret "being only known to Sam, myself, and a third person, whom Mr. Ireland is not acquainted with." Mr. Talbot, in the same letter (thirteen days after the failure of Vortigern), protested against the younger Ireland's proposal of disclosing the secret to two gentlemen of respectability. "It would not be," he said, "consistent with our promise and oath." In the same month, nevertheless, Ireland, after much difficulty about selecting his confidants, chose Mr. Albany Wallis as the depository of the mystery, so that Mr. Wallis might, as a professional man, assure Mr. H. that no part of his property would be damaged by the disclosure. The elder Ireland used reiterated importunities and most anxious solicitations, but Mr. Wallis kept close as a Freemason, his only reply was: "Do not ask me any questions. It is not proper that you should know the secret. Keep your mind easy, all will be well in time."

In the mean while all went bravely for the enterprising clerk only nineteen years old. Indeed, there was quite a competition among the London managers for Vortigern. Sheridan, who was a very lukewarm admirer of Shakespeare, and Harris, were both competitors for it. They neither of them cared a button probably whether the play was genuine or not; all they knew was that the town was wild to see it acted, and the cash

result must be gratifying. As for Kemble, who was a student of old plays, he was very gloomy and silent about Vortigern, and refused, in spite of young Ireland's request, to make any alterations whether he deemed them necessary or not. Porson had also seen the manuscripts, and refused to sign the Articles of Faith; Malone's strong disbelief no doubt influencing him. Nevertheless, Sheridan boldly made an agreement with Ireland to pay him down three hundred pounds, and after deducting the expenses of the theatre, to share the profits with him for sixty nights. That awful poet, Sir James Bland Burgess, wrote the prologue. On the 2nd of April, 1796, the rush of Shakespearians was so tremendous that not more than two or three women could force their way into the Drury Lane pit. It must be confessed, however, with all due deference to the Swan, that the play, on nearer acquaintance, was by no means equal to Cymbeline.

John Kemble, Bensley, Charles Kemble, King, Mrs. Powell, and Mrs. Jordan, did their best, but it was from the first too evidently an up-hill game. Vortigern murdered Constantius, became King of Britain, invited over the Saxons, defeated the Scots, fell in love with Rowena, and was fairly on his way to his last place of refuge in Cæsar's Tower after Rowena had poisoned herself, when the public would not have it—not another crumb of it—though there were yards more of flatulent blank verse to spout, and Aurelius had still to fight the hateful Vortigern, knock him down, take his crown, and spare his life. At the perhaps rather unfortunate line,

And when this solemn mockery is o'er,

which Kemble, being interrupted by a wolfish howl of vexation, contempt, and disappointment, somewhat maliciously repeated twice over, the house rose, and in a Niagara of indignation, swept the very early play of Shakespeare into everlasting forgetfulness. Immediately after this lamentable failure, when the Ireland family had shrunk from the theatre hot, astonished, and angry, dozens of critics detected in Vortigern plagiarisms from Shakespeare, and one keen eye found an allusion to "Bishop Bonner," which, to say the least, was a ridiculous anachronism. But the popular verdict did not shake the belief of Ireland's more generous friends, for Chalmers soon after published a defence eleven hundred pages long, and Ireland père wrote a vindication of his own conduct in an angry and contemptuous reply to that

"usurper," "dictator," and presumptuous, arrogant critic, Malone. Unfortunately the very month the father's pamphlet appeared, one written by the son was also printed by Debrett (opposite Burlington House, Piccadilly), acknowledging, with shameless frankness, every one of the extraordinary Shakespearian papers of the imaginary Mr. H. to be mere forgeries of his own.

Young Ireland had been well educated (according to his own account, at Kensington, Ealing, and Soho-square schools, afterwards at Amiens, and a college at Ems, in Normandy, and at sixteen had been articled to a lawyer of eminence in New Inn). The mistaken and vain lad, fond of books and accustomed to old plays, one day took it into his head that if he could pass off some documents of his own writing for Shakespeare's, it would secure him a reputation, delight his father, and show how easily credulous antiquaries could be gulled. Macpherson had led to Chatterton, Chatterton led to Ireland. Purchasing a thin quarto tract of the time of Elizabeth, with her arms on the cover, the lawyer's clerk, eager for this spurious kind of fame, wrote a letter in Elizabethan hand, supposed to be a letter presenting the book to the queen. This letter his father at once pronounced to be genuine. That very day, on his way home, Ireland called on a bookbinder named Laurie, in New Inn-passage, and showing him the letter, told him the story. A young man in the shop then showed him how to make ink look old, by mixing it with some acid and a liquid used in marbling book-covers, and afterwards turning it brown at the fire. In the next long vacation a visit to Stratford-upon-Avon further inflamed the young forger's mind, for at Clapton House the owner told him that a few weeks before, in clearing out a lumber-room to serve as an aviary for young partridges, he had found a whole basketful of old letters and papers, rotten as tinder, but many of them bearing the signature of Shakespeare, which he had burnt as mere litter and rubbish. On Ireland's return to New Inn, being left alone in chambers, he carried his impostures further, at first for mere frolic, keeping by him copies of the poet's signature from Stevens's Shakespeare. The wording of the sham deeds he took from an old Jacobean law paper. Here he had resolved to stop, but his first lies dragged him further down. His father insisted that he knew of more treasures, so did his dupes, and his own vanity and secretiveness urged him on. The paper he first used consisted of blank sheets torn from old books, but after

a time, hearing the jug spoken of as the prevalent Elizabethan water-mark, he selected sheets bearing that mark. Most of the old paper he purchased of Verey, a bookseller in Great May's-buildings, Saint Martin's-lane. Talbot became Ireland's accomplice, the forger tells us, by mere accident. He was also a clerk in New Inn, but at another lawyer's, and his articles had just expired. He had often seen Ireland imitate old handwritings, and at once told him that the first Shakespearian deed was not original. Ireland firmly denied the charge, but unfortunately, a few days after, Talbot, always on the watch, stole in and caught him writing a sham Shakespearian document. No longer able to deny the fact, Ireland forced him to secrecy, fearing the anger of his father, and Talbot, entering into the scheme, promised never to betray him. Not knowing of any extant autograph of Lord Southampton, Ireland invented a style, and wrote the earl's sham letter with his left hand. The praise lavished on his Profession of Faith by Parr and Warton first began to make him think he had original talent, and might carry the imposture further. Queen Elizabeth's letter Ireland wrote from her signature only, and this he copied from an original in the library at Norfolk-street. The drawings of Shylock and Bassanio were bought at a broker's in Butcher-row, and at New Inn, with water colours, he painted in the letters W. S., and the arms of Shakespeare, and gave the old Dutchman, whom he christened Shylock, his appropriate knife and scales. No one observed, however, that Ireland had made the spear in the coat of arms point the wrong way. Growing rapidly more daring, he next wrote alterations to King Lear, and he forged the playhouse receipts, which he tied round with threads unravelled from old tapestry. He now flew at higher game, and began to write, in detached portions, his play of Vortigern, pretending that the mysterious Mr. H. would not deliver the original manuscript till Ireland had transcribed the whole work. To his delight his dupes swallowed the whole two thousand lines, declaring they were superior to the worst of Shakespeare's plays, and much inferior to his best. For every separate forgery, Ireland had some artful motive. The Profession of Faith was intended to please all true Protestants; the corrections to Lear to show that the impurities of Shakespeare's plays were mere interpolations; the theatrical accounts were to prove the Swan's business habits; the story of Ireland saving the Bard from

drowning was to establish a claim to the papers, which he said Mr. H. assured him had belonged to one of his ancestors. So he went on piling lie upon lie. All this time this artful young impostor purposely appeared frequently in public, in order to induce the world to think him a giddy, thoughtless adolescent, incapable of producing such poems. Talbot, after much hesitation, consented to remain an accomplice and sort of sleeping partner in the fraud, and, by his letters to old Ireland, he helped on the scheme. It now became necessary, from time to time, to concoct more documents to strengthen the former evidence, and to win fresh praise from the still hungry literati. Still slowly but surely the time came when the lies could no longer live. The credulous father, urged by foolish dupes, determined that the world should no longer be deprived of such a treasure. He would publish the newly-found Shakespearian papers in spite of all the entreaties of his alarmed son. Vortigern appeared, Malone's crushing—no, that is not the word—pulverising exposure followed, and the imposture crumbled to pieces. The son (with some good in him) began to be seriously uneasy when the world commenced to dub his father an accomplice. Urged by his father, and pressed by the committee, young Ireland was at last compelled to tell Mr. Wallis the whole secret, and to beg him to be silent. At last, driven hopelessly into a corner, the clever young scamp, still vain of his triumph, while his father's vindication of himself and his reply to Malone were actually in the press, November, 1796, issued his Authentic Account of the Shakespearian Manuscripts, and, without waiting for Talbot's consent, as he had solemnly promised, at once avowed his imposture.

"I am myself," he wrote, "both the author and writer, and have had no aid or assistance from any soul living, and I never should have gone so far, but that the world praised the papers so much, and thereby flattered my vanity." And he concluded his pamphlet in the following manner:

"Here then I conclude, most sincerely regretting any offence I may have given the world or any particular individual, trusting at the same time they will deem the whole the act of a boy without any evil or bad intention, but hurried on, thoughtless of any danger that awaited to ensnare him. Should I attempt another play or any other stage performance, I shall hope the public will lay aside all prejudice my conduct may

have deserved, and grant me that kind indulgence which is the certain inmate of every Englishman's bosom."

The impudent imposture had continued for upwards of a year. The elder Ireland died five years afterwards, his end, as was generally supposed, hastened by shame and mortification at his son's forgeries. The son did not produce his promised Henry the Seventh, his interlude of the Virgin Queen, or his windy William the Conqueror, but afterwards published a novel and some rhapsodical and worthless poems, became editor of the York Herald, and died in 1835. That such poor forgeries as Ireland's should have required Malone's closely reasoned four hundred and twenty-four pages to expose them, does not say much, it must be confessed, for the knowledge of Elizabethan literature possessed by the contemporaries of Farmer, Stevens, and Isaac Reed.

It will now probably never be ascertained whether the father was an accomplice before or after the fact; but we are, nevertheless, by no means certain that he can be altogether acquitted. His Hogarthian memoranda were in too many cases proved to be spurious.

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LXVI. HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF FALCONBURY.

In this pleasant green shade they had come to a standstill.

"Pretty creature," said this lady, in very sweet tones, "you are looking for somebody, I think. You have not been long here; I have not seen your face before. First, tell me who it is you want; I may be able to help you."

"Thank you very much; I have been looking everywhere for Lady Mardykes, and no one seems to know where she is."

"Oh! Lady Mardykes? You'll find her time enough. You are very young, dear; Lady Mardykes is a charming companion. But if you knew as much as I do of this curious world, you would hardly be in such a hurry to find her; you would wait with a great deal of patience until she found you."

The young lady looked in the face of her new acquaintance, who spoke so oddly of her hostess. That unknown friend laughed musically and softly, and looked very archly from the corners of her eyes, and nodded a little more gravely, as if to say, "Although I laugh I mean it seriously."

What she did say in continuation, was this:

"Come through this arch; there is a seat here that commands a very good view of the croquet-ground and the open walks. And what is your name, child?" she continued, as they walked side by side; "you are sweetly pretty; but by no means so pretty as I."

This little qualification Maud, of course, accepted as a pleasantry, which yet might be quite true, for this lady, although by no means so young as she, was extremely pretty.

"You, now, begin by telling me who you are," said this lady, taking her place on the rustic seat, to which she had led the way, and pointing with her parasol to Maud, invited her to sit down also, "and then you shall hear everything about me."

"My name," said Maud, "is Vernon, my mamma is Lady Vernon; we live at Roydon, a little more than forty miles from this."

"Indeed! Lady Vernon, of Roydon? We ought to know one another then. I knew your mamma at one time, when I was a very young girl; it is twelve years ago. You have heard her speak of me, the Duchess of Falconbury. My greatest misfortune overtook me very early."

She turned away, and sighed deeply.

Maud had heard of that lady's bereavement. It had been a marriage of love. The young duke died in the second year of what promised to be a perfectly happy union, and the beautiful dowager had refused to listen to any solicitations to change her widowed state ever since.

"I like your face, I love your voice, which, for me, has a greater charm than even the features," said the duchess. And she placed her hand on Maud's as it lay upon the seat, and looked for a moment earnestly in her face. "Yes, we shall be very good friends; I can trust you; I ought to trust you, for, otherwise, I cannot warn you."

"Warn me?" repeated Maud.

"Yes, warn you. I see you looking round again for Lady Mardykes."

"I don't see her anywhere," said Maud.

"So much the better," said the duchess, this time with a little shudder.

Maud looked at her. But her dark look was but the shadow of a passing cloud. The sunshine of her smile immediately succeeded, and was soon darkened again.

"For five years a miserable secret has lain heavy at my heart; I breathed it but once, and then to a person who visited me

under circumstances so strange, that I scarcely know whether he is of this world or of the next. Can you keep a secret? Will you, while you live?" she whispered, drawing nearer to Maud.

I wonder whether priests and physicians, who have so many secrets thrust upon them, in the way of their trade, have any curiosity left for those which fortune may throw in their way? But people who enjoy no such professional obligations and opportunities, have for the most part a large and accommodating appetite for all such mental aliment.

Maud looked for a moment in the pretty face which had so suddenly grown pale and thoughtful, and with hardly a hesitation she accepted the proffered trust.

"You like Lady Mardykes?" asks the duchess.

"Extremely—all I know of her."

"Well said. Well guarded—all you know of her.' You shall know more of her before you leave me. She is a pretty woman still, but, of course, *passée*. When I knew her first she was beautiful; how beautiful you could not now believe. But always something, to my sense, *funeste*; a beautiful flower dedicated to death. Yet she seemed the analogy of some exquisite and wonderful flower that grows somewhere in dreamland, in enchanted gardens, where you will, but always in shade, never in light. Her face was beautiful, gentle, melancholy, but, to my eye, baleful. I should have liked to have held my parasol between it and me. Do you understand that feeling? Those flowers are associated in my mind with a poison that blasts the very air."

"An odd guest," thought Maud, "to speak so of her entertainer."

"You think it strange," said the duchess, oddly echoing Maud's thoughts, "that I should speak so of Lady Mardykes. You shall hear and judge."

This lady spoke, I may parenthetically mention, in a particularly low, sweet voice, and with a curious fluency, which, if one had only heard without seeing her, would have led one to suppose that she was reading a written composition rather than talking in colloquial English. She continued thus:

"You know her. She is very winning and gentle; she is, or was, one of the most fascinating persons I ever met. She is radiant with the beauty of candour. Her expression is soft and quite angelic; and she, among all living women, possesses the blackest heart and is capable of the most enormous crimes."

As she murmured these words, the lady,

with a dismal gaze in her face, pressed her hand on Maud's wrist.

"You can't believe that I am serious," said the duchess. "I'll convince you. You think it odd I should know her and meet her. I'll convince you in a way you little expect. The days of detection are marked in this little red book. No one reads it but myself, and that only for a date." She showed a little book about two inches square, bound in scarlet leather. "I'm talking to you in an unknown tongue; you will understand me perfectly another time," she continued, a little embarrassed. "I'll tell you at present enough to justify what I have said of her. I am fettered and she is fettered. You cannot yet understand that; and, as sometimes happens, from the first moment we met there was a mutual embarrassment, that is, mutual fear and dislike; even more, mutual horror and antipathy, the reasons of which depend on— Well, by-and-bye I may speak of it again; but for the present we let that pass. There is the cause of my permitting her to live, and of her permitting me to live. Those are strong terms, but true. Listen. I make no half-confidences. She liked my dear husband before his marriage. Gentle and soft as she looks, she is an ambitious and daring woman. He suspected nothing of it. She loved him passionately, and in proportion as jealousy began to infuse itself into it, that passion became atrocious. Here is the secret. Sit closer to me. My husband died by the hand of a poisoner; and that hand was afterwards directed against my life."

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed Maud, feeling as if she were still in a horrible dream.

"Hush! Dear child, it is of the last importance that no human being should suspect that I have imparted a secret to you. Your life would be practised upon immediately, and the ultimate vindication of justice be defeated. You shall know, by-and-bye, the curious circumstances which, for a time, prevent the sword from descending upon Lady Mardykes, and which, although she knows that a movement of my finger may bring it down, yet compel her to tolerate my existence, and constrain both to live on mutual terms of exterior friendliness. Do you see that man coming toward us?"

"Doctor Antomarchi?" said Maud.

CHAPTER LXVII. MAUD CHANGES HER ROOMS.

DOCTOR ANTOMARCHI was walking slowly in that direction, with his eye upon them.

"I see you know him. He is a very

particular friend, and has been for many years, of Lady Mardykes. I never smell any perfume, no, not even a flower, that he presents. You will do wisely to follow my example. Lady Mardykes chooses her instruments astutely. See how he watches us. Let us get up; he will think, if we seem so absorbed, that we are talking of that which—might not please him."

The duchess rose as she spoke, and Maud with her.

Could Maud Vernon credit one particle of the shocking melodrama she had just been listening to? One thing was certain: her new friend had not been mystifying her. Her colour came and went as she told her story, and the expression was too genuinely that of a person pursued by an agitating and horrible recollection to be counterfeited.

"You can't believe all this?" resumed the duchess. "I shall be here for a walk at eleven in the morning; meet me, and we shall have another talk. Till then, upon this subject we are mute."

Antomarchi was now near. To the duchess he made a very ceremonious bow, and one not quite so profound to Miss Vernon.

"Oh, Doctor Antomarchi," said the duchess, loftily, drawing up, "can you tell us where Lady Mardykes is? Miss Vernon has been looking for her."

"I believe, your grace, she is not likely to see her this evening; Lady Mardykes has been called away. But she will certainly be here again in the morning."

Doctor Antomarchi had to address the conclusion of this speech to Maud only, for the Duchess of Falconbury turned her head away with an air of scarcely concealed disdain, which implied very pointedly how exclusively in the interest of her companion her inquiry respecting Lady Mardykes had been made.

"And can you tell me," said Maud, "whether Miss Medwyn has arrived, or how soon she is expected?"

"I know that Miss Medwyn has not come; I do not know when she may come; but certainly she is not expected to-day," he answered. "I think, Miss Vernon, I need scarcely ask you whether you feel a good deal knocked up to-day?"

"I am a little tired."

"And a little nervous?"

"I slept so little last night, and went to bed rather tired, and I really do think there is nothing else."

"Well, you must consent to remain perfectly quiet for the remainder of the after-

noon, and get to bed before ten to-night, and to-morrow you will be quite yourself. You are more tired, and your nerves more shaken, than you suppose. You may bring on an attack of illness else."

"But if Lady Mardykes should come to-night I should like so much to be ready to go down."

"She will not be here to-night, assure yourself of that. Or I'll put it, if you please, in a way you may like better. If she does come to-night I undertake that she will certainly pay you a visit in your room, the very first thing she does."

"That is very good of Doctor Antomarchi," said the duchess, with a satirical smile on her lips, and irony in her tone. "I shall be going out for a drive after luncheon, so I suppose, dear, I shan't see you, unless Doctor Antomarchi should give leave, again to-day, but to-morrow we shall meet, and I think till then I shall say good-bye."

She nodded prettily to Maud, and smiled lingeringly over her shoulder as she turned away and re-entered the shady walk from which they had lately emerged together.

Doctor Antomarchi, although not included in the lady's leave-taking, took off his hat with another ceremonious bow, and at the same moment a servant stationed on the terrace began to ring a bell.

"That is the luncheon-bell," said the doctor.

The polite company assembled on the croquet-ground threw down their mallets at sound of it, and they and all the loiterers on the walks, and among the flowers, began to troop toward the door through which she had entered, and in a very short time this pretty quadrangle was nearly emptied, while, more slowly, Doctor Antomarchi walking by her side, they two moved in the same direction.

Maud did feel a little, indeed a good deal, tired, and this, together with the dispiriting absence of her hostess, and the agitating stories, false she was certain, communicated by her fanciful new friend, the duchess, predisposed her to adopt Antomarchi's advice.

Maud found Mercy Creswell awaiting her in the passage. She ducked a little curtsy, with a face of awe, to Doctor Antomarchi as he passed her; and then told her young mistress that "she had been moved to much more beautiful rooms."

On reaching them, under Mercy Creswell's guidance, she found that they were next the suite which she had occupied

on the night before, but at the near side of that strong door which seemed to form a very marked boundary in the house.

They consisted of four rooms, a bedroom, a dressing-room adjoining it, and a sitting-room beyond that; there was also a narrow room for her maid, with a door of communication with the young lady's room, and another opening on the passage.

Nothing could have been devised more charming than the taste in which the rooms, intended for Miss Vernon's use, were furnished and got up. If they had been prepared by some wealthy vassal for the reception of a royal visitor, they could not have been more elegant, and even magnificent. Who could have fancied that these bare, gloomy corridors led to anything so gorgeous and refined? Maud looked round, smiling with surprise and pleasure.

"They was only finished this morning, miss," said Mercy, also turning round slowly, with a fat smile of complacency, for she participated in the distinction.

"Was all this done for me?" Maud inquired at last.

"Every bit, miss," rejoined her maid.

"How extremely kind! What taste! What beautiful combinations of colour!"

Maud ran on in inexhaustible admiration for some time, examining now, bit by bit, the details of her sitting-room.

"Lady Mardykes will be here to-morrow morning," said Maud, at last; "it really will be a relief to me to thank her. I hardly know what to say."

Her eloquence was interrupted by the arrival of luncheon, served on beautiful china and silver.

When she had had her luncheon, she began to question Mercy about the people whom she had seen in the croquet-ground under the windows.

"Do you know the appearance of the Spanish minister?" she asked.

"Spanish hambassador? Oh! La, yes, miss. Don Ferdnando Tights they calls him in the servants' hall."

"What kind of person is he?"

"Well, he's a quiet creature; there's no harm in him, only, they say, he is woundy proud."

"That is pretty plain. And the Duchess of Falconbury? She was talking to me a good deal of Lady Mardykes. Are they good friends?"

"Oh! bless you, that's a troublesome one. Never a good word for no one has she. I would not advise no one that's here to make a companion of that lass; she has got many a light head into trouble, not

that there's nothing dangerous about her, only this, that she is always a-trying to make mischief."

"That is a good deal, however. Do you mean that she tells untruths?"

"Well, no; I do believe she really half thinks what she says, but her head is always running on mischief, and that's the sort she is."

"How do you mean that she has got people into trouble?"

"Well, I mean by putting mischievous thoughts in their heads, you see, and breeding doubt and ill-will."

"Do you recollect any particular thing she said, of that kind?" asked Maud, curiously.

"Not I, miss. Ho! bless you, miss, she'd talk faster than the river runs, or the mill turns. That's the sort she is with her airs and her grandeur, fit to burst with pride."

Miss Vernon was pleased at this testimony to the dubious nature of this great lady's scandal. A mist, however, not quite comfortable, still remained. She wished very much that she had never heard her stories.

Maud had still a slight flicker of her nervous headache, and was really tired besides, and not sorry of an excuse to spend the rest of the day quietly with her pleasant books and music, for a piano had been placed in her sitting-room, now and then relieved by so much of Mercy Creswell's gossip as she cared to call for, and, in this way, before she was well aware, the curtain of night descended upon her first day.

CHAPTER LXVIII. THE THIEF.

It was past nine o'clock next morning, notwithstanding her resolution to be up and stirring early, when Maud got up.

Lady Mardykes was expected, as we know, to arrive that morning; and Maud peeped often from the window, as she sat at her dressing-table near it.

In her dressing-gown and slippers, she went into the sitting-room on hearing the maid arrive with her breakfast things.

"Can you tell me," asked Maud, "whether Lady Mardykes has arrived?"

"Please 'm, is that the lady that is coming from——"

"No matter where she's coming from," interrupted Mercy Creswell, sharply; "it is Lady Mardykes, the lady that came yesterday, and is expected again this morning. She's a new servant, not a week in the house," says the femme de chambre to

Maud, in a hasty aside. "I think you might know whether her ladyship's harrived or no," and she darted at the maid a look black as thunder.

"Yes 'm, I'm quite new here, please. I don't half know the ways of the 'ouse yet. I was 'ired by——"

"Don't you mind who you was 'ired by. I'll make out all about it, miss, myself, if you please, just now," again interposed Mercy.

And before she had time to reflect upon this odd dialogue between the maids, Miss Vernon's attention was pleasantly engaged by satisfactory evidences on the subject of her inquiry, for she saw Lady Mardykes enter the now quiet croquet-ground from the further side, in company with Antomarchi. Except for these two figures the large quadrangle was deserted.

Antomarchi was speaking earnestly to her; she was looking down upon the walk. The distance was too great to read faces at; but Maud saw Lady Mardykes apply her handkerchief once or twice to her eyes. She was evidently weeping.

Her father had not died. Her dress was as brilliant as good taste would allow, and the morning paper said that there were no longer any grounds for uneasiness about him. Had Maud's eye accidentally lighted on a scene? Was this strange, and as she thought, repulsive man, urging his suit upon this lady over whom he had succeeded, possibly, in establishing a mysterious influence?

Lady Mardykes glanced up suddenly towards this long line of windows, as if suddenly recollecting that she may be observed.

Then she walked with more of her accustomed air; and she and Antomarchi crossing the grass-plot, ascended the broad flight of steps that scale the terrace, at its middle point, exactly opposite to the door in the side of the house, nearly under Maud's window. Through this door they entered the house, and Miss Vernon, for the present, lost sight of them.

On the breakfast table lay the Morning Post, where, among other interesting pieces of news, she read: "Lady Mardykes is at present entertaining a distinguished circle of friends at Carsbrook;" and then followed a selection from the names. Her interest more than revived as she read this long list of names, containing so much that was distinguished. There was one omission. The Honourable Charles Marston did not figure with other honourables in the list. But that list was but a selection,

and Charles Marston had not yet made his mark in the world, and might easily be omitted, and be at Carsbrook, notwithstanding.

She would not ask Mercy Creswell; for she did not choose Lady Vernon to hear anything that might awake her suspicions. And that reserved and prevaricating femme de chambre had written, she knew, the day before, to Lady Vernon, and considered herself as in *her* employment, and not in Maud's. It behoved her, therefore, to be very much on her guard in talking to that person.

Maud never found Mercy Creswell so slow and clumsy in assisting at her toilet as this morning. There was very little to be done to equip her for her ramble in the croquet-ground; but that little was retarded by so many blunders, that Maud first laughed, and then stared and wondered.

She saw Mercy Creswell frequently look at her big watch, and not until after she had successfully repeated it pretty often, did she perceive that this sly young woman was pointing out to her in the quadrangle below, which was now beginning to fill, persons, and little incidents in succession, which tempted her again and again to look from the window, and delayed her. All this time the femme de chambre, affecting to laugh with her young mistress, and to be highly interested in the doings of the croquet-ground, was plainly thinking with some anxiety of something totally different, and watching the lapse of the minutes whenever she thought she could, unobserved, consult her watch.

Maud looking in the glass, saw her do this, with an anxious face, and then hold it to her ear, doubtful if it were going, time seemed, I suppose, to creep so slowly.

Why was it that this maid, this agent of her mother's, seemed always occupied about something different from what she pretended to be about, and to have always something to conceal?

Another delay arose about the young lady's boots. Her maid had put them out of her hand, she could not for the life of her remember where.

"It seems to me, Mercy, you have made up your mind not to let me out until your watch says I may go; so unless you find them in a minute more, I shall walk out in my slippers."

As the young lady half in jest said this, the great clock of the old house, which is fixed in that side of it that overlooks the croquet-ground, struck eleven. And the clang of its ball seemed to act like

magic upon Mercy Creswell, for she instantly found the boots, and in a minute or two more had done all that was required of her, and her young mistress went out, full of excited expectation, and not a little curious to observe more closely the odd relations of confidence and sympathy which seemed to have established themselves between the wealthy lady of Carsbrook and the clever foreign adventurer who had, she fancied, marked her for his own.

The gallery that passes her door is a very long one, and exactly as she entered it from her dressing-room, there emerged from a side-door near the further extremity, to her great surprise, two persons, whom she saw to be Lady Mardykes and Doctor Antomarchi. The lady stepped out quickly; their way lay toward the head of the stairs. They were in low and earnest conversation, and plainly had not seen her.

Lady Mardykes walked with a quick and agitated step, intending, it seemed, to avoid observation. Had it been otherwise, Maud would have run to overtake her. What was she to think?

She would try to keep Lady Mardykes in sight, and when she got down-stairs there would be no awkwardness in speaking to her.

Lady Mardykes and Antomarchi had but just appeared, and Maud had hardly made two steps toward them from her door, when Mercy Creswell peeped out.

"Lord! There's her ladyship!" gasped the maid in unaccountable consternation, and with a stamp on the floor she called to her young mistress, still in a suppressed voice, as she tried to catch her dress in her hand. "Come back, miss, you must not follow her ladyship. It's as much as my place is worth if you do."

"What on earth do you mean? What can you mean?" said Maud, turning towards her for a moment in astonishment. "I'm going down-stairs, I'm going to the croquet-ground. Go back to my room, please, and wait for me there."

The femme de chambre glared on her irresolutely, with her finger-tips to her underlip, and the other hand extended in the attitude in which she had grasped with it at the lady's dress. Suddenly she drew back a step, with a look a little demure and frightened, and dropping a short curtsy, she dived back into the room again.

This woman, to whose care Lady Vernon had consigned her toilet, was becoming more and more unaccountable and unpleasant every day. But there were subjects of curiosity that piqued her too

nearly to allow the image of Mercy Creswell a place in her thoughts just now.

As she moved along the gallery, she saw the door, through which Lady Mardykes and Antomarchi had just passed, open, and a man's head and part of his figure protruded; it was only for a moment while he dropped a black leather bag at the side of the door next the stairs, and then withdrew, closing but not quite shutting the door; but she had no difficulty in recognising the peculiar countenance of Mr. Darkdale.

As she passed she heard a voice she recognised. It was the same she had heard from the carriage that passed them in the pine-wood on the night of her journey, and which, allowing for the hoarseness produced by shouting, so nearly resembled that of Captain Vivian.

"Imprisoned by Lady Mardykes, you know as well as I, I can't get away, no one ever can from this house: I shall never leave this room alive——"

These odd words reached her, and the door was shut, as they were rapidly spoken. It was not the voice of an angry man. It was spoken in a tone of utter despondency. Some people, however, have an exaggerated way of talking; and this was not worth a great deal.

Maud knew her way to the great staircase perfectly now. As she went down she met the Duchess of Falconbury coming up. This great lady was dressed, as usual, in very elegant taste, and looked quite charming. She stopped at the landing where she met Maud.

"So I have found my friend at last. Come to my arms, my long lost swain!" she exclaimed, and smiling placed her arms about her neck and kissed her, before Maud had well time to be even astonished. The duchess laughed a little silvery laugh. "I really began to fear I was never to see you again, and I have so much to tell you. So much more," she whispered, "and you don't know what it is to have a confidence to make, and no one with either honour or sympathy to hear it; and that was my sad case, until I met you. I forgot my watch in its case on my dressing-table. I don't mind sending; I go myself. I look up everything," she said in a still lower whisper, and held up a little ormolu key, and she added significantly, "you had better do so, while you remain here. I used to lose something or other every day till I took that precaution; they steal all my penknives and scissors. Where are you going now?"

"I'm trying to find a friend." (She did

not care to mention Lady Mardykes particularly, as her name might easily set the duchess off upon one of her "hominies," as they call such stories in the north country.) "I think I shall have no difficulty in finding her."

"And then? Where shall I look for you?"

"I suppose I shall go where every one seems to go, here, to the croquet-ground."

"Yes—the croquet-ground, that will do very nicely, and I will meet you there."

She nodded, and smiled over her shoulder as she ran up the stairs, and Maud ran down, in hopes of recovering Lady Mardykes's track, but, for the time, she had effectually lost sight of her.

There was no footman at this moment in the hall near the stairs. The servant who was at the hall-door had not seen her. She had probably taken the way to the croquet-ground, the general muster before luncheon.

She made a wrong turn in threading the long passages, and found herself at the door of the odd, oval room in which her interview with Doctor Antomarchi, on the night of her arrival, had taken place.

The door was a little open. It occurred to her that possibly Lady Mardykes might be there. She tapped at the door. There was no answer; she pushed it more, opened it, and stepped in.

This room had a peculiar character, as I have said. Something sternly official and mysterious. It might be the first audience-chamber, in a series, in the Inquisition. Maud looked about her. She was alone.

On the massive table I have mentioned, near the large desk which stood at one end of it, was spread a square piece of letter-paper, on which were laid, side by side, three trifling toys, of very little collective value, but which at once riveted the attention of Miss Vernon.

She stooped over them; there could be no doubt as to their identity. There was the tiny paper-cutter she had missed, with its one little steel blade in the handle. There were the scissors with the gold mounting of her dressing-case, from which they had been stolen, and there, finally, a little penknife, also stolen from her dressing-case, but which she had not missed. The pretty little penknife had her monogram, M. G. V., upon it. The paper-knife had this, and the device of the Rose and the Key beside; and about the scissors there could be no doubt whatever. If there

had been any it would have been removed by a memorandum written in a clear, masculine hand, upon the sheet of paper on which they lay.

It was simply these words:

Septm. —th, 1864.

Miss Vernon.

Roydon Hall.

See K. L. L., vol iii., folio 378.

Three articles; viz. scissors, paper-cutter, penknife.

Questionable.

"Questionable! What can he mean? Is this a piece of insolence of that foreigner, about whom Lady Mardykes appears infatuated? Questionable? What on earth can he mean or suspect?"

Her first impulse was to seize her own property, and the paper, and bring the whole thing before Lady Mardykes. But her more dignified instincts told her differently. She would leave these stolen trifles where they were, and mention the discovery, perhaps, after consultation with her cousin Maximilla, whom she was sure to see in a day or two.

Maud turned about now, and walked out of the door, almost hoping to meet Doctor Antomarchi. She did not; for he returned through another door, and too late discovered his oversight. But he little suspected that Miss Vernon had herself visited the room, and by a perverse accident had seen and recognised her missing property. He glanced jealously round the room, with eyes that, whenever he was roused, became wild and burning.

"Strange forgetfulness! But nothing has been stirred. That dear Lady Mardykes, she is so excitable! One can't avoid being disturbed."

He shut the door sharply, opened a large cabinet, and popped these trophies of larceny into one of a multitude of pigeon-holes.

"What will Damian say? What will Damian think? He's past the age of thinking against a hard head like this," and he tapped his square forehead with his pencil-case, smiling and musing.

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS, JUN.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 140. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 1871.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

CASTAWAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN PORT," &c. &c.

CHAPTER IV. FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

THE income which Major Vane derived from his sporting transactions being of a fluctuating character, and the sum regularly transmitted to him by his wife being, as he justly considered, contemptible in amount, that gallant officer was unable to have his permanent home as luxurious, or even as comfortable, as he undeniably wished it to be. Though accustomed to speak of his abode vaguely and generally as his "rooms," the major in reality occupied only one apartment, which was situate at the top of a house, the ground floor of which was a shop of such enormous dimensions, that it not merely absorbed the first and the second floors, but so bulged out at the side as only to leave space for a private door so narrow that it looked like one plank, and for a staircase, which was perfectly ladder-like in the slimmness of its proportions. In the fanlight above the narrow door, so narrow as to consist only of one pane of glass, and immediately above the small speck of blue gas that was allowed to issue from the one tiny burner, was posted in the off season a fly-blown, skimpy little bill, inscribed with a legend, setting forth that apartments were to be let "for club gentlemen."

In the off season only, for during the season the "club gentlemen" mustered so strongly as to render the announcement quite unnecessary. Of various kinds were they, and so numerous, that one wondered where they could find space sufficient to stow themselves away. Blue-faced majors of the Bagstock breed, with pendulous

cheeks, and double-breasted coats, and buckskin gloves, occasionally took up their quarters in the "apartments for club gentlemen," which also afforded shelter to an Irish M.P., who was popularly supposed to live upon the produce of the sale of blue-books and printed parliamentary documents for waste paper, and whose tall hat was so extremely shiny, as to cause the parliamentary funny man—like most parliamentary funny men, but a poor joker—to say that O'Dwyer must have forgotten to take his hat off one morning when he greased his hair. There, too, for three weeks, in the very height of the season, sleeping for about two hours out of the twenty-four, was to be found a provincial newspaper reporter, who spent all the money and health which he had gained during the previous eleven months in rushing about from theatre to concert, from dance to drum, from artist's studio to author's library, chatting, note-taking, observing, and gathering together an amount of anecdote and chit-chat, upon the distinction due to the purveyor of which he lived, a courted guest, on his return to his native town.

In the midst of this motley colony, Major Vane was the sole regular tenant. The bedroom which he inhabited, though at the top of the house, was larger, airier, and better furnished than the rest, and he kept it on throughout the year, because, though he was often absent for weeks together, going from race meeting to race meeting, or staying in the country-houses of trainers and jockeys, with certain of whom he was a great favourite, he was always liable to be summoned to London, where he made it a point of having a pied-à-terre. There was a certain recklessness of tone about the whole affair which amused him. He

laughed at the open note, written in a round hand by the landlady, and skewered on to the extinguisher of the Irish member's candlestick, informing that distinguished politician that the cabman, who brought him from the House on the previous wet night, had called twice, and would take out a summons unless the money was left for him in the morning. He grinned as he inspected the highly-scented notes addressed in violet ink and very scrawly writing, which awaited the return of the blue-faced major. He laughed as he stumbled over the enormous high-lows of the provincial newspaper reporter. He did not mind the smell of warm mutton fat, tempered by tobacco, which lingered on the staircase. He did not mind the normal state of blackness in which lived the female slave of the establishment, who printed off impressions of her fingers and thumbs on everything which she could possibly clutch hold of. He would have objected to her very strongly, indeed, and to the black beetles, in whose company she lived, and which, when dead, were in the habit of dropping out of her costume as she moved along; and to her cooking, an art which, judging from the result, she seemed generally to practise contemporaneously with the performance of her toilet and the arrangement of her hair; he would have objected to all this, had he had anything to do with it. But the fact was that Major Vane only slept at his lodgings, and ate, drank, wrote, read, played cards, received visits, and gave his address at his club.

The Craven, to which Major Vane belonged, may best be described as a shady club. It was situated on the shady side of the way, in a shady street, in the neighbourhood of Piccadilly, and the members were all more or less shady, generally more. There were shady majors, and colonels, and captains, some of whom had been in the regular service, which they had quitted in a remarkably shady manner, but most of whom were accredited by, or attached to Indian nawabs, or foreign potentates of the shadowiest as well as the shadiest order. There were shady barristers, whose names were recollected in connexion with the shadiest cases, and shady attorneys who employed them. Such members of the Craven Club as had well-known names, were for the most part the worst of all. Whenever one of those names was mentioned, the question arose, "What have I heard about that man?" and the reflec-

tion was generally certain to bring something forward to the discredit of the gentleman in question.

One noticeable feature of the Craven Club, too, was that though most of its members were seen a great deal in public, driving handsome horses in the park, lounging out of pit-boxes at the opera, and sprawling in stalls at theatres, always expensively dressed in exaggeration of the reigning fashion—no one ever met them in general society. They gave each other elaborate banquets at the club, they were seen during the season at Richmond and Greenwich, entertaining ladies, quietly dressed, and not indecorous in manner, who were equally unknown to the rest of the London world. Sometimes they would make an attempt to assert themselves. The men would get themselves proposed for some established and well-known club, when they would be either black-balled or withdrawn. The women would call upon some ladies whose husbands had been introduced to them; the visit would not be returned, and any further attempt at intercourse with the outer world would for a time be abandoned.

Not that they would be discouraged at these rebuffs. They ignored them as far as possible, and when compelled to accept them, they would shrug their shoulders, and talk of themselves as Bohemians; though between their debased and sensuous lives and the honest, free Bohemianism of literature and art, there was as much resemblance as between their purple whiskers and painted faces and the black locks and bronzed cheeks of the real Romany.

In its external life, at least, the Craven had some resemblance to other clubs; men ate and drank there, and there was a writing-room (the blotting-cases of which, if they could have revealed the secrets confided to them, would have been invaluable to Messrs. Moss and Moss, the attorneys of Thavies Inn, or Serjeant Skinner, the well-known leader in the Divorce Court), and a smoking-room, where many curious little "plants" had been concocted, and a card-room and a billiard-room. The wines and spirits supplied to the members were undeniably good; Dick Wrangham, commonly known as Ringlet Wrangham, took care of that, for after he had sold out of the cavalry and failed as a horse-dealer, some of his friends set him up as the proprietor of the Craven, and out of its profits he earned a very tolerable income.

About noon on the second day after his

return from Wexeter, Major Vane entered the club, and ordered his breakfast. In the coffee-room he found several other members engaged in discussing the same meal; breakfast, however, at the Craven Club, was by no means of the ordinary kind. On the tables was seldom to be seen any tea or coffee, or their usual accompaniments; there was toast, certainly, but it was prepared with anchovy; there were devilled biscuits and cayenned legs of poultry, and artful thirst-provoking preparations of dried fish; and for the allaying of the thirst when provoked, there were cool cups, which on the whole were found to inebriate considerably more than they cheered, and effervescent liquors of all kinds.

Noon was the very earliest period of the day recognised at the Craven Club; the number of members did not admit of more than one staff of servants being kept, and as the habits of its frequenters were undoubtedly late, much alacrity before noon could not be expected of the waiters who had not retired to rest before daybreak. Very filmy-eyed and cloudy-lined were these domestics in the morning, as they yawned in the bay windows and swept up the fragments of cigar-ash with dirty dusters, and plunged their fingers into flat remains of half-emptied tumblers. The grim old porter, who had an easier time than most of them, as he slept soundly during the latter part of the night in his glazed box, always had a hoar frost of silver beard upon his mottled cheeks, and cursed, and envied while he cursed, the bright freshness of the boy who slapped the newspapers down on the desk before him and laughed in his face. The man who brought the play-bills knew something about sitting up late, and the woman who left the milk knew something about getting up early; but in regard to the number of hours' sleep they had, one might be regarded as Rip Van Winkle, and the other as the Sleeping Beauty, in comparison to this hall-porter. By noon, however, all the establishment was on the alert; the members who lived in lodgings wanted their breakfasts, and the members who lived at home, and who for various reasons did not care to have their correspondence addressed to their private houses, wanted their letters. There was generally great anxiety to see the sporting papers, several copies of which were taken in at the Craven, and there were hazy reminiscences of last night's conversation to adjust, and half-made, half-dreamt of wagers to regulate and settle.

All the men at breakfast looked up as Philip Vane swaggered to the waiter's desk to give his orders, and two or three of them growled out "Good morning." He was a popular man in the club, and had it been dinner time, would have been received with a chorus of acclamation, but the members of the Craven were generally short tempered and reticent in the morning, and thought a nod quite sufficient greeting. Major Vane returned the salutations in his usual careless, insolent way, seated himself at his table, and buried himself in the folds of a sporting newspaper. From the vaticinations of the writer, whose principal merit appeared to be the ingenious manner in which he refrained from mentioning the name of the horse whose merits he was discussing, alluding to it now as the son of its sire, now as the native of the place where it was bred, and now as the property of the person who owned it, Major Vane's attention was distracted by the simultaneous arrival of his breakfast and of a friend.

There were some points of similarity and dissimilarity between them; the breakfast was sound and good, the friend was neither; the breakfast had to be paid for, so generally had the friend. There was a doubt as to whether the breakfast might disagree with one, there was no doubt about the friend's disagreeing with one, if by so doing he saw a chance of bettering his position. Delabole was the friend's name, his status that of gentleman, though twenty years before, when he spent a few happy days with Lieutenant Bird, the governor of Alawick jail, his name was Munker, his profession horse coping. But Alwick was a long way off, and Lieutenant Bird had been dead for many years.

A short fat man, Mr. Delabole, with a square head like a tin loaf, no neck to speak of, an enormous chest, always set off by a very open shirt-front, or covered by a waterfall of satin, with one valuable pin in its centre, short awkward legs, and very small hands and feet. The latter, which were flat as well as small, always looked like the feet of the dummies in the tailors' shops; the little fingers of the former were always covered to the knuckles with lustrous rings. Philip Vane saw the rings blazing on his shoulder before he looked round at their owner. Mr. Delabole always put his hands on his friends' shoulders and generally called them "dear boy." He was a large-hearted man, very.

"We wanted you with us last night, dear

boy," were Mr. Delabole's first words, after the interchange of greetings.

"And I wanted you here," said Philip Vane.

There was something in his look which aroused Delabole's attention, for he said, quickly:

"Why, has anything been done?"

"Not much. Bolckoff brought his cousin here, the man from Germany, about whom he is always swaggering."

"I know."

"Well, I played *écarte* with him."

"Well!"

"We played five games, of which he won three."

"Ah! that means nothing, dear boy!" said Mr. Delabole, drawing up his chair and dropping his voice. "You were playing—"

"Foxy!" said Vane, in a whisper, "so was he, foxy to the teeth and eyes, foxy all over! Vine grower at Neuwied, Bolckoff called him, and thought I believed it! No Rhenish grape merchant ever handled his cards like that Viennese, my dear Delabole! As keen a Viennese sharp as ever swaggered in the Prater, or played at the Verein."

Philip Vane's eyes flashed, and his voice grew a little louder as he finished this sentence. Mr. Delabole held up a warning finger, and when he spoke there was no trace of emotion in his tone.

"It is very, very likely, dear boy!" he said, in a fat whisper; "it's just one of Bolckoff's moves! Your Polish Jew, sir," continued Mr. Delabole, shaking his head sententiously, "your Polish Jew is a bad breed!" Then, in quite a different tone, he added, "What did you want me for, dear boy?"

"Merely to know whether I was right as to our friend's style; merely to see whether you agreed with my idea of it."

"No occasion for my presence for that; trust my Philip for the spot-stroke in such a case! For finding needles very judiciously hidden in bottles of hay, there is not, I believe, your equal."

"You must want something of me very badly indeed, Delabole," said Vane, grimly. "I never heard you so complimentary. Has it anything to do with last night, of which you were speaking?"

"It had nothing to do with anything in the world, dear boy," said Delabole, "certainly not with anything of last night, which was devoted to pleasure, and in which no trace of business intruded."

"Pleasure!" repeated Philip Vane.

"Pleasure, and nothing else," said Delabole. "A delightful little supper given to Lotty Lopez, and a few of her female friends."

"Ah!" said Philip Vane, shortly.

"And why 'ah!' dear boy?"

"I don't go in for that sort of thing."

"Perhaps not," said Mr. Delabole, in his airiest manner; "but because you are virtuous, are there to be no more cakes and ale? It was really a very pleasant little gathering, not the less so from the touch of romance attending the circumstances."

"Romance?" echoed Philip Vane, with a laugh. "What was there romantic about it? Was the landlord so fascinated by Miss Lotty's beaux yeux, that he declined to take any money for the bill, or was the brilliancy so contagious that one of the waiters exhibited a talent which he had hitherto hidden under a napkin?"

"Neither, dear boy," said Mr. Delabole, quietly, "nor was any one rude—as you are just now! Rudeness isn't clever, dear boy, and as a general rule doesn't pay. No! the little spice of romance was derivable from the fact that it was a farewell banquet to Lotty, who, with her little troupe, has been engaged by Wuff on a travelling engagement for three years, and quits these shores for America next week."

"What a blow for England!" said Philip Vane; "how she will sigh over her departing children!"

"There are others of her children," said Mr. Delabole, "who may some day be called upon to depart from her shores, under different circumstances, and whom she will not regard so much! As for myself, little Lotty always amused me, and I am sorry she is going; I could have better spared a better woman. That's a quotation. I believe, but oddly enough it's true."

"If you are so fond of her, why don't you go with her?" said Vane.

"Because it wouldn't suit me, dear boy; because there is no opening for me; because—I don't want to, in point of fact. But, for the matter of that, why don't you? Wuff's at his wits' end for a leading man and leading woman. Let me write him a line, and say I have found the first in you?"

A sudden thought struck Philip Vane. "Hold on a minute and drop chaffing. Does he really want a leading actress to go out with this lot with him? Not a dancing, capering wench, I mean, but a woman who can act?"

"He does want one most infernally."

"What will he give?"

"Well, our friend Wuff isn't in the open-handed, melting, charity line, but I should think he would stand six pounds a week, and travelling expenses. He gives Lotty ten I know, but then——"

"I'll find him the person he wants," said Philip Vane, quickly.

"You, dear boy?" said Delabole, surprised. "I thought you said just now you were not in that line?"

"Nor am I, but when I was down in the West the other day, I saw a girl—Miss Pierrepont, I think she was called——"

"Pierrepont!" said Delabole. "Yes, I've heard of her in the provinces. Good, isn't she?"

"So far as I understand these matters, very good," said Vane; "a friend of mine is interested in her."

"Ah, ah," said Delabole, "we know what that means."

Vane knew, too, what Delabole's tone meant; knew that it was his wife thus alluded to, but took no notice.

"I mean," he continued, "I would be glad to see her position improved, and this is an opportunity which I think would suit her."

"I would, if I were you, dear boy," said Delabole, looking at him straight in the face, "I would just put on my friend's hat and my friend's coat, put my friend into the train, and get him to discuss the matter with Miss Pierrepont."

"You think that's devilish funny," said Major Vane, returning his stare, "but you're wrong for once. The woman is nothing to me, only I thought it might suit her, and do your friend a good turn at the same time."

"All right, dear boy," said Mr. Delabole. "I will let Wuff know. If it comes off, she must start next week."

"I have heard," said Mr. Delabole to himself, as he climbed into the mail-phaeton which was waiting for him at the door, "I have heard Philip tell a great many lies cleverly, but never so cleverly as that one he told just now. His face was a perfect study of candour. Pierrepont? I'll make a little memorandum of this conversation when I get into the city."

When Philip Vane had finished his breakfast, he went into the writing-room, and wrote this letter to his wife:

Friday.

You need not send up the benefit money to-morrow, I will come down and fetch it.

Meet me in the same place at the same time, I have something very important to say to you.

SPECTRES OF OUR TIME.

THE unfailing interest which attaches to a well-authenticated ghost-story — not to speak of the equally robust expectation that, from each fresh phenomenon as it occurs, shall be born a theory of explanation that may cover much that is foregone — furnishes a sufficient excuse for continuing to arrest and chronicle, if we may not analyse, those mysterious gleams that shoot across our ordinary life, and vanish, leaving only, according to circumstances, a perplexed recollection or an indistinct fear.

"Is there not a cause?" Again and again is the question propounded, and never yet, so far as the writer is aware, has it called forth any answer calculated to retain the colour of reason under the powerful lens of philosophical inquiry.

Is the vision due to the seer or the seen? If the former, how is it that a condition, unquestionably so peculiar and abnormal as to produce the needful receptivity, is reached at precisely the same moment, by two or more individuals, differing entirely in mental and bodily constitution, and yet witnesses of the same vision? If, on the other hand, these spectra can reveal themselves at pleasure, how strange is it that the sole result that most frequently follows such departures from the hitherto recognised laws of nature, is the alarming some timid infant, or stolid ignorant boor?

That ghosts have local predilections is a fact hardly less familiar than the popular mode of accounting for it, namely, tradition, by virtue of which the spectre is forcibly kept going, and is conjured up whenever there is danger of its disappearing for good and all. But even a ghost must have a beginning, and how, when there is as yet no tradition?

There was none at D., an extensive property in Essex, sixteen years ago, in the possession of the writer's brother, where an extraordinary incident of this description undoubtedly occurred.

D. Church, a picturesque old edifice, well mantled in ivy, and half-concealed on two sides by cypress and the dismal yew, stands in the park, about a quarter of a mile from the hall. It was about sixteen years since that the clerk, a very staid and sober man, much respected in the parish,

having had occasion, one autumn evening, to visit the church, returned hastily, pale and disordered, to his home, and announced that a strange thing had befallen him. He had quitted the church while it was yet light, and was half-way down the path, when a figure appeared to enter by the churchyard gate, and move to meet him. It was that of a woman of the cottage class, decently dressed, and wearing a red cloak. She seemed to be stooping, but, as the distance lessened, the horrified man saw that she was headless! As he shrank instinctively from the path, the spectre, without staying its measured step, passed close beside him, and, having done so, disappeared.

The man's serious and truthful character appears to have considerably narrowed the field of explanation. No one doubted that he had really seen the vision he described, and it was equally undeniable that no one could explain its object and character. The circumstance itself left a very painful impression on the poor clerk's mind, and possibly acted injuriously on his already failing health. He died within a few months, having frequently adverted to the occurrence, adhering to the story as he had from the first related it.

Two years later, at a spot in the graveyard close to that at which he had encountered the vision, there was dug up the headless skeleton of a woman.

This, however, is only half the story.

Several years more elapsed, and the rectory of D. had passed into the hands of the Reverend A. W. H., an old friend and schoolfellow of the writer, from whose lips the latter learned the incident that follows.

One morning the rector received an unexpected visit from a friend whom he had not seen for some time, and who had never previously visited that part of the country. During luncheon, the rector happened to speak in commendation of an organ which had been recently placed in his church, upon which the visitor, Mr. S., himself a skilful organist, expressed a wish to try it, and presently, under the guidance of one of his host's daughters, Miss Emily H., proceeded to the spot.

It was a hot summer afternoon, and the pair lingered in the cool organ-loft, enjoying the swelling chords, as each in turn essayed the instrument. It was Mr. S. who was playing, when his companion noticed that, after glancing carelessly over his shoulder, his gaze became suddenly fixed, his hands stopped, his face became deadly pale.

Before Miss H. could question him, however, he had regained his usual demeanour.

"It is gone," he said, passing his hand across his forehead, with a sigh as of relief. "But, do you know, I have seen a spectre!"

The young lady smiled, as she looked down the aisle, radiant with the westerling sun, as it glowed through the stained-glass windows. "You are imaginative. What was it like? Whence did it come?"

"The last question I will not pretend to answer," replied Mr. S. "I only know that she—that is, it—entered at the door, passed hastily up the aisle, and vanished."

"Could you see the face?"

"There was none. The figure was headless."

"What dress?"

"Such as a farmer's or cottager's wife might wear going to market. Her red cloak first caught my eye. She carried something on her left arm. It is getting late," continued Mr. S., rising, "and this unexpected auditor has disturbed my nerves. Shall we take a turn in the park?"

They did so, meeting the rector, to whom they related the incident that had occurred. Mr. H. said little in reply, but on reaching home requested his visitor to make a sketch on paper of the figure he had seen. Mr. S. complied, when the rector, going to a cabinet, took from it another sketch, and placed them, side by side, on the table. They were in all respects similar.

Relating to his friend the former apparition, Mr. H. explained that the sketch in his possession had been prepared from the minute description of the first seer.

The circumstance next to be related, in illustration of the local character of these "visitings," is unique of its kind, and grotesque enough in its details to justify as minute a narrative as authenticated information can supply.

It is, the writer believes, about five years since, that an advertisement announced to be let, on lease, a handsome mansion, standing in its own grounds (about twenty acres), ten miles from London and one from a railway station, the rent being no more than one hundred a year. Now, seeing that land in that locality could be easily let at three pounds an acre, it followed that any one, willing to dispense with the meadow portion of the property, might inhabit the many-roomed mansion, with its garden, &c., at a rent of fifty pounds.

Tempted by this prospect, a gentleman named Ronaldson, about to marry, and desirous of settling within reach of his pro-

professional duties (he was at the bar), obtained an order from the agent in London, and proceeded to examine the mansion.

Nothing could be more delightful. It stood in a very sequestered spot, nearly a mile distant even from the very little village of W., whose one modest hostel, the Red Cow, seemed sufficient to supply all the needs of that temperate neighbourhood. The house itself far surpassed the representations of the advertisement; and what even more excited Mr. Ronaldson's astonishment was the fact, first revealed to him by the staid old housekeeper, that several of the best apartments were fitted with old but handsome furniture, the use of which was included in the terms demanded.

So charmed was the visitor with all he saw, that he at once resolved on taking the house, and, only giving himself time to take the measure of the rooms which remained to be furnished, hastened back to London, to close with the agent, having informed the old housekeeper that he would return on the following Saturday to make final arrangements.

It chanced that, on the day in question, Mr. Ronaldson was unable to visit W. until so late an hour that the dark surprised him while still engaged in acquainting himself with the charms and capabilities of his new dwelling. Anxious, however, to complete the business, he expressed an intention of remaining to sleep, and requested that a large bedroom, to which he had taken a strong fancy, might be prepared for him.

The housekeeper began immediately to start a host of difficulties. The room itself was damp—the bed-linen unaired—the chimney choked with soot, &c. The gentleman would find the Red Cow, though small, very clean and comfortable, and, moreover, would there find a good supper, which the unfurnished larder of the mansion certainly could not supply.

But Mr. Ronaldson was of a character that rather relished a contest with difficulties. He would be content, for the nonce, with a sofa. As for supper, a rasher of bacon, with a couple of eggs and a cup of tea, were all that he required, and were, in fact, his favourite refectation.

The housekeeper reluctantly gave way, and only warning the visitor that, if he were not lodged and fed to his entire satisfaction, the blame should not rest with her, withdrew to make preparation.

A far better repast than he had been led to expect rewarded Mr. Ronaldson's perseverance. Furthermore, the housekeeper presently pronounced the enormous bed

to be perfectly dry, and, in point of comfort, worthy of the occupation of royalty itself! It seemed as if—now there was no help for it—the visitor was to be made as comfortable as possible.

On being conducted to his chamber, Mr. Ronaldson found it a perfect blaze of splendour. Every place in the room calculated for the reception of a candle, exhibited one.

"My good lady!" said the astonished guest, shading his eyes, "I cannot sleep in the midst of this illumination! Pray help me to reduce it a little."

With curious reluctance the old woman aided in the extinguishment of about four-fifths of the lights; after which she continued to flit restlessly about the room so long, that Mr. Ronaldson, losing patience, announced his intention of retiring instantly to rest.

The housekeeper moved to the door, but, pausing, came back.

"I beg your pardon, sir," she said; "I have one favour to ask, and it is for your own comfort too. Be so kind as to leave at least one light burning when you go to bed."

"I am not accustomed to a light in my room, and dislike it very much," he replied. "So if you mean it, as you say, for my comfort—"

"I do, sir, and I request it particularly," said the woman, earnestly.

"All right. I'll remember. Good-night."

Mr. Ronaldson sat musing for a little while by the fire; then, starting up, undressed, put out all the remaining lights, and was in the act of stepping into bed when he remembered his promise.

"Dence take it," he muttered. "But I must be as good as my word." And, relighting a candle, he placed it on a side-table, and got into bed.

Nothing could be cosier, but still it so happened that he could not sleep. No change of position was of any avail. Rest he could not; and thinking that perhaps the unaccustomed light had banished slumber, he at length sprang out of bed, blew out the candle, and returned to his rest. No sooner had he lain down than a singular hoarse murmur, like a distant sea, made itself audible from below. By degrees, growing louder, it resolved itself into voices—the voices of men engaged in a dispute, which every moment became more violent. Oaths and imprecations succeeded, and, at length, blows. Upon this Mr. Ronaldson jumped out of bed and lit the candle. In an instant all was still as death. He rubbed his eyes:

"I must have been dreaming without knowing it," he muttered.

But, on looking at his watch, he found that not three minutes had elapsed since he had last lain down.

Once more he got into bed; but again the light annoyed him, and he extinguished it. In a second, the mysterious quarrel recommenced, with greater fury than before. The voices rose louder, the execrations were more frequent, there was a rush and trample of feet, then blows, delivered, apparently, with savage purpose. Ronaldson once more lit the candle. The tumult ceased as suddenly and completely as before.

Ronaldson took a turn or two in the chamber, debating what he should do. Was it fancy? Some mental disturbance beyond his control? He felt his pulse, he bathed his face, and, finally, resolved to try the experiment calmly once again. He placed the lighted candle beside the bed, and, lying down, extinguished it with a wave of his handkerchief. The contest below was resumed with twofold violence. It was, as the listener declared, like a battle of fiends! Foreign languages were used, but little more than imprecations were intelligible, and, strangest feature of all, those expressions which seemed to proceed from English combatants were, as Mr. Ronaldson affirmed, such as belonged to a former age.

Cries and groans succeeded, and Mr. Ronaldson, unable to remain quiescent while such a scene was, even in fancy, proceeding beneath him, for the last time left his bed, and lit, not only his bed-candle, but every other candle in the apartment. All again was still, but the visitor had had enough, and paced the haunted room till morning.

Upon questioning the housekeeper, that staid person simply inquired if the request she had made had been complied with, and, finding it was not, respectfully, but positively, refused any responsibility as to the consequences which, she was ready to admit, usually followed. Nor could her questioner obtain any further satisfaction from this quarter.

He was not more fortunate with the agent, to whom he related the disturbances which, if not explained, would certainly compel him to resign the bargain. The agent merely bowed, and handed him back the agreement.

The excitement of that night at W. affected Mr. Ronaldson's health. A week or two later, he was attacked with brain fever, from which, however, he completely

recovered. It might be suggested that this was rather the cause, than effect, of the nocturnal conflict at W.; but how account for the request and conduct of the housekeeper, and the entire absence of surprise on the part of that very practical and business-like man, the agent, when informed that this spacious and most desirable family mansion was uninhabitable by reason of the quarrels of ghostly banditti?

If haunted houses are as plentiful in London itself as some persons assert, it may really become necessary to insert in leases a short conditional clause, having reference to this form of disturbance. The incumbent of a West-end district was but recently consulted on the subject of a large house, but a few hundred yards from Belgrave-square, from which tenant after tenant had departed in despair, and in which no servant could be persuaded to remain. Not to mention mysterious noises, "spirit" hands were both felt and seen. The fact is at least curious that, in this house, several years since, a now defunct spiritualist society held occasional meetings.

Another very large house, in a fashionable street, had to be given up by the lessee, a distinguished general officer, at a considerable sacrifice, his lady's rest, and indeed his own, being perpetually broken by smothered shrieks, of which it proved impossible to ascertain the cause.

But, of all the spectres of our time, none have, in amount and character of testimony, exceeded that of B., personally investigated by the writer, a few weeks after the commencement of the disturbing influence.

It was in a letter from a friend residing in the neighbourhood—Sir C. S.—that the writer received intimation of certain occurrences at B., so remarkable, yet so authentic, as to justify a visit of inquiry to the spot.

The pretty, sequestered village of B. is situated a few miles from Rugby, and consists only of a few small dwellings of the cottage class, the inhabitants of which appeared both clean, sober, and intelligent, with manners which might have done honour to a more polished community.

In this village died, March the 3rd, 1851, a Mrs. Knebb, aged sixty-seven. Born and bred in the place, she had married, late in life, a person of some means, who, dying, left her in easy circumstances for persons of her class, the cottage in which she resided forming a portion of her own property. She was, however, of a most pennurious disposition, concealing to the utmost

her means of subsistence, and denying herself the necessaries of life to such an extent as to bring on the illness of which she subsequently died.

During this illness she was supplied with all she needed by her nephew, Mr. Hart, a farmer, and was nursed by her neighbours, Mrs. Holding and Mrs. Griffin, her habits retaining such hold upon her that she, on one occasion, pretending to be penniless, sent Mrs. Holding to beg for sixpence to purchase brandy.

As her end approached she betrayed no mental disquietude, but, when turned in her bed by her two attendants, expressed an opinion that she should not survive that night, adding that she trusted it would prove so, and that before another she would be in paradise.

She did, in fact, die that night, having a short time before left everything, by will, with the executorship, to her nephew, Mr. Hart.

A month after the funeral, Mrs. Holding and her uncle, who occupied the cottage adjoining that of the deceased, which had been shut up, were alarmed by loud thumps against the partition wall, slamming of doors, and sounds as of furniture violently thrown about. This last circumstance was the stranger, seeing that everything had been removed from the building. But, on entering the house, all was quiet.

These noises generally commenced about two o'clock A.M. (the time of the old woman's death), but sometimes earlier, and caused so much alarm that Mrs. Holding declared they could never bear to go to bed till eleven, an unheard-of dissipation at B., in order that, when they did retire, fatigue might enable them to sleep through it all.

One night, however, the noise was so fearful that Mrs. Holding got up and went in search of her uncle, who was absent. His consolatory comment was simply:

"Well, missis, I do believe there's our Missis Knebb come back!"

On the 9th of April the family of a respectable sawyer, named Accleton, tempted by the low rent, came into the disturbed house.

Mrs. Accleton informed the writer that she occupied the bedroom in which the old woman died, a rather lofty and commodious apartment, having in the ceiling a small trap-door, leading to a sort of loft among the rafters. Accleton was much from home, but the eldest child, a girl of ten, slept in a small bed in a corner, about three paces from her mother.

On one occasion, soon after they entered, Mrs. A. was awakened, about two in the morning, by a tremendous crash in the room below. Thinking it was her husband, who had gone to Hilmorton feast, she called out, "Oh, so you've come home at last, I can hear."

No answer was returned, but the noises were renewed, at intervals, until seven o'clock, when the husband returned.

Similar sounds were heard nearly every night, but nothing was seen until one night, or rather morning, about two, the elder Accletons were aroused by loud shrieks from the child:

"Mother, mother! There's a woman standing by my bed, a-shaking her head at me."

The parents saw nothing, but the child persisting, Accleton got up, and approached the bed, saying:

"Nonsense, nonsense, girl. It's only your mother's cap and gown hanging on your bed."

(This was not the case, it being merely said to pacify her.)

The girl, however, reiterated her story, adding that the woman wore a white cap and mottled gown, and was very tall. (The deceased, Mrs. Knebb, was five feet eleven inches in height.)

All was now quiet till about four, when the child, who had been lying with her face to the wall, shrieked out again in an agony of terror:

"Mother, mother! Here's that woman again!"

She declared that the visitor had awakened her by turning the corner of the sheet over her face.

The apparition was seen by the little girl in all, seven times, and her health, the mother declared, had been seriously injured by the nervous shock, though, "by the blessing of God, and with youth on her side," she would now get over it.

She was a pretty, blue-eyed, intelligent child, with a frank, infantine manner, the reverse of cunning. She told the writer that the spectre came with a low laughing, or singing voice, was surrounded by a "brown light," stood erect with folded hands, and gazed at her in a bold, firm manner.

Up to this time, some degree of incredulity existed among the neighbours as to the child's statement, a feeling never partaken by the mother. But all doubts were soon to be set at rest.

Mrs. Accleton, whose mother was sleeping with her, in the absence of her husband,

was awakened one morning, at two, by a sudden light in the room. In an instant, the idea of the spectral presence crossed her mind, and she at first closed her eyes, resolved not to see it, but, regaining courage,

"I said to myself," she related, "the Lord's will be done. I never did her any harm. With that, I lifted my head from the pillow, and there she stood, at the bed's foot, and 'set' me as firm and proud as if she was alive. I looked at her full five minutes. Then I spoke to my mother, who was awake, and told her there was Mrs. Knebb. But she only said, 'Lord help us, don't see it!' and pulled the clothes over her head."

Mrs. Accleton had previously declared her intention to address the spirit, should it appear, but her courage proved unequal to this, though, she added, it moved towards her with a gentle and appealing manner, and even slightly touched the bolster, "as though it would have said, 'Speak, speak.'" The form and face were distinctly visible in a misty light; it was beyond question the presentment of the deceased woman.

Mrs. Radburn, a determined-looking dame of about threescore, who had enjoyed the dangerous honour of partaking Mrs. Accleton's couch, stated that she was aroused one night by a pressure on her elbow. The room was so light that, mistaking it for dawn, she prepared to rise, when a clock struck two, and she in the same instant became aware of the presence of the apparition. It stood between her and the window. "Patches of light" were about the room, all the witnesses alluding to coruscations of some description, which always accompanied the spectre, as it went "flustering" through the apartment.

A very well-mannered and intelligent woman was Mrs. Griffin, before-mentioned, who had nursed the deceased, and performed the last offices to the dead. She, too, was aroused at the same hour by the same cause. She, however, possessed more nerve than her neighbours, for though conscious of the presence of the apparition, she determined to baulk it.

"I 'sleered' my eyes through the room, sir, and said, 'My old wench, you shan't know I'm seeing of you.'"

The spirit, however, exercised some compulsory power, or curiosity did, and Mrs. Griffin saw the spectre, looking "bold and impudent," and wearing a dark mottled gown, and a double-bordered white cap, in which she was dressed for the grave.

The usual brownish light was visible, pervading the room, and sending streams or "ribbons" of lustre towards that portion of the ceiling where the trap-door was situated.

All these parties referred to the moaning noise made by the phantom, and compared it to the constant moaning made by the deceased during her last hours.

The most extraordinary feature of the story has yet to be narrated.

The circumstance of streams of light pointing always towards the before-mentioned trap-door, coupled with certain conjectures, engendered by the deceased's miserly ways, induced a suggestion that money might be concealed in the loft above, and, an appeal being made to Mr. Hart, the nephew and executor, he proceeded to the house, and, assisted by Mrs. Accleton, who held the ladder by which he reached the trap, crept into the loft.

It was totally dark, and the candle was thrice blown out by the eddying draughts before he reached the inner recesses. Presently he called out that he had found a parcel, and flung down into the room a bundle of old deeds.

A minute later he cried out again, and hastily descended, bringing with him a large bag, secured with twine, and covered with dust and cobwebs. On opening it, notes and gold were found to a considerable amount.

On being asked if he did not appear surprised or elated at such a discovery, Mrs. Accleton replied that he displayed much agitation, shed tears, and said that "now he trusted the poor soul would rest in peace."

The expectation was not immediately fulfilled. Three days, indeed, elapsed in quiet, but, on the fourth, the noises recommenced worse than ever.

Mr. Hart now proceeded to examine more closely into the affairs of the deceased, when certain debts were discovered still existing against her estate. These were scrupulously satisfied, after which (the dead year, as Mrs. Radburn called it, being up) all disturbance ceased.

Such are the facts of the B. ghost, detailed, by those questioned, with all the appearance of perfect sincerity and good faith. They were undoubtedly respectable, and seemingly religious persons, impressed with a deep reverence for things divine. It may have been but fancy, still the idea certainly crossed the writer's mind, that the wonderful visitation to which these poor people believed themselves to have

been subjected had had the effect of somewhat refining their coarse natures, and imparting to their language and manner a sort of dignity not usually characteristic of their class in life.

Understanding that the reverend rector of B. had expressed doubts of the story, the writer inquired as to this point.

"Yes, yes, sir," was the prompt reply. "Mr. G. may say so, and think so, but seeing is believing, and not twenty Mr. G.'s can convince us, four sane people, against the evidence of our own eyes and ears. Mr. G. is a very good gentleman, but he has not seen what we saw."

CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

SOUTHAMPTON BUILDINGS (CHANCERY-LANE END).

FROM the bad, gay times of Charles the Second, we find Southampton-buildings tenanted by nonentities, who were born, ate, married, slept, and died unrecorded by any bard. But in 1820 a ray of light strikes them, and one of the least popular, but by no means the least remarkable, of the Charles Lamb set came to lodge at No. 9, half-way down on the right-hand side as you come from Holborn. There for four years lived, taught, wrote, and suffered that admirable essayist, fine art and theatrical critic, thoughtful metaphysician, and miserable man, William Hazlitt. He lodged at the house of Mr. Walker, a tailor, who was blessed with two fair daughters, with one of whom, Sarah, Hazlitt, a married man, fell madly in love. He declared she was like the Madonna (she seems really to have been a cold, calculating flirt, rather afraid of her wild lover). To the Liber Amoris, a most stultifying series of dialogues between Hazlitt and the lodging-house keeper's daughter, the author appended a drawing of an antique gem (Lucretia), which he declared to be the very image of the obdurate tailor's daughter.

This untoward but remarkably gifted man, whom Lamb admired, if he did not love, and whom Leigh Hunt regarded as a spirit highly endowed, usually spent his evenings at the Southampton; as we take it, that coffee-house on the left hand, next the Patent Office, as you enter the Buildings from Chancery-lane. It is an unpretending public-house now, with the quiet, bald-looking coffee-room altered, but still one likes to wander past the place and think that Hazlitt, his hand still warm with the grip of Lamb's, has entered it often.

In an essay on Coffee-House Politicians, in the second volume of his Table Talk, Hazlitt has sketched the coterie at the Southampton, in a manner not unworthy of Steele. The picture wants Sir Richard's mellow Jan Steen colour, but it possesses much of Wilkie's dainty touch and keen appreciation of character. Let us call up the old customers at the Southampton from the dead, and take a glass with them. First of all comes Mr. George Kirkpatrick, who was admired by William, the sleek, neat waiter (who had a music-master to teach him the flageolet two hours every morning before the maids were up), for his temper in managing an argument. Mr. Kirkpatrick was one of those bland, simpering, self-complacent men, who, unshakable from the high tower of their own self-satisfaction, look down upon your arguments from their magnificent elevation. "I will explain," was his condescending phrase. If you corrected the intolerable magnifico, he corrected your correction; if you hinted at an obvious blunder, he was always aware what your mistaken objection would be. He and his clique would spend a whole evening on a wager as to whether the first edition of Doctor Johnson's Dictionary was quarto or folio. The confident assertions, the cautious ventures, the length of time demanded to ascertain the fact, the precise terms of the forfeit, the provisos for getting out of paying it at last, led to a long and inextricable discussion. Kirkpatrick's vanity, however, one night led him into a terrible pitfall. He recklessly ventured money on the fact that the Mourning Bride was written by Shakespeare; headlong he fell, and ruefully he partook of the bowl of punch for which he had to pay. As a rule his nightly outlay seldom exceeded sevenpence. Four hours' good conversation for sevenpence made the Southampton the cheapest of London clubs.

Kirkpatrick's brother Roger was the Mercutio to his Shallow. Roger was a rare fellow, "of the driest humour and the nicest tact, of infinite sleights and evasions, of a picked phraseology, and the very soul of mimicry." He had the mind of a harlequin; his wit was acrobatic, and threw somersaults. He took in a character at a glance, and he threw a pun at you as dexterously as a fly-fisher casts his fly over a trout's nose. "How finely," says Hazlitt, in his best and heartiest mood, "how finely, how truly, how gaily he took off the company at the Southampton! Poor and faint are my sketches compared to his! It was like

looking into a camera obscura—you saw faces shining and speaking. The smoke curled, the lights dazzled, the oak wainscoting took a higher polish; there was old S., tall and gaunt, with his couplet from Pope and case at Nisi Prius, Mudford eyeing the ventilator, and lying perdu for a moral, and H. and A. taking another friendly finishing glass. These and many more windfalls of character he gave us in thought, word, and action. I remember his once describing three different persons together to myself and Martin Burney (a bibulous nephew of Madame D'Arblay, and a great friend of Charles Lamb's), namely, the manager of a country theatre, a tragic and a comic performer, till we were ready to tumble on the floor with laughing at the oddity of their humours, and at Roger's extraordinary powers of ventriloquism, bodily and mental; and Burney said (such was the vividness of the scene) that when he awoke the next morning he wondered what three amusing characters he had been in company with the evening before." He was fond also of imitating old Mudford of the Courier, a fat, pert, dull man, who had left the Morning Chronicle in 1814, just as Hazlitt joined it, and was renowned for having written a reply to Cœlebs. He would enter a room, fold up his great-coat, take out a little pocket volume, lay it down to think, rubbing all the time the fleshy calf of his leg with dull gravity, and intense and stolid self-complacency, and start out of his reveries when addressed with the same inimitable vapid exclamation of "Eh!" Doctor Whittle, a large, plain-faced Moravian preacher, who had turned physician, was another of his chosen impersonations. Roger represented the honest, vain, empty man purchasing an ounce of tea by stratagem to astonish a favoured guest: he portrayed him on the summit of a narrow, winding, and very steep staircase, contemplating in airy security the imaginary approach of duns. This worthy doctor on one occasion, when watching Sarratt, the great chess-player, turned suddenly to Hazlitt, and said, "I think I could dance. I'm sure I could; ay, I could dance like Vestris." Such were the odd people Roger caricatured, on the memorable night he pulled off his coat to eat beef-steaks on equal terms with Martin Burney.

Then there was C., who, from his slender neck, shrillness of voice, and his ever-ready quibble and laugh at himself, was for some time taken for a lawyer, with which folk the Buildings were then, as

now, much infested. But on careful inquiry he turned out to be a patent medicine seller, who at leisure moments had studied Blackstone and the statutes at large from mere sympathy with the neighbourhood. E. came next, a rich tradesman, Tory in grain, and an everlasting babbler on the strong side of politics; querulous, dictatorial, and with a peevish whine in his voice like a beaten schoolboy. He was a stout advocate for the Bourbons and the National Debt, and was duly disliked by Hazlitt we may feel assured. The Bourbons he affirmed to be the choice of the French people, the Debt necessary to the salvation of these kingdoms. To a little inoffensive man, "of a saturnine aspect but simple conceptions," Hazlitt once heard him say grandly:

"I will tell you, sir. I will make my proposition so clear that you will be convinced of the truth of my observation in a moment. Consider, sir, the number of trades that would be thrown out of employ if the Debt were done away with. What would become of the porcelain manufacture without it?" He would then show the company a flower, the production of his own garden, calling it a unique and curious exotic, and hold forth on his carnations, his country-house, and his old English hospitality, though he never invited a friend to come down to a Sunday's dinner. Mean and ostentatious, insolent and servile, he did not know whether to treat those he conversed with as if they were his porters or his customers. The prentice boy was not yet ground out of him, and his imagination hovered between his grand new country mansion and the workhouse. Opposed to him and every one else was K., a radical reformer and tedious logician, who wanted to make short work of the taxes and National Debt, reconstruct the government from first principles, and shatter the Holy Alliance at a blow. He was for crushing out the future prospects of society as with a machine, and for starting where the French revolution had begun five-and-twenty years before. He was a born disturber, and never agreed to more than half a proposition at a time. Being very stingy, he generally brought a bunch of radishes with him for economy, and would give a penny to a band of musicians at the door, observing that he liked their performance better than all the opera squalling. His objections to the National Debt arose from motives of personal economy, and he objected to Mr. Canning's pension because it took a farthing a year out of his own pocket.

Another great sachem at the Southampton was Mr. George Mouncey, of the firm of Mouncey and Gray, solicitors, Staples Inn. "He was," says Hazlitt, "the oldest frequenter of the place, the latest sitter-up; well informed, unobtrusive, and that sturdy old English character, a lover of truth and justice. He never approved of anything unfair or illiberal, and, though good-natured and gentleman-like, never let an absurd or unjust proposition pass him without expressing dissent." He was much liked by Hazlitt, for they had mutual friends, and Mouncey had been intimate with most of the wits and men about town for twenty years before.

He had known Tobin, Wordsworth, Porson, Wilson, Paley, and Erskine. He would speak of Paley's pleasantry and unassuming manners, and describe Porson's deep potations and long quotations at the Cider Cellars. Warming with his theme, Hazlitt goes on in his essay to etch one memorable evening at the Southampton. A few only were left, "like stars at break of day," the discourse and the ale were growing sweeter. Mouncey, Hazlitt, and a man named Wells alone remained. The conversation turned on the frail beauties of Charles the Second's court, and from thence passed to Count Grammont, their gallant, gay, and not over-scrupulous historian. Each one cited his favourite passage in turn—from Jacob Hall, the rope-dancer, they progressed by pleasant stages of talk to pale Miss Churchill, and her fortunate fall from her horse. Wells then spoke of Apuleius and his Golden Ass, the Cupid and Psyche, and the romance of Heliodorus, Theogenes and Chariclea, which, as he affirmed, opened with a pastoral landscape equal to one of Claude's. "The night waned," says the delightful essayist, "but our glasses brightened, enriched with the pearls of Grecian story. Our cup-bearer slept in a corner of the room, like another Endymion, in the pale rays of a half-extinguished lamp, and, starting up at a fresh summons for a further supply, he swore it was too late, and was inexorable to entreaty. Mouncey sat with his hat on, and a hectic flush in his face while any hope remained, but as soon as we rose to go, he dashed out of the room as quick as lightning, determined not to be the last. I said some time after to the waiter that 'Mr. Mouncey was no flincher.' 'Oh, sir!' says he, 'you should have known him formerly. Now he is quite another man; he seldom stays later than one or two; then he used to help sing catches and all sorts.'"

While living in that state of half-assumed love frenzy at No. 9, Southampton-buildings, Hazlitt produced some of his best work. His noble lectures on the age of Elizabeth had just been delivered, and he was writing for the Edinburgh Review, the New Monthly Magazine, and the London Magazine, in conjunction with Charles Lamb, Reynolds, Barry Cornwall, De Quincy, and Wainwright (Janus Weathercock) the poisoner. In 1821, he published his volume of Dramatic Criticisms, and his Table Talk; in 1823, his foolish Liber Amoris; and in 1824, his Sketches of the Principal English Picture Galleries.

Hazlitt, who was born in 1778, and died 1830, was the son of a Unitarian minister of Irish descent. Hazlitt was at first intended for an artist, but coming to London, soon drifted into literature. He became a parliamentary reporter to the Morning Chronicle in 1813, and in that wearing occupation injured his naturally weak digestion. In 1814, he succeeded Mudford, as theatrical critic, on Perry's paper. In 1815, he joined the Champion, and in 1818 wrote for the Yellow Dwarf. Hazlitt's habits at No. 9 were enough to have killed a rhinoceros. He sat up half the night, and rose about one or two. He then remained drinking the strongest black tea, nibbling a roll, and reading (no appetite, of course) till about five. He took supper at the Southampton; his jaded stomach then roused, he ate a heavy meal of steak or game, frequently drinking during his long and suicidal vigils three or four quarts of water. Wine and spirits he latterly never touched. Morbidly self-conscious, touchy, morose, he believed that his aspect and manner were strange and disagreeable to his friends, and that every one was perpetually insulting him. He had a magnificent forehead, regular features, pale as marble, and a profusion of curly black hair, but his eyes were shy and suspicious. His manner when not at his ease, Mr. P. G. Patmore describes as worthy of Apemantus himself. He entered a room as if he had been brought in in custody. He shuffled sidelong to the nearest chair, sat down on the extreme corner of it, dropped his hat on the floor, buried his chin in his stock, vented his usual pet phrase on such occasions, "It's a fine day," and resigned himself moodily to social misery. If the talk did not suit him, he bore it a certain time, silent, self-absorbed, as a man condemned to death, then suddenly, with a brusque "Well, good morning," shuffled to the door, and blundered his way out, audibly

cursing himself for his folly in voluntarily making himself a laughing-stock of an idiot's critical servants. It must have been hard to bear with such a man, whatever might be his talent, and yet his dying words were, "I've led a happy life."

TWO SURREY LANDSCAPES.

I. SPRING.

APPLE-trees bunched with pink and white,
King cups (Oberson's) gilt and bright.
Meadows speckled with spots of gold
To-morrow will double a thousandfold.
Blossoms that strut as black and solemn,
Under the poplar's leafy column,
As newly appointed pluralists.
Elms that through the evening mists
Look like giant mutes in gloom:
Gathered around a nation's tomb.
But this is the shadowy twilight time.
Why should I sadden my April rhyme
With thoughts of night? No, let me sing
Of the bird that throws from its ruffling wing:
The clover's dew, while the thrush below
Whistles so gay where thickest grow
Aches and hazels, and where till dark
The cuckoo utters his one remark,
Cuckoo!

II. SUMMER.

The brown-faced mower, with sweeping scythe,
Whose bright steel has cut its lavish tithes
Of great ex-daisies as white as milk,
And soft green grass-blades soft as silk,
And those purple plumes that children bind
In bunches tied with the sycamore rind,
Is resting now beneath the shade
The spreading, generous oak has made.
That great brown jar has gurgling treasure
To yield its thirsty master pleasure.
And down the long grey swathes that lie
Before him, fits the butterfly.
Ah! spendthrift of the sunshine, see
Those flowers you passed so carelessly
But one hour since. Out idler gay,
You've squandered all your little day.
Night lurks behind that distant hill,
Where the long ranks of firs are still,
That hill with a drifting cloud for its crest,
And a scarf of sunshine athwart its breast.
Sunshine!

A TRIP TO THE LAND OF SCOTT.

PART I.

[In our last Raid over the Border into the land celebrated in the poems and romances of Sir Walter Scott (see ALL THE YEAR ROUND, No. 111), we halted at the venerable castle and town of Stirling. In the approaching tourist season, a more than usually numerous swarm of travellers and sight-seers from all parts of the world will be attracted to Edinburgh, to the Scottish Border, and the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland, in consequence of the centenary of Sir Walter's birth, which is to be celebrated in a manner becoming the respect, affection, and admiration of the Scottish for the character and genius of their great countryman. In view of, and in preparation for the event, we resume the series at the point where we left off, and ask our readers to accompany us in our rambles over the glorious scenery which Sir Walter's pen has rendered classic.]

In travelling by rail from Stirling to Callander, we leave unvisited, though not

unseen, the village and castle of Doune, the scene of Edward Waverley's temporary imprisonment. There is a bridge over the Teith at Doune, built three hundred years ago by a worthy tailor, who was not in the least degree ashamed of his business, as the following inscription on the parapet abundantly testifies: "In God is all my trust, said Spittal. The 10th day of December, in the year of God 1553, founded was this bridge, by Robert Spittal, Tailor to the Most Noble Princess Margaret, Queen to James the Fourth." It would appear that in those days ladies employed men to make their garments, as they did but recently in Paris, under the pleasant but extravagant reign of the fair Empress Eugénie. Why, it may be asked, en passant, the ridicule thrown upon tailors? Did it commence in the feudal ages, when every man was supposed to be a warrior, and tailoring was held to be women's work? In this connexion, as the Americans would say, it is recorded of a late alderman of London, who had been a saddler, that he objected strongly to the candidature of a tailor for the office of sheriff. The tailor replied that he saw no force in the objection. The alderman had been himself a sheriff, and his trade was to make clothes for horses. He, the tailor, made clothes for man, a clearly superior calling.

From Doune we skirt along the Teith and arrive at the fashionable village of Callander. We are now at the very entrance of the Highlands, and the great Bens rear their giant heads to the north and west—Ben Ledi, Ben Venue, Ben Lawers, and others less celebrated: while as we journey onwards, Ben Lomond and Ben Arthur, of greater altitude, appear in due succession.

At Callander, whose mild climate recommends it to invalids, there is little to interest the hale and hearty, unless it be a ramble to the top of Ben Ledi, which towers above it, the dominant mountain of the place, and a stroll to the Lynn or Fall of Braehla. Ben Ledi means in the Gaelic language the Mount of God, a name which is derived from its consecration, in the Druidic ages, to the Celtic and Phoenician divinity Bel or Baal. Beltane or Bel Tein, the fire of Bel, was celebrated on the 1st of May, and Beltane E'm still signifies in Scottish parlance the Eve of May Day, as appears from its frequent mention in ballad literature.

It was the custom in the Druidic days at Callander, for the whole population to

assemble on Ben Ledi on May morning, to receive from the hands of the priest the "need-fire," all other fires and lights throughout the realm having been extinguished on Beltane E'en, in order to be relighted from the sacred fire on the altar. "Any one," says Colonel Robertson, in his *Gaelic Topography of Scotland*, "who has ever been at the summit of Ben Ledi, must have noticed that the top, instead of being bare and rocky like those of other mountains, is remarkably verdant, having been evidently cleared of stones, and smoothed by the hand of man;" and by the fact also, one would think, that the feet of a large population had annually ascended it during many hundred years, in the performance of a solemn religious ceremony. Beltane E'en is still a kind of festival among the peasantry in remote districts, if any district can be called remote in our railway era. Some account of the Beltane E'en observances may be found in the valuable treatise on the *Darker Superstitions of Scotland*, by Mr. Graham Dalyell.

"Bracklynn's thundering wave," as Scott calls the Lynn or Fall of Brackha, is the leap made by a mountain stream, called the Keltie, in its course from the hill-side to join the Teith, about a mile and a half from the village. It is a point of duty among all visitors to Callander to visit this beautiful fall—a favourable view of which is obtained from a rustic bridge erected for the purpose.

There are so many pleasant trips to be made to every point of the compass from Callander, that the difficulty is to choose which shall be the first. So great, however, is the fascination exercised over the minds of most people by the genius of Scott in the *Lady of the Lake*, as well as in *Rob Roy*, that nine tourists out of ten decide without hesitation in favour of the Trossachs and Loch Katrine, famous as the scenes of the adventures of the gallant Knight of Snowdon, the fierce Roderick Dhu, and the gentle Ellen Douglas. We decide to do otherwise for reasons of our own, resolving to make the Trossachs the last, instead of the first of our excursions, in order that we may take Loch Lomond in our way, ascend the Ben if the weather be favourable, and thence proceed to Glasgow, or such other point on the Clyde, as may be most convenient for our future movements. We avoid, accordingly, the beaten track, and wend our way to the less frequented regions of the Lake of Monteith and the clachan of Aberfoyle; the

latter known by name to every one who has read *Rob Roy*. A drive of three miles brings us within sight of the small sheet of water called Loch Rusky, in which is a little island where John Monteath, who betrayed Wallace to the English, once possessed a castle, of which the ruins still remain. The Monteaths were a noble house, notwithstanding the evil fame of one of their race, and left bright marks upon the history of their country to atone for the one black spot that will ever attach to the name in the minds of the romantic youth of Caledonia.

At the Port of Monteath, a little village or clachan on the shore of the beautiful lake, boats may be procured for conveyance to the Island of Inchmahome, or the Island of Rest, one of the most interesting places in Scotland. Thither we were rowed accordingly, and found the ruins of an Augustine priory, said by tradition to have been erected by Edgar, son of Malcolm Canmore, in a time that is almost prehistoric. All who visit this little frequented part of Scotland, lying so near to, and yet so out of the beaten track of tourists, look with much interest upon a little piece of garden ground, scarce twenty yards in circumference, surrounded by a box-hedge of about six feet high. There seems nothing particular about it at a first glance, and it is only when the visitor learns that the garden was made, and the box-hedge planted by a little child, of three years of age, more than three hundred and twenty years ago, that the tiny plot of earth attracts attention. After the battle of Pinkie, on the day still known as Black Saturday, when the Scottish forces, under the Earl of Arran, regent of the realm, were defeated by the English, under the command of the Protector Somerset, the infant Queen of Scotland was sent to Inchmahome to be out of the reach of danger. With her were sent as playmates and companions, four other little maidens, all named Mary, "the Queen's Marys," as they were afterwards called. The mournful ballad of the Queen's Marys, in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, represents the four as "Mary Beaton and Mary Seaton, Mary Carmichael and me;" me, the heroine of the tragical love-story, being Mary Hamilton. But the real Marys attendant on the queen in her infancy were Mary Beaton, Mary Seaton, Mary Fleming, and Mary Livingston. As time wore on, some of the Marys either died or left the court; but long after she became a queen in power, and a woman in experience, the lovely Queen of Scots made it

a custom to have four Marys as her ladies of honour, until at last it became a common phrase to speak or sing of a favourite waiting-woman as a Mary. The child's garden of Inchmahome, with its tall box-hedge, and its little enclosure overgrown with rank luxuriant weeds, and with bushes that have reached the altitude of trees, is a touching spectacle to such as can carry back imagination to the times when the innocent child, so sorely in her after life to be buffeted on the storms of passion and suffering, frolicked in her little isle, with nothing to do but to learn her daily lessons under the tuition of worthy John Erskine, the prior of the monastery, to tend her flower-beds, and to make merry with her artless companions. After having had charge of the little queen for two years in the Isle of Rest, Erskine was commissioned by the Scottish Estates to convey her to France to be educated under the auspices of the French king, with a view to her ultimate marriage with the Dauphin. They embarked on board of a French ship-of-war, from Dumbarton Castle, attended by the four faithful Marys, and her three natural brothers, grown men, and ruthless as the other Scottish nobles of their time, and who each envied her her legitimacy, and the throne which it gave her. When Mary returned to Scotland, a lovely young widow, eleven years afterwards, her four faithful Marys returned with her. It was on the 19th of August, 1561, when the weather should have been bright in Scotland, that the great John Knox, an unfriendly and prejudiced observer, mentions the day as one of evil appearance and omen. "The very face of heaven," he says, "at the time of her arrival, did manifestly speak what comfort was brought into the country with her; to wit, sorrow, dolour, darkness, and all impiety. In the memory of man, that day of the year was never seen a more dolorous face of the heaven than was at her arrival, which two days after did so continue: for, besides the surface wet (wet) and corruption of the air, the mist was so thick and so dark, that scarce might any man espy another the length of two butts. The sun was not seen to shine for two days before and two days after. That forewarning God gave to us! But, alas! the most part were blind." The happiness of poor Mary's life ended in France; and she returned to Scotland with a presentiment almost as gloomy as that of John Knox, that dark days were in store for her and for her native country, of whose people and manners she knew so little that was

favourable, and so much that was forbidding. Mary never revisited the Isle of Rest, never may be said to have known rest at all, until the final scene at Fotheringhay, when the axe of the headsman ushered her to that final repose of the grave, in which she found the peace that cruel Fate had so persistently denied her while living.

We leave Inchmahome with regret, and proceed to the clachan of Aberfoyle, a distance of about four miles, through a picturesque country, Ben Lomond looming grandly in the distance, "hill paramount and watch-tower of the clime."

It was at Aberfoyle, as all readers of Rob Roy will remember, that the excellent Bailie Nichol Jarvie met Major Galbraith, and had his memorable encounter with that hero, armed with a red-hot poker to defend himself from the major's sword. Until very recent times, it was the custom at Aberfoyle to exhibit to visitors the identical poker which the Bailie used in the encounter, from which he came out with so much credit; but the new generation has grown sceptical, and no more believes in the Bailie's poker than it does in the veritable pair of pincers with which St. Anthony pinched the devil's nose, which used to be, and possibly is still shown to the curious somewhere down in Sussex.

From Aberfoyle, after due refreshment on "the wine of the country," with oat-cake, and such transcendently good butter as Scotland and Switzerland alone can supply, we continue our course to Loch Ard and Loch Chon, places little visited, but among the wildest and grandest within the compass of the British Isles. In the solitudes of this region, under the landward shadow of Ben Lomond, the Regent Murdoch, Duke of Albany, took refuge from the cares of his uneasy and thankless sovereignty, and from a castle, which he built for himself on a small island in Loch Ard, he was taken captive to Stirling, and there executed. Two miles behind Loch Ard, lies Loch Chon, than which, with all its accessories of crag and mountain and wild-wooded defiles, there is nothing more romantically and savagely picturesque in Scotland. Both of these lochs are favourite resorts of such happy anglers as can obtain the privilege of fishing in their well-stocked waters.

The second excursion which we resolve to make from Callander is to the Braes and the Kirk of Balquhither, or Balquhider, in the heart of the country of the great Clan Gregor, or MacAlpine, a district, almost

every hill, dell, and mountain torrent of which is renowned in song and story.

The road lies almost due north, by Bochastle, a spur or ridge of Ben Ledi, of which mention is more than once made in the *Lady of the Lake*, and through the small village of Kilmahog, where, over the door of a wayside inn, we see a rude attempt at heroic art, in the shape of a sign, representing a duel between two ferocious-looking combatants, one of whom, in the Highland garb, represents Roderick Dhu, and the other the Knight of Snowdoun. Continuing this road we come to the celebrated Pass of Leni, one of the entrances to those Alpine regions, which a very small force of the native population could, and often did, defend successfully against vastly superior numbers. Emerging from this rugged defile, we come in sight of Loch Lubnaig, or the Crooked Lake, about five miles in length, surrounded by steep, and in some places perpendicular banks of crag and mountain, which throw their deep shadows far over the lake, and give it the dark and gloomy aspect which it exhibits, except when the sun pours its meridian rays directly upon it. Half-way up the loch on the eastern side stands a solitary farm-house, called *Ardchullerie*, the property, but not the residence, of a ripe scholar, the well-known and highly-respected Laird of Kier; and noted as the place where another scholar, Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller, secluded himself from the world, while engaged in writing the work which has made his name famous.

Skirting Loch Lubnaig for its whole course, and thence traversing for three miles the district of Strathire, we diverge from the high road eastwards at Kingshouse, and enter upon the village and the Braes of Balquhither. At Kirkton, close to Loch Voil, where a new church has recently been erected, highly useful in the neighbourhood, but not very ornamental—and Scottish churches seldom are ornamental, except in the great cities—lie, buried side by side, the famous Rob Roy and Helen, his wife. A heavy slab of grey stone, without any inscription to denote the names of the "poor inhabitants below," lies over each grave. On the tombstone of Rob is rudely sculptured a Highland broadsword, the weapon that he could wield so well, and in the use of which, from his great strength as well as his length of arm (he was able to tie his garter below his knee without stooping) he was more than a match for all com-

petitors. At the head of Loch Voil, a smaller sheet of water than Loch Lubnaig, still stands the house of Inverlochlarly, where he lived during the peaceful latter years of a life of more than average storminess in its youth and maturity, and where he died at an advanced age in 1736. The history of the Clan Gregor, and of Rob Roy, its last great central character, are well told by Sir Walter Scott in the introduction to the *Abbotsford Edition* of the novel. The whole of the circumstances connected with the cruel persecution of the clan during many ages would, if truly told—as they have never yet been—reflect high discredit, not only upon the great families who were the immediate neighbours of the Macgregors, but upon the governments both of Scotland and England, which legalised the rapacity and vindictiveness of those who sought to profit by the extermination of a race which had given many kings to Scotland before the Stuarts were ever heard of. Even Scott himself has not done historical justice to Rob Roy, who was not a thief, in the Saxon and vulgar acceptation of the word, and who only laid himself open to the charge of being a robber and a freebooter, because, in conformity with the wild and all but regal notions of his tribe, and of the Highlanders generally, he considered himself as much entitled to wage war against his enemies, as the king of Great Britain. Private war is murder and robbery in the eyes of the law, but they were not such in the eyes of Robert Macgregor, or in those of any of his clan contemporaries, who did not hope to profit in lands and honour by the impoverishment and ruin of the Macgregors. Rob Roy was a Highland gentleman, neither much better nor much worse than his neighbours, and, when he died, was honoured with a funeral which showed the high estimation in which he was held, and at which all the gentry and leading people for fifty miles round attended.

One story of Balquhither, characteristic alike of the Macgregors and their enemies, and of a barbarous time, but too recently passed away, is recorded by Sir Walter Scott in the introduction to the *Legend of Montrose*, and forms the main incident of that romance. This murder cost the Macgregors dear, for the privy council of Scotland granted a commission to the Earl of Huntly and others, to attack and pursue the offenders with fire and sword, and exterminate them, like wild beasts, wherever they might be found; a commission which appears to have been executed with the utmost rigour. At a subsequent time the

Macgregors were forbidden to wear armour, or to use any weapons except a blunt knife to carve their food with, and their very name was considered too offensive to belong to a good man and a loyal subject, and was consequently rendered illegal. A worthy gentleman of this ancient clan, still living and flourishing, maintains that the Macgregors, notwithstanding all the persecutions they have suffered, are the greatest and noblest of the clans; that all others are by hundreds of years their juniors, and that all mankind are divided into three classes; first, the Macgregors proper; second, those who, by their virtues, bravery, and genius, are worthy to be Macgregors; and, thirdly, the *oi polloi*, the swinish multitude, who are too ignorant and brutal to rank on an equality with the meanest member of the royal clan. This worthy gentleman's idea hurts nobody, and is as amusing to his friends as it is consolatory to himself. He does me the honour to say that I ought to be a Macgregor, and hints that, somehow or other, though neither he nor I can trace the genealogy, I must have had a member of that glorious clan among my maternal ancestors.

Passing from Rob Roy's grave, and forgetting for awhile the rights and the wrongs, the bravery and the cruelty, the chivalry and the lawlessness of the turbulent but much-wronged family, who were first of all oppressed, and then barbarously punished for resistance, we retraced our steps to Kingshouse, and proceeded to Lochearn Head, or as it was formerly, and ought still to be called, Kinloch Earn. Here, at the commodious inn that commands a view of the loch in its full length and breadth, we put up our steeds and order dinner. There is no lovelier spot in Scotland, or one in which it would be pleasanter for a man wearied with mental work to take up his abode for a couple of summer months, with nothing to do but to explore the glens, thread the mazes of the streams, climb the mountain tops, row or sail upon the placid water surrounded by hills, like a gem in its setting, or, if his tastes inclined that way, to make war upon the pike, the trout, and the salmon ferox which abound in the rivers that run into the loch.

Our third and last excursion from Callander is the one best known and most popular, and one never omitted by the tourists, who are attracted to Scotland by their admiration of Scott's genius, and who think themselves bound in duty to tread

the beaten track which he has celebrated. With these hero-worshipping tourists, not to see Loch Katrine and the Trossachs is not to see Scotland, and so thoroughly is Scott master of their movements that they leave unvisited hundreds of scenes as beautiful as any which he has described, and which lie in close proximity to the well-worn track. To any one who has Scott's poetry in remembrance it is easy to cite the various passages that mention the places on this well-frequented road. First is Colantogle Ford, at which Roderick Dhu's safe-conduct of the Knight of Snowdown ended; and next is Loch Vennachar, in the description of which the poet has lavished all his wealth of imagery. Vennachar is five miles in length, and neither more nor less lovely than five hundred other lakes and lakelets that gem all the west of Scotland, and of which the praises have not yet been sung by any bard or minstrel known to fame in our day.

Most travellers desire to obtain a glimpse of Lanrick Mead, the trysting-place of the Clan Gregor, to which Malise in the poem summons the son from the funeral of his father, the bridegroom from his bride at the altar, the ploughman from the field, the smith from the anvil, to carry out the high behests of their chieftain. The place is only interesting for its association with the poem, but no reader of Scott passes it without the tribute which genius exacts from its admirers. The Bridge of Turk, where Fitz-James shot ahead of all his companions in the chase, and "rode alone," and by so doing led to the incidents and the catastrophe of the poem, is next passed. Beyond the Bridge of Turk is Loch Achray, smaller than Loch Vennachar. Its northern shore is bold, rocky, and picturesque, and brings us to what many travellers consider to be the crowning glory and beauty of Scottish scenery, the world-renowned Trossachs. The name in Gaelic signifies the rough and broken territory which it was, when no road existed through it, except that which was traced by the feet of the roving Highlander. In days not very remote, when Queen Victoria was in her youth, there was a comfortable little inn in the Trossachs, with an all but unpronounceable Gaelic name; but since that time the great stream of summer travel has so largely increased, that a spacious baronial hostelry has displaced its humble predecessor, and taken possession of the place in the name of "modern improvement." I for one am not ashamed to own that I regret the disappearance of the little inn, with its few

travellers, every one of whom was a welcome guest. The new building is doubtless a convenience, but its appearance is not in keeping with the wild accessories of the scene, and jars upon the harmony of surrounding objects like a discord in music. Hence, after due rest and refreshment, we push on to Loch Katrine, or the lake of the Catterans (be it said, by the way, that this etymology is disputed). This lake has been so often and so well described in prose and verse, and notably by the great wizard himself, that any new pen that would attempt to do justice to its mingled loveliness and grandeur has a hard task. Language, at the best, is poor and weak in the description of the sublimities of nature. There are but few adjectives that can be employed, and they speedily become threadbare, and the mock raptures of sentimental description convey but faint impressions. It is of little use to tell the world that such a scene is fine, or lovely, or grand, or solemn, or sublime. The world either does not understand the epithets, or interprets them in a manner different from that of the writer; and there is an end. It must suffice to say that the scenery of the Trossachs disappoints none of the pilgrims who come to visit it, and that it is a fortunate thing for everybody in the neighbourhood, who owns land or who has his living to get, that Sir Walter Scott came, saw, admired, and described it.

Loch Katrine has its utilitarian as well as its romantic aspects. It supplies the city of Glasgow, nearly forty miles distant, with an abundant, and, in case of need, an over-abundant wealth of the finest water in the world. Happy is Glasgow to be so provided. Happy would London be if it were only half as well cared for. The needs of Glasgow, amply as they are met, make but little, if any, difference in the broad expanse of Loch Katrine. The mountains feed the lake with their constant rills, and burns, and foaming torrents, and Glasgow takes away the superfluity, leaving Loch Katrine none the poorer for the abundant largess which she has given to the crowded city.

We of course visit Ellen's Isle, the isle where the Lady of the Lake, in the poem but not in the fact, lived in a castle, such as only a novelist could have created in so limited a space. The sail over the lake is beautiful exceedingly, and the little isle itself, steep of ascent, is well worth a visit on its own account, irrespective of the halo of romantic glamour which the poet's genius has thrown over it. But for the in-

struction of a matter-of-fact age, let it be here recorded that there never was a house, much less a castle upon it, and that Ellen's home might as well have been in the clouds as in the little isle of Loch Katrine.

This queen or empress of Scottish lakes, as she might be called were there no Loch Lomond, Loch Long, or Loch Awe to contest the sovereignty, is about ten miles in length, with an average breadth of a mile and a half. Having used up all my adjectives, I can say no more about it than to advise all those who seek for fine scenery in continental Europe, or America, or anywhere else under the benignant sun, to try this part of Scotland; and if they are not satisfied, the fault will lie in themselves.

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LXIX. A RIOT.

In the mean time, Maud had reached the steps of the door which opens on the terrace-walk of the quadrangle; and from that elevation she made a survey of the ground.

This fruitless pursuit of her hostess was beginning to grow ridiculous; she would have laughed, I dare say, if she had not been also very near crying. For her comprehensive survey was unrewarded by a sight of Lady Mardykes; and here was she already in the third day of her visit, without having yet exchanged a word with her hostess, or having been introduced to a single person; and were it not for the absurdly magnificent proofs of Lady Mardykes's very marked attention to her comforts and luxuries, displayed in the number of rooms assigned to her use, and the exquisite taste in which they were furnished, she would have begun to suspect that Lady Mardykes had quite forgotten that she had ever invited her to Carsbrook. Occupied, somewhat uncomfortably, with these thoughts, Maud wandered across the croquet-ground, and up and down some of the shady alleys which lie beyond it. But her search was fruitless. Lady Mardykes was nowhere to be found.

So Maud, disappointed and a little offended, returned with a slower step to the place from whence she came, wondering whether she was ever to meet Lady Mardykes again.

Her guests certainly did not seem to trouble her a great deal, and, so far as Maud could see, she was pleased to leave

them very much to amuse and take care of themselves.

Well, it was disappointing; but, after all, Lady Mardykes was sure to be home for luncheon, possibly an hour before it. In the mean time, other people might introduce themselves, as had happened yesterday, and so her acquaintance might grow.

Her anticipations were quickly justified, for as she was walking down, by this time pretty well resigned to her disappointment, toward the yew-hedge walk, a singular-looking person accosted her.

He was almost a pigmy in stature, and his air was ineffably pompous; his face was long and pallid, with a turn-up nose, and he wore an expression of conceit and scorn as he eyed passers-by, such as Miss Vernon could not have believed in except perhaps in the caricature of a pantomime. He walked slowly, rising on his toes as he did so, and carried a big portfolio and a small shagreen case under his arm, and a quadrant strapped across his back. To Miss Vernon he made a slight bow and a smile, so transitory that it amounted to little more than a momentary grimace, the effect of which was rather odd than alluring.

His long chin terminated in a lank white beard, unaccompanied by either whisker or moustache. A solemn gloom overspread his countenance, and an habitual look of surprise made his small eyes round, except when a smirk of contempt or of self-esteem lighted his face.

It seemed to be the rule in this house not to wait for introduction. The appearance of this dwarfish sage aroused Miss Vernon's curiosity, and she was rather glad that she had so quickly found some one willing to entertain her.

"You have heard, madam," said he, walking at her side, "of Laplace, of Newton, you have heard of Watt, you have heard of Davy. I see, by your head and eye, that you have an intellect and an interest for the physical sciences, and, I need scarcely add, you have heard of Sidebotham, and the perpetuum mobile. He is at present a guest at this place, and of course he comes and goes as he pleases."

"Oh? Indeed!" said Miss Vernon, affecting a greater interest in the worthies of science than perhaps she felt, and ashamed to admit that she had never before heard of Sidebotham in that brilliant muster-roll. "Lady Mardykes has so many distinguished guests that one is scarcely surprised to meet any great name among them."

He simpered with gratified self-complacency and made his bow, and in an instant was more solemn than ever.

"The individual who has the honour of addressing you," he continued, "is Sidebotham, the mechanist, the mechanical genius of this, and *all* ages, as I have had the honour of being termed."

At this moment a sweet voice inquired:

"Well, Mr. Sidebotham, how goes on the perpetual motion?"

And raising her eyes, Maud saw the Duchess of Falconbury before her, smiling.

"That is a question that answers itself," said the professor, slowly averting his face with upturned nose and a sublime sneer. "How goes on the perpetuum mobile? Why it goes on *for ever*? Ha, ha, ha!"

And he laughed, as demons do in melodramas, in three distinct "Ha's."

Her grace was not in the least ruffled, for her attention was engaged by a melancholy but gentleman-like looking man who was approaching.

"You see that man," whispered the duchess in Maud's ear; her eyes looking down the shady walk, which they had now entered.

"The Spanish ambassador?" inquired Maud, who saw that minister, in the antique costume which he affected, approaching with toes turned out, at a slow and grand pace, in the rear of the melancholy man.

"Ambassador! He's *no* ambassador, my dear; he has lost his head a little; he's a Mr. Ap-Jenkins, who has a slate quarry in Carnarvonshire; but it is not about him. You see this man in black who walks towards us, looking down on the gravel over his shoulder. Did you ever see such a comically miserable face? When he comes up we'll talk to him; he'll amuse you."

Maud thought that such pining misery and malignity as were expressed in that dark face, could not have been conveyed in the human countenance.

The duchess said, as he was passing by, unheeding:

"I hope, Mr. Poinders, you find that boiling sensation a little better to-day?"

"Sensation?" he repeated, stopping suddenly, and raising his dreadful face. "Heat and motion tell pretty plainly, when water, much less blood, is bubbling at a boil? No, not better, *worse*. My blood boils; as yesterday, so to-day, and so for ever and ever, amen!"

"I'm so sorry," said the duchess, pressing her hand ever so little on Maud's arm,

by way of showing her enjoyment of what was passing.

The sufferer, about to resume his walk, added:

"And I am subject, to-day, to violent shocks of electricity."

He ground his teeth, and muttered to himself, and so passed on. The duchess was laughing quietly, as she turned again to Maud, who was anything but amused; she was very much shocked, on the contrary.

"The poor man is perfectly mad," whispered the duchess

Miss Vernon felt a hand laid softly on her shoulder, before she could speak; and looking round, saw that frightful face.

He said rapidly, with his eyes close to hers:

"I am beyond the hope of salvation!"

And he turned and pursued his slow, solitary walk through the valley of the shadow of death. What on earth could induce Lady Mardykes to permit a mad-man to walk about these grounds? A filmy suspicion was stealing over Maud, too terrific for utterance.

The Spanish ambassador, in full fig, arrived. There was an opening just here in the yew-hedge, and a low hedge of sweet-briar, running for some yards, at the edge of the walk, made the air at this spot fragrant.

His excellency, the Spanish minister, having arrived, the little party came to a halt, here commanding a view of the house and the croquet-ground, as well as one of the long and sequestered alleys in both directions.

The minister made his king-like greeting. They were standing on the grass, that with a broad belt skirts the walk; the croquet-ground before them, the little sweet-briar hedge in the rear.

His excellency, notwithstanding the sultry weather, wears, as before, the skirt of his black mantle flung across his breast, over his shoulder. He is speaking loud, throwing his chest well out; his head is thrown back, his dark eyes half-closed. His clear brown complexion and black moustache, white, even teeth, and handsome features, lend a cavalier-like grace to the contemptuous smile with which he surveys the pigmy of perpetual motion, and flouts him with a lofty irony.

The dialogue grows a little more spirited, as the ambassador with folded arms persists in his lofty vein of banter. The homunculus becomes more fiercely voluble on his perpetual motion, and treats his excellency with a good deal less ceremony

than he likes. Both parties are waxing fiery.

"Mechanic! perpetuum mobile! Professor! Philosopher!" said his excellency, smiling on, and quite closing his eyes for a short time. "A great European name. Sidebotham and Co., grocers, Cheapside. Why, no one who lives near you can fail to discover the perpetual motion. It exists in your tongue, ha, ha! your tongue—it is nowhere else about you—and it never ceases."

The sage gasped; sprang back two or three steps; and rose, as usual, to his toes, with his fists clenched, trembling all over, his teeth set, and his eyes starting from their sockets.

"You have no business talking so," said the duchess, haughtily, "if we spare you all inquiry into the authenticity of your diploma, or whatever you please to call it, I think you might, at least, remember what is due to rank; you can hardly suppose that it can be an agreeable pastime to the Duchess of Falconbury to witness a low quarrel between two such persons as Mr. Sidebotham and Mr. Ap-Jenkins."

But the minister, nothing moved from his faith in his own representative dignity, smiled superbly, with folded arms, his black cane, tipped with its golden crown, held gracefully in his French-gloved hand, and with his chin high in air, he observed, in a tone of cold ridicule:

"Duchess of Falconbury! Ha! ha! ha! How charmingly that comes from the lips of Mrs. Fish, of New York!"

And he made the lady a satirically ceremonious bow.

The eyes of the duchess gleamed actual fire; her face, her very lips grew white. She stood open-lipped and breathless. It was hard to say whether the great lady or the pigmy was most furiously agitated.

To the latter his excellency turned again with a haughty wave of his white-gloved hand, and observed:

"As for you, you illiterate dwarf and grocer, I shall order my secretary to take you by the cocked-nose, and jerk you over that wall, like one of your own bad red-herrings."

The lady uttered a sudden scream of fury, and the philosopher jumped in the air, and slapped his forehead, with a roulade of blasphemies, yelling still more shrilly, "Let me—let me—I'll annihilate him! I'll annihilate him!" and they rushed nearly together upon his excellency the Spanish ambassador, who smiled in haughty scorn, as well he might, of such an attack.

The homunculus, strung to double his natural strength by fury, was first to reach the object of assault, and grasping the Goliath in his arms below the knees, and, nothing daunted by the untoward interference of his own quadrant, which, in the feat, swung over his head, and hit him a smart blow over the nose, lifted the minister fairly off his feet; and this superb personage, in spite of a frantic effort to recover his equilibrium, fell backward, with an undignified souse, and a grunt, through the tangled hedge of sweet-briar, so that half his person lay on the grass, at the other side, and his shapely legs were struggling wildly for escape, at this.

With the acumen and promptitude of her sex, the enraged duchess caught up the jet-black cane with its head of gold, that had flown from his hand, and with immense rapidity discharged a shower of whistling cuts, right and left, on the silken calves of the ambassador, who kicked right and left, shrieking horrible threats and wild appeals to his sovereign, to heaven, to the laws of nations, to his servants, in the vain endeavour to struggle through the thick fence, while the professor of mechanics, who had transferred himself to the other side, seized his hair and moustache in both hands, and with his heels against his shoulders, tugged as hard as if it had been to tear his last beefsteak from the jaws of a tiger. The ambassador was roaring "murder" by this time, and the shrieks and gabble of the executioners rose horribly over his roars of panic, while his mouth was dragged upward at the corners by the moustache into a monstrous caricature of a smile.

The uproar, wilder and fiercer, alarmed the loungers and the croquet players. Mallets were dropped and balls abandoned. Some whooped and threw up their hats in saturnine ferocity. Others broke into screeching laughter. A frightful and contagious excitement ran swiftly through the strange throng.

At this moment, however, several strong, grave-looking men, who acted unobserved as a patrol in those pleasure-grounds, came running up at the top of their speed to quell the outbreak.

Professor Sidebotham let go the moustache and dropped the ambassador's head on the ground, as an Irishman would say, like a hot potato; rearranged his quadrant and recovered his hat, concealed his bleeding nose with one hand, and affected to be a sedate professor and an ornament to

society, and highly to disapprove of the mysterious riot.

Not so the duchess. She had tasted blood, and plied the supple cane with shrieks and Billingsgate, resolutely, and even ferociously, resisting all interference. She turned now upon the men who had caught her wrists and disarmed her; she scratched, she stamped, she kicked, she bit.

Darkdale emerged from the house in the midst of this struggle. He had a strange, short garment in his hand with enormously long sleeves. The duchess seemed to recognise this, for at sight of it she redoubled her struggles, she became quite furious. By a kind of magic, in spite of all, without violence, by a sinister dexterity, Darkdale with the aid of the other men got it on her. The arms were drawn across her breast, and the long sleeves crossed and tied behind, so that no force or skill which she could exert could in the least avail to extricate her.

All her struggles could effect nothing. She was quietly and completely overpowered and hurried, now uttering long despairing screams, but no longer offering active resistance, swiftly across the grass to the terrace, and so disappeared into the door through which she had lately emerged in so different a mood.

"What is that you have just put upon that lady?" Maud, who was horribly agitated, inquired of a broad-shouldered, dark-faced man in a short fustian-coat. He looked at her silently for a minute, and smiled cynically.

"It is a thing we call a strait-waist-coat," he answered.

"But that is for people who are quite mad," said Maud.

"Well, I take it," he replied, "you don't want to see no one madder than that."

CHAPTER LXX. CAGED.

It seemed to Maud Vernon that she did not breathe once, from the time she left the scene of the too significant buffoonery she had just witnessed, until she found herself, she could not tell how, in her own dressing-room.

It seemed as if she awoke there.

She saw Mercy Creswell standing with her back against the wall, pale as a ghost, with a dark stare, and the corners of her mouth screwed down hard as she gazed at her. She looked scared and guilty, and as if she expected she did not know what; her hands she held folded together as

tightly as the joints could clasp, and was as motionless as the wooden door-case behind her, and never took her frightened, watchful eyes off her young mistress.

There was something in the look and mien of the young lady, you may be sure, to account for the panic of the maid.

Miss Vernon sat down trembling, and then got up, pressing her hands to her temples, with a terrible look of helplessness, and she walked round and round the room, with long stifled moans. After a time she stopped, and looked slowly about her.

"My God!" she gasped, "I'm terrified! Did it all happen?"

She glided over to the window, and looked out on the gaily-dressed and busy crowd, and, with a cry of despairing terror, she covered her eyes with her hands.

Now she is passed swiftly from one room to another, back and forward; and thus she ran toward Mercy Creswell, and standing fixed, like an apparition, before her, cried:

"I see it all; I understand it now! Mercy Creswell, help me to think. Do you know what has happened? My God! they have inveigled me into a madhouse! Oh, you wretch—you have led me into a madhouse!" The sentence broke into a shriek at the close.

"Now don't, Miss Maud, don't, now; there's a darling!" cried Mercy Creswell, as quick and shrill as the words could fly from her lips, and with her hands extended towards her. "Ye'll take a parrokism, ye will, indeed; indeed ye will; ye'll take a parrokism, if ye don't be quiet; ye will, ye'll have it."

"You have done it; and mamma; and lady Mardykes; and cousin Max. Merciful God! All my friends! And cousin Maximilla! There's no one left—I have none to help me! Oh! where shall I hide? Help me to think of something, Mercy Creswell, my old friend; you could not forsake me—you would not. Poor Miss Maud. Oh, think of long ago, at Loydon; if ever you hope for God's forgiveness, get me out of this horrible place."

"It wasn't me, miss, so it wasn't; so 'elp me, miss; 'twas your mamma. I've no more to do with it, as God's my 'ope, than the infant babe unborn," protested Mercy Creswell, in a shrilly whine.

"I'll not stay in this dreadful place," cried Maud, "I'll lose my life, or I'll get out of it. Oh! mamma—mamma—how could you—could you—could you? I shall go mad. I can't stay here! I'll not eat or drink here; I'll find a way, some way, a

short way. Oh, mamma! you'll be sorry, then."

Again she was walking swiftly from room to room. Now up and down the floor of one; now to and fro across the floor of another, shifting her hands across her forehead with an uncertain movement.

"I can't be imprisoned here; I'm not a slave. Where is the nearest posting-house? I'll have advice; I'll write to Mr. Coke; that can't be prevented; I'll escape from this house now."

And she ran to the bedroom door.

Mercy Creswell knew that it was secured, and running into the dressing-room, she adroitly bolted the door of communication between the two apartments.

Maud now found herself a prisoner in her room. She tried both doors with growing impetuosity, but they resisted her utmost efforts.

Her own maid had locked her in, by a trick, and she was securely imprisoned in her room. This outrage fired her resentment so as, for the moment, to displace her panic.

"Open the door," she cried, shaking the lock with all her strength; "Mercy Creswell, open the door," she repeated again and again; and she heard the creak of the servant's shoe, faintly, as she stood holding her breath, close to the other side of the door.

"Open the door; how dare you treat me so? Am I to be insulted by my own servant? Let me out."

Mercy heard her run to the window, and throw it up. More cadaverous than ever her face looked, as, in a momentary hesitation, she extended her dumpy fingers, that trembled visibly, to the bolt, but she changed her mind, and withdrawing her hand, ran, instead, to the brass handle that was fixed in the wall, pulled it, and a deep-toned bell sounded all down the gallery. She had remembered that the window as it went up, drew with it a strong wire grating, which made it safe against all attempts at escape, or worse.

She stood on the gallery, and almost instantly two of those firmly-knit, hardy women, whom we may call housemaids, emerged from a room at its further end, which formed a sort of guard-room for the detachment in charge of that wing of the house, and up they came at a jog-trot; and almost at the same instant, for the alarm sounded also in the opposite direction, the iron door across the passage opened, and a keeper, a powerful man, in

barragan jacket with a white scar across his brow, and a . . . , along of old service, entered, clanging the door behind him. Beckoning them on, and waiting till they were ready to enter, Mercy unlocked the door of Maud's room, keeping herself in the rear.

"Who are you?" asked Maud, who was standing now in the middle of the room; "I have been led to suppose, this is my room. What do you all want here?"

The man stepped in.

"By your leave, miss," said he, looking with his shrewd quick glance at her hands, and then, with another, about the room; and then striding to the window, and shutting it down, he turned some little pins at the side, and said to Mercy: "You should 'a fixed the window."

"There's the grating, though."

"No matter," he replied.

"What do you mean by shutting my window without my leave?" inquired Maud, with a fiery glance.

The man took no notice of the question, but asked Mercy Creswell:

"Is there fire-irons, or anything hard and heavy, that way, here?"

"No, nothing," answered she.

"But I asked you——" repeated Maud Vernon.

"I'll attend to you just now, miss," said the man. "Nor nothing sharp?" he continued.

"I'll mention your conduct. Who is in the house, to whom I can make a complaint?" said the young lady, who was not accustomed to be treated so by servants.

She had directed her question to Mercy Creswell; but the man answered it, scarcely looking at her, as he did so.

"To the doctor, please, miss, Doctor Antomarchi," and he continued in the same even tone. "You should not 'a left her alone; don't you know this 'ere number's entered questionable? Mr. Darkdale will put another with you if you want her. Look here."

And he wet his thumb in his mouth, and turned over the leaves of a little book rapidly, and showed her something inscribed upon a page.

"Well I *would* like another in call. She could sit in the next room, d'ye see; I'm not fit alone," said Mercy Creswell, with nervous earnestness.

"I'll not remain here, I shan't stay, I'll go," said Maud, going to the wardrobe and pulling the drawers open, and beginning to place her things upon the table close by.

"And ye shouldn't leave a thing like that here," said the man, with a frown and a wag of his head, availing himself of Maud's having gone to a distant part of the room, and taking in his hand the silk cord of her dressing-gown, which lay on the back of a chair close by. "You might 'a remembered Miss Bangles, it ain't so long ago. Is there any more bits of cord about?"

"No, not one."

"Tell some one to order me a chaise from the nearest place, as soon as possible, or go and order it yourself," said Maud to the man.

"But I can't, miss; none of us, without the doctor's orders."

"Then I'll go on foot, I'll go this moment. Tell him I've left."

The man looked away with a sheepish smile, amused, and cleared his voice, and then looked grave.

"It won't do, miss; you can't go out without the doctor's order, and you must make your mind 'appy; for you can no more go out o' this house, without it was allowed, than you could walk through a wall. But it is easy for you, miss, to talk to the doctor, and tell him what ye wants, and if you persuades him, it will be all right, you know; and he's a reasonable gentleman; and anyhow, it can't do no one no harm."

Maud walked about the room, agitated.

"Very good," she said at last, "tell him I should like to see him."

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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CASTAWAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN PORT," &c. &c.

CHAPTER V. A MEETING BY MOONLIGHT.

MISS PIERREPOINT'S benefit was even a greater success than her warmest and most sanguine friends had anticipated. The dramatic critic of the *Wexeter Flying Post* remarked the next day that "such a galaxy of beauty and fashion had never before been gathered together in our little temple of Thespis."

And he was almost justified in his statement. The clerical party was fully represented. The bishop was away in London; but the dean was there, rosy and bland, following the text of the tragedy in a large quarto volume, which he had brought with him, beating time to the delivery of Mercutio's speech about Queen Mab as though he had been conducting an oratorio, and benignly deaf to the profane remarks with which the representative of Colonel Hardy in Paul Pry thought fit to season the author's dialogue. Emboldened by their august leader's presence and evident delight, the other pillars of the church gradually relaxed from the extreme state of severity into which they had thought fit to settle themselves on their entrance, while the female members of their families sighed over Juliet's woes, and tittered at Phosbe's impudence, in unrestrained freedom. Be sure that Probus, the coach-maker and Shakespearian enthusiast, was in the front-row with his family, looking as if he knew all about the tragedy, and wagging his head as one who should say, "I am pleased to see the delight it affords you, my friends, but I have been steeped in it for many years." Gerald Hardinge

was right in his anticipation of the presence of the military. The officers were there in force, from the colonel to the youngest subaltern, and being one and all in severe evening dress, gave quite an aristocratic appearance to that portion of the dress-circle which they filled. So Sam Cave said at least, and Sam Cave ought to have known, having twice attended the performances of Madame Malibran in London, and being the only person within many miles who was supposed to know what Fop's Alley was, or what it meant.

The good townspeople, too, most of whom had heard from Miss Cave of her lodger's quiet life, and of the way in which she supported her younger sister, made a point of attending in crowds, and of cheering the heroine of the evening to the echo. These cheers she really deserved, as, always conscientious and painstaking, she had never so thoroughly identified herself with any character, never so sunk her own individuality in the part to be assumed, as on this occasion. The extra excitement and fatigue, indeed, had so far prostrated her, that at the conclusion of the performance, Miss Cave, who had been checking the accounts in the front of the house, ran round to the stage-door, and seeing Gerald Hardinge in waiting on Miss Pierrepoint, bade him take her home at once, leave her at the door, and not attempt to talk to her that night, and the worthy soul added to Madge, "You will not see me, my dear, until to-morrow morning, or hear anything from me about it; though I can tell you that owing to Sam's having packed them together like herrings, we have got more money than I can ever recollect into the house, and the result will be better than I told you; I will come up to your room the first thing to-morrow morning with the

and kiosk-like over the road into the little lane, the moonbeams penetrated through interlacing trees, working a wavy arabesque pattern on the green hedgerows, and chequering the winding path with light and shade.

This time Madge was not the first to arrive. As she turned into the lane, a figure arose from the bank, against which it had been lying, and advanced to meet her. It was her husband.

"You're late," was his genial greeting.

"I came away as soon as I could, Philip," she replied; "didn't even stop to change my dress—look here." And she opened her cloak, showing Juliet's white robe underneath.

"By Jove," he said glancing at her, "there's purity! What is it, a Druidical priest's, or a virgin of the sun?"

She flushed angrily for a moment, but recovered herself directly, then said with a short laugh, "You would rather it were Iago's doublet, I suppose, and that I could not merely give you his counsel, 'put money in thy purse,' but act upon the advice. However, I can do that as it happens without the doublet. This is for you," and she placed a small packet in his hand.

"What is this?" he exclaimed, as he took it. "Oh, yes, the benefit, I forgot all about it! How much is there here?"

"Forty-eight pounds, Philip," she cried, laying her hand upon his shoulder, and looking up into his face. "Isn't it good?"

"Might have been worse," he said, quietly slipping the money into his pocket. "Well, and how did it go off, and all that sort of thing?"

"I scarcely know what you mean by all that sort of thing," said Madge; "the house was very full, as you will know by the contents of your waistcoat-pocket."

"Yes, but you? Did you tip 'em the word in grand style? Did you let 'em have it from the shoulder?"

"I spoke the text of the part, so that I conclude that I did tip them the word. I don't understand your delicate allusion to the shoulder."

"There, don't be cross, Madge," said Philip Vane, putting his arm round her; "I know I am always talking slang, but that's the fault of the people I live with; I've no doubt you acted splendidly and got plenty of applause."

"Old Mr. Probus wrote me a note this morning, declaring he had never seen Juliet better played, and he recollects Miss O'Neill."

"Dear old Probus," said Philip Vane. "What will he take to drink? Seriously though, I am delighted to hear it. Well, and what have you got to say to me?"

"I thought it was to say something to me that you came down here," said Madge; "for my part I have not got much to say. Oh, yes, Philip, one thing I want you to do, if you can, to spare me a little of that money."

"Oh," said Major Vane, "a little of that money, eh?"

"A very little will do, Philip: there are two or three things that I absolutely must have in my theatrical wardrobe, and poor Rose has scarcely a gown to her back."

"It seems to me a devilish hard thing that we should have to provide poor Rose's gowns out of our income," said the major; "however, of course she can't be allowed to disgrace the family. Let me see," he added, taking the packet from his pocket. "What did you say the figure was?"

"Forty-eight pounds," said Madge.

"Forty-eight. Five, ten, fifteen, ah, very neatly made up, forty-five in notes and three in gold. Well, Madge, I will see if I can spare you the three pounds, though I must confess that just now it is deuced inconvenient."

Madge took the three sovereigns without a word. The devils of passion and wounded pride were struggling within her, and she dare not trust herself to open her lips.

"And, by the way," continued Philip Vane, "it was upon the very subject of money that I have come down to talk to you. You know all this applause and all these compliments from old Potbus, or whatever his name is, are very well in their way, but there is nothing substantial about them. The only way to appreciate a thing is by its money value, and the salary you are earning just now is an uncommonly small one."

"When you say 'appreciate a thing,' you mean appreciate me by my money value, I suppose," said Madge, "and that to you is small. You must permit me to say, however, that you knew what it was when you condescended to accept it; and that it has not deteriorated since."

"Yes," said Philip Vane, impatiently, "all right! Just come off the high ropes, will you, and let's talk this thing through quietly, and in a business-like way. Our interests are the same, or ought to be."

"Yes," said Madge, bitterly, "'or ought to be'!"

"Now, if I were not the best-tempered man in the world, you really would put me out by your interruption! Our interests are the same, and what is good for you is good for me. Now I have an idea, which, if I can only carry it out, will improve both your position and our interests."

"Not by my going to London, Philip; not by my attempting to play in burlesque, and sing songs. Oh, for goodness sake, don't ask me to do it! It would not be of the smallest use either; I should make a dead, flat failure of it, and lose the little fame I have gained in my present humble way."

"My good girl, I am not going to do anything of the sort. I would not dream of inflicting upon you such a degradation! On the contrary, what I have to propose entirely arises from the fact that you are what you are, a leading actress, and not one of those jiggging jades."

"Do you mean to say you have heard of an opening for me in my own line in London, Philip?" cried Madge, eagerly.

"Well, no, not in London exactly," said Major Vane.

"Liverpool or Manchester?" she asked.

"No, wrong again; a little further off. The fact is, that Mr. Wuff, whose name I dare say you have heard, a man who has been mixed up in theatrical matters for the last hundred years, I believe, has been organising a troupe to go out under his supervision to America, Australia, and other places of that kind, on a three years' tour. He has made his arrangements with the best ballet people and that sort of thing, and he wants some one for a star actress, and I have come down to propose that you should go."

Madge had been listening open-eyed and open-mouthed. When he ceased, she was silent for a moment, then her first words were, "But what of Rose?"

"Oh, damn it," cried Major Vane, "must she go too?"

"She must, of course. How could I leave her, with whom could I leave her? Of course she must go!"

"Well," said Major Vane, after a moment's reflection, "I dare say that could be managed." Wuff will make her play pages' parts, or turn her into something useful, he thought to himself.

"Three years," said Madge, reflectively; "it's a long time to be away. Do you think you could manage to live without seeing London, and London acquaintances, and London ways, for three years, Philip?"

"No," said that gentleman, candidly, "I am certain I could not."

"But you will have to, if we accept this offer?" said Madge.

"Eh?" cried Major Vane, in a loud and startled tone; "you don't imagine that I am going away to play a leading lady too, do you?"

"Do you mean to say that you are not going, Philip?"

"I have not the remotest intention of doing anything of the sort; my business engagements here, my good girl, would prevent me."

"Oh," said Madge, quietly, "your proposition, then, relates to me alone?"

"Exactly!"

"You don't expect me to give you an answer here, and at once, I suppose?"

"Well, I did, as I rather want to get back to London."

"It is impossible! It is a matter which will take serious reflection. If you are so pressed you had better go; I will write to you my decision."

"No," said Philip Vane, promptly, "that won't do; you must make up your mind, please, within the next twelve hours," looking at his watch. "It is now eleven o'clock; at eleven o'clock to-morrow morning I will be here again, and you will be good enough to meet me. Consider it thoroughly, and don't act upon impulse; your reply may have a greater influence on your future than you are at present aware of. Now, good-night."

He did not offer to embrace her, he did not even approach her; but kissed the tips of his fingers airily, and walked off.

Madge, standing in exactly the same position, heard the rumble of the departing wheels of the cab which, as before, he had left at the bottom of the lane; then, with sad face and rebellious heart, she made the best of her way towards what she called her home.

DEBATING DOWN EAST.

To a very frank-hearted, independent-minded population of twenty-five hundred or so, Cranberry Centre is the centre of the world. True enough, it is to the rest of the world much like the "gem of purest ray serene," lying as it does in a deep, and for the most part unfathomed forest ocean, in northern New England. The farmers of Cranberry Centre would perhaps forgive a scholared man (as they might call him) an ignorance of Carthage; but if he had never heard of Cranberry

Centre, he would be scouted as a quack. New York is so many miles from Cranberry, not vice versa. Mighty political issues hang on the decision of the Cranberrians; the little nook of glaringly white houses heaves in earthquake throes at the recurrence of a political crisis. There is no preacher, doctor, and la'yer like the Cranberry preacher, doctor, and la'yer. You'll not find a farm in Yankeeland like Squire Pickering's. There's an old church at Cranberry, just at the brow of the hill, which is certainly the oldest in "our parts." There's a mill which turns out the biggest and evenest planks; and most of the Cranberry boys, going forth from this nursery of greatness, work marvels in the outlying world beyond. One has been vice-president of these United States; another gets fifteen thousand dollars a year as a preacher in "York."

To the outer barbarian Cranberry Centre is a bright, bustling, exquisitely situated, inviting, sunshiny New England village. There are several minor satellite Cranberrys round about, such as East, West, and South Cranberry, and Cranberry Corner; but this you will perceive at once, even if you failed to spy the sign-board at the cross-roads, is indisputably the centre. Here is the town-hall, a great architectural triumph, opened with high ceremony seven years ago, a wooden imitation (on a modest scale) of the Parthenon. Here are the three churches, Baptist, Congregationalist, Methodist, whereof two have needle spires, pointing skyward, and the other a squat square tower. Here, round the open common, is the shop where the village Jack-of-all-trades dispenses with impartial hand candles, calicoes, and pickaxes; the doctor's and the lawyer's office; the village bank; the village tavern; the academy; and Squire Pickering's old ancestral wooden mansion. Just a few steps below the common there is factory music the livelong day. The natives show you proudly the little mill, driven by water-power, where certain fancy children's toys are turned out, including base-ball bats and croquet sets.

There is everywhere cheery healthiness and vigour. The air is dry, the village street high, open, and clean, the people brown, muscular, and active. Stage-coaches still come and go; there is an old lady in Cranberry (in truth, one of its wonders) who never yet rode by rail, or saw an engine; and Silas Crow, octogenarian, who went by rail to Boston once, "twenty-five year ago, sir," declares, by every rustic

deity ("by Gosh" and "by Jiminy"), "that he'd never go agin, it shuk him up so."

Speaking of the stage-coach touches nearly, though you mightn't guess it, our subject. You would hardly look, for the founder of a debating club, to a stage-coachman. Nevertheless, the Cranberry Debating Club, christened the "Washingtonian Union," was the inspiration of Hephiah Mann, who had for three years driven the Cranberry coach. Hephiah had missed his peculiar tide to fortune. His aunt Hetty said that he was "a nat'ral born o-rator," and so he was. He drove by day, he "orated" by night. Once he visited a debating society's meeting at the Lyceum in Doefield, the nearest town, and daily destination of the coach. That fired his ambition. Should Cranberry Centre lag behind Doefield? Never. Cranberry should debate as well as its neighbours. So, sitting at eventide in the tavern porch, where were also Squire Pickering (in his shirt-sleeves), the Reverend Elkanah Pike (reading the news), Doctor Jerryly (wiping his spectacles), and Hobbs, the landlord (smoking a long clay), he broached his new-hatched plan. He represented to the assembled dignitaries that Doefield had no superiority in talent, and no more right, in fact, to have such a club, than Cranberry. It need not be a dry debating club; we might improve upon the model by introducing apt dialogue, singing, occasional addresses, and so on. It would be an excellent plan to gather the village folks together on winter evenings; would improve the mind, as well as afford innocent and popular recreation. The seed fell on genial soil. The reverend pastor said it was a capital idea. Doctor Jerryly would go for it, provided they'd make a rule not to talk politics. Squire Pickering, as "selectman," readily promised the use of the town-hall. Hobbs, the landlord, wondered if they couldn't add a little dancin', "after the speakin' was threw?"

It needed no haranguing from the oratorical Hephiah to persuade the young men to enter into his idea heart and soul; and as for the young women they took to it at once, headed by Addie Dunster, who was a new-fangled village heroine, a "sweet girl graduate with golden hair," who had been to that university out West which receives maidens, and had returned thence Demoiselle of Arts.

Start a new "notion" in a Yankee village, and everybody is soon agog with it. There is not, as in older countries, a clinging to

old ways and precedents. Novelty is, indeed, almost too much worshipped in America, for its own sake. The people, whether in town or country, are ever experimenting, trying new things. This starting of a debating society was quite an event in Cranberry Centre. The old ladies gossiped about it over their twilight tea. The farmers joked about it as they went afield. The little boys looked on the big boys with envy, for the big boys were going to immortalise themselves as orators before the whole village. The Reverend Elkanah Pike rejoiced in the plan, as one ingeniously mingling profit with the pleasures of his flock.

So one Sunday evening, when the matter was ripe, the good pastor, at a meeting in the vestry, announced that there would be a gathering of all such as wished to become members of the club, at his house, on the following evening. What a merry meeting it was! The elders, declining to take any other part than that of approving patrons, the proceedings were conducted by the younger men. Hephiah Mann was, of course, the hero of the moment. The other young men, who were to be the moving spirits of the club, were mostly broad, brawny fellows, with knotty hands, and honest, open faces, full of lusty health, and, although you might have picked flaws in their grammar, no dullards either in intelligence or skill in speaking. Every one had been trained in the free village school, and could quote you Milton and Jefferson as glibly as can, on occasion, the senators in congress. In politics it would have been hard to disconcert them; and with religious topics they were scarcely less conversant.

After some urging, Hephiah, who had privately conveyed a hint to almost every one in the room that he had a set of regulations written out, in his pocket, was induced to take a position at the parson's centre table, and read them out. He had been to the Doefield Lyceum secretary, and got the model; and had for many nights employed his brain and pen, working up the important document now to be read.

This society shall be called the "Washingtonian Union;" first, out of respect to the father of his country, whom we must always honour; secondly, because "in union there is strength."

Anybody can belong who wants to, who is twenty years old, and who'll pay the fees. Everybody who belongs must speak

when called on by the president, and also read essays. A penalty of a quarter of a dollar will have to be paid by anybody who refuses to perform this duty.

The officers shall consist of a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer, and a committee to get up subjects and arrange the debates, all to be elected every year. The fees shall be one dollar a year, to pay for lights, fuel, and Pompey for sweeping out.

The meetings shall be held every Friday night. Punctual attendance is earnestly requested.

Nobody can wear their hats at the meetings, nor scrape the floor with their feet. Peanuts are prohibited, also tobacco chewing. Disorderly folks will be expelled. Ladies can be members of the Union, and may be called upon, if so, to read essays. What their punishment shall be for not reading when called upon, the president for the time being must decide.

Members may be elected by a majority of the votes cast. A quorum shall consist of six members.

The motto is, "The Union. It must and shall be preserved."

Thus duly established, the Washingtonian Union prospered. All the great questions of the day, whether metaphysical or agricultural, literary or political, speculative or practical, were duly discussed.

On one occasion I happened to be sojourning at Cranberry Centre; and, as luck would have it, my first evening there was the night of a great debate at the Union. Mine host was very particular to inform me of the fact, and of the exact time when the debate was to begin. It was a blustering cold winter's night. The wind blew in whirlpool gales across the hills, and the snow, as it thickly descended, gathered in great clouds near the earth, and then, as if changing its mind, and intent on getting up into the sky again, whirled off and up in headlong gusts. The forests were a very Bedlam of maniac Boreases, shrieking and tearing among the branches. Yet the village street was far from dismal. The rows of white dwellings shed out bright rays from their windows upon the paths; and forth from the porches came laughing, hastening groups, making merry with the storm, and caring nothing for its fury. The majestic Parthenon porch of the town-hall loomed grandly if dimly (perhaps the more grandly because dimly) through the quivering and ever-changing

gauze of snow; and three or four large lanterns, hung to its pillars, sent out a hospitable invitation to all to enter. Just within the door was a group of newcomers, eagerly discussing the evening's arrangements, the while stamping the snow from their feet, unwinding the complicated spirals of shawls, and shaking down to a becoming fold the somewhat crumpled and disordered skirts. Here were old as well as young; the good pastor, smiling from behind his spectacles; tough old farmers, with a smell of hay about them; the inevitable little circle of maidens of uncertain age, some trying to look youthful, and others starched, sedate, and duly critical; the speakers rather fidgety and absent-minded, and the speakers' sweet-hearts looking half proud and half anxious; some small boys and little girls, who enjoyed the Union as a novelty, and as a chance to go out, and to "sit up" after bedtime.

Up in the hall, which was on the first floor, the plain deal benches had been arranged in a semicircle; the platform was duly supplied with a table, a sofa (of black hair-cloth) for the president, and a pine chair for the secretary. It was a primitive-looking place enough. The only adornment was a full-length portrait of General Washington on his charger, and looking very determined and patriotic, over the president's sofa. Gas was an unknown luxury; the hall was lighted with kerosine lamps along the walls.

The audience were a long time drifting in, singly and in shoals, chatting and excited. An elderly man in grey remarked to me that "the hull (whole) village must be there, he guessed." Finally, in bustled, with great ado, a sharp-visaged little man, passing his hand rapidly up through his hair, and evidently encouraging himself to appear self-possessed and unconcerned, and mounted the steps to the platform. "That's Squire Sweetin', the la'yer," explained the elderly man in grey. "He's the president."

The president brought his eyes gradually round upon the audience, as if to break the shock which an abrupt facing of them would produce; drew out of his pocket an interminably long yellow-and-red handkerchief, as if he were about to perform a wizard's trick with it, and were on the point of saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, you see the eggs are not here," blew his nose with great energy, and hemmed loudly twice.

That the Union was not a mere dry de-

bating club, the reader will perceive from what followed. The meeting having been called to order, the president, looking seriously toward one corner of the room, asked "if the young ladies were ready to favour us with a song?" There was at once a rustling and turning of leaves in the corner, where, round an immense, lumbering air-tight stove, was a bevy of village lasses of various ages; near them, against the wall, was a piano, whose chords a young woman with long shiny curls was trying. Presently two of the group, Miss Lois Sparks and Miss Adelta Pickering, both of whom were on the sedate side of thirty, stood a little forward, and mingled their voices in

We are—two forest—nymphs—who—dwell
In the depths—of the woodland—she—ade,

their faces growing very red, and their arms very nervous. The chorus was very merrily joined in all over the hall, and this part of the entertainment lasted through five sprightly verses.

Then we had a recitation, by a very dark young man, with a very black moustache and a very blue necktie—a "college fellar," as the natives called him—of the final speech of Othello. To make the Moor's dying eloquence more impressive, the college fellar had wrapped his sweet-heart's waterproof cloak in Roman folds about his shoulder, wore a visorless cap on his head, and used, as the implement of self-destruction, a farmer's big jack-knife belonging to the village carpenter. When he came to "I took—by the throat—the circumcised dog, and—smote him—thus!" and when he stabbed himself, with terrific aim (slitting the waterproof), and when he fell, and wriggled on the platform, to the great discomfort of the president, the hall shook with applause, and Miss Briggs whispered to Miss Wiggs that "she never saw anything so perfectly splendid in all her life!"

The golden-haired advocate of woman suffrage, Miss Addie Dunster, aged nineteen, next appeared upon the platform, and read an essay upon the Mother of the Gracchi, which was so full of poetical quotations, and had so many superlative expressions, and was read, withal, in so pleasant a voice, and with such an air of graceful shyness, that the performance quite won the hearts of the rustic audience, and almost eclipsed the triumph of the tragic youth.

You see that the Union was really much more than a debating club. Nevertheless, Hamlet was not omitted from the play.

After another song, the bustling little president announced that the debate was next in order, and that the subject for the evening was, "Man—has he physically, mentally, and morally improved within the past century, as illustrated by the people of Cranberry Centre, and in the growth of our town?"

The first speaker was the distinguished founder of the club, Hephiah Mann, coach-driver. You should have seen the painful primness with which he had got himself up for the occasion. At least half a bottle of Doctor Harrison's hyperion hair-oil must have been represented by the pasted condition of his thick red locks, which were parted behind, and fairly plastered to the sides of his face. He wore his "Sunday-go-to-meetin'" suit of black alpaca coat and waistcoat and grey homespun trousers; his cravat was yellow with black spots, and reached across over the lapels of his coat, and he wore an imitation rosebud in his button-hole. He got up with great composure, and went into his subject with Yankee directness and vigour.

He didn't believe man had degenerated in either respect, but had improved. He didn't know so much, though, about the physical improvement. "The folks who lived a hundred years ago," said he, "didn't eat so much pastry as they do now-a-days. Pastry ain't good. It disturbs your digestion. Then there's pork. Who'll tell me that pork ain't bad? It'll do in winter, when we want more fat stuff; but in summer, pork is pison—deny it who can! Wheat ought to be ground and eat, bran and all, oughtn't it, now?" For which reasons Hephiah, on the whole, decided that man, as represented by the Cranberrians, had physically degenerated, but not morally or mentally.

He sat down amid great applause, after a thrilling peroration about "our forefathers, who fit in the revolution of liberty," and was succeeded by Zenas Slader, a tall, thoughtful-looking youth, with bushy hair and hatchet face, whose clothes hung somewhat too loosely about him, and whose shoes sang a creaky song, or rather creakily trumpeted his approach, as he made his way to the front. There arrived, he assumed a somewhat belligerent attitude, and, in the travail of his thought, frowned upon his auditors. Zenas had been teaching school for a year or two, and was the lawyer's clerk and destined partner, and felt, it is needless to add, great self-confidence.

"What is't," he burst out suddenly, "'s made us grow so, if we ain't improved? Look at the factory down the road—was that there a century ago? No! Look at them churches—when was they built, I sh'd like t' know? Well, I do know, and so do you—three on 'em put up within three years. Why, what was this village a hundred years ago? I've heard tell that there was only a hundred folks here in revolution times. Go out into the road and look at the boys. Do they act as bad's they used to? The old folks tell us how the boys and gals used to 'cut up' when they were young. They don't 'cut up' so now, do they? Wall, then. Of course we ain't perfect—of course we ain't. But I was readin' the other day how Miles Standish, the old Puritan soldier, used to swear like a good un, and yet was a holy man; and Gen'ral Ethan Allen, he used to swear; and they do say Gen'ral Washington swore now and then. Do any of our first men swear neow? Does Squire Pickering swear? Does La'yer Sweetin' swear? Does Parson Pike swear? No, they don't. Wall, then. I agree with friend Hephiah—pork ain't good, and pastry certainly ain't good. But we ain't so bad off, even if they ain't, be we now?" With which crushing argumentum ad hominem, Zenas sat down in triumph.

Several of the other village hopefuls pursued the debate with great vigour, much after the style of the two I have sketched, often eliciting laughter and applause by their homely humour and their patriotic rhapsodies. When the speaking was finished, the president put the subject to the audience to vote upon it; whereat the optimist villagers almost unanimously decided that man, as exemplified in Cranberry Centre, had certainly progressed in the triple advantages of physical, moral, and mental well-being.

But even yet the entertainment of the evening was not concluded. The debate over, of a sudden the maidens came bustling through the audience, bearing baskets, and offering refreshments to each and all, dough-nuts and apple turnovers, seed-cakes and biscuits, tartlets and apples; while the youths brought cider and ginger-beer, homemade, which they dispensed in tin cups brought for the occasion. Then, in a moment, the rows of benches were whirled round and packed closely against the walls, leaving a large clear space in the middle of the hall. Before any one knew where Hephiah had disappeared to, he suddenly

showed his shining locks in the little square gallery over the door; and before any one could guess what he was up there for, he struck up a lively air on his fiddle. For Hephiah was a universal genius, and could handle a fiddle-bow, a knotty argument in politics or morals, and the reins of a team, with equal ease and éclat. The men led out their partners, and anon the town-hall fairly shook with the thumps of the dancers, dancing the ancient yet ever exciting Virginia Reel. Even the elderly gentleman who had such a terror of steam locomotion, and the sedate Squire Pickering, joined in the sport; while the younger dancers were made hilarious, as well by watching the old folks gallivant down the line as by the jolliness of the dancing itself.

It was midnight ere they could make up their minds to bundle up for the homeward jaunt. The snow was still whirling and careering wildly over street and houses, encircling the steeples with dissolving wreaths, and heaping in drifts against the knolls. But that made the home-going all the merrier, for the couples clung to each other all the tighter, and it was royal fun to fight, with one's sweetheart, against gust and drift.

ALI BABA IN GERMANY.

"Possibly you recollect," observed Rupert, laying down his elaborately adorned meerschaum, and staring at the flimsy mountain of willow shavings that filled his fireless grate, "possibly you may recollect that when you were here some weeks ago, I told you a tale about a Three-eyed Man,* the termination of which strongly resembled that of the Forty Thieves?"

"I remember the tale perfectly," answered Adolphus. "It came, you said, from Cyprus, and the two stories coincided in the termination only, being, in all other respects, essentially different."

"Good!" exclaimed Rupert. "Well, I have now discovered a legend which is essentially the same story as the Forty Thieves, with this exception, that of the termination, to which we formerly directed our attention, not a trace is to be found."

"Does the legend come from Cyprus, or anywhere thereabouts?" asked Adolphus.

"No," was the reply. "It comes from Prussia, from the principality of Halberstadt, near Magdeburg, and refers to a

castle, the ruins of which are still to be seen. The Dumburg, as it is called, was most conveniently situated for predatory purposes; and the robbers, by whom it was tenanted, were in the habit of sallying forth into the high road from Leipzig to Brunswick, and killing and murdering everybody of sufficient importance to render such operations lucrative. They had at their disposal subterranean vaults in which to conceal their ill-gotten treasure, and wells into which they flung the corpses of their victims. Ultimately the robbers of the Dumburg were put down as a nuisance by the neighbouring princes, but the belief is current that their treasures are still heaped up in the vaults. Now, once upon a time, a poor woodcutter——"

"The Ali Baba of the story," interrupted Adolphus. "Did he flourish before the robbers were put down, or afterwards?"

"We can discuss that point presently," remarked Rupert. "While this woodcutter was felling a tree behind the ruins, he saw a monk gliding through the forest, and, judging that something interesting was afoot, concealed himself, and watched. The monk disappeared among the rocks, but was soon followed on tip-toe by the woodcutter, who saw him stop at a little door, which had never been noticed by any of the villagers in the neighbourhood. At this he knocked softly, crying at the same time, 'Open, little door,' and his order was at once obeyed."

"What, no sesame!" exclaimed Adolphus, "no millet! no barley! merely the door addressed in its own proper person! It seems to me that the German tale is more primitive than the Arabian."

"When the monk had entered, the woodman heard the words 'Close, little door,' and this order was obeyed like the other. Though he trembled from head to foot, the woodman was determined to visit the spot on some future occasion, and accordingly he marked the path leading to the door with branches and stones. Never was man's mind in a more disturbed state. Glad to get home, he was no sooner there than he wished himself back among the rocks, so anxious was he, and at the same time so afraid to try his hand with the little door. During the whole of the ensuing Saturday he fasted, and on Sunday, at nightfall, he proceeded to the fascinating spot, with a rosary in his hand. The door was in its proper place, and, shaking in his shoes, he stood before it. He thought it might be opened by the monk."

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. v., p. 516.

"Decidedly," said Adolphus, "there is a sensational colouring in the German tale which is not to be found in the other."

"No one appeared," proceeded Rupert, "consequently the woodcutter knelt down and prayed. Strengthened by the devout exercise, he gave a desperate knock at the door, at the same time saying, in a trembling whisper, 'Open, little door.' It opened at once, and a narrow, dimly-lit passage was revealed, which led to a spacious vault. 'Shut, little door,' was his involuntary exclamation."

"Involuntary as it was," remarked Adolphus, "it doubtless answered its purpose."

"Advancing into the vault," continued Rupert, "the woodcutter discovered open vessels filled with old coins and heavy ingots of gold. Sacred vessels used for divine service, and costly images of saints, were likewise in great abundance. The woodcutter crossed himself, and wished that he was a hundred miles off, but at the same time he recollected that he had a wife and eight children, and he did not like to go home empty-handed."

"I object to those eight children," cried Adolphus. "The number ought to be seven, according to all the laws of precedent."

"Then, as the children have nothing to do with the story, to seven they shall be reduced to suit your views," said Rupert. "Well, the woodman hastily took several handfuls of coin, and poured them into a sack, which he took down from a nail in the wall."

"It was very handsome on the part of the robbers to put it there," observed Adolphus.

"Nay, if that astonishes you," said Rupert, "what will you say when I tell you that, when the woodcutter had reached the door with his treasure, a human voice from the back of the cave cried, 'Come again.'"

"Now what was the motive of the invitation?" inquired Adolphus. "There was no immediate mischief intended, or the voice would have ordered him to stop where he was, and he would probably have come to grief. Neither was any particular good intended, or he would have been told where he could find another sack."

"You are too deep for me," retorted Rupert. "I can only say that the woodman made no answer, but left the cave as quickly as possible by the method already tested, and hurried to the nearest church, where he offered a tenth of his treasure for the benefit of the establishment, and another tenth for the benefit of the poor. A few more coins he expended in purchasing

clothes for his family. The bulk of his treasure he resolved to conceal in his cellar, but being anxious to have some faint notion of the extent of his wealth, and not being able to count, he asked his neighbour, a hard-fisted old corn-dealer, to lend him a peck measure, of course not telling him for what it was required."

"There is an old friend, Ali Baba's brother," murmured Adolphus.

"The old gentleman," proceeded Rupert, "enjoyed a reputation for cheating the poor, which he fully merited. He kept measures with chinks in them so large that, whenever they were used, some grains of corn were sure to fall for the benefit of the dealer. In one of these a coin stuck fast, which escaped the notice of the woodcutter, but was at once detected by the shrewd corn-dealer when the measure was returned. Waylaying the woodcutter in the forest, he extorted from him, by threats, the whole story of the hidden treasure. He then changed his tone, and promised that if the woodcutter could lead him to the newly-discovered source of wealth on the following Sunday, they should equally share the profits of the expedition. The woodcutter, who did not like the arrangement at all, expatiated largely on the perils of the vault; but the corn-dealer, far from being moved, scarcely listened to his neighbour's description of accumulated horrors."

"Well now, really," interposed Adolphus, "if the woodcutter adhered strictly to the truth, I don't see there was much to be frightened at. He had seen a monk, who unwittingly showed him the way, and never troubled him further; he had come to an obliging little door, which did whatever it was told; and when he had loaded himself with coin, an extremely polite voice had requested the honour of a second visit. I am afraid that his mendacity on this occasion was very great."

"I fear so too," responded Rupert. "Be that as it might, Sunday came round, and at sunrise, not at nightfall, did the neighbours proceed to the ruins of the Dumburg, the corn-dealer having across his shoulder a huge sack, which contained twenty others of smaller dimensions, and carrying with him a spade and a pick-axe. He was to enter the vault alone, and the woodcutter, remaining outside, was to receive the sacks as they were filled, and to hide them in the bushes till the entire operation was completed. In accordance with

this plan, the corn-dealer gave the prescribed orders to the little door, which opened and closed at his bidding, and was so highly stimulated by the aspect of the vast treasures around him that he at once dragged out his twenty sacks, laid them on the ground, and began to fill them without delay. Presently, however, a huge black dog, with fiery eyes, slowly emerged from the depths of the cavern, and laid himself successively on every one of the filled sacks. 'Hence, miser!' growled the dog; and the miser made the best of his way to quit the cavern, but so completely was he befogged by terror that instead of saying, 'Open, little door,' he kept on bawling, 'Shut, little door,' at the top of his voice; and the door, already closed, remained in that condition."

"A new proof," almost shrieked Adolphus, "that the German version of the story is older than the Arabian. The conduct of the miser is almost beyond the limits of human nature. What amount of terror could make a man, whose house was on fire, throw up his window and shout 'Water,' or how could a woman, whose husband was beating her to death, cry out 'All right,' instead of 'Murder?' Could any idiocy, permanent or temporary, make a person ask for a door to be shut when he wished for it to be open? Turn to the Arabian story, and, as far as human agency is concerned, you will find that the laws of probability are respected. The mention of the grain 'sesame' has no apparent connexion with the opening or closing of doors. Cassim Baba had merely learned the word for the occasion, and terror might easily make him forget it, and substitute the name of some other and more familiar grain. In my opinion the author of the Arabian story has seen and corrected the absurdity to which I refer."

"I appreciate your reasoning perfectly," said Rupert, after a pause. "We will, if you please, in our further comparison of legends, lay it down as a canon, that when two stories are precisely identical in substance, the one that is least absurd shall be deemed the more recent. Of course you will be prepared to hear some wiseacre object that the Arabian Nights must be more ancient than tales about the corn-dealer and peasant of Halberstadt."

"Such objections are naught, as you will admit," rejoined Adolphus. "The story is only connected by accident with the Dumbburg, unless, indeed, it was told on the spot by old German contemporaries of

Tacitus, the monk having taken the place of some pagan priest. Whittington's Cat, as you are aware, appears in one of Grimm's popular tales, and it would be indeed presumption to suppose that it was first fathered within the sound of Bow bells. But, I beg your pardon, the story stands still."

"For a long time," resumed Rupert, "the woodcutter, with beating heart, remained outside. As he approached the door he heard something like a groan, and something like a howl, and then all was silent. After telling his beads with quiet devotion, he knocked softly, and, as before, the door opened when duly commanded, but this time it revealed the bleeding corpse of the miser, stretched upon the sacks, while the casks filled with treasure sank deeper and deeper into the bowels of the earth."

"I see now, clearly enough," observed Adolphus, "that the incidents are supposed to occur after the extermination of the robbers. There is no horde ready to punish the woodcutter, but the treasures are in the custody of supernatural beings, who are there for a moral purpose, assisting honest poverty, and castigating avarice. The monk may be one of these, or he may be a favoured person like the woodcutter; for it is very obvious that the appropriation of the treasure to the service of the church is looked upon as meritorious."

"The robbers having been exterminated," remarked Rupert, "as you say, before the commencement of the story, all that relates to the disguise of the chief as a merchant, and the concealment of his band in jars, all, in short, of which we were reminded by the Three-eyed Man of Cyprus, naturally falls away from the German story—"

"No—no—why will you not be accurate, dear Rupert?" cried Adolphus. "It did not fall away from the German—in my opinion the oldest story—because it never was there. The incident of the pretended merchant equally well fits the Arabian and the Cyprian tales, which have otherwise nothing in common. On the other hand, the German and the Arabian tales have everything essential in common till we come to this particular incident. We have, therefore, in default of further information, a right to assume that the disguised merchant has been tacked to Ali Baba by a comparatively late hand, having had originally no connexion with him whatever. Probably, too, he was subjected to the same

liberty in the case of the Three-eyed Man, who so curiously blends Bluebeard and Polyphemus."

AT A WINDOW.

An oriel window looks
Over elms alive with rooks,
While afar,
Past glades where browses the deer,
There shines a silver mere,
Like a star.

And, while the sunlight fits,
In that wide window sits
One I know.

I see an easel stand,
But idle is that hand,
White as snow.

A dream is in those eyes,
That gaze on windy skies,
Cobalt blue:

A sad delicious dream,
With love its only theme,
Lost, though true.

Fain would the maiden trace
An unforgotten face:

Ah, no, no!
Nought can its life recal;
Let the vain pencil fall:
Love means woe.

the magic of song that she remains a child in the poet's verse with all her surroundings as he described them, and will so remain, a little cabinet picture, as long as English literature endures, with

The lake, the bay, the waterfall,
And she, the spirit of them all.

At Inversnaid are the ruins of a fort, erected and garrisoned by the British government in 1713, with the avowed purpose of overawing and holding in check the turbulent Clan Gregor; and where, when he was a subaltern, the afterwards celebrated General Wolfe was for a short time stationed. The Dukes of Montrose, the hereditary foemen of the Macgregors, received an allowance from the Crown as governors of the Fort of Inversnaid, nearly to the close of the last century. From Inversnaid, access by steamer is easy to every part of Loch Lomond. The traveller can cross to Tarbet on the opposite shore, and after a walk of two miles or less, through shady avenues of luxuriant trees, arrive at Arroquhar, at the end of Loch Long, or he can proceed down to Rowardennan, by land or water, on the same side of the loch as Inversnaid, if he desires to climb to the noble peak of Ben Lomond. Or without landing he can steam down the whole length of the loch to Balloch, where the lake overflows into the placid stream of the Leven. Young travellers, who mostly have a fancy for climbing to mountain tops, generally make Rowardennan, whence the ascent is usually made, their first halting-place. And they cannot do better. I have been more than once at the top of Ben Nevis, of Ben MacDhui, of Goatfell, in Arran, and of a score of other great Bens in the Highlands, and can testify from experience that none so well repays the time expended and the toil incurred as Ben Lomond. The view from the top on a clear day is superb. Half of the length, and the whole breadth of Scotland, lie outstretched like a map beneath the feet. To the eastward may be seen the tall chimney of the St. Rollox Works, at Glasgow, without other trace of that great city; still further east, Arthur's Seat, overlooking Edinburgh, and further still the Bass, Rock in the middle of the Firth of Forth. Westward rise the glorious peaks of Arran and the inner Hebrides, and further down the Firth of Clyde, Ailsa Craig, far larger and grander than the Bass. Southwards lies Loch Lomond, glittering like a sheet of gold, and studded with islands, and far beyond, the green sloping hills of

A TRIP TO THE LAND OF SCOTT.

PART II.

FROM the head of Loch Katrine is a ride of five miles to Inversnaid upon Loch Lomond. Until recently, those who wished to make this little excursion had to tramp it over moor and mountain, or hire ponies; but now there is a fair carriage-road, which adds to the comfort of the trip, though robbing it to some extent of its pristine wildness. We are still in the district of the Macgregors, and at the very headquarters of Rob Roy. At the foot of Loch Arklet, a small lake, which would attract admiration anywhere but in Scotland, where lakes are as plentiful as rainbows, stands Corrie Arklet, the place where the bold Rob found his shrewish bride, the fair Helen of Sir Walter's story. Here Loch Arklet pours out its surplus waters, forming a little river, which afterwards effecting a junction with the Snaid, discharges itself into Loch Lomond at Inversnaid in a series of cascades, which few travellers omit to visit. It was here that Wordsworth's admiration was extorted by the uncommon beauty of a barefooted Highland lassie, fourteen years of age, upon whose youthful charms he lavished all the wealth of his fancy in one of the most pleasing of his minor poems. This vision burst upon his sight in 1803, so that the lassie, if she still live, has turned fourscore. Yet such is

Renfrew, Ayr, and Lanark. Northwards the Grampians rear their magnificent heads and close the view with that massive rampart, beyond which, as Scotsmen boast, Cæsar and his legions were never able to penetrate. The northern side of the mountain, as seen from the summit by the traveller who has nerve enough to stand and look down, is precipitous; a sheer wall of fully fifteen hundred, or perhaps two thousand, feet. People of weak heads should lie flat down, if they would behold with perfect safety the awful crag, than which there is nothing in Great Britain more sublime, and which the Swiss Alps themselves cannot surpass. But it is not only in the clear sunshine that Ben Lomond is grandly beautiful. It was once my fortune to be on the top, with five or six companions, when the mountain became wholly enveloped in cloud, and when

Mist, thick mist poured on,
And so enwrap us where we sat or stood,
That each to each loomed spectral and remote,
A thing of shadows in a shadowy land;
The mountain-top and twenty yards around
The only visible earth; ourselves alone
The earth's inhabitants.

Under such circumstances to move from one's place is perilous fool-hardihood. North, south, east, and west are all undistinguishable in the thick vapour; and even a few steps, if in the wrong direction, may pitch the rash adventurer head foremost into death and eternity. On this occasion we were all experienced climbers, and knew the risks we ran; so we sat still and told tales and sang songs; some of us smoked, and one was so far off, a dozen feet or so, that we could only make out where he was by the glowworm light of his cigar, showing faintly as if it were a mile distant. We had creature comforts along with us, which enabled us to pass the time without being benumbed by the icy mist that gathered on our clothes like hoar-frost; and we found amusement, such as it was, by pelting an empty whisky-bottle which one of our company had stuck upon the top of the cairn (and on the top of every Highland Ben a cairn is sure to be found, to verify the fact that the spot in question is indubitably the highest), with such loose stones and pebbles as bestrewed the grey head of the mountain. It is only those who are very hard put to it for amusement, in long and weary hours, who can picture to themselves the enjoyment our party derived from this apparently trivial occupation. But let those laugh who win. We laughed and we won the relaxation we

sought. And when, after three hours, the mists began to roll away, and

the cloud dispersed,
And in full glory, at one burst,
Revealed a world—hill, valley, town,
Glittering in sunlight miles adown—
Rivers and lakes and highlands brown,

we felt more than repaid, by the sudden grandeur of the spectacle, for all the little sufferings we had undergone and the dangers we had incurred. It was as if we had been privileged to behold an act of creation, and had been witnesses of the transformation of chaos into order, into life, and into beauty.

The ascent and descent of Ben Lomond, allowing ample time for lunch or refreshment on the way, or at the top, may be easily made in six hours. Those fond of geological studies will do well to note, as they ascend, the unmistakable marks of glacial action upon the granite rock over which the track lies; and will be carried back in imagination to the far distant time when the now comparatively low ranges of the Highland Bens were snow-capped Alps, as high above the sea level as Mont Blanc or the Wetterhorn; and when, perhaps, Scotland formed, with Ireland and England, part of a continent that stretched westward a thousand miles from Cape Clear and the outer Hebrides. Evidently what is now the pole was not always the pole, nor the equator the equator, and earth and sea are ever changing their places in the mighty procession of the ages.

The sail down Loch Lomond from Inversnaid, or from the northernmost extremity at Inverarnan, at the entrance of Glen Falloch, to Balloch at the south, a distance of about five-and-twenty miles, is, in fine clear weather, a scene of varying beauty, such as few travellers are ever likely to forget. From Inverarnan to Inversnaid, the lake is scarcely broader than the Thames at Gravesend; but at the southern end towards Balloch it expands into a width of about seven or eight miles, and is thickly studded with islands, on which the larch, the rowan, and the silver birch (the damsel of the woods, as it is sometimes called in Scotland), flourish luxuriantly. But the excursion up and down the lake is soon made, and the pedestrian, after he has seen from the deck of the steamer all that is to be seen in that mode of travelling, and after he has gained the summit of the Ben, which is the first thing to be thought of, will do well to land at TARBET, on the western side of the lake, and either stay at that hostelry, if he be willing to

defy gnats and midges that sting as ruthlessly as American mosquitoes, or walk across the narrow isthmus that separates Loch Lomond from Loch Long, to Arrochar, and make this his resting-place for two or three days. Loch Long, properly Loch Luing, or the "lake of ships," is grand and rugged, and owes its existence, not to Highland rills and rivers, and the abundant moisture of the clime, like the fresh-water lakes, but to the sea, which flows north-eastward from the Firth of Clyde, and is, though of smaller extent, a veritable fiord, like Loch Fyne and Loch Linnhe, its near neighbours.

The mountains at the head of Loch Long at Arrochar are of truly Alpine grandeur. Conspicuous above them towers to a height of three thousand feet and more the ragged and picturesque crest of Ben Arthur, or the Cobbler, so called from the fancied resemblance of its upper crags to a cobbler hammering on his lapstone. The precipices of this mountain are so steep as to render the summit all but inaccessible, and the few who have braved the dangers of the way and successfully accomplished the feat, confess that the reward of their toil is not nearly so satisfactory as that which is afforded by the easier ascent of Ben Lomond. But if instead of ascending the Cobbler, and running the risk of breaking his neck (for nothing), the traveller decides upon traversing the solitudes of Glen Croe, that stretches for eight miles along the base of the mountain, he will be well rewarded. The glen is perfect of its kind, and needs only to be seen by artist, poet, or lover of natural scenery, to be appreciated as, only next to Glen Coe, the grandest in all Scotland. It is a winding valley with an occasional narrow strip of cultivated ground on the banks of the little river the Croe, from which it receives its name, and which signifies in Gaelic the "sheep-folds," and is flanked by rapid slopes, broken by protruding masses of rock, rising into precipitous acclivities, the hills split and cloven into separate summits of various form and outline. An excursion, occupying a day well spent, may be made by a tolerable pedestrian from Arrochar through this glen, and its continuations, to the head of Loch Fyne, and the little town of Inverary, the head-quarters of the Clan Campbell, and its chief the Duke of Argyll. The distance is not above twenty miles as the crow flies, but the road is tortuous and the ascent is steep, and may be fairly said to represent thirty miles of walking on more level

ground. Pedestrians who are not hardy enough for such an encounter of the hills, often compromise the matter by a walk of eight miles to the summit of the glen, where a large stone by the wayside, inscribed "REST, AND BE THANKFUL," invites the traveller to enjoy the twofold duty—or pleasure. It bears the date 1748, and was erected and inscribed by the British soldiers, who, after the suppression of the Jacobite rebellion in the memorable '45, were wisely employed by the government of the day to subdue the troublesome Highlanders by the civilised method of opening up the interior of the country, and constructing good roads. From this spot the descent is easy to Glen Kinglass, properly Canglas, or "grey-head," a beautifully wooded, and in some places pastoral glen, at the extremity of which stands the comfortable inn of Cairndhu. On the shore of Loch Fyne, boats may be obtained to Inverary, if the traveller prefers the shortest route. It should be mentioned that stage-coaches at convenient hours ply on what is called every "lawful day," that is to say every day but Sunday, through all the romantic regions connecting Glasgow with the West Highlands; so that neither the legs of the pedestrian, nor the purses of those who are unable or unwilling to walk, need be severely taxed for the means of locomotion.

Inverary, so called from its situation at the junction of the little river Aray with Loch Fyne, is the county town of Argyllshire, and offers no attraction to delay the footsteps of the traveller, unless it be the castle of the Duke of Argyll, the lovely scenery, Argyll's Bowling Green, the hill of Dunaquoich, or the fine Runic cross on the quay, transported thither from Iona; and if he be an epicure, the chance of a breakfast, dinner, or supper on herrings freshly caught in the lake. Loch Fyne herrings are celebrated all over Scotland for their large size and delicate flavour, and are universally admitted to be the finest herrings in the world. Other specimens of the genus mammalia, in addition to mankind, seem to be of this opinion, for whales often risk the dangers of the harpoon and the musket, and come up the loch to regale themselves upon this dainty, and occasionally reward the fishermen for the damage done to their ordinary sea-harvest by their own bodies, and the profitable blubber and whalebone which they yield. Naturalists are not agreed upon the causes of the superiority of the Loch Fyne herring, or whether it is to be accounted for by

difference of race, just as the Caucasian is superior to the Ethiopian, the Caffre, and the Malay, or by greater abundance of food, or peculiarity of climate, or by a combination of all these. The fact, however, remains, and is never disputed by any one who has once regaled upon the fish, within half an hour after its capture, either on board of the Glasgow steamer, plying to Inverary, or in the little town itself. In days not long since gone by, mine host of the Argyll Arms was not only famous for the admirable manner in which he, or perhaps his good wife, cooked and served up the herrings, but for his super-eminent skill in the concoction of "Athole brose." Whether his successor be equally an adept in both of these branches of the culinary art, I am unable to say. I can, however, safely advise every traveller in these regions to partake of the herrings, and to avoid the "brose," at all events not to try both on the same day. It is a maxim in the Highlands that everything put into whisky, except hot or cold water and sugar, spoils it. This is a matter of opinion, and I can only give it as mine, that the maxim holds true as regards "honey," and that anything more unpalatable than "Athole brose," which is a mixture of honey and whisky, and about as heavy as lead, is difficult to imagine.

Every one who has read and remembers Scott's Legend of Montrose, and the adventures, whims, oddities, and idiosyncrasies of the doughty Captain Dalgetty of Drumthwacket, will visit Inverary Castle with more interest than those who are unfamiliar with that story, though it has little to show, and that little not remarkable. Sir Walter Scott has, it appears, fallen into error, from his imperfect knowledge of the Gaelic, in designating the Duke of Argyll as "MacCullum More." The attention attracted to the history and antecedents of this illustrious family by the marriage of its heir with the Princess Louise of England, has elicited from Gaelic scholars a controversy, from which it appears that the true Celtic designation of the Duke of Argyll is MacVich Coilen Mohr, or the son of the great Colin, not Cullum; and that the Clan Campbell is known in the Highlands as the sons of Diarmid.

From Inverary to Oban, by Dalmally, Loch Awe, and Loch Etive, stretches a tract of country to be described hereafter. Meanwhile, leaving it unvisited, we retrace our steps towards the great city of Glasgow,

which is to be our next halting-place. That we may not re-pass over ground already trodden, we take a boat to Strachur on the eastern shore of Loch Fyne, with the intention of walking to Kilmun, on the Holy Loch, and thence making our way to Glasgow by the steamer. Tourists who prefer the steamer for the whole distance will find daily facilities and ample enjoyment in a trip through the whole length of Loch Fyne, the Kyles of Bute, and the ever-varying scenery of the Firth of Clyde, and the narrowing river from Dumbarton up to Glasgow. But the tramp's the thing for those who are strong and willing, and prefer the simplest, as it is the best and most natural of all the modes of locomotion at man's service. So to the tramp we resort after landing at Strachur, and make our way through a well-cultivated tract to the head of Loch Eck. This lake, which is but little known, except to such citizens of Glasgow as love to angle for trout and salmon, and for this purpose make excursions to its lonely shores, and to the little river Eachaig, by which its waters are discharged into the Holy Loch, above Kilmun, is about nine miles in length, and at the widest half a mile in breadth. The hills on the western side rise abruptly from the water's edge, broken here and there by wooded ravines, high bare crags, and jagged peaks, where the feet of man, unless it be those of a shepherd, seldom tread. The whole scene suggests the intensity of solitude. A story is told of a rich Glasgow merchant, who made a fortune too rapidly, and retired from business in the early prime of his life, to enjoy himself in the country. He built himself a house upon the previously untrodden shores of Loch Eck, away from the public road, that he might not be overburdened with visitors. He had but few resources in his own mind. He had no literary tastes; did not much enjoy music, or shooting, or fishing; had no particular hobby or pursuit (blessed is the man who has a harmless hobby and the means to indulge in it!); and after a short residence in his grand new house, found his solitude as insupportable as Alexander Selkirk found his in the island of Juan Fernandez, and might have exclaimed with that prototype of our old friend Robinson Crusoe:

Oh, Solitude, where are the charms
That sages have found in thy face?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,
Than reign in this horrible place!

There was no reason why this poor man,

poor in spite of all his wealth, should not have gone back to the active world which he had quitted, and resumed business for the sake of the only occupation for which his mind and habits were suited; but he was too proud to own that he had made a mistake, and persisted in perpetuating it. His wealth brought him no enjoyment. He had nothing to do; there was nothing he particularly cared for; books were a weariness, shooting a nuisance, fishing a bore, and he took no pleasure in the conversation of his fellows. So stomach and brain having gone wrong together, as they often do, he put a heavy stone round his neck, and jumped into the loch, where his body was discovered five days afterwards.

Salmon of forty pounds weight are sometimes caught in Loch Eck, a fact that renders the little inn at Whistlefield a favourite resort of solitary anglers. In reference to the quondam hostess of this inn, a celebrated living artist and enthusiastic fisherman tells the following story:

"I was once fishing in Loch Eck," said the artist, "but had caught nothing, and on my arrival at Whistlefield, very hungry and thirsty, I inquired of the honest Highland woman who keeps the place if I could have anything for dinner?"

"Oo, ay!" she replied, "anything you like to order, sir."

"Well, then, can you let me have a little bit of salmon, or a trout?"

"A'm vara sorra, but there's no saamont and no troot. There were some trovers (drovers) here yesterday; and they just ate up a' the saamont, and a' the troot. But ye can have anything else you like."

"Can you let me have a beefsteak?"

"Is it beef ye ar' askin' for? Beef? There's no beef; do ye think we can kill a coo?"

"Well, mutton-chops will do just as well."

"Chops!" she replied, with a melancholy whine; "chops! ye might hae had chops, only ye see the trovers were here yesterday, and they ate up a' the chops."

"You don't seem to have very much to choose from, my good woman; but perhaps you can let me have some ham and eggs, or bacon and eggs, I don't care which?"

"Ham and eggs! Lord save us! There's no a bit ham left in the hoose! The trovers, ye see——"

"Oh, confound the trovers; can you give me some eggs without the ham?"

"Deed, sir, that's just what I canna

dae; the trovers! hech! they're hungry callants, and can eat mair eggs than a' the hens in the country-side can lay. They didna leave me a single egg for my ain supper yesternight; but ye can hae onything else ye like to ca' for."

"Suppose, then, as you have no eggs, that you throw (twist) the neck of the hen that laid them!"

"Deed, sir, I would dae that right willingly, but the trovers, ye see—the trovers! They not only ate up a' the eggs, but the hen and the cock as weel!"

"Then I suppose I can have nothing, and must walk on to Kilmun?"

"Na, na! wat for should ye do that? there's plenty in the hoose, if ye wad but just say what ye want."

"Plenty of what?"

"Plenty of cake (oat-cake) and butter, an' a bit o' 'ewe milk cheese, an' wusky (whisky) enough to soom (swim) in!"

"So I took the oat-cake, and the fresh butter, and the whisky; and I advise nobody to expect anything else at a Highland village."

Bearing this story in mind, I entered the small hostelry at Whistlefield, and found that better fortune attended me. The hostess had a trout at my disposal, and a grouse, with bread, oat-cake, and excellent fresh butter at discretion. The artist's story had become a tradition of past days, and on my asking the hostess if any "trovers" ever came that way, she replied, "Whiles, but that she didna care muckle for their company." From Whistlefield there is a by-road over the mountains on to Ardentenny (the Arranteenie of Tannahill's song, which the poet never visited), a secluded village on the wild western shore of Loch Long, deriving its name from Ard an teine, the hill or promontory of the beacon fire. There is a shorter and level road by the banks of the Eachaig to the Holy Loch, a pleasant little fiord of salt water that runs into the heart of the hills from the Firth of Clyde. When this loch acquired the name of holy is not positively known, though it is plausibly suggested that one Mun, a "monk of the west," mentioned in Montalembert's History, and a contemporary of Columba and the Culdees, whose high place was at Iona, established a chapel here in the seventh century. Hence, undoubtedly, the name of the village of Kilmun, or the Cell or Chapel of Mun; a favourite resort of the citizens of Glasgow, as soon as the apple-trees begin to put on their bloom, and

wives and daughters long to escape for their annual holiday "down the water." Long rows of neat villas and cottages, looking as small as dolls' houses, when compared with the huge masses of the hills behind them, line the shores of the Holy Loch, extend around the bold projecting corner at Strone Point, and thence push upward to Loch Long, as if they would invade every mountain solitude within reach of the Glasgow steamers. From the top of Strone Point, a heavy and a hard climb over hard rock and soft bog, and two thousand feet above the level of the sea, there is a magnificent view over the estuary of the Clyde, the towns of Helensburgh, Greenock, Gourrock, Dunoon, and a score of other watering-places for which the noble river is famous, the whole encompassed by a gorgeous panorama of mountains, extending from Goatfell and Arran, the Cobbler and Ben Lomond, and fifty other Bens, each of which has its Gaelic name, unknown to any one but the shepherds and the dwellers at their base.

Kilmun is the burial-place of the family of Argyll. It is told of the late Douglas Jerrold, that he visited this place when in Scotland during the great Burns Festival in 1844. One of his companions remarked how unpleasant it must be to a member of the Campbell, or, indeed, any other family, to know and to visit the exact place where he was to be buried. "Very unpleasant, indeed," replied Jerrold, "and that is the reason why I never go into Westminster Abbey!"

From Kilmun there are morning and afternoon steamers up the Clyde to Glasgow, the commercial capital of Scotland, and one of the most flourishing and rapidly growing cities in the world.

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LXXI. MAUD AND AN TOMARCHI UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER.

NEARLY ten minutes had passed, and Maud was sitting in her room, in profound gloom, almost a stupor; without motion; with her eyes upon the floor.

Mercy Creswell, unable to divine what her thoughts might be, was only a few steps away, standing against the wall, with her arms folded across, and her eyes turned, with a nervous side-glance on the young lady.

In the room beyond that, sat one of the athletic housemaids, who could have lifted

Maud off her feet, and carried her about the house as easily as her hat and jacket.

At this, the sitting-room door, now came a knock.

Doctor Antomarchi was there; Maud was on her feet in a moment.

This doctor had the peculiar marble skin which is ascribed to the first Napoleon. Dark and colourless, his strongly pronounced under-jaw, and thin lips, his delicate black eyebrows, and piercing, cold eyes, gave a character of severity and decision to his massive face, which inspired fear in all who were subjected to his authority.

Some little sensation of this kind modified Miss Vernon's agitated feelings as he entered the room, and made his bow of ceremony, in obedience to her summons.

"Oh, Doctor Antomarchi!" she said, calmly, "I will try to tell you how I have been duped. I came here under the persuasion that I was on my way to Carsbrook, Lady Mardykes's house. I find that I have been horribly deceived. I am a prisoner, and I can't escape. I am here, helpless, in the most awful place a mortal can be committed to—a madhouse. I have not a single friend or adviser to turn to in this great danger. I am utterly alone. I have been brought up in a very lonely way, in the country, and I don't know much of the ways of the world, or what I ought to do in this dreadful case. May God help me!" Her lip trembled. "You, sir, can have no wish to keep me here, if I am perfectly in my right mind; and, as God is my hope, I am not mad, nor ever was supposed to be! My good cousin, Maximilla Medwyn, when I write to her, will come and tell you so. And you, I have heard, are learned, and clever, and can easily decide whether I tell you truth; and if you find that I am what I describe, you will set me at liberty."

"What you say is reasonable," replied Antomarchi, not one muscle of whose stern face had evinced a sign of life during Maud's appeal, and whose dark grey eye had shown neither light nor softening. "Shall I say a word in private?" he added, glancing at the servant.

"Do—pray."

He signed to Mercy Creswell to leave the room, which she did.

He then in a low tone, with an air of very marked deference, said:

"Your request is grounded on a supposition, which, if sustained by proof, would insure its being instantly granted. All

you say is quite fair. As to the fact on which you rely, however, it is, I regret to say, more than disputed in the papers which have been placed before us; and while you remain here, which may be a very short time indeed, I need scarcely say, you shall be treated with the greatest possible consideration, and everything done to make your sojourn as little disagreeable as possible. Would you object, Miss Vernon, to accompany me to my room downstairs. I wish very much, with your permission, to call your attention to a circumstance."

The lady assented. Together they entered the gallery. Doctor Antomarchi took a key from his pocket and opened the iron door, which separated that portion of the long corridor, from which Miss Vernon's rooms opened, from the remainder of the gallery, passing westward.

In the wildest dream, no matter how fantastic the situation and strange the scenery, the dreamer follows the action of his vision with good faith, and the sense of incredulity slumbers. But here was a reality strangely horrible as any dream she had ever dreamed. She heard their tread on the boards, she felt the cold smooth bannister on which her hand rested, as they went down the private spiral stair, and it was an effort to think it real.

Now she had arrived. The door was shut. When she had placed herself in one of the great chairs in the oval-room, of which she and Doctor Antomarchi were the only tenants, he touched a bell, without speaking, and Mr. Darkdale entered.

Maud wondered what was intended. Antomarchi rose quickly, and two or three steps brought him to Darkdale's side. That slight dark man inclined his ear; and as Antomarchi concluded a few whispered sentences, he nodded, and immediately withdraw.

Maud heard nothing of what passed.

The doctor returned, and sat down at the opposite side of the table.

"I think it desirable to impress upon you, Miss Vernon, two or three facts, which, while here, you will find it very much to your advantage to bear in mind."

An intimidating change had come over Doctor Antomarchi's face, and he was speaking in stern, measured accents. His ceremonious manner was quite gone, and he was talking as a cold, insolent colonel might to a defaulting drummer-boy on the parade-ground.

"The inmates of that part of the house

in which apartments are assigned to you, are generally quite competent to understand what I now say. It is my duty to treat you with what skill I possess; it is yours to submit; and submit you shall. I have heard of your language, of your violence, of your covert menace of forcing an escape, or committing self-destruction. Sufficient precautions are taken in this establishment to render that crime impracticable. There are people confined here whose desire to commit suicide never leaves them. They hope for nothing else, they dream of nothing else; they are persistent and crafty, and yet all their persistence, cunning, and wickedness are daily defeated with perfect ease and certainty. Violence, here, leads necessarily to repression; contumacy, in the most trifling particulars, to increased restraint; and angry language, as tending in certain nervous states to produce corresponding action, necessarily to subjection to a treatment that is intensely disagreeable. These, you understand, are not punishments; they are precautions, and processes, though painful, strictly of a sanatory kind. And now, you distinctly comprehend, that neither unmeasured language, nor violence of temper, nor threats of suicide, or of escape, ever fail to bring down on the patient who indulges in them consequences which are deplorable."

All the time he thus spoke his eyes were fixed on those of the young lady, who felt the power of that indescribable coercion.

Under it thought grew vague, and the power to will became torpid.

"You will be so good, Miss Vernon, as to accompany me a little further," said Antomarchi, his eye upon her, as he suddenly arose. The young lady, without answering, followed him.

Through a door at the side of this room, a short and narrow passage, tiled and lighted by a window over the door, conducted them to a small but lofty room, also tiled, the arrangements of which were singular.

In the corner of this room rose something that looked like a tall iron press, of some four feet square, which reached or rather seemed to pass through the ceiling. There was no other furniture except two small shelves; and a piece of thick rug lay on the floor.

"You are here, Miss Vernon, merely as a spectator, to witness, in part, the practice to which the refractory are subjected. There is nothing more refreshing than a

shower-bath. Taken in the ordinary way it is a luxurious stimulant. You will see what it is when administered in a case of morbidly over-excited energies. This is a powerful shower-bath. The patient upon whom you will see it exercised is a lady whom you have seen not an hour ago. She styles herself the Duchess of Falconbury. You shall see, in her case, how we reduce that unhappy state upon sanatory principles."

Darkdale opened the door and looked in.

"The patient is coming;" and he inquired, "do you wish it *now*?"

"Yes," said Antomarchi.

Maud heard a sound of feet descending the stairs, accompanied by a muffled noise of furious hysterics.

"Your maid, Mercy Creswell, is to attend her," said Antomarchi, coolly. "It will show you that she is a woman of nerve, and can do her duty."

This impertinence did not fire Maud's pride, as an hour or two ago it would. A part of her nature had been reduced to a state of trance.

"You have taken an ordinary shower-bath, I dare say, Miss Vernon, and found it quite long and heavy enough? This, from its greater height, has a fall more than twice as heavy. Yours lasted only a fraction of a minute, this will descend without interruption for exactly thirty-five minutes. Yours, probably, contained between two and three stone weight of water; this will discharge between eight and nine tons. You observe, then, that it is very different from anything you have experienced. Are you ready?"

"Yes, sir," answered Mercy Creswell, who looked a little pale. "How long, please, sir?"

"Thirty-five minutes," said the doctor.

"But please, sir," said Creswell, growing paler, "that is five minutes longer than the longest."

The doctor nodded.

"She never had it before, sir."

"Better *once* effectually, than half-measures repeatedly," remarked the doctor to Miss Vernon, with his watch in his hand. "Take the winch," he said to Mercy Creswell. "When the minute-hand reaches half-past (keep your eye on the clock), you turn it on; and when it reaches five minutes past, you turn it off. You are ready? Stay—wait—look to the minute-hand—now."

As the doctor uttered the final direction, at the same instant Mercy Creswell turned

the handle, and a rush perceptibly louder and heavier than any heard in those toys of luxury, which don't deserve the name of shower-bath in sight of these titanic appliances.

The cries and shrieks of the unfortunate patient are soon hushed. No sound is heard in that torture-room but the ceaseless, thundering fall of the water, and the loud ticking of the clock as it slowly tells off the allotted time.

At length the dreadful half-hour has passed. Five minutes remain—the hand is measuring the last minute. Antomarchi's eye is on the second-hand of his watch—the last second is touched. "Stop," cries his loud voice, and the winch is turned.

The noise of the falling water has ceased. The door is open, the room is as still as the dead-house of an hospital, where no one comes to claim the dead outcast. A great silence has come. In a whisper Mercy directs the women, who obey in silence.

The "patient" is lifted out, and placed on a chair in the midst of the room. She looks lifeless. Her long dark hair clings about her shoulders. Her arms hang helplessly and the water streams over her, over her hair, over her closed eyes, in rivulets; over her pretty face that looks in a sad sleep; over her lace and vanities; over her white slender hands that hang by her sides, and over her rings, making little rills and pools along the tiles.*

There must be the agonies of drowning in all this; worse than common drowning, drowning by a slower suffocation and with a protracted consciousness.

And now there is the greater agony of recovery.

The doctor had returned to the side of the poor duchess, who was now breathing, or rather sighing, heavily, and staring vaguely before her.

His fingers were again on her pulse.

"Give her the white mixture," he said to Mercy Creswell, glancing at a phial which stands beside a cup on a table a little way off.

"Oh, sir, please, doctor, not this time,

* This peculiar use of the shower-bath in the treatment of the insane is no fiction. It was supported on the theory that in the awfully depressing malady of madness, if a patient is "violent," "noisy," "excited," and "destructive," "quiet" and "docility" are legitimately to be induced by "overpowering" him, and "prostrating the system" by a continuous shower-bath of monstrous duration, followed up on his release from the bath by a nauseating emetic, still further to exhaust an already prostrate system. This outrageous treatment is no longer countenanced by the faculty, or practised in any institution.

“sir,” faltered Mercy Creswell. “She eat no breakfast, I hear, sir, and she’ll be very bad for hours after she takes the mixture.”

“Shake it first; pour it into the cup; and administer it to the patient. Do your duty, Creswell.”

She shook the bottle, poured its contents into the cup, and, with a frightened face, did as she was ordered.

Antomarchi said to Darkdale: “The patient may go now. You will show them Mrs. Fish’s new rooms. Creswell, you are not to accompany her. You attend Miss Vernon now as before. Miss Vernon, you can return to your rooms.”

He made her a bow, and in a moment more Maud and her *femme de chambre* had left the room.

“Miss Vernon, a spirited young lady,” mused Antomarchi. “She has had her first lesson.”

CHAPTER LXXII. QUESTION AND ANSWER.

It is well when, even in after-life, we can see that our sufferings have made us better—that God has purged the tree, and not cursed it—that the fire from heaven has purified, and not left all barren, for ever, like the Dead Sea plain.

This awful time in Maud’s life will do a good work in her. Her character has suffered from the coldness of her mother, from occasional periods of parental caprice and coercion, and from long intervals of the indulgence of absolute neglect. God has found her a time and a place in which to think upon Him, and on herself. These awful days, if they lead her to see and to amend her faults, will not have passed in vain.

For four-and-twenty hours Maud never opened her lips to speak one word to Mercy Creswell. But the quarrel of the two sailors in the lighthouse would not do here; and a little reflection tells Maud that Mercy Creswell, after all, has acted in this affair under orders, and in good faith, believing all representations made to her by so great and good a woman as Lady Vernon, and walking honestly in such light as she had. These silent relations would not be long endurable to Maud herself; and her anger against Mercy Creswell was not altogether reasonable.

I do not wonder, therefore, that before the evening of the next day Maud was on speaking terms again with her maid. The situation was now distinctly before her mind; but hope, irrepressible, began to revive.

“Do you know, Mercy,” asked the young lady, after they had talked a little, and a short silence had intervened, during which she was in deep thought, “upon what subject they say I am mad?”

“I don’t know, indeed, miss; I don’t know at all. Only Lady Vernon told me the doctors said so; and she had no doubt of it herself.” Mercy Creswell was speaking now without the preliminary hesitation which gave, while Maud was still in the dark as to the nature of the real relations in which they stood, and of the house of which she was an inmate, an air of reserve and prevarication to all her answers. “But, miss, it mayn’t last no time. There was a lady sent away from here last week, quite right again, as had bin here only two months.”

“But is there nothing? Why were my scissors and penknives taken away? And the breakfast knives are silver, like dessert knives?”

“Oh, yes, miss! Yes, to be sure. It was said you threatened, different times, to take away your life, miss. That was the reason.”

Another silence followed.

“Every girl, when she’s vexed, wishes herself dead. But she does not mean it. I never had a thought of suicide all the time I was at home—*never*, at *any* time. I am foolish and violent sometimes; but I am not wicked. Mercy Creswell, do you care about me?”

“La! miss, I like ye well, miss, and always did.”

“Do people listen at the doors, here?” she said, lowering her voice.

“Not they, miss; they have no time—too busy—they don’t care, not a jack-straw, what you’re talking about, and if anything goes wrong there’s the bell at hand. *That* will bring hands enough in no time.”

“For how long have you been here?” asked Maud.

“It will be five years next November, miss.”

“Then you can’t be mistaken about anything here,” mused Maud. “You must know all their rules—I wonder, Mercy, whether you care for me?”

“Yes, surely, miss,” she answered.

Maud was silent again, looking at Mercy thoughtfully.

“You were very young, Mercy, and I only a child, when we were together in Roydon nursery; but—I’m afraid—you have no affection for me.”

"Why will ye say that, Miss Maud; don't you know I always liked ye well? Affection! well, miss, I think 'twould be less than kind in me if I hadn't."

Maud looked again thoughtfully at Mercy Creswell, and then on the ground, and then raising her eyes, she said:

"Do they often inflict that dreadful punishment that I witnessed yesterday?"

"The bath, ma'am? La! you wouldn't call that a punishment. There's nothing Doctor Antomarchi is more paticular about than that—not one of us here dar' call it a punishment."

"Well, half-drowning, or whole-drowning, as it may turn out, is that *often* inflicted in this place?"

"Well, Mr. Damian would not allow it, perhaps, twice in a year, when he's at home, and then only ten or twelve minutes, and no white mixture. But Doctor Antomarchi, he'd be harder on them—he's a man that won't stand no nonsense from no one." Mercy nodded with a dark significance at Maud as she said this. "He won't spare neither high nor low. He may do as he pleases. La! no one ever minds what a patient says. The doctor has only to smile and shake his head, and whisper a word in the ear of father, or mother, or brother, or whoever comes to see that the patient is comfortable, and all his grumbling and complaints, they're just took for so much dreams, and nothings, and no one never believed but the doctor."

"It is very bad—it is horrible," and poor Maud shuddered.

There was another silence, and then Maud asked:

"Has Lady Mardykes sold her place? Is this Carsbrook?"

"La! no, miss; this is Glarewoods, Mr. Damian's asylum. It is like Carsbrook in a way, and it's not like it. They are both black and white houses. But Carsbrook is a beautiful house; not so big as this great barracks, but you never saw a prettier. There's nothing in this to look at, without they fits up two or three rooms special, like these was done for you. It is a bare-looking place, and furnished very plain; but Carsbrook is beautiful all through. It is too grand almost. You'd say 'tis a pity to walk on the carpets, or sit on the chairs."

"But—but it was described to me exactly like this. The croquet-ground, and every-thing."

"Yes, it has a croquet-ground, with a hedge round it; but it is shaped different;

and it lies to t'other side of the house."

"And the flower-garden round it," says Maud, still a little bewildered.

"Ay, the flower-knots; yes, they was laid out by the same man as settled them that's at Carsbrook. But as for all the rest, if you was to see the two places, you would not think there was two things about 'em alike; no more there ain't."

"Glarewoods—I think I have heard it mentioned—and Mr. Damian's name—"

"He's a hard man in some things, miss. But 'twould be well if all was like him," she added, with a dark little nod.

She had already told Maud of his absence, and the uncertainty respecting the time of his return.

A time of great mental agony, however measured by clock or calendar, is a time of great duration. The moment when her terrific discovery broke upon her, seemed now a long way off. The period of violent agitation was over; and a gloomy, calculating listlessness had come instead. Almost without effort of her own, everything, in turn, that promised a chance of liberation, revolved in her mind, hovered there a little, and gave place to some new hope, or thought, call it which you will.

CHAPTER LXXIII. A DISAPPOINTMENT.

THERE was another silence now, and Maud got up, and walked slowly about the room. At the piano, which she had not touched for two days, she lingered for a little, and now with one hand she softly struck a chord or two, as she went on thinking.

"I certainly saw Lady Mardykes here. There could be no deception, at least, about that. Does she know that I am here?"

"No, miss; I'm sure she don't."

"Why do you suppose that?"

"Well, miss, ye won't say a word if I tells you—if you *do*, it might be the worse for me."

"Certainly, not a word," promised Maud, whose curiosity was excited.

"Well, miss, Doctor Antomarchi told me you wasn't to get into the croquet-ground, nor out of your own room, yesterday morning, till after Lady Mardykes was gone, and he told me the minute to keep ye to, and I did; and something more, and so I did; but after all, ye was as near meeting—la! but ye was—as *ever* two was, in the gallery!"

"Perhaps she knew, but did not herself wish to see me?" ruminated Maud.

"No, not a bit; she's not that way, no, she's very good-natured. She came all the way from Carsbrook the morning after you came, and yesterday, only to see about that poor young man, Mr. Vivian Mardykes, her husband's nephew. 'Twas him, on his way here, as overtook us near Torvey's Cross. 'Twas a very sad thing. He went mad after a fall from his horse out a-hunting; and he was promised in marriage to a young lady near Oxford; and he thinks, poor fella, he's a capting in the army! La, but it is funny, poor lad! And he hates the name of Mardykes, and won't call himself nothing but Vivian, Capting Vivian! and Lady Mardykes took it to heart, awful. He got well again, very near, for awhile, and he took bad after, and had to come back, as you saw. And, to-day, they say, he's very bad—some inflammation that may kill him—and goodness knows, 'twould be a mercy he was took."

"Whose funeral was that I saw from my window the first night I slept here?"

"That was Lord Corrington's second son; I believe he drank, poor man; he grew paralytic; a deal on 'em goes off that way."

"It was you," said Maud, suddenly, after another pause, "who took away my pen-knives and scissors."

"Well it *was*, miss," said Mercy, brazening it out with sullen resolution. "I must do as I am ordered, and I *will*, and there's the whole story out."

"How could you tell me all the untruths you did, about that and other things?"

"La, miss! if you was in my place you'd do the same. We must humour patients, or we could not get on, no time."

"Patients! And you really think me mad?"

"I'm not fit to judge, miss; 'tis for wiser heads than me."

A longer silence than before ensued; Maud was thinking, as she leaned her head lightly on her hand.

It was a horrible thought that even her companion had no faith in her sanity; horrible, too, that her own word went for nothing. How can she prove that she is *not* mad? Prove a negative! A dreadful excitement streams up to her brain, gush after gush. The small vigilant eyes of Mercy Creswell watched her with a restless, sidelong scrutiny.

"Fetch me a glass of water," said Maud, and sipped some. "Give me the eau-de-cologne," she said, and bathed her temples and forehead.

For a good while there was silence, and Mercy Creswell stood, as before, eyeing her young mistress.

Maud sighed and looked at her, and seemed on the point of saying something that lay near her heart, but changed her mind.

"Will Lady Mardykes be here again soon?" she asked, instead.

"I told Mr. Darkdale to ask, on account of you, miss, for I did not want to get into trouble unawares; and he told me she might not come for another month, or more, for the doctor promised to write to her; telling how Mr. Vivian Mardykes is getting along."

Maud looked down again, and sighed. There was another silence. Then she raised her eyes, and looked for a time earnestly at her humble companion; and once more she asked her oft-repeated question:

"Mercy, do you really care about me?"

"Why, miss, you knows I do. 'Twould be a queer thing if I didn't, sure. I always liked you, Miss Maud; I always did, indeed."

"If you care for me ever so little," said Maud, suddenly standing before her, with her hand on her shoulder, and looking hard in her face, with dark eyes, now dilated and stern, with the earnestness of horror, "you will help me, Mercy, to escape from this place."

"Escape, miss!" exclaimed Mercy, after she had gaped at her for some seconds, in consternation. "La bless you, miss, all the wit in fifty heads would not manage that. They're wide awake, and lots of hands and eyes everywhere; and good locks, and safe windows, and high walls, and bell-wires, in a many a place, miss, ye would not suppose, that would ring, almost, if a fly walked over them. There's no chance of getting out that way; and anyhow, I could not have act or part in it, and I *won't*, Miss Maud; and you mustn't never talk that way in my hearing, miss, for I'm bound to report it, and won't run no risks for nonsense. Ye must not be offended, miss, for I knows a sight better than you do, all about it."

"If you won't aid me in that, at least you will manage to have a letter put in the post for me. I must write to Mr. Coke, my attorney; and to my cousin, Miss Medwyn. I ask for nothing but inquiry. There can be no honest reason for refusing that."

"I'm sorry, miss, to refuse you," said the maid, doggedly; "but the rule is that

all letters is subject to inspection—'subject to inspection' is the words in the order-book, and no letter from a patient to be conveyed to the post-office, 'conveyed to the post-office,' mind, 'or by a messenger'—I'm telling ye the very words of the order—'except by the permission of the principal, or his rapperräsentative'—I'm telling you the very words, miss—'in the one case, by the post-bag of the consulting-room,' and he has the only key of it in the house, 'and in the other, by the messenger of the consulting-room for the day.' Them's the identical words, I could say them in my sleep."

"Then you won't—oh, my God!—you won't; and I have none to help me!"

"I won't do that, miss; no, I won't."

There was a long interval of silence, during which Maud walked distractedly about the room. At last she turned and said gently:

"Well, Mercy, you may, at least, do this—you may write yourself to my cousin, Miss Medwyn, and tell her I am here, and that I implore of her to come and see me without delay."

"No, miss, I can't do that."

"Not for me, in this extremity? It isn't much. Oh! think—think—take pity on me—you could not be so cruel."

"I won't do it for no one, miss. You don't know this 'ouse, miss, like I does. It's no use a-pressing of me. I *won't*, miss; and what's more, I couldn't, if I would. And don't say no more about it, or I must report it to the doctor."

Mercy delivered this speech with a flushed face, and many a wag of her head, looking straight at the wall, and not at Maud.

"I'll tell you what, miss, if you be as you say," resumed Mercy, after an interval, "and has nothing to signify wrong with you—you'll not be long here. Only you must draw it mild—I mean ye must 'ave patience, and do hevrything accordin' to the rules. Look at that poor foolish Mrs. Fish, jest puttin' herself in a tantarem with that creature Ap-Jenkins; it's jest like puttin' a light to one o' them fireworks; once they takes fire, away they goes, and none to hold 'em till they has the fun out; and now she's out o' this side, beyond the cross-door, among the dangerous 'uns, and much stricter looked after; you'll not see

her in the croquet-ground very like for a year to come again."

Not for a year! How frightful that Mercy should assume that she was still to be an inmate of Glarewoods at the end of a year!

Maud had made up her mind not to quarrel with Mercy, and here it required a little effort to avoid it.

It was dismaying to meet this rebuff, where she had begun to hope for sympathy and active aid. What sordid brutality it was!

But already Maud Vernon had grown more tolerant. In this strange seclusion she had learned more of human nature, and had her sense of superiority more humbled, in two or three days, than in all her life before.

"Service is no inheritance, miss, as I've often heard say, and if I don't look to myself, who will? You know, miss, 'twould never do to get the sack from here, and not know where to turn to. But if ye'll jest have patience, and don't get into no rows, nor refuse your meals, nor your walking and driving, or whatever's ordered for you, nor never sulk, nowadays, about nothing, you'll not be long till something turns up. Why should the doctor want to keep you here, miss, a day longer than is fit? There's never a room empty in this house; and one customer's money is as good as another's; so don't you think or imagine, if you're not a case for Glarewoods, you'll be here any time to speak of, and when you're on the convalescent list you'll have more liberty, and ye'll be allowed to write to your friends. Only don't ye mar all by nonsense. If you're ever so well in your wits, you'll drive yourself out of them, so sure as ye take to moping, and sulking, and roaring, and raving. 'Tis best to be quiet, and orderly, and cheerful, and happy, and that's my advice to you, miss; be always pleasant, while you stays at Glarewoods."

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN PORT," &c. &c.

CHAPTER VI. A MEETING BY DAYLIGHT.

WHEN Madge Pierrepont arrived at her lodgings, she found the door open, and Miss Cave looking down the street.

"At last, my dear," said the old lady; "I thought you were never coming; I have got the fidgets upon me to-night, and have been up two or three times to look out for you; and when I heard your foot-step coming round the crescent—I would know it in a thousand—I thought I would wait, and get a little fresh air until you came up. Now in with you and get to bed at once; what with last night and all, you must be dog tired."

"And I am very tired, Miss Cave," said Madge, with a faint smile.

"Tired, my dear; I have no patience with that old Probus keeping you up to this hour. Was he pleased with what you did last night?"

"Very much pleased indeed," said Madge, recollecting the letter she had received from the Shakespearian enthusiast; "he said he had not seen anything like it since Miss O'Neill."

"Did he? Now, come, that was very civil of him, and not bad judgment either, for I saw her myself, and you resemble her in many points. Come now, my dear, you are dropping off to sleep, just you O'Neill off to bed." And the good old woman, closing the door, took Madge gently by the shoulder, and pushed her before her up the stairs.

On the dressing-table, in Madge's room, lay a twisted slip of paper. She took it up and read in Rose's handwriting:

"G. H. was greatly disappointed at not

finding you to-night. He has something very particular to say to you; he will be away all day to-morrow. He says he will see you in the evening, and you must keep yourself disengaged, as it is most important. I wonder what it is: you will tell me, Madge, won't you?"

When Madge had finished reading the paper, she smoothed it out mechanically between her hands, laid it on the table again, and seated herself on the edge of her bed. The words which she had just perused made no impression on her mind. Her thoughts went back to the interview she had gone through, and as she recollected Philip Vane's last speech, her face grew grey, and set, and rigid, and her hands almost involuntarily locked themselves together in front of her.

"Not the remotest intention of going with me! that was what he said; his business engagements would prevent him. His business engagements! So that I am to go away to America, Australia, or to any other place where my employers may choose to take me, and he is to remain at home. I am to be thrown into such society as I may chance to meet, to make my own way as best I can, and he, the only person in the world to whom I can look, or ought to look, for advice, consolation, or help, is to remain here, consoling himself for my absence by the receipt of a larger income derived from my earnings, which he will undoubtedly take every means to secure. It is too low, too mean, too unmanly!

"To go away by myself to the other end of the world for three years, that is what he asked me! I will not do it, come what may, I will not do it! I have been too patient and too quiet as it is; I have slaved for him ungrudgingly, unrepiningly, in the

knowledge that I was his wife, and in the ridiculous hope that his acknowledgment of my position was merely a matter of time. Now he proposes to get rid of me for three years, and with such a man as Philip Vane, it is not difficult to understand what that means. Three years! But only two have elapsed since we were married, and even in that short time my attraction for him has so waned, my hold on him has so relaxed, that he makes me such a proposition as this.

"What is it?" she cried, suddenly, stepping leisurely across the room, and looking at herself in the looking-glass on the dressing-table. "Have I grown plain, old, or repulsive? I confess I cannot see the alteration," she added, proudly, shaking her hair back, after a moment's inspection of herself; "nor if Mr. Philip Vane thinks so, is his opinion shared by every one. Here," laying her hand on Rose's crumpled note, "here is evidence to the contrary. Here is some one younger, better looking, and, unless I am very much mistaken, better bred, than Mr. Philip Vane, who would give all that he holds dearest in life for the companionship which that gentleman despises! Another example, God knows not wanted, of the misery set forth in those words, 'too late.' If I had only known Gerald Hardinge—I talk like a fool! Gerald Hardinge is a boy, who is nothing to me, and Philip Vane is—my husband."

Her husband! The mere sound of the word sent her thoughts into a different current. Philip Vane was still the principal figure, not as she had just seen him, cold, sneering, practical, and hard, but ardent, romantic, and impassioned. Chestow Castle and the path along the windings of the silver Wye, the young man so different in the polished ease of his demeanour, and the style of his conversation, even in the fit of his clothes, and his graceful negligent manner of carrying himself, from any one she had ever seen before. The stolen interviews, the long walks, finally the quiet marriage, with the local fisherman and his wife as the only witnesses; all these scenes and imaginations came floating across her brain and mysteriously served to still the storm which was raging within her breast. Philip could not mean what he had said; he could not think of parting with her for three years! It was to try her, perhaps, that he had suggested it; and she had fallen so readily into the trap. Perhaps she, too, was to blame; her place was by his side, and she ought to have tried to fall in with his pro-

position for her going to London. She would agree to that now, she would tell him so to-morrow, and then there would be no more questions of her going abroad, and the old happy time, the time of two years ago, would come back again. And so thinking, Madge Pierrepoint fell asleep.

These kindly feelings, these hopes for the future, had not passed away when Madge awoke in the morning. On first opening her eyes, indeed, the sense of some impending calamity, which she had felt so strongly on the receipt of Philip's last letter on the previous evening, haunted her again; but when she recollected her recent thoughts, and her determination to submit herself to her husband's wishes, so far at least as accepting an engagement in London was concerned, she speedily got the better of her weakness, and had not much difficulty in persuading herself that a happy future was yet in store for her. So, full of hopes and anticipations, she started forth soon after she had finished her breakfast. She knew that at that time she need fear no interruption from Rose, who during the whole of the morning was busy with her various lessons, or from Miss Cave, who, after the ordering of her little household, invariably set forth to take her place in the box-office of the theatre, a position which just then claimed her attention even more rigidly than usual, as the season was about to terminate, and all outstanding accounts had to be carefully gone through.

Madge knew, moreover, that at such an hour she should be able to walk through the streets without undergoing the severe scrutiny which was usually bestowed upon her. The good people of Wexeter, though better bred than those of many other provincial towns, were yet human. Consequently, the sight of anybody whom they recognised as connected with the theatrical profession, when attired in ordinary costume, and proceeding through the streets in an ordinary manner, awoke in them an amount of curiosity which betrayed itself, even amongst the highest and most refined, in covert glances, amongst the less delicate in prolonged stares, and amongst the boys in loud shouts of recognition and war-whoops of a wild character, indicative of a desire on the part of the shouters to make an onslaught on the person observed, and to ascertain by pinches and other manual appliances, whether they were really flesh and blood. Miss Cave, indeed, had a legend which she was accustomed to narrate on special occasions, setting forth that within

the memory of her father, the actors had been known as "lakers," and that on any of them being recognised in the streets, the cry of "The lakers, the lakers!" would call forth the utterance of the ferocious hint to "smash their heads agin the wall." This, however, was in the dark ages, and now the recognised members of the company were only subjected to a great amount of staring and whispered observations, generally of a complimentary character.

Even from this torture—for torture it was to a sensitive-minded woman—Madge Pierpoint was free during her early walk. It was a tacitly recognised tradition among the Wexeter people, that no one was to be seen in the streets until the afternoon. The members of the cathedral, their families, and a few ladies, old and young, regularly attended morning service, before and after which the female heads of families might have been seen discharging their-marketing duties; but the generality of these persons constituting what was called society in the good old town, never appeared in public until after that meal, which by a polite fiction passed as luncheon, but which in most cases was understood to be dinner.

Thus, when Madge reached the lane at the back of the Dumpington turnpike, she found the spot almost as much deserted as on the previous night, scattered parties of working people in the distant fields being the only human creatures within view.

Eleven o'clock rang out from the cathedral as she arrived within sight of her destination, and on hearing the sound she quickened her pace, and when she turned into the little lane, her heart was beating fast, and her face was all aglow. She was compensated for her hurry, however, by finding that she was first at the spot; and it was not until after she had taken two or three leisurely turns up and down, recovering her breath, that she heard the sound of wheels, and looking round saw Philip Vane alight from a cab by the turnpike, and advance towards her.

That Major Vane was not in a very good temper, was evident from his first words.

"You are going to tell me that I am late, I suppose?" he said, "but you need not, because I know it! Not that I overslept myself, or anything of that sort. How anybody sleeps at all in that infernal hotel is a matter of wonder to me; it's a sin and a shame that a place like that shouldn't have something better than such a pot-house for a gentleman to put up at."

"I wasn't going to say a word about your being late, Philip; I am only sorry to hear

you were not comfortable at the Half Moon. Everybody speaks so well of the house."

"It may be all very well for bagmen, and people of that kind," said Major Vane, with great disgust.

"It has the reputation of being very clean," said Madge.

"Clean," echoed the Major; "I knew you would say that! When people can say nothing else for an inn, they say it's clean! Just as when they can say nothing else for a man, they say he is good-natured. All I know is, the beds seem as if they were stuffed with potatoes instead of feathers, and they give you cotton sheets—cotton sheets, by Jove!"

"Well, it was only for one night, Philip," said Madge, soothingly; "to-day you will be able to go back to your London luxuries."

"My London luxuries—while you struggle on here! Is that what you mean to convey?" said Philip Vane, looking at her sharply.

"No, indeed, I did not mean to convey anything of the kind," said Madge, quietly; "I meant no sneer. And, indeed," she added, with a desperate effort of cheerfulness, "I do not intend you to enjoy those luxuries, if luxuries they be, much longer by yourself. I intend to come up and share them with you."

"The deuce you do!" said the major, in a loud key. "Oh, you have been thinking over what I said to you last night, then?"

"I have."

"And what is the result of your deliberation?"

"I will tell you, Philip; but before I tell you, let me say one word about myself, about ourselves. I have been thinking a great deal, not merely about this one proposition, but about our lives altogether, and it strikes me that, for the last few months at all events, there has been a sort of division between us, not expressed, indeed, but nevertheless existing, which should not be. Our interests are one, and our great point in life should be to carry them out by working together loyally, and in unison. Do you follow me, Philip?"

He was standing with his face turned towards her now, but with his eyes looking far away over her shoulder, swaying himself to and fro, and switching his legs with a small cane which he carried in his hand.

"Oh, yes, I follow you," he said; "it isn't time for me to speak just yet, while you are dealing in generalities. I am waiting until you come to the point, before I have my little say."

Madge winced as he spoke, but took no

further notice. Then she proceeded: "I have no doubt that I have been very foolish in allowing my fears to get the better of me, and in refusing to go and act in London. It must seem ridiculous to you that I should be wasting what remains to me of my youth and energy, in playing to provincial audiences, and in earning so small a salary. I can fully understand that, from what you saw of me two years ago, you imagined that I should by this time have made much greater progress, and been enabled to contribute much more effectively to our income. You shall not have that cause for complaint any longer. I will not even refuse to appear in any style of character, which your good sense and knowledge of the world may decide that I should undertake with a chance of success; I will give up any scruples of the kind which I have hitherto held, and if you will get me an engagement—and I am sure, amongst all the people you know, there must be plenty who would be proud to oblige you—I will go to London."

She looked up into his face as she said these last words, and made a slight movement of her hand towards him, as though expectant of some little recognition of her speech. In this, however, she was disappointed. Major Vane merely stopped himself in the act of switching his legs, and looking down at her, said: "You seem to have mistaken what I said to you last night; there was no question of going to London in the matter."

"No, not in what you last proposed, I know; but you have said more than once that you wished I would go to London, and now I am not merely willing, but anxious to do so, Philip."

"It seems impossible to get you women to be business-like," said Major Vane, pettishly. "I took the trouble to come down here yesterday, bringing you an offer, which I should have thought you would only have been too glad to have availed yourself of, and given me my reply at once. You demanded time for deliberation, and I accorded it. Now, when you should communicate to me your decision, you branch off upon a totally different topic."

His tone was harsh and morose, his manner half scornful, half savage. As Madge listened to, and looked at him, all her recently formed resolutions of submission, all her growing hopes for peace in the present, and happiness in the future, melted away. If such were to be the response to all her overtures of affection,

Hurt, proud, and defiant, she threw her head back and said, with as much calmness as she could call to her aid: "Since you wish our relations to be merely on a strict business footing, you will find me prepared to meet your wishes so far. You ask me if I will accept a three years' engagement to travel with a theatrical company through America and Australia, you, during that time, remaining in England. Do I state the matter rightly?"

"With almost legal precision," said Major Vane, with a sneer.

"Then to that proposition I answer, 'No! no! no!' See here, Philip Vane: I came to you this morning prepared to do my best to set matters right between us, to meet you more than half-way, to give you, if it were possible, even more freedom than you have now, and not to attempt to claim my position until I had made such a name in London as would render you not ashamed to acknowledge me. To this separation—for such the Australian scheme really is, call it by what name you like—I could not have consented, but it might have been modified in some way, or if you had been kind and gentle with me, I—God knows—I might have gone away. But," she added, speaking slowly, and curling her lip, and looking him full in the face, "when you allow your hard bed and cotton sheets to influence your temper so far as to make you forget, not merely the regard due to me as your wife, but the respect which I should claim as a woman, I meet you on your own ground, and distinctly refuse to accept this offer which you have made me!"

"Oh, you do, do you?" said the major, slowly, giving his legs one vicious switch; "don't let's have any mistake about it this time, let me understand you quite clearly. You refuse?"

"I do!" she cried, exasperated at the mocking tone in which he spoke; "I do, and I tell you so, plainly! Do you think I have been blinded by this pretext for an instant? Do you think that I do not see plainly enough that your object is to rid yourself of me, apparently for a time only, but really for ever?"

"Well, and suppose it were?" he said, quietly.

"Suppose it were!" she echoed; "well, then, I tell you plainly, I would frustrate it. Do you hear? There is a devil I have in me, which once roused renders me a match for you, long-headed and crafty as you are."

muttered Major Vane, low, but loud enough for her to hear.

"If she is not a nice style of woman, she has only you to thank for it," cried Madge. "What she is, you made her, for what she will be, the responsibility will rest on you. If you were a different style of man, I would speak to you in a different way. I would appeal to you, for God's sake, to remember what we are to each other, and to avert this ruin of soul and body, which is overhanging us, by acknowledging me and giving me a portion, a very small portion, of your life. But to you I simply say that I am your wife, that I shall claim the position which the law will award me, and that any attempt of yours to disown or get rid of me will be fruitless and vain."

As she uttered these last words, she emphasised them by stamping her foot and throwing out her hand. It was a natural movement with her; but scarcely had she made it, before she grew hot and flushed, knowing to what taunt she had exposed herself. Philip Vane was much too brutal to neglect such an opportunity.

"Brava, brava!" he cried, clapping his hands softly together. "Deuced good that; always keep your energy for your peroration! You really have improved wonderfully, and I am deuced sorry for Wuff's sake that you decline to astonish—not the natives, but the colonists. Now to business; you have been remarkably candid with me, I will be equally frank with you. In the first place, the fact, which you make such a point of asserting, and which you look upon as your trump card—that I am your husband—would be the very thing which would upset your apple-cart, and ruin your play! I have only to prove that I *am* your husband, and the law, which you were good enough just now to threaten to evoke, will give me the power of forcing you to accept this very excellent offer, which you refuse so contemptuously."

"I don't believe it."

"Exactly. I thought you wouldn't, and unfortunately it isn't a question which we shall be able to bring to any issue, as I don't intend to assert my conjugal rights. You have happened to hit with remarkable dexterity the right nail on the head. I did intend our little separation to be not merely temporary, but final. Oddly enough, I intend it still."

"You may intend it," said Madge, bitterly, "but you cannot carry it out."

"There," said the major, giving his leg a few persuasive taps, "there we differ! I rather think I can! You are my wife—

understand I admit that at once! If, to speak after the pleasant fashion which you have adopted—if you had been another style of woman, I might have been more reserved. I might have introduced a little innocent deception into the matter, have told you, as they do in novels, that our marriage isn't a legal one, either because the person was a postman in disguise, or that I was a Quaker, while you were a Protestant, or some ingenious stratagem of that kind. But with you I do nothing of the sort; I fully admit the legality of our marriage, while at the same time I bid you a respectful farewell."

"What do you mean?"

"Simply this, that by a method more speedy, more efficacious, and less expensive than any known to your friend the law, I dissolve this marriage between us! And I will be generous enough to let you into my plan, which is as simple as it is excellent. From this day forth you will never look upon me again. I disappear, efface myself, as the French say! Don't ask me how, because I scarcely know myself yet; I may emigrate, I may go abroad, may join Wuff's company as the Bounding Brother of something or other. I don't know what I shall do, but I do know this, that you will never see me again. Listen now, Madge Pierrepoint," said he, suddenly changing his tone, "for Madge Pierrepoint you are once again. I have been talking in a light tone, but I have meant every word I said, every syllable, by George! Our marriage is known to no one but ourselves, and when we decide upon ignoring it, it is just as though it had never happened. I will never interfere with your plans and projects. I swear that! But on your part you must leave me free! I need say nothing about that, however, for you will have no choice in the matter."

He turned and walked rapidly away, without turning his head. Had he looked round, possibly he might have felt some touch of compunction or compassion, for he would have seen his wife lying senseless on the ground.

OLD SATIRICAL PRINTS.

THE days of the Tudors and the Stuarts were marked by numerous examples of the use of caricatures and satirical prints in illustration of the politics, religious quarrels, dress, amusements, manners, and customs of the people. Such pictorial sketches, and the minor literary productions with

which they were often associated, are valuable as keys to unlock the history of those times. Ballads, broadsheets, monodies, copies of verses, petitions, complaints, short poems, libels, trials, humorous satires, stinging epigrams; together with rude woodcuts, pencil sketches, illuminated headings to manuscripts—all, if viewed aright, are historical memoranda of the greatest interest. Many of these queer old pamphlets and prints admit us in a notable way into a knowledge of the thoughts, habits, diet, peculiarities, homes, gossip, trades, and domestic economy of those who were emphatically the people.

There are, for instance, in the British Museum, rich stores of prints and drawings, some in books, and some on single sheets of paper, full of such suggestive information. We may adduce (without going back to earlier dates) Bateman's *Crissall Glasse of Christian Reformation*; wherein the Godly maye beholde the coloured Abuses used in this our present Time. It is a small pamphlet, published in the early part of the reign of Elizabeth, and adorned with several little homely woodcuts illustrating Sloth, Envy, Gluttony, Wealth, Pride, Vanity, and many other evil things. It tells us something of the religious animosities of that period, that nearly all the persons who are concerned in the evil deeds are represented as popes, priests, monks, and nuns; but apart from this there is a wonderful amount of detail to be picked up relating to dwellings, rooms, furniture, fireplaces, cooking vessels, apparel, and daily usages. There is a broadsheet extant, belonging to a later period of Elizabeth's reign, which illustrates the curious tendency of that age to visit shrews, scolds, and vixens with a mingled punishment of satire and vituperation. Whether those unfavourable specimens of womanhood were relatively more abundant then than they are now, or whether men were more inclined to disparage their wives, are delicate questions to solve; but true it is that satires of this kind were abundant in the days of the Tudors and the Stuarts. The broadsheet warns us thus:

Who marieth a Wife vpon a Monday,
If she will not be good vpon a Tuesday,
Let him go to y^e Wood vpon a Wednesday,
And cutt him a Cudgell vpon a Thursday,
And pay her soundly vpon a Fryday,
And she maind not, y^e Diuill take her a Saturday,
Then he may eat his Meate in peace on y^e Sunday.

The sheet is adorned with seven small woodcuts, representing the scenes thus assigned to the seven days of the week.

Another of the bits of fun or sarcasm

largely indulged in, was the accusing of women of gossiping whenever they met. The old playwrights furnish a profusion of examples; but there is one particular broadsheet worth notice, on account of the amount of information unconsciously given on other subjects. It has a large engraving, with eight pictures or scenes, and thirty-six verses relating to those scenes. The whole is called *Title Tattle*; or, the *Several Branches of Gossiping*; and it appears to have been published very near the close of Elizabeth's reign. It lets us into many curious bits of knowledge concerning every-day life, apart from the skit at women, which the artist evidently regarded as the most important matter. The first picture represents a bedroom scene, with several women, a baby, candle-cups, and so forth; in it the gossips sit round an open fire on a tiled hearth, with a hood over it by way of chimney. The second is called *At the Market*. There is a kind of rough shed, to which a miller has brought a mule laden with sacks of corn; other sacks are placed up against posts; a salesman is taking corn out of an open sack to weigh in a balance; several women are standing near, all tattling, and most of them carrying flour-bags under their arms; four more are sitting with vegetables, melons or pumpkins, and other fruit; while others have small hand-baskets. This little rude woodcut tells plainly of the days when housewives bought their own corn, ground their own flour, and made their own bread. At the *Bake Hous* in like manner shows that, though women made the loaves of bread, they had not the facilities for baking at home. Women are assembled, each bringing her lump of dough to be baked into a loaf; a baker is thrusting the dough into his oven, by means of a peel or long-handled wooden shovel, and there is a broom at hand to sweep out the embers of the wood fire with which the oven is heated. There is also a woman bringing in a pasty in a dish to be baked, just as a workman's wife now takes a pie to the bakehouse. In the picture called *At the Aele Hous* there is not so much insight afforded into what may be called domestic life, the satirist being too much engaged in showing women drinking; but the fire outside the *Half Moon*, the benches round the fire, the large fagon, and the lidded noggins, are noteworthy; while an old soldier passing by, with buckler at his back and broadsword over the shoulder, shows how the queen's soldiers were dressed and armed in those

days. Washers at the River tell us of times when laundresses did not use hot water for their cleansing labours (unless indeed the "fine things" were attended to separately at home). Two women are carrying off washed linen in a tub, by means of a pole passing through two handles and resting on their shoulders; a mistress is scolding them, and they are retorting; a woman stands on a stool in the river, beating wet linen with a mallet or wooden bat; another is kneeling on a stool, washing in the river; several women are idling about and chatting; two are fighting, and one is trying to separate them. At the Church the women sit on hassocks at one side of the church, while the men stand on the other side. We may perhaps attribute to the ill-nature of the artist the fact that he represents the preacher as addressing the men, while the women are all looking round about and chattering. There is an hour-glass near or on the pulpit, to enable the preacher to regulate the length of his sermon—clocks inside churches, and even outside, not being very plentiful. At the *Hotte Hous* introduces us to a women's warm bath; and it would be interesting to know how many there were of such establishments in the Tudor times. Very little mention is made of them by dignified historians; indeed, so far as we are aware, the matter has been left nearly unmentioned through sheer want of knowledge. Be this as it may, here we see the vaulted interiors of two chambers, with dormer openings in a slated roof; the floors are tiled. In one room are several women, in various stages of *deshabille*, playing about and gossiping. Towels hang on the wall. In the other chamber, two women are sitting in large tubs; boards, resting on the tubs in front of the women, have food and drink placed on them. That it was a public bath is shown by the sign of the Crown. At the *Conditte* introduces us to a state of things which prevailed in London before the days of Sir Hugh Myddelton, and prevails still in many country towns. Women are surrounding a circular conduit, gossiping and filling their pails; two are quarrelling and fighting; while a water-carrier is bearing one of those peculiar tall cans in which the water was hawked about.

Coryat's Crudities, published in the early part of the reign of James the First, frequently contained in the early editions engraved frontispieces, which throw a good deal of light on the minor details of life in various countries. *Coryat* visited France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and the

Netherlands, and jotted down numerous descriptions of what met his view, or, to use his own words, "hastily gobbled up," during a five months' journey. A frontispiece to his book depicts, in one scene, *Coryat* travelling in a Picardy covered cart drawn by two horses; in a second, crossing a mountain in a chair carried by two men; in a third, rowing in a gondola under the window of a house in Venice, from which a lively lady pelts him with eggs; in another, sleeping in a stable at Bergamo: and so on. Each of these little bits (for they are all very small) tells its story of something real, as that something existed two centuries and a half ago.

In the time of Gustavus Adolphus, a broadsheet appeared in Germany, containing pictures of some Irishmen who served in his army. From this we learn that the men wore long-skirted coats reaching to the knee, a broad bonnet, a loose-sleeved under-coat, a girdle, and full breeches; they carried bows, arrows, swords, and guns. Underneath the picture are some lines in German, bemoaning the troubles which the sins of the country had brought upon her. The Irish legionaries of the invader are described as "hardy and strong, dark-coloured like gipsies, short in stature, eager to fight, furnished with muskets, and skilful in the use of bows and arrows, ready to cut their way with long knives. Their clothes and caps have a barbarous appearance, almost all black; their shoes are chiefly made of, and tied on with, bark of trees. They make shift with little food; if they have no bread, and are hungry, they dig roots out of the earth, with which they are easily appeased." An intelligible picture this of rough-and-ready adventurers, always fighting, or prompt to fight!

Elizabeth, James the First, and Charles the First, are well known to have granted patents and monopolies to all kinds of crafty and unworthy persons, and for numerous branches of trade, in return for money payments to replenish the sovereign's purse. Sometimes the manufacture of certain articles, sometimes the retailing, sometimes the importing, sometimes the exporting, were granted to the favoured parties as special monopolies; while in other cases the patentee had a right to claim royalties or percentages on all the sales effected by regular dealers. In this way the list of monopolies became at length enormous. Wine, oil, salt, starch, tin, steel, coals, currants, iron, playing-cards, calf-skin, felts, canvas, ox-shin bones, potash, aniseed, vinegar, aqua-

vitæ, brushes, pots, bottles, saltpetre, lead, Latin grammar-books, calamine stone, glass, paper, sulphur, new drapery, dried pilchards—all were subject in divers ways to the operation of this pernicious system. The satirists and artists were not slow to attack the monopolists with pen and pencil. There appears to have been one Alderman Abel, who held a monopoly of some kind for the sale of wine in the City of London. A broadsheet was published about him at a time when he had become enriched by his monopoly. One woodcut represents him at his wine-office in Alderbury Churchyard, while another shows his wife surrounded by the good things of life. The complaining reproaches in the lines beneath the woodcuts are full of little instructive bits: "His wife's shoes must not now shine with the smearing and unsightly unguent of kitchen stuffs, but the purest Blacke that Spaine affords must now cover her happy feet." "Their children must be nursed and bred at Hyegate, and (because the Court breeding is not gentle enough) have select persons on purpose for their better education." "Her manifolde Chaine and Tiffinie Ruffe, without the addition of her Sattin Gowne, Hood, and round be-guarded Petticoat, speake her supereminent for a Citie Patron-ship at least." "His patent for the Office of Wine being granted, not a firkin of wine can be conveyed without a ticket from Alderbury Churchyard, but one of this noble Alderman's sprites will prie into it; and, because it wants hallowing with a note, it must be damned to the bottom of his cellar."

The mountebank was a well-known character in streets and fairs in the old days; and humorous prints throw light on many queer sayings and doings connected with the lives of such men. In some cases the broadsheet, or hand-bill of the exhibitor himself, has been preserved. One of these belonged to Hans Buling, a Dutch mountebank well known in London. He was a grotesque-looking fellow, very fantastical in dress, and was attended by a monkey, which he had taught to act the part of a Jack-pudding attendant. Buling himself had once been a Jack-pudding to some other mountebank, and thus well knew the secrets of the craft. His broadsheet represents him bedizened with finery, holding a scroll and a phial; at his feet an ape and a chest of medicines; while his Jack-pudding is coming from behind a curtain. Beneath the picture is an ample versified account of the wonderful cures he can effect, beginning:

See sir, see here,
A doctor rare,
Who travels much at home;
Here take my pills,
I cure all illa,
Past, present, and to come.

Then he goes on to say:

Thousands I've dissected,
Thousands new erected,
And such cures effected,
As none e'er can tell.
Let the palsie shake ye,
Let the chollick rack ye,
Let the crinkum break ye,
Let the murrain take ye,
Take this and you are well.

After much else (unquotable to modern ears) he winds up with the exhortation:

Read, judge, and try,
And if you die,
Never believe me more.

The rogue must have enjoyed the joke contained in the last two lines. Another mountebank, somewhat later in date, caused his portrait to be engraved with the sonorous inscription in dog-Latin: "Magnifico Smokentissimo Custardissimo Astrologissimo Cunningmanissimo Rabbinnissimo Viro Jacko Adams de Clerkenwell Greeno hanc Lovellissimam sui Picturam." Then, in the corner where the painter's and engraver's names are usually placed, there is the further entry, "Hobbedeboo by pinxit et scratchabat." Jack Adams, the cunning man of Clerkenwell Green, is represented in this picture, standing at a table, with a horoscope, an alphabet hornbook, and a Poor Robin's Almanack before him; a tobacco-pipe is sticking in his girdle; a slatternly woman is coming into the room, saying, "Please, sir, can you tell my fortune?"

The complaints by workmen concerning the low rate of wages, and the starvation life of those who make up cheap clothing for slop-sellers, are by no means of recent origin. A broadsheet ballad, about the Commonwealth time, or a little later, is called the Clothier's Delight; or, the Rich Men's Joy and the Poor Men's Sorrow, wherein is expressed the craftiness and subtlety of many clothiers in England, by beating down the workmen's wages:

Combers, weavers, and spinners, for little gains,
Doth earn their money by taking hard pains.

And the broadsheet further tells us that the song is to be "sung to the tune of Jenny come tye me." The woodcuts are on a par with the verses.

If we come to the reign of Charles the Second, we have abundant proof of the strong language used in the broadsheets

and ballads relating to political affairs. When Oliver was dead, and it was safe to abuse him, there appeared such effusions as the following: The English Devil; or, Cromwell and his Monstrous Witch Discover'd at Whitehall: with the Strange and Damnable Speeches of the Hellish Monster, by way of Revelation touching King and Kingdom: with a Narrative of the Infernal Plots, Inhumane Actings, and Barbarous Conspiracies of this Grand Impostor and most Audacious Rebel, that durst aspire from a Brewhouse to the Throne, Washing his Accursed Hands in the Blood of his Royal Sovereign. The title being thus highly spiced, we can well believe that the ballad or effusion itself is not wanting in veneration.

CAPTURED BY PATAGONS.

A FRENCH traveller, Monsieur A. Guinnard, in order to confirm his countrymen in their innate love of their village steeple, has published an account of what befel him when, in the naughtiness of his heart, he ventured into the wilds of South America.*

Assuredly, Monsieur Guinnard's misfortune was great, and his sufferings as a slave most unusual in kind. The selfish public finds its consolation in the description he gives of tracts of country and half-savage tribes hitherto unseen by Europeans.

He was twenty-three years of age when he went to seek his fortune, in 1855. To reach the place where the streets would be paved with gold, he had to traverse an enormous desert region on foot, in company with an Italian named Pedritto, who had left his home on the same promising errand. How they kept body and soul together, and lost themselves like babes in the wood—except that there was no wood—were long to tell. They went on their way, eating such game as they could catch, not particular whether it were cooked or raw. At last they caught a Tartar, in the shape of a party of Indians, who cut short poor Pedritto's biography, and were about to leave Monsieur Guinnard for dead, when one benevolent savage resolving to spare him, in order to convert him into a domestic animal, stripped him, tied his hands behind him, and set him astride on a fiery steed, no more encumbered with superfluous clothing than himself. This completely stripped condition

continued afterwards to be his invariable and every-day costume. It was a capital plan for preventing his pilfering by hiding small articles in his waistcoat-pocket.

The tribe into whose clutches he had fallen were the Poyuches, who wander along the banks of the Rio Negro from the neighbourhood of the island Pacheco to the foot of the Cordilleras, a mountainous country cut up by deep valleys. After a few months of this vagabond life, no trace of the European was visible in his person. Thus acclimatized, he was sold by the Poyuches to some Puelches, who were staying with them on a visit, for the small price of a horse and an ox. He seems to have been purchased rather as a curiosity than with any hope of his turning out useful. However, the buyers grinned a grin of satisfaction which would have highly diverted him under any other circumstances.

When Turks are unusually angry with a slave, they threaten to sell him. Monsieur Guinnard learned to understand a slave's fear of being sold, and the feeling that makes him rather bear the ills he has, than fly to others that he knows not of. As the Poyuches had done, so did the Puelches; they sold him out of speculation to some eastern Patagons, who seemed likely to treat him with the same tender mercies. People fond of changing horses, often give a one-eyed for a blind one. Monsieur Guinnard's change of masters scarcely promised better results. Nevertheless, this time, he felt less repugnance, as his new owners appeared just a little more human than his previous enslavers. Their stature approached six feet, but their personal type differed little from that of the Puelches. Their bust was long, compared with their height, so that on horseback they looked taller than they really were. Their limbs were well-proportioned; their heads large, almost square, flat on the top of the skull; the forehead, and also the chin, projecting, which, combined with a long thin nose, gave them a singular profile.

Continual opportunities of observing the bodily strength of the Patagons enabled their captive, who witnessed their numerous exercises, to feel assured that it greatly surpasses that of Europeans. He saw them adroitly seize with the lasso an untamed horse, pull it up suddenly when at full speed, resist unaided the animal's shock simply by leaning in the opposite direction, until it rolled half-strangled on the ground; and their muscles, while performing these feats, were not more apparent than in their normal state. The physical organisation

* *Trois Ans d'Esclavage chez les Patagons. Récit de Ma Captivité, par A. Guinnard, Membre de la Société de Géographie.*

of the Indians is much superior to that of civilised men. They bear with the greatest ease continued privation and fatigue, during journeys of two or three months which they perform almost without taking rest, galloping on day and night. When they start on a pillaging expedition four or five hundred leagues off, besides the twenty or thirty horses which each man has with him, they take scarcely anything except the lassos, lances, and boleadoras, which they employ both for procuring the means of existence and for fighting. Only the epicures of the party put under the piece of leather, which serves as a saddle, a few slices of salt meat dried in the sun, which they eat with a mixture of horse and beef fat.

According to the accounts of the Patagons in general, the immense desert which lies between the chain of the Andes, the south bank of the Rio Negro, the eastern coast, and the Straits of Magellan, is not, as has been hitherto stated, completely sterile. On the contrary, at least a third of this area is exceedingly fertile, especially the western side and the extreme point of Magellan. Monsieur Guinnard cites with perfect assurance the various places at which he resided, in the neighbourhood of the Andes and of Los Serranos, which are charmingly picturesque and fertile.

Painful as was Monsieur Guinnard's condition, he could not help beholding with pleasure the superb landscapes by which he was surrounded. They would even have afforded him unmixed delight, had they not reminded him of his sad position. Nay, more, he could have fallen in with his masters' mode of life, had not constant ill-treatment aggravated his sorrows, and forced him to anticipate a tragic end. And when sold again, exactly like a passive brute or a beast of burden, he gazed for the last time, with regret, at the lovely scenery which had so often been witness to his tears.

Condemned to live the life of the dumb, his time necessarily passed heavily. The Indians never admitted him to their company, and when his duties called him inside their huts, he was at once brutally driven out. Nor did he wait for the order to be repeated, accompanied as it was by threatening gestures, or by strokes of lassos, which cut his chest and back. He returned to the herd confided to his care, with which he had to remain in all weathers, day and night, sometimes exposed to insupportable heat, his naked body scorched by the summer's sun, or else experiencing

the influences of wind, rain, ^h or frost. In the latter case he suffered badly from cold and numbness in the ^h and feet. Frequently, after passing several hours on horseback, he was obliged ⁱⁿ order to dismount, to seize the mane with his teeth, his hands and feet being perfectly useless, and when he fell upon the ground he felt as if rolling on broken glass. He could not rise until he had given himself a sharp friction of the limbs, after which a rapid run helped to restore the circulation. Could he help brooding over the means of escape?

With all his goodwill he could not perfect himself in the various Patagonian exercises, nor acquire the skill they required of him. He was, therefore, all but worthless in their eyes. Consequently, they sold him to some Pampeans, who paid them a visit after several invasions of the Buenos Ayrian territory. The price paid this time for the biped animal was several horses and a few pieces of common cloth, coloured black or red.

His new proprietors were curious to know what motive had induced him to leave his native land. He answered that he quitted Europe because he had some ambition, and because in his country the extent of space is so restricted, compared with the number of the population, that only a few individuals succeed in acquiring an independent existence, or even easy circumstances. That money being the principal mover of all things in civilised countries, every one tries to get as much as possible by the exercise of some special industry, but that the majority barely earn enough for their wants. That, like him, hundreds of thousands of Europeans submit to voluntary exile every year, in the hope of realising, in a short space of time, sufficient profits either to place them out of the reach of want, or to enable them to lead a life of pleasure. Finally, he added, that the hope of winning the smiles of fortune, and the desire to be able to assist his family, had sufficed to make him leave the mother country.

The interpreter, after communicating this reply to his companions (who laughed as if in pity with shrugs of their shoulders), answered that, since chance had thrown him amongst them, any care for the future was superfluous. That he had no need to work to eat, and that his family would manage to do without him, because they would never see him again. That he would lead a happy life with them, although, in truth, they promised neither house nor clothing to protect him from the

erity of the seasons. That the earth, ^{rain, hot or dry,} the rocks, or the grass, would ^{red} be by turns his bed. That he would get used to this sort of life, just as well as they did, for he seemed to be made exactly as they were, and that they would treat him well, in proportion as they found him faithful and serviceable. To sum up the whole, he added, by way of moral, that Christians are fools—ouésalmas—imbeciles—pofos—to labour for gold, and to cover themselves from head to foot with inconvenient, extraordinary, and unhealthy clothing, which, to judge from its appearance, must give a deal of trouble to fabricate.

Amongst the South American Indians, every family, and even every man, believes himself absolutely free. They live completely independent of each other; nevertheless, in spite of those habits and ideas, the Poyuches, the Pampeans, and the Mamonelches, as well as the Patagons, are divided into a great number of tribes. Their intestine wars, besides those against the Hispano-Americans, so frequently compromise their liberty, that they have been driven, out of sheer necessity, to form themselves into societies more or less numerous. They choose chiefs or caciques, whom they regard as their fathers and directors, rather than their masters, with whom they remain, or whom they quit, according to their pleasure.

The variations of the climate of the Pampas are exceedingly regular, consisting mainly in a great difference of summer and winter temperature. The latter is almost as cold as December in France. There is no snow, but every morning the ground is covered with hoar frost. The ice is never more than an inch and a half thick. On the other hand, the summer is oppressively hot. The horses and wild oxen which people the plains indulge, like the human inhabitants, in a siesta, which seems to all a repose as natural as necessary. But throughout the Pampas there are considerable atmospheric differences. In the Mamonelches regions, which are wooded, the air is extremely dry. No trace of perspiration is to be seen on any creature whatever. Animals, killed by the heat, lie entire on the arid plains, dried in their skin. But in the latitude of Buenos Ayres, where the finest possible lucerne abounds, the vegetation clearly demonstrates the moisture of the climate. Dead animals putrefy rapidly, and wounds are difficult to heal. Yet in spite of this constant humidity the Indians sleep with impunity on the naked ground, almost unclad.

The stature of the Pampeans is inferior to that of the Puelches and the Patagons. With a few exceptions, they are seldom more than five feet eight or nine inches high. Their hue is the darkest of all these Indians, being deep olive-brown; some even are almost black. Their skin is exceedingly fine all over their bodies—soft, like satin, and almost as brilliant. They exhale a peculiar odour, which, though less powerful than that of negroes, is still more so than that of Europeans. Their skin becomes more shining, and slightly oily, under the action of the sun, as was easily ascertained by the touch. They tie up their hair over the top of the head, with a strip of stuff or a strap of leather; but in battle they let it hang loose over their face, to avoid seeing the dangers which may threaten them.

The gait of all Indian women is exceedingly ungraceful; that of the Pampeans is especially so, brought on by their seating themselves, through a sense of decency, in a manner different to the men, who squat in Oriental fashion, with their legs crossed under them. They bend the left leg, with the point of the foot resting on the ground, then they seat themselves upon the heel, and pass the right leg over the left thigh, taking care to put the right foot flat beside the left, in order thereby to be able to keep their crossed legs in equilibrium. This fatiguing posture, to which they are accustomed from their infancy, brings on a curious disfigurement of the left hip, turning the leg inwards, and causing them to halt on the left side. Their hands are small, well made, and rarely thin; their joints, as those of the men, are clean; their feet also are small, but broad. If their forms are not beautiful, they announce at least enormous strength. The richest, or the most considered amongst them, wear a leather collar three fingers broad, and very tight, garnished outside with discs, or half-beads of metal, which they fabricate themselves. The breadth and stiffness of this singular ornament, which might very well serve for a Newfoundland dog's collar, gives a most comical aspect to the wearer's dignified face.

The Pampean women are very active and very attentive to their husbands, to whose exactions they submit without a murmur. Those worthies devote to complete repose all the time which is not occupied by the chase or in taming their horses. In their changes of residence, it is the women who undertake to transport all the household goods. They load the

horses, and saddle their husbands' and afterwards their own, on which they then instal themselves with three or four children. With this equipage, they assemble the herd and drive it before them with the lances of their lords and masters, who, mounted on their best coursers, with no other burden than their lassos and their boleadoras, indulge on the way in the pleasures of the chase, without appearing to bestow the least thought on their family, however great may be their attachment to their children. Arrived at their destination, it is again the women who unload the horses and hasten to pitch the tents, under whose shelter the husbands stretch themselves, while their helpmates prepare the food. The Pampeans, for whom horse exercise is obligatory, usually mount at a single bound into the wooden saddles which encase their coursers' head and chest. The richest only, or the luckiest in pillaging, saddle their horses after the Gaucho fashion. The women ride on horseback, in the same way as the men, only their saddles are completely different, being veritable scaffoldings composed of seven or eight sheepskins, surmounted by a couple of rolls of rushes. To climb up into this apparatus, they make use of a stirrup hung round the horse's neck.

Amongst all the wild tribes through whom Monsieur Guinnard passed, marriage, as with civilised peoples, is considered as an important act and the source of an honourable and happy life. It is contracted under the form of a traffic or an exchange of the women for divers goods and animals. When an Indian wishes to get married and has cast his eyes on any girl in the neighbourhood, he visits in turn all his relations and friends, confides to them his desire, and begs their assistance in carrying out his project. Each one, according to his degree of relationship or friendship, gives his advice and his approbation in a long discourse suited to the circumstance, adding weight to his words by some acceptable gift, such as horses, oxen, silver stirrups or spurs, or pieces of stuff the proceeds of pillage.

Ill-treatment of wives is perfectly allowable, when based upon infidelity. The husband may even put his wife to death, as well as her accomplice; but generally his avarice induces him to keep his wife and exact damages from the delinquent, who has the right to ransom his life when he has the means. From the moment when the injured spouse has received satisfaction, he has no right to reproach his wife by the slightest allusion to her fault. Her

family would be allowed to interfere were he to ill-treat her again on that account. Condonation is accepted by Indian, as well as by English law.

Children, amongst these primitive people, are not nearly so numerous as might be expected. The life of a new-born babe is submitted to the decision of the father and mother—whether it shall be suffered to exist or not. If their judgment is favourable, it instantly becomes the object of its parents' love, who at need would submit to the greatest privations to gratify its slightest wants or its most wilful caprices; for children are spoiled all the world over. They stretch their pretty darling on a sort of little ladder, which supplies the place of a cradle. The upper part of its tiny person reposes on staves fixed close together, and covered with a sheepskin, whilst the lower part of its body sinks into a sort of cavity formed by staves placed below the sides of the ladder.

This curious cradle is longer than the infant by a foot, at each extremity. To the four corners are attached leather straps, which serve to suspend it during the night over the parents, who can rock it, by means of a thong, without disturbing themselves. Every morning, the babes are set at liberty during the space of time necessary for cleaning them. When the sun shines, the mother lays them on a sheepskin, to imbibe strength from the source of life and motion. In rainy weather, fixed in their ladder, they are set upright against one of the poles of the tent. Mamma squats opposite, admiring their beauties and frequently giving them either the breast, or little bits of raw meat, which they suck down greedily.

The women suckle their babes till they are three years; if, during that time, they give birth to others, they suckle both, or all, without apparent injury to either party. The slightest whims of these little tyrants are law for the parents and their friends. As observed just now, the spoiling of children is a cosmopolitan weakness. Scarcely do these precocious urchins begin to drag themselves about on their hands and knees, when they are allowed to handle knives and other sharp weapons, and to use them against any one who crosses them. "Pretty dears!" exclaim the delighted parents, "they'll make famous enemies of Christians."

One of Monsieur Guinnard's servile functions was to serve as a butt to these youthful tormentors. His duty was to practise complete submission to the children, whose pleasure it was to inflict on him all sorts of

cruelties. Sometimes they pelted him with stones from their slings, or threw their boladoras round his body, or when they were on horseback caught him with a lasso, and dragged him after them at full gallop—all to the great satisfaction of their honoured parents, who thought no more of his bleeding wounds than they would of a horse's broken knees.

After this, can we wonder that the unhappy captive resolved to escape at the risk of his life? He did escape. How, the reader may learn from a translation (which the writer has not seen) of Monsieur Guinard's narrative, published by Messrs. Bentley and Son.

THE FOURFOLD ASPECT.

The lovers stood in the deep recess
Of the old ancestral hall,
Where the storied panes their gold and red
Flang o'er the grace of her bending head,
As he whispered "Nothing on earth is bliss
Like a silent hour, such as this,
With the soft hush over all."

The children played on the flowery lawn,
Darting from glade to walk;
"And see," they said as they glanced above,
To the two, in their glorious trance of love,
"How Mand and Charlie waste the day,
Though night is coming to stop our play,
And they do not even talk!"

With her weary eyes and her sable robes,
The lonely lady passed;
A sudden cloud her pale face crossed,
The anguish of one who has loved and lost;
Then, from laughing babes and dreaming pair,
She turned, with the tearful gentle prayer,
"God, long may their sunshine last!"

The old men glanced from the lighted hearth,
Where they sat over cards and wine,
To the two, unconscious of aught the while,
But love and each other—then shrug and smile,
As one, draining his glass, said—"As they choose,
But yon blaze is better than chill night dews;
Your trick, and the deal is mine."

The twilight deepened into night,
The stars through the dusk air shone,
Aged and infants calmly slept,
O'er a bright-eyed portrait the mourner wept,
And the lovers still murmured, "Not yet, not yet,
Ah why should such hours in parting set!"
And so the old world rolls on.

A TRIP TO THE LAND OF SCOTT.

PART III.

THE city arms of Glasgow were evidently designed by an amateur unproficient in the scientific mysteries of heraldry, and consist of a bush with a bird upon it, a bell hanging from the bough, and a fish, not at all rampant, and supposed to be a herring. Some local poet has written in reference to this odd emblazonment:

This is the tree that never sprang,
This is the bird that never sang,
This is the bell that never rang,
This is the fish that never swam, &c.

The motto underneath this device was, "Let Glasgow flourish by the preaching of the Word." Though the Scotch are eminently a polemical and theological, they are none the less eminently a trading people, and at some time during the last century the commercial element got the mastery in this little epigraph, and excluded the theological. The motto now stands, "Let Glasgow flourish." And Glasgow does flourish, thanks to the abundant coal and iron of Lanarkshire, to the enterprise of the people, and to its commanding situation on the Clyde. The river, however, did comparatively little for it until within the last sixty or seventy years. Before that time there was scarcely more than five feet depth of water at the Broomielaw; at the present time there is a depth of twenty-five feet, allowing the largest class of vessels to load and unload within the city boundaries. The far-seeing and energetic men who proposed, and their successors who have carried out, the improvement of the Clyde, from the Broomielaw downwards to the point where the river becomes an estuary, have been the means of raising Glasgow from the position of a small and unprogressive country town to that of the second city in the empire, for population, enterprise, and wealth. Their efforts were aided, no doubt, by the great mineral wealth of all the near-lying districts, but none the less praise is due to them for their sagacity and public spirit. The traveller who seeks merely health, recreation, fine scenery, and change of air as excuses for leaving home, will find but little to detain him in this dingy metropolis; but the social philosopher and the man of business will discover at any time something to interest and instruct them. The old city of Glasgow, like old Edinburgh, without the advantage of its picturesque station, is ill-built, over-crowded, and abounds with narrow streets, lanes, "wynds," and "vennels," the hot-beds of filth, malaria, fever, as well as vice and crime. But new Glasgow, extending westwards from the Exchange, and beyond Kelvin Grove, to Gilmore Hill, and, still pushing itself westward, is one of the finest cities in Great Britain. It covers a series of gently-swelling hills, and contains miles of stone-built and handsome streets, squares, crescents, and terraces, with many ecclesiastical, civic, and commercial buildings of the highest order of architectural merit. As regards the old town, the antiquary will perhaps take a look at the beautiful cathedral, lately restored, and the man of literary taste will, if he have time,

stray into the "Saut Market," for the sake of Rob Roy and Bailie Nichol Jarvie, taking care, if he be wise, to be provided with some aromatic vinegar, or a piece of camphor, to protect him from the many "athletic stinks" that are likely to grasp him by the nose as he passes along. This done, he will turn to the Clyde and its ship-building establishments, as the sight above all others which renders Glasgow remarkable. The first sight of the river, dank, oozy, slushy, and as foul-smelling as the Salt Market, can scarcely fail to suggest to his mind that the municipality of Glasgow has sadly neglected its duty in not having expended about half or a quarter as much money in purifying the river as the Clyde trustees have spent in deepening, dredging, and embanking it. If there be in the world a filthier river than the Thames was before the main drainage works were constructed, that river is the Clyde, which receives all the refuse and pollution of half a million of people, pollution which is kept in a continual state of churn, by the paddle-wheels and screws of one of the busiest and most crowded ports in Europe. There are no engineering difficulties to prevent the work; it is nothing but a question of money, which Glasgow can well spare, even were the purpose of its expenditure of far less importance than the life and health of its citizens, both rich and poor.

The sail from Glasgow to Oban, in the land of Lorne, occupies a long summer day, and compels the traveller to rise betimes if he would lose no portion of the enjoyment, which all who make the trip anticipate, and in which few, if any, are disappointed, unless Highland mist, thick and opaque, shuts up the view. But this seldom happens in the summer, and such mists as occasionally arise and settle upon the side or the crests of the great Bens, if they detract from the beauty, enhance the sublimity of the landscape. Stepping aboard the Iona at the Broomielaw, the acknowledged pride of the river, and the finest steamer of the fine fleet that the enterprising David Hutcheson has placed at the disposal of all who travel for pleasure or necessity between Glasgow, the West Highlands, and the inner and outer Hebrides, we start down the Clyde punctually at six in the morning. In less than ten minutes we thread our way through the crowded river, and behold, on the east side of us, the busy yards of the iron ship-builders by whose skill and enterprise the reputation of the Clyde-built ships has been carried to every part of the world.

stocks loom large and heavily as we pass; and the docile monsters, which are hereafter to visit all parts of the globe, laden with merchandise and passengers, and sometimes on the less agreeable errands of war and destruction, stand before us in all stages of development. The ship-building industry of the Thames seems to have emigrated to the Clyde, determined to remain there. Everybody knows the fact; and the ship-builders of London, workmen as well as masters, have reason to deplore it. In this, as in all similar cases, where a trade or manufacture leaves its usual seat for another, the reason is chiefly to be found in the conduct or organisation of the workmen. The operative ship-builders of London demand more wages than the men of Glasgow; do less work in a given space of time; and encumber the trade with a greater number of regulations injurious to the masters. The result is that ships can be cheaper and more expeditiously constructed in the Clyde than in the Thames; and that trade, true to its instincts as the needle to the pole, flies to the spot where the largest profits can be made with the least risk and the greatest certainty. Doubtless the coal and iron that lie at the very doors of the Clyde ship-builders, and have not to be transported from distances of a hundred or two hundred miles, as is the case with those who ply their industry on the Thames, is one reason why Glasgow wins the day; but the main and paramount reason is, the demand of the Thames workman for a wage that he does not really earn, aided by the inability of the English workman to live as comfortably on his larger wage as the Scotsman on a smaller one. And this latter question is not one of the cost of subsistence so much as of management. The English workman's wife is, in nine cases out of ten, a woman of very imperfect or of no education, who knows next to nothing of domestic economy, and whose principal idea of cooking is to take a joint to the neighbouring baker, and have it baked in his oven without trouble to herself, and who knows not how to make soups, broths, stews, or savoury dishes, or how to convert a pound of meat, by the aid of vegetables and condiments, into a dish satisfying alike to the palates and stomachs of three or four, or even half a dozen people. The Scottish women of the same class are much better instructed, and can do as much with half a crown in the sustenance of their families, without stinting them, as an Eng-

On the left of the river, after passing the last of the great ship-building yards, and getting beyond hearing of the incessant hammering against the iron ribs of the future leviathans of the deep, stands the little town of Renfrew, which gives the title of baron to the Prince of Wales. Inland a few miles may be seen the spires of the busy manufacturing town of Paisley, that was almost ruined a few years ago by the fiat of the great goddess Fashion, who decreed that ladies should wear mantles, instead of the shawls for which Paisley is celebrated. But, after a hard struggle, Paisley surmounted its difficulty, remembering, in the day of its adversity, that other articles of dress besides shawls might be made of fine wool, and that tartans and many choice and tasteful fabrics of the loom might be worn otherwise than on the shoulders. Near this point the Clyde gradually widens, and by the time we reach Kilpatrick, the birthplace of the patron saint of Ireland, it begins to assume the appearance of an estuary. The Irish vehemently deny that the saint was a Scotsman; but as, up to the seventh or eighth century, the western Scotch and the eastern Irish were but one people, and are to this day of one race and closely related language, there is no need why the Irish should think it a point of honour or of duty to maintain that the saint was born on the banks of the Liffey or the Shannon, and not on those of the Clyde.

Beyond Kilpatrick is Dunglea, the "grey hill," near to which are the remains of an ancient Roman fort, marking the western extremity of the old Roman wall from the Forth to the Clyde, commonly called by the country people "Graham's Dyke." On a rock by the river-side a monument has been erected to the memory of Henry Bell—one of the pioneers of steam navigation—who, in the year 1812, navigated the first steamer whose paddles ever disturbed the waters of the Clyde. In close proximity is the village of Bowling, the entrance to the canal that connects the Clyde with the Forth. On the opposite shore stands Eskine House, the seat of Lord Blantyre, a member of the great clan, sept, or house of the Stuarths, and then we come within sight of the most prominent and picturesque object on the river, the noble rock and castle of Dumbarton, the Balclutha of Ossian. The rock not only commands the passage of the Clyde, hence its Gaelic name, but the town of Dumbarton, and the passage to Loch Lomond and the Highlands by the Vale and Water of the

Leven. It is about nine hundred feet in height, columnar and almost perpendicular in some parts, and is split into two summits, at the base of, and between which, stands the castle. The place was once of great military importance, and as such played its part for centuries in the troublous history of Scotland. Its chief interest in the present day concentrates in the fact that it was the prison of Sir William Wallace before he was betrayed to the English by "the fause Menteith." Forty or fifty years ago (authorities differ as to the exact date) some fishermen, dredging in the river opposite the rock, drew up a great double-handed sword, such as Wallace, according to tradition, was accustomed to wield, and of a weight and size that would have over-taxed any of his contemporaries. It was immediately asserted, and believed, that this was the identical sword of Wallace, which possibly, and very probably, it was. The relic is preserved with great veneration in the castle, and shown to the few tourists who care to visit the fortress. Dumbarton, under the name of Balclutha or Alcluth, was the capital of the Strathclyde Celts, and is mentioned as a strong place by the "venerable Bede." But the strength of the position is wholly due to the rock, for the town itself lies low, and might, in former days of bloodshed and civil broil, have been easily taken in the rear. At one time a stronger enemy than man appears to have endangered its security, for in the year 1606 the inhabitants petitioned King James the First to come to their relief against the inroads of the Clyde, which is here almost as broad as the Thames at Sheerness, declaring that "the surges and inundations of the sea were likely to destroy and tak' away their hail town, and could na be repulsit by nae means that their poor ability and fortunes were able to furnish." It required thirty thousand pounds Scots (fifteen hundred pounds sterling) to make a proper bulwark against the waters. A singular adventure at Dumbarton rock, interesting to military men, that finds a place in the chequered history of poor Queen Mary, happened in 1571, when the place was in possession of a body of her partisans. One Crawford, of Jordan Hill, an officer of the Regent Lennox, being foiled in the attempt to capture the fortress, resolved, with a small body of followers, to surprise the garrison in the dead of night, by scaling the almost perpendicular side of the rock by the aid of ladders. All went well for a time, but a

singular accident threatened, at the last moment, to defeat this daring project. One of the escalading party, when more than half-way up the ladder, was seized with a fit of epilepsy. Had he fallen to the ground the alarm would have been given to the garrison. What was to be done? Crawford of Jordan Hill, with a fertility in expedients which marked him for a born general, hit upon a remedy. Immediately, and before the man had time to drop, he had him securely fastened by the hands and feet to the ladder on which he stood. This done, the ladder was turned, and his comrades marched over him in safety, gained the summit, and captured the unsuspecting garrison.

On the left, below Dumbarton, stands the little town of Port-Glasgow, so called in the days before the Clyde was deepened up to the Broomielaw, and when large vessels, bringing tobacco to the Glasgow merchants from Virginia and the other American plantations, were compelled for want of water to drop anchor and unload their cargoes. The place has long since lost most of its importance, and the merchandise which keeps Port-Glasgow alive is lumber, or timber, from the Canadian forests. The industry of wooden ship-building having to a great extent been displaced in Glasgow by that of iron, Port-Glasgow has given it refuge, and turns into ships and boats of a smaller kind much of the good timber that Canada sends to it.

Two miles beyond Port-Glasgow, and on the same shore of the ever-widening Firth, is the prosperous town of Greenock, where once upon a hill, in the days of the Druidic Celts, stood a rude temple of the sun; hence comes its Gaelic name, Grian-knock, or hill of the sun. Celtic philologists are of opinion that Greenwich, on the Thames, derives its name from the same period, and from the same verbal root, and considering the astronomical purpose and fame of the hill at Greenwich, the derivation seems singularly happy. Greenock was the birthplace of that hard-headed Scotsman and benefactor of his kind, James Watt. The steam which he did more than any man before him to utilise, has done much for his native town, and at no time in the day, or scarcely at night, is the roar of the funnel silent, or the paddle-wheel at rest at its busy quay. The view over the Clyde from this vantage ground is singularly grand and varied. The Highland hills, among which Lomond, the Cobbler, Argyll's Bowling Green, and Ben Goil, are conspicuous, together with a

score of others, trace their outlines against the sky, and the sea pours in among them in a series of lochs, each of which is a thing of beauty and a joy to those who love the solitude of the mountains. But of the mountains only, for the solitude of the lochs and glens of the Clyde is banished by the constant inpouring crowd of the citizens of smoky Glasgow, who have lined the whole shore with villas, villages, and towns, where they place their wives and children during the summer and autumnal months, to find health and recreation, and where they join their family circles as often as work and time allow. Opposite is the town of Helensburgh, which, lit up by gas, sends at night a torrent of radiance over the Firth, suggesting the idea of a fairy city, and all along the coast-line a succession of smaller, though similar places, testify alike to the wealth that can afford to build, and to the populousness that can occupy such far-stretching and beautiful suburbs. The Iona puts in to the quay of Greenock to take up such Glasgow passengers as know the river too well to care for losing time in the voyage, or who are so busy as to value the hour and a half which they can save by taking the rail. Thus reinforced in numbers we speed onwards to Rothesay and the Kyles of Bute. On the left we pass the picturesque town of Gourock, and the Cloch or Clach Lighthouse, and on the right the entrances to the Gare Loch, and the pleasant village of Roseneath, Loch Long, the Holy Loch, and the villages of Strone Point, Kilmun, the Kirn, Dunoon, and others. Rounding Toward Point and Toward Castle, the ancient residence of the Lamonts, a semi-Highland family of once great renown, we come in sight of Rothesay, the first place of historical note at which the steamer touches. The town gives, like Renfrew, a title to the Prince of Wales, but one of higher rank, that of duke, formerly borne by the elder sons of the kings of the House of Stuart. It stands on the island of Bute, at the entrance of the famous Kyle, erroneously called Kyles, a narrow sea channel that separates the islands from the mainland of Cowal, in Argyllshire. The climate of Rothesay is as mild as that of Torquay, and it is consequently a favourite resort of such invalids as are too delicate to bear unscathed the icy blasts of winter on the eastern coast of the island. The temperature is as favourable to vegetable as to animal life, and roses flourish at Rothesay—pronounced not inappropriately “Rosy” by the Gaelic population—long

after the other roses of Scotland, except those in greenhouses, have strewn their blossoms upon the ground. The fuchsia more especially seems to delight in the air and soil of Rothesay, lasts far into the winter, and attains a height equal to that of the lilacs, the acacias, and the laburnums, with which the suburban Londoners of the well-to-do classes love to adorn their villas.

Rothesay Castle, of which the ruins still remain, was once the royal palace of the early kings of the Stuart race. It was attacked and taken by Haco, king of Norway, in his ill-fated expedition for the subjugation of Scotland in the year 1263, though the total defeat which he suffered shortly afterwards at Largs, on the opposite coast of Ayrshire, at the hands of the brave young King Alexander and his patriotic nobles, rendered his conquest of no value. King Robert the Third resided here when his eldest son, the Duke of Rothesay, was murdered by his uncle, the Duke of Albany, in the castle of Falkland; and here the old king breathed his last, broken-hearted by this and subsequent calamities. Cromwell's soldiers had a shot against this, as against so many other old feudal castles, both in Scotland and Ireland, and did it what the Scotch call "muckle skaith." But the final blow was given to it during the civil wars of the Solemn League and Covenant, when one of the great Clan Campbell, younger brother of the MacCallum or MacCoillin More, at the head of a covenanting force, reduced it to the state of ruin in which it now lies.

The sail through the Kyles is a favourite excursion. The scenery is picturesque rather than grand, though if the traveller looks beyond the comparatively low shores of the island of Bute to the mountain summits of its sister isle of Arran, the craggy peaks of Goatfell (or in Gaelic, Ben Gaoith, the "hill of the winds"), he will find the element of sublimity which Bute itself does not supply. The Kyles—the name occurs in other parts of Scotland, as at Kyle Aken and Kyle Rhea, and again in the New World, between Staten Island and the state of New Jersey, where the passage is called the "kill"—are seldom wider than the Thames at Gravesend, but are indented by several small lochs, among which Loch Streven and Loch Ridden are conspicuous for their beauty. At the entrance to the latter is a small rocky island, called Eilangreig, on which that luckless MacCallum More, who took part with the Duke of Monmouth in the

dignity of the bigoted James the Second, deposited five thousand stand of arms and three hundred barrels of gunpowder, under the charge of a little garrison of one hundred and fifty men of the Clan Campbell. On the collapse of the rebellion, and the subsequent execution of Argyll and Monmouth, the stores were seized by the British Government, and the little fort that stood upon the island was demolished.

After threading for an hour and a half the apparent mazes and seemingly land-locked waters of the Kyles, and watching from the deck the gambols of countless swarms of many-coloured medusæ or jelly-fish, in their calm, transparent element, beautiful disc-like creatures, without sight or hearing, but full of electric life, and counting during the last half-hour, in which a succession of rapid showers had broken over the vessel, at least a score of rainbows on the land and on the sea, we turn the point of Ardlamont, and find ourselves at the entrance of that Loch Fyne, famous alike for its beauty and its herrings, of which we made the acquaintance at Inverary, its remotest extremity. We are not, however, bound for Inverary this time, but for Ardrishaig and Loch Gilp. The scenery is wilder and more imposing than in the Kyles. On the right hand is the Cowal district of Argyllshire, and on the left that of Knapdale and Cantyre. To avoid the voyage round the long projecting Mull of Cantyre—a voyage never taken by pleasure steamers—we make for the entrance of the Crinan Canal, and thus, by a narrow cut of nine miles across the peninsula, save a circuit of at least a hundred round one of the stormiest headlands in Great Britain, upon which breaks the full vehemence of the Atlantic tides. Passing West Tarbet, where the normal width of the isthmus is reduced to two miles by the inroad made upon the land by Loch Tarbet streaming up from the ocean, we catch a glimpse, on the barren and rocky shore, of the ruins of an old keep erected by Robert Bruce. It was at one time contemplated to construct a second canal at this narrow pass; and when we consider the yearly increasing prosperity of the Highlands, and the constant stream of traffic that flows into them when the day approaches when the grouse may be lawfully slain by the sport-loving Sassenachs, it seems remarkable that so small, but so highly useful a work, has not been undertaken.

Arrived at Ardrishaig, we bid farewell

baggage, in a small steamer through the canal to Loch Crinan, where another fast and commodious steamer of Mr. Hutcheson's fleet lies in waiting for us, with steam up, and ready to start immediately upon our arrival. The track boat was drawn by horses until within the last few years. The hale and hearty among the passengers generally prefer to walk the distance, rather than be shut up in the boat during the weary passage through no less than fifteen locks, and it is no doubt the wiser plan to leave the little steamer to pass the locks at its leisure, and walk on to the inn at Cairnban, where the traveller of moderate pedestrian powers will arrive as soon as the boat, and have time to spare for the "needful refreshment" which the law in Scotland allows to all travellers on all days, not even excepting the Sabbath. Such refreshment seldom amounts to more than whisky and oat-cake, with butter or cheese; but as travellers eat and drink more from idleness and want of something else to do, than from hunger and thirst, the inn at Cairnban generally receives visits from more than half of the passengers every time the boat arrives. The canal is in many parts constructed above the level of the surrounding plain, which it requires no great amount of geological study to believe was once a continuation of Loch Crinan, and over which, at some early period in the history of our planet, the waters extended to the bases of the circumjacent hills. The country is rich in pasturage, and the beautiful little black-faced sheep and the black cattle, for both of which the Highlands are noted, bespeak the agricultural wealth of the neighbouring farmers and proprietors. The canal is fed with water from the uplands on the left bank; and one of the reservoirs, high up among the hills, suddenly burst, four or five years ago, and the water rushed down into the canal, bearing with it an irresistible torrent of rocks and stones, which destroyed the banks for nearly half a mile, put an end to the navigation for a whole season, and flooded a large portion of the lowland grazings in the ancient basin of Loch Crinan. The accident, however, was not allowed to stop the traffic, and omnibuses supplied the place of the canal steamer, and got over the distance in much less time. The remains of this great eruption of the waters still cover the hill-side from which the torrent rushed, and presents the appearance of a river of stone.

From the new point of embarkation at Crinan, to the busy little port and town of

Oban, the scenery is far finer than anything we have previously passed, and opens up, in a long succession of ever-varying grandeur, a panorama of land and sea, of rock and mountain, and rugged isles, such as cannot be surpassed anywhere in Europe, unless it be still further north and west to Skye, and the shores of Ross and Sutherland, or, still further north, to the rugged Atlantic seaboard of Norway. But even when travelling amid scenery which is the most magnificent in the world, the sound of the dinner-bell has an attraction for the great majority of tourists—greater than that of inanimate nature. The dinner-bell rings within a few minutes after the departure of the steamer, and creates a temporary conflict in the mind between the love of the beautiful and the love of beef. Beef generally wins the day; for the all-sufficient reason with most people that now or never is the time for dinner; that much time need not be spent over it; and that at the utmost it is but taking half an hour out of the three that the voyage occupies, leaving ample time for the enjoyment of the scenery. Resuming our places on deck as speedily as possible, and looking behind us, as the vessel cleaves its way towards Oban, we see the triple hills, known as the Paps of Jura, raising their rocky ramparts above the clouds of mist that swathe their middles like a belt. Skirting along the lower shore of the same island for many miles, we reach an opening to the Atlantic between Jura and the huge uninhabited mountain, or island, of Scarba. Beyond this passage, not visible in calm weather, but easily discernible by the telescope when the wind blows fresh, is the famous whirlpool of Corryvreckan, a name of terror to mariners. "On the shores of Argyllshire," writes Campbell, the author of the two immortal poems, the *Battle of the Baltic* and the *Mariners of England*, "I have often listened to the sound of this vortex at the distance of many leagues. When the weather is calm, and the roar of the adjacent sea can scarcely be heard on those picturesque shores, its sound, which is like the sound of innumerable chariots, creates a magnificent effect." The author of the old *Statistical Account of Scotland* describes the whirlpool with more particularity. "The gulf," he says, "is most awful with the flowing tide. In stormy weather, with that tide, it exhibits an aspect in which a great deal of the terrible is blended. Vast openings are formed in which one might think the bottom might be seen; immense bodies of

water tumbling as if over a precipice, then rebounding from the abyss, they dash together with inconceivable impetuosity, and rise foaming to a prodigious height above the surface. The noise of this conflict is heard through all the surrounding islands."

This pool is represented in a popular tradition to be the abode of a kelpie, or water spirit, who sometimes in the shape of a gallant knight, mounted on a white steed, formed of the sea foam, rides on the waves to the land, and makes love in the villages to fickle maidens, who do not know his real character, but whose imaginations are excited by his seeming beauty, and whose ears are tickled by his cozening speeches. Such maidens, however, are warned by the legend to beware of mounting behind the fascinating wooer on his jaunting jennet, a feat to which he is sure to invite them. If they consent, he rides with them over the roughest waves of the sea, and drowns them at last in the terrible whirlpool.

After leaving Scarba in the rear, the course of the steamer lies through a seemingly intricate passage of countless islands, great and small, that cluster within five or six miles of the mainland of Lorne. Among the most conspicuous are Luing, or the Isle of Ships, Sail, Shuna, Lunga, and Easdale, some of them uninhabited, but yielding succulent pasturage to the flocks and herds of the farmers on the mainland during the summer months. Easdale contains a considerable population, who live by working the slate quarries belonging to the estate of the Earl of Breadalbane. To the left, looking seaward, rise the grand mass of Ben More, in Mull, and the bold craggy outline of the shores of that large, little known, and all but primitive island. The evening sun, as it sets behind Ben More—supposed to be haunted by a potent witch—throws a curtain of deep rich purple over all the eastern landscape, and lights up sea and rock, and shore and glen, with such colours as none but a Turner, or one of equal genius, would dare to imitate upon canvas for fear of being accused of extravagance. The steamer, passing Easdale, keeps close in shore to the coast of Lorne, of which the bold cliffs seem to assume new shapes at every turn; here a crag embattled like a fortress, here a projecting headland, running sheer into the water, and there a precipice, so split and riven as to suggest the time when the rocks were molten in the fire, and hardened into mountains as they cooled. To this wild scene succeed the more placid and pastoral regions, where the beautiful

green island of Kerrera, famous in Scottish history, shelters the placid bay of Oban, where stands the little town that is to be our terminus for a few days. Early in the thirteenth century, King Alexander the Second determined to expel the Danes and Norwegians from the north and east of Scotland, and to plant his standard on the furthest cliffs of Thurso. For this purpose he assembled a fleet in the bay of Oban, and an army in the green vale of Kerrera, but taking a fever, he died without accomplishing the grand object. At a later period (1263), when the redoubtable Haco, King of Norway, resolved upon the conquest of the south of Scotland, he assembled a fleet of one hundred and sixty vessels for the purpose in this capacious and safe anchorage:

Music and rejoicing followed on their way;
Every sailor in the fleet felt his heart with pleasure beat,
Every soldier in the ships had a smile upon his lips,
As he drank and saw in fancy, reeking sword and flaming brand,
And the rapine and the violence and the carnage of the land.

The invading army numbered twenty thousand men; and effecting their descent at Largs, upon the coast of Ayrshire, they met with such a warm reception from King Alexander the Third and his patriot army, as not only put an end to that particular invasion, but prevented the Norwegian monarchs from ever attempting another. Very few of Haco's ships returned home; and the king himself, flying for his life, reached Kirkwall, in Orkney, where he died of disappointment and vexation.

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LXXIV. A FRIEND'S FACE. A MENACE.

It was only about three days after this that Maud, having gone down for her accustomed walk in the croquet-ground, had a rather agitating adventure.

On the ground floor the passages are a little complicated; and Maud, whose thoughts were, as often happened now, far away, missed the turn which would have led her direct to the terrace-door, and entered the passage that terminates in one of the doors of Doctor Automarchi's oval-room of audience.

The passage is pretty long, and the door into Automarchi's room is at the further end of it.

That door was now open. Doctor Automarchi was standing at the table, speaking to a lady who had been listening in a chair

she knew not why. Sometimes came hours of the blackest despair. Sometimes a frenzy of terror.

In external matters, one day was like another, except that on Sunday a pale little resident chaplain with a consumptive cough read the morning service, and preached in the chapel.

It is alleged as a scientific fact, that a man may go into an oven and sit there with a raw mutton-pie suspended by a string in his hand, and come out, himself none the worse, with the same mutton-pie perfectly well baked. We don't know what human nature can bear till it is submitted to experiment. As it grows late in life with us, we look back over the wide waste of years, and meditate on the things that have happened; through some of which we thought we could not have lived, and retained our reason, and yet here we sit, and in our right minds.

And so it was with Maud. Day after day she lived on, and wondered how she lived, how she had not lost her mind. Except when, now and then, as I have said, despair or terror seized her, life moved on in a dream, stupid and awful, but still a dream.

One morning, taking her accustomed walk a little earlier than usual round the croquet-ground, she was astounded to see taking his leave of the philosopher Sidebotham, with whom he had been conversing, a man she knew. He was about the last person of her acquaintance she should have thought it likely to meet in that part of the world.

The figure was youthful and athletic, and the costume clerical. In fact it was the curate of the vicar of Boydon, the Reverend Michael Doody, who stood before her, shaking, with his powerful leave-taking, the hand of the little discoverer of the perpetual motion, who swayed and skipped in that gigantic swing, and showed by a screw of mouth and brow, and a sudden ogle, the force of the Reverend Mr. Doody's grip.

The good-natured curate, who had been away on a ten days' holiday, was here to make personal inspection of the great mechanism, at the request of a friend who took an interest in him.

He was now walking toward Miss Vernon on the side walk that leads straight to the court-yard door, which he was approaching, with swinging strides, laughing to himself, as he looked down on the gravel walk, and repeating the words per-

petuum mobile, in low tones, with an irrepresible chuckle.

Maud stood still; she felt on the very point of fainting. All depended on a word with him, unobserved. If he were to escape her now, years might pass, and no such opportunity occur again. He was scarcely a hundred paces from her; for a moment all darkened, and she lost sight of him. When light returned, she saw him, at an interval of only twelve steps, approaching at the same pace, and still chuckling over his recent conversation.

She put back her veil, and before he could pass he heard a voice, nearly before him, earnestly repeat his name. He raised his eyes, checking his pace, and saw Miss Vernon, of Roydon. It was the face of a person who had suffered. She was pale, and looked at him earnestly, and even imploringly.

"Good—good Heavens! Miss Vernon!" he said in a whisper, staring at her, himself suddenly pale, with a great frown.

"Will you give a message for me?"

"A hundred—send me where you like Good Heaven! Miss Vernon, I'm very sorry."

"It is only this—they won't allow me to write, or to send a message to a friend, by my maid, and I ask you to do this—and you must not tell any one here that you know me—I want only a chance. Do you know a place called Warhampton?"

"Lord Warhampton's place?"

"Yes," she answered.

"I'll make it out—well?"

"You must see his son, Mr. Charles Marston, and tell him where you found me, and say I sent him this, and don't fail me, in my trouble, and may God for ever bless you."

And she placed in his hand a rose which she had plucked from the tree beside her, and at the same time passed on without turning her head again.

"Be the powers o' Moll Kelly!" exclaimed the curate, recurring, in deep amazement, to an ejaculation which he had not employed till now since his initiation into theology. "The crayture! Bless us all! How close that was kept! Not one at Roydon, except her ladyship, has an idaya."

He looked over his shoulder ruefully after the young lady, and saw her now in the distance.

"I'm, not to tell them I know her. I'll not be looking that way after her." As he thus soliloquised he was folding the

rose carefully into a letter, and placing it in his breast-pocket.

"Lady Vernon won't like it. But how can I help that? If the poor young lady is mad, what harm can it do? And if she hain't, it may do a deal of good. There is no refusing the crayture. I don't know where the place is. But I'll go, if it's a hundred miles."

So ruminated and resolved the curate, as, by favour of the key of one of the keepers who constantly hovered about the croquet-ground, he passed out by the door that gives access to the court, and got into his fly in front of the house, and drove to the railway-station, from whence he had come.

As Maud walked in a state of indescribable but controlled agitation towards the lower walk that lies within the yew-hedge, Antomarchi emerged from it. At sight of this man, whose eye seemed everywhere, and to pierce all disguises, she felt as if she would have sunk into the earth. She had drawn her veil closely over her face; he might possibly fail to recognise her. That, indeed, was not very likely. But he generally passed her with a bow. And she hoped he would do so now.

But he did not. He stopped and spoke to her, fixing his eyes upon her.

Every vibration of that dreaded voice seemed to tremble at her heart, and awake a separate terror.

"Have you seen," he asked, with slow emphasis, "an old friend, Miss Vernon, anywhere about here?"

Maud's veil covered her face so as to conceal the signs of her alarm.

"Who is it—what old friend?" she asked.

He paused; perhaps there was something unconsciously careless in the tone of her inquiry that quieted his uneasiness.

"I'm sure it is a mistake. They said the Duchess of Falconbury, as she calls herself, Mrs. Fish, had contrived to get in." And with another bow he went on.

He was nearly satisfied that Miss Vernon had not spoken to the clerical visitor from Roydon, whose untoward arrival, together with her unusually early promenade in the croquet-ground, might easily have resulted in such an occurrence.

Maud hurried back to the house.

Mercy Creswell remarked that she looked ill. No wonder. Such a tumult in heart and brain! Oh! for a friend, however humble, whom she could trust! With Mercy Creswell, in some sort a spy, she must be circumspect. She asked an indifferent

question or two, and, with a bursting heart, sat down and played waltzes on the piano.

CHAPTER LXXVI. AT CARSBROOK.

I NEED not follow the Reverend Michael Doody all the way to Warhampton, nor thence, in pursuit of Charles Marston, to Carsbrook.

It was not until the day after he left Glarewoods that his devious journey brought him to the door of the beautiful old mansion, where that charming widow dispensed her hospitalities. Ample time had passed for a careful consideration of the nature of his message, and of the best manner of communicating it.

In the library he saw the young gentleman alone, told his message, and delivered his significant token.

He had nothing, of his own knowledge, to add to the words of his message. He had been as much amazed to see Maud at Glarewoods, and almost as much horrified, as Marston was himself to hear the news.

His message delivered, the Reverend Mr. Doody, with all the impulsive energy which was peculiar to him, took a hasty leave, and rushed off to catch his train.

Charles Marston, with the precious rose still nodding in his hand, stood thinking for awhile in the library, where this strange interview had just taken place.

He was scared and agitated. Here was the rose plucked by her own hand so lately. He pressed it to his lips. Sent to him, Charles Marston, with a message from her own lips. He laid it fondly to his heart.

Yes, here was the rose. But, alas! for this pettifogging, vulgar generation, where was the key? His ancestor had but to lift his arm, take down his battle-axe, and ride out at the head of his men-at-arms and archers to the siege of the northern castle; but here was no work for manhood, or emotion. The lady must be rescued, alas! by writs and commissioners; and her best champion would be a competent attorney. Every man is a knight-errant in his love; and, like every other Quixote, intolerant of the mean and sober restraints of a well-regulated world. It was hard that this thing was feasible, if at all, without immense pummelling and slaughter, and that he could not even get badly wounded in the process.

He was glad that his sister, Lady Mar- dykes, was out taking a drive with some of her guests. It was clear that the more secret he could be the better. Lady Mar-

dykes had received a note from Lady Vernon on the day of Maud's expected arrival, saying that her daughter was not very well, that she required a little rest, and that, with the advice of a physician, she would leave home for some weeks; perhaps a little longer, but that she hoped she would very soon be quite herself again.

A note to a similar effect had reached Maximilla Medwyn. Maximilla immediately wrote to offer her services as a companion to Maud; but Lady Vernon did not seem to want her, so she could not press it.

Miss Medwyn had left Carsbrook only a day or two before. Her absence was unfortunate. It involved loss of time; for she was the only person acquainted with those "friends of the family," who might be usefully taken into council, and without whom Charles Marston could scarcely hope a successful issue for his enterprise.

He left a little note for his sister, Lady Mardykes, accounting for his flight. A very dear friend of his was in trouble; he must go for a few days and try to be of use. But he won't let her off; she must receive him again when he returns.

Leaving this to account for himself, away he started for Wybourne, to find Maximilla Medwyn at the Hermitage.

He did find her there that evening. She in turn was astounded and terrified. After the first eloquent half-hour, she began to think more coolly.

"Now I understand, for the first time, a singular persecution to which Maud and I were exposed during our little tour in Wales. We were watched and followed everywhere by an ill-looking, canting man; his name was Lizard, and I saw him once shortly after at Roydon. I'm quite certain that man was instructed to follow us, and to collect information and make notes of everything we, that is to say, Maud, said or did which could be perverted into evidence of insanity."

So the old lady indignantly ran on.

"I can swear, and I fancy I have had as good opportunities of judging as Mr. Lizard, that no person was ever of sounder or clearer intellect than Maud Vernon, and there never was anything the least eccentric, in either word or act, except what was natural to the high and wayward spirits of a girl emancipated for a brief holiday from the gloom and formality of a

cold and joyless home. You and I are among the very last who saw her, before this amazing step was taken, and I think neither you nor I can have the slightest difficulty in pronouncing her as sane as ourselves. Mind," she said a little later, "I don't charge Barbara Vernon with acting in this dreadful business contrary to her belief. But she is the kind of person who believes whatever it pleases her passions should be true. She has a kind of conscience, and advises with it. But she bullies it into whatever shape she pleases. I never in my life met a person with the same power of self-delusion. There is no character more dangerous."

At first Miss Medwyn recommended immediate recourse to Mr. Coke, the family attorney. On second thoughts, however, she took a different view. It was quite possible that Mr. Coke's mind was already charged with perverted evidence, and his adhesion secured for Lady Vernon's view of the question. Lady Vernon was artful and able in managing people; and her social influence was potent.

Ultimately, therefore, for a variety of reasons, she decided on old Richard Dawe as the safest person to consult and act with in this crisis. He was sagacious and taciturn. He knew Barbara Vernon thoroughly, and was not a bit afraid of her. He was attached to the family of Vernon; he was a man of inflexible probity, and where he took up a cause, he was a thorough friend and a persevering.

Furnished with his address, and a letter from Maximilla Medwyn, Marston set out without losing a moment unnecessarily. And early next morning had an interview with Mr. Dawe.

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CHAPTER VII. GERALD'S LUCK.

THE Dumpington turnpike-keeper, a man naturally of a pleasant and social disposition, and inclined secretly to repine at the dullness of the life to which circumstances had relegated him, was in the habit of killing time, by gazing out of one or other of the square panes of glass let in at either side of the toll-house, and wondering what would be the next object likely to present itself for the relief of his monotony. The dust left by the passing by of a flock of sheep yet lingered in the air, and the turnpike-man had derived at least five minutes' amusement in watching the manner in which the sheep had at first blindly refused to go through the gate, dashing off in every other direction, sticking their heads into the hedge-rows, bleating in a remonstrating manner, which was ineffective, perhaps, from being carried on in one note, notwithstanding the shake with which it concluded, and in seeing them finally, after having been run over by a very circus rider of a dog, being hustled through the gate ignominiously on three legs, the fourth remaining in the hands of the driver or his assistant boy. The turnpike-keeper, with these reminiscences fresh in his mind, and a vacuous smile on his face, suddenly descried a new object of interest.

This was a woman advancing slowly, and with wavering footsteps. Her dress was covered with dust, and her hat was crushed and bent. When the turnpike-man first saw her, her veil was off, and her head thrown back as if to catch the air; but, as she approached, she pulled the veil

over her face, and seemingly nerving herself for what she had to do, tried to steady her footsteps, and advanced with a swifter and surer pace. With more delicacy than could have been expected from him, the Robinson Crusoe of the highway gave up his first idea of addressing her, it being his custom, for the mere sake of hearing the sweet music of speech, to accost every passer-by, and did not even look after her until she was through the gate, and some distance on the road to the town. Then, standing at his door, and scientifically, with his little finger, plumbing the depths of his pipe-bowl preparatory to filling it anew, the worthy man muttered to himself: "She had had a downer, she had; was all covered with dust, and went very shaky on her legs! Queer case that, respectable-looking woman, too respectable for a tramp, but been on the drink like the rest of 'em! That's what ruins 'em all, the drink! If it hadn't been for the drink my wife would have been here now, sitting in that easy-chair, and giving me a bit of her mind, probably. Ah, well! the drink ain't so black as he's painted; but he had laid hold of that poor creature that went by just now, surely!" And the toll-keeper, turning back into the house, proceeded to fill his pipe from the capacious stomach of a brown earthenware image which stood on his chimney-piece, with the full conviction that the woman he had just seen go by was drunk.

That woman was Madge Pierrepont, and after a cursory glance at her, most people would have been of the toll-keeper's opinion. When she had passed beyond the ken of such as might be within the toll-house, she threw back her veil and raised her head well aloft again, once more dropping into the slow and wavering pace.

It was with difficulty, indeed, that she managed to make any progress, for her knees trembled beneath her, and her vision was so dim and flurried as to necessitate her stopping after every few paces, and pressing her hands tightly before her eyes.

In these short intervals of rest the recollection of what she had just gone through would come back upon her; the vision of her husband confronting her, with a sneer upon his lips, would stand out terribly distinct; some of his words, the cruellest and most bitter of them, would surge up in her ears. Then, knowing that another instant's abandonment of herself to such thoughts would cause her again to faint away, with one strong act of will she would dismiss them from her mind, and doggedly plod on her way. Later on she would think of all this, go through it bit by bit, sift out what it meant, and determine what she ought to do; later on, when there was a bed near on which she could fall back and rest, a hand near to steady her or to smooth her forehead, a voice to tell her that she was not all alone in the world, and that though she had been deserted— No! no! that no one must ever know; but she was weak now, and could not think it out properly. Only let her get home!

So, on through the quaint old streets, quiet and deserted now, for it is one o'clock, and at that hour Wexeter dines. The cathedral dignitaries are taking their luncheon in pleasantly shaded rooms, with low ceilings and black oak fittings, where generations of cathedral dignitaries had done precisely the same thing at precisely the same hour. The ill-used, hard-worked notes of the long-legged, narrow-bodied pianos in the establishments for young ladies at South-Hedge have ceased to sound, for the young ladies are now engaged in attacking roast mutton with an appetite which they will speedily learn to be ashamed of. And afterwards there will be an hour's walk in the garden, with their arms lovingly entwined round each other's waists, and their mouths filled with little backbitings and jealousies, before the overture to Semiramide bursts forth upon the scent-laden air, to the delight of the invalid old gentleman who has taken lodgings in that quarter for quiet and repose. Peacefully sleeps Mrs. Twiddle, original manufacturer of the celebrated Bonneton lace, and three doors off equally peacefully sleeps Miss Grylls, her late assistant and present rival, behind the wire-blind in her shop-window,

on which the word "from" is painted so very small, and "Twiddles" so very large. Nothing is to be seen of the proprietor of the photographic and religious fancy assortment shop, where you may pick up a neat ecclesiastical book-marker for thirty shillings, or a reduced copy in stone of the ancient abbey font, handy to keep rings and shirt-studs in, for five pounds. Stumber, too, his young men, who wear white cravats and black coats, and look like curates. Only one verger, standing at the cathedral door, for there is a train due about this time, and it is a likely day for excursionists, sees Madge Pierrepont crossing the yard under the shade of the great elm-trees, where the rooks are holding a noisy concert over her head, and he does not recognise her. Her progress has been slow, but unwatched, and at length she has reached her own door.

Madge longs for rest and quiet, but she is not to enjoy them yet. At the foot of the stairs she is confronted by Miss Cave. The old lady has just returned from a long morning's work at the box-office; having gone through all the accounts of the closing season, having paid away and received to the uttermost farthing, and having been able to submit a very satisfactory balance-sheet to Mr. Dobson, the manager. Naturally, therefore, she is in a good temper, and anxious to relieve herself, after the tedium of business, by a pleasant chat with her lodger, who is such a favourite with her.

"Why, where have you been, my dear?" said Miss Cave, holding up her hands as her eyes fell upon Madge's dust-covered dress; "not been knocked down by one of those dreadful cows, surely;" the idea of being tossed, gored, and trampled upon by errant cattle ranking foremost amongst the old lady's self-inflicted troubles.

"No, Miss Cave," said Madge, with a faint smile, looking down at her dress and endeavouring to brush the dust off with her hand; "no, I have only been for a country walk, and feeling a little tired sat down in the hedge-row, without particularly observing where I placed myself."

"Well, my dear, what you can want with taking long country walks, after all the work you have gone through, I cannot understand. I can't say I think much of the country, for what with the cows, and the dust, and the crowds of midges that buzz all about you, it seems to me to be more pain than pleasure taking it altogether. Now when I go out of Wexeter, give me

the seaside, I say; and talking of that, my dear, I have brought some news which I think will please you."

"Indeed, Miss Cave, and what might that be?"

"Well, Mr. Dobson is finely delighted at the success of his season, as well he may be, as being the best he has had the last three years; and when he said so to me just now, I up and told him at once that it was all owing to you, my dear, and that he had had no leading lady here for years that was a patch upon you, and that you were as great a favourite out of the theatre as in it."

"That was very kind of you, dear Miss Cave."

"It was only the truth, Madge—there, I never called you Madge before, not being given to use Christian names freely as I find is the custom in music-halls and low places of that kind, but as I am fond of you I will do so now and in future; it was only the truth, Madge, and Mr. Dobson agreed to it, and then he asked me how I thought it would do if he was to take the Avonmouth Theatre for the short summer season, that would take in the regatta and the races and the grand military review. 'Miss Pierrepont would be new at Avonmouth,' he said, 'and I think she would draw.' I told him I thought so too, but that he must give you better terms than you had here, for there would be the expenses of moving for yourself and your sister, and you would have perhaps to dress a little more than you do here, it being a gay place. Dobson didn't see it at first, but I held to it, so finally he told me to talk to you about it, and offer you an extra pound a week."

Miss Cave had expected that her announcement would be received with great pleasure. She was disappointed when Madge, with a grave face, said, "I am much obliged to you, dear Miss Cave, and to Mr. Dobson, but I don't think the offer would suit."

"Not suit you! You are too shy and timid, Madge. You dislike going among strange people, and perhaps you are afraid of the officers and flighty fellows that you have heard of in Avonmouth. Don't you be afraid of them, my dear. Dobson wouldn't dream of going without taking me with him, and I shall be sure to look after you."

"No, indeed, it isn't that."

"Indeed, what can it be, then? Oh, I know, that young Hardinge."

"Mr. Hardinge, what about him?"

"Well, Dobson wanted him to go, too. The Avonmouth Theatre has not been open for two years now, and the scenery all wants looking after and touching up, and Dobson wanted young Hardinge to go off in advance and get it ready by the time you came there; but when he was spoken to this morning, he said he was very sorry he could not, that his engagement was up, and that he did not think there was any chance of his coming back to the circuit."

"And what has that to do with me, dear Miss Cave?"

"Well, my dear, I have got eyes in my head, though they are not so bright as they were, and I can see that while that young man is desperately in love with you, you have a sneaking kindness for him, and I thought you might have set your horses together, and—"

"Mr. Hardinge hasn't spoken to me on the subject, dear Miss Cave, and I assure you I have not the smallest knowledge of his movements."

"Well, my dear, no offence. I won't take your answer to Dobson just now, lest you might change your mind. Think it over and let me know to-morrow, and if I were you I would lie down a bit after dinner and rest myself. You ought to be very brilliant to-night, for it is not only the last night, but Dunsany's benefit, and he's sure to have a fine house, for he's a Buffalo, or a Druid, or something of that kind, and we shall be full of brothers, with aprons on and green ribbons, and tin thing-a-me-jigs round their necks."

Then Madge, nodding kindly at the old lady, went up-stairs, and after looking into the sitting-room to tell Rose to get her dinner by herself, as she felt too tired and unwell to eat, went to her own room, and locking the door threw herself at full length upon her bed. There are some people upon whom any great grief has a stunning, overwhelming effect, so overwhelming that it numbs their brain and paralyses their power of thought. Madge Pierrepont was of these. With all the wish, she felt utterly powerless to deliberate what effect her recent interview with her husband ought to have on her future life, or even to recollect the details of that interview. It was all too sudden, too recent; the weight of the blow seemed to have deprived her of the power of thinking over what would be its result, or even when it had been given. She strove to rally, to collect her senses, to think it over,

but all in vain. She lay in a dull lethargic state, from which the recollection of what Miss Cave had said about Gerald Hardinge roused her only for an instant. Then she relapsed, and gradually losing consciousness, fell into a deep unbroken sleep.

In that state she remained, until she was roused by a loud knocking at the door, and Rose's voice outside, telling her it was time for her to go to the theatre. At first she listened mechanically, without the power to move or even to speak, then muttering something sufficient to satisfy her sister that she had been heard, Madge struggled into a sitting position, and clasping her head with both her hands, strove to collect her scattered senses, and to comprehend what had been passing around her. It flashed upon her in an instant, the interview with Philip in the lane, the long dreary walk back, with heavy heart and wavering footsteps, the talk with Miss Cave, and her mention of the Avonmouth Theatre. She recollected them all, but what would be the result of it all was as far off as ever; she had come to no decision, and she could come to none now. What she had to do now was to hurry off to the theatre and to act. To act! With the feeling of an iron band around her temples, and her heart throbbing like a ball of fire.

Mr. Dunsany's friends, who, as Miss Cave expected, mustered in large numbers, were very much pleased with their evening's entertainment, more especially when the hero of the night came on in the after-piece, wearing, in addition to his theatrical costume, the insignia of the Order of Friendly Brothers, to which he belonged, and interpolated in his dialogue many mystic allusions, only understood by the initiated. The audience generally was of a convivial rather than of a critical character, and more appreciative of the comic than of the tragic acting. It was agreed on all sides, however, that Miss Pierrepont was "a fine woman," and if she failed in impressing them as they had been led to believe, they laid it more to their own want of comprehension, than to any shortcoming on her part.

As for Madge herself, she acknowledged afterwards she owed it entirely to the early training of her memory, and to her methodical practice of her profession, that she got through her part at all. She dressed herself in a dream, and in a dream she went through her various scenes, speaking when the cue was given to her, and not missing a word of what she had

to say, "doing her spouting," as Philip Vane would have called it, with due emphasis and intonation, but with eyes that were without fire, and gesticulations void of life or energy. How she got through it she knew not, but at last her performance came to an end, and she was led on before the curtain by the delighted Dunsany. Still dazed, she went to her dressing-room, and exchanged her theatrical attire for her ordinary walking-dress. Still dazed, she was coming forth from the stage-door, when she was confronted by Gerald Hardinge, who took her hand.

Then she roused at once.

"Good evening, Miss Pierrepont," said Gerald, very polite, and rather distant, for Gonnop, the hall-keeper, was standing close by, and his ears were full-cocked; "may I have the pleasure of seeing you home?"

Madge thanked him for his proposed escort, and they went out together.

When they were in the street, and out of hearing, Gerald turned to her and said:

"Didn't Rose give you my message?"

"Certainly."

"And you were going away without waiting for me?"

"Not at all. I fully expected to see you where I did."

"Did you? And yet you looked astonished as though my presence had taken you quite unawares. You have had that same strange look, however, during the whole evening. I was watching you from the wings while you were acting, and I saw it then. I see it now."

"Do you?" said Madge, trying to smile, but there was a leaden weight on her eyelids, and the muscles of her mouth refused to move.

"Yes," said Gerald Hardinge, gazing into her face; "your appearance gives me the notion of some one who has been bewitched, or is under a spell."

"Break the spell, then, and exorcise the demon," cried Madge, still striving against herself, "but don't let us stand here in the middle of the street, glaring into each other's faces, or we shall excite the wonderment of the passers-by."

"No," said Gerald; "let me take you home, I have lots to say to you."

"We won't go to my lodgings I think, Gerald," said Madge, mindful of what Miss Cave had said to her in the morning; "let's walk round the crescent, there is not a soul near, and you shall tell me all you have to say."

"As you please," he said, shortly.

"Don't be angry, Gerald; I am sure I am right in what I am doing," whispered Madge, laying her hand on his arm. And instantly he was tamed and happy.

As they turned into the crescent, the chimes of the cathedral clock rang out the four quarters, and the deep bell struck eleven. Listening to it, and looking up at the great yellow moon riding high in the sky, Madge recollected where she had been the same hour on the previous evening, and an irrepresible shudder ran through her frame. Gerald felt the vibration of the hand lying on his arm, and looked down gravely and earnestly at her.

"What is it, Madge?" he asked. "You trembled then from head to foot; there is something the matter with you. What is it? I insist upon knowing!"

"There is nothing wrong with me, Gerald, indeed," said Madge, "believe me there is not. I have been working hard, you know, and I was perhaps a little overcome by the fatigue and the heat. But the season is over now, and I shall have rest—at least until I go to Avonmouth."

"Oh, Dobson has made that proposition already, has he?" said Gerald. "I knew he was going to do so, but I scarcely thought it would be so quick; however, you are not going to Avonmouth, Madge."

"You are not, Gerald, I know."

"Nor are you!"

"Are my future movements, then, to be influenced by yours, sir?"

"I hope and trust so, Madge," said the young man, earnestly; "I devoutly hope and trust so."

There was something in his tone which had more effect in rousing her and fixing her attention than anything she had experienced within the last twenty-four hours. Up to this point she had been striving against an overpowering lassitude and want of energy, which still retained their hold upon her; had been trying to laugh and make light conversation, as it were, for the mere sake of keeping herself up to the required pitch of answering her companion's remarks. But his last few earnest words had worked a charm. Her attention was aroused, and her interest excited.

"If that is to be the case," said she, "you must no longer talk in riddles, but speak out plainly, Gerald."

"I want nothing better," said the young man. "I told Rose, last night, to let you know I wanted to speak to you on a most important matter."

"Yes, I recollect on making the appoint-

ment Rose told me that it was important; and it is important, is it Gerald?"

"To me the most important matter in my life," said Gerald, not looking at her, and speaking very low.

"Tell me, then," said Madge, in the same tone.

Under the fascination of that moment, with his low voice murmuring in her ear, her hand resting on his arm, in the full consciousness that he was devoted to her body and soul, the great mental agony she had just been labouring under melted away entirely for the time.

"Tell me, then," she whispered again.

"Why should I tell you the first part of it again?" he murmured, "unless, indeed, you have the same gratification in hearing that I have in saying it. You know how I love and worship you, my darling! How, since the first hour I saw you, I have been your slave, never happy but when near you, and having no other thought but of and for you. You hear me, Madge?"

She made him no answer, save what he might infer from the smallest pressure of her hand upon his arm.

"I have said all this to you before, and you have listened to me and laughed at me, and while you half forbade my thus addressing you, let me go on, because you said it was idle talk. I told you then that the time would come when such talk would be idle no longer, when I might have the power of attaining such a position as would enable me to ask you to marry me. You recollect all this, Madge?"

He bent his head and looked down at her. Her face was very white, and it was more by the motion of her lips than from anything he heard, that he understood her to assent.

"Do you recollect further what you said?"

"I do."

"I recollect the very words; 'you shall ask me when the time arrives, Gerald,' you said, 'and I will answer you then.' Madge, the time has arrived now, and I claim your answer."

"Gerald!" said Madge, with a low cry.

"It has arrived now, my darling," he continued, passing his arm around her. "I am to remain a scene-painter and a theatre drudge no longer. Listen, dear one! For months past I have been working in secret, and have completed two pictures, which I sent to London. Yesterday morning I heard from the agent I had consigned them to, that they have been bought at

the prices which I had fixed upon them; bought, the agent tells me, by some rich, eccentric old man, who wishes me to come to London, and pledges himself to find sufficient commissions for me to occupy my time for months to come. More than this, the agent advises me at once to come to town, and introduce myself to my patron, as, should he take a fancy to me, there is no knowing where the good results may end. When I got that letter, Madge, my first thought was of you; now, I said, I can ask her to be my wife; now I can ask her to link her lot with mine, not as the obscure drudge of a country theatre, but as one who has a fair prospect of fame and fortune; now I can offer her rest from the toil she has undergone, and freedom from the annoyances and insolence which she is compelled to put up with. Madge, darling, I can, I do, offer you this now. What do you say in reply?"

Nothing.

She said nothing. He drew her closely to him, and bending down noticed that her eyelids were closed, and when he pressed his lips upon her cheek, it was stone cold.

Gerald feared she had fainted, but immediately afterwards she half unclosed her eyes, and murmured, in broken tones, "I am very ill, Gerald! Take me home—take me home!"

A VISITORS' BOOK.

PERHAPS the Falls of Niagara, the most magnificent cataract, or series of cataracts, in the world, are annually visited by greater multitudes, than any other single object of natural beauty and grandeur that attracts the curiosity of the human race. Greater crowds may distribute themselves annually on the mountains and lakes of Switzerland, or among the wild and lovely scenes of the north and west Highlands of Scotland; but these crowds do not all converge to one point as at Niagara. The Falls are so beautiful, that not even the bustle and swarm of fifty thousand people, noisy, pompous, silly, vulgar, and ignorant as the immense majority of them may be, can detract very materially from the delight of a visit. I knew a worthy gentleman, however, an Englishman of world-wide fame, who happened to be within two hours' ride of Niagara by rail, in the height of the summer season, and who refused to visit the Falls—which he ardently desired to see—because he had a horror of the

crowds of tourists. He unluckily deferred his visit until a quieter time, missed his opportunity, and returned to England, leaving Niagara, as Wordsworth did Yar-row, "unseen and unknown," a vision of the fancy and not of the memory. I have been more fortunate. I have visited Niagara half a dozen times—in the full season, in the half season, and in the long Canadian winter, when all the tourists had departed, when all the hotels were closed, and when the last of the professional guides (a class of bores the most wearisome and dispiriting in the world) had disappeared; and when I had the whole of the magnificent scenery to myself, and no profane or inane babbler at my side, to pester me with platitudes, to tell me what I knew and spoil it in the telling, and when all was done to look to me for backsheesh. I am not going to describe Niagara here. I have done it in another place, and am so thoroughly impressed with the unsatisfactoriness of the description, as well as that of every other which I have seen, as to have firmly resolved never to attempt it again. My present purpose is not so much with Niagara itself as with its visitors, and more especially with such visitors as take the trouble to write in the Album or Visitors' Book at the Table Rock. King David, the Psalmist, said in his haste that all men were liars, and a Scottish clergyman preaching on the text, declared that if David had lived in his parish he might have said it at his leisure. If this worthy minister had been at Niagara Falls, and passed a few hours looking over the Visitors' Book, he might, without great injustice, have varied the phraseology, and said, either at haste or at leisure, that all men were "cads."

Barbarous tribes amuse themselves by making marks or drawings on their naked bodies, and take a pride in thus tattooing themselves, that all their small world may see and admire. Members of civilised communities, instead of writing upon their bodies, strive to attract the attention of a larger circle by scribbling upon walls, cutting their names and initials on trees, and when travelling at home or abroad, in writing their names and reflections in hotel books.

It has been said that the horse is a very respectable animal, but that he has the unhappy fatality of making more or less of a blackguard of everybody who has much to do with him. In like manner it may be said of Niagara, one of the grandest objects in Nature, that it has the unhappy fatality of making fools of nine-

tents of the people who go into spoken or written raptures about it. Such a mass of inanities, platitudes, conceits, affectations, impertinences, sillinesses, mouldy jokes, and absurd profundities, with here and there a gleam of good sense and good-feeling, is possibly not to be found in equal quantity in any library beneath the moon, as that which exists in the possession of the worthy Canadian who has established the Museum at the Falls, and has for more than a quarter of a century provided visitors with books, and pen and ink, to record their names and their observations. The following is a selection of some of the best and some of the worst of these entries.

Place aux dames! Niagara is a favourite resort of lovers before, during, and after the honeymoon, as well as of lovers whose courtship may be interrupted by unkind Fate, and predestined never to attain the blissful consummation of marriage. "And all mankind," as the eloquent and philosophic Emerson observes, "loves a lover. Though," he goes on to say, "the celestial rapture falling out of heaven seizes only upon those of tender age, and although we can seldom see after thirty years a beauty overpowering all analysis or comparison, yet the remembrance of these visions outlasts all other remembrance. No man ever forgot the visitation of that power to his heart which created all things new, which was the dawn in him of music, poetry, and art, which made the race of Nature radiant with purple light, and made the morning and the night a varied enchantment." So, for these reasons, and with, I hope, a proper amount of respect and gallantry for the beautiful sex, I turn to the autographs and the observations of lovers, whether they be gentlemen or ladies. Not that my readers will be very amply rewarded. No doubt the true lovers, the real ladies and gentlemen, have something better to do and to think of than to scrawl their names and their thoughts in public places, for the relief of their own hearts, or for the after amusement of strangers. Wise people, whether lovers or not, keep their private emotions sacred, but fools of both sexes love to babble and to scribble. The first lover thus records his experience:

On Table Rock we did embrace,
And then we stood both face to face;
The moon was up, the wind was high,
I looked at she, and she at I.

Language failed him after this effort, and he could say no more. The next gentleman must have had a difference with his

lady-love. At all events he eases his mind by the profound reflection:

Great is the mystery of Niagara's waters,
But more mysterious still are some men's daughters.

Another swain, deeply enamoured, but more of a wag than a poet, writes from his heart, and with a daring rhyme:

Next to the bliss of seeing Sarah,
Is that of seeing Niagara.

A disconsolate one, jilted, perhaps, or it may be divorced, records her sorrows in prose. "I have come," she says, "to Niagara too late. Five years ago I was a creature of enthusiasm, poetry, and devotion. Now I am feelingless, heartless, soulless. The once gushing fountains of youthful emotion have been broken up by the withering blast of adversity. The flowers of my life are blighted, and all is dull—all is tame. I laugh at Niagara! What care I for the thunder of its waters? Great God, how should I have enjoyed this sight once!" The signature to this outburst of disappointment is "Bit," to which some critic of the sterner sex has appended this comment, "Yes, bit with affectation!"

A happy lover enters what he perhaps thought a very original remark: "How lonely and desolate the life of man would be without woman!" To this a critic, who signs himself "Quip," appends the query, "What has woman to do with the Falls?" A third tourist, signing himself "Crank," replies, "If woman has not to do with the Falls, I should like to know who has. She made the first Fall herself." The next is evidently the production of a much later period in married life than the moon of honey:

Once on a time with naught to do at home,
My wife and I determined we would roam;
But to decide upon the route
Admitted much domestic doubt.
If I said east, she said 'twas best
That we should travel to the west;
So after many arguments and brawls,
She brought me nolens volens to the Falls.

The thunderous roar of the waters is so loud, when heard either from the Table Rock, or from the Tower on Goat Island, that silence, if not imposed by the majesty of the scene, is rendered necessary, by the difficulty of making oneself heard above the din of waters. This fact, of course, does not escape the notice of the amiable cynics who like to make a harmless jest upon the ladies. One of them writes:

Niagara, it has been sung,
Can speak so loud without a tongue,
You hear its voice a mile hence.
But I a greater wonder know:
A pretty woman, who, although
She has a tongue, keeps silence.

Socrates, who hints that he has no Xanthippe of his own, declares what he would do if he were in such an unhappy condition :

If I were annoyed with a termagant wife,
Whose tongue was the bane of my every-day life,
To try to get rid of her pestilent clatter,
I'd live on the brink of this great fall of water.

The last quotation, out of scores that might be made, is the more creditable effusion of a happy lover :

In after years when memory comes
To cheer us in our happy homes,
A voice amid the social cheer
Shall speak of what we witnessed here.
No time, no change, no chance shall sever
The links that bind our hearts for ever.

Among the contributors to this farrago, the utter idiots and cads who write what no one cares to read, and which it is a wonder that any ordinary, decent person cares to write, are the most numerous. There is, however, a touch of humour about the New York stock-broker who wrote the following :

I came from Wall-street
To see this water sheet ;
Having seen this water sheet,
I return to Wall-street.

Next in order to the witlings are the sentimental and the pious, or affectedly pious people, who indulge in heroics—mock, not real, and in ambitious moral reflections on the beauty and sublimity of the spectacle. Their name is, indeed, legion ; and their attempts both at prose and verse are more than sufficient to show how small a way the ordinary education that people receive goes towards enabling them to write sensibly of anything but that which concerns their own business, or the everyday current of their lives. One man, who dates from Dublin, says : “ Forgive these lines ; they emanate from the pen of one who derives his inspiration from the sublime works which surround him. Poetry is not my forte. I was never found to be a brilliant writer, but silence is not the only admiration which these great works deserve.” Impressed with the idea of saying something, though he confesses he is not able to say it, he tells all future travellers who may read what he has written, that “ he has sipped to the very dregs the cup of affliction” (taking his affliction daintily, sipping it, not drinking it), “ but that in spite of all he cannot gaze upon Niagara without feeling how little, how very, very little and insignificant are his sorrows when compared with the ills of the many !” A short course of Whately's or Mill's logic would have done this inconsequential

reasoner more good than a month at the Falls. Another, who would be eloquent if he knew how, writes his Farewell to Niagara : “ Thou lord of water-power in thy majestic glory. Thou art all and more than all my soul conceived thee ! I never dreamed thy wonders to be so numberless and vast. Beauty in union with grandeur here fill and elevate and satisfy my soul !” The more prosaic scribbler who follows in verse, writes better, and very much to the point :

While standing under the Horse-shoe Fall,
Didn't it look great, didn't I look small !

One who aspired to the sublime, and floundered into the absurd, writes : “ When God went forth to the work of creation attended by a shining array of seraphim and cherubim, these living ones veiled their faces and said, ‘ Lord of Glory, stay Thy hand or we die. ’ ‘ Once more,’ said the Almighty, ‘ and inanimate creation is complete. ’ He spake, and the mountains started back, and ocean heaved affrighted as Niagara sprang into birth.” Why ocean should have been alarmed at a fall of fresh water, so many hundreds of miles from the shore, and the whole immense volume of whose waters, poured into her capacious breast, is of no more account than a drop in a bucket, the writer would find it difficult to explain. Another enraptured traveller, not quite so ridiculous, is struck with as much admiration by the beauty of the rainbow, that in the clear sunshine always smiles upon the torrent, as by the grandeur of the Fall, and relieves his soul by writing : “ The most stupendous work of Nature ! The mountains, oceans, lakes, and cataracts are great specimens of the magnificence of God's works, but here his *beneficence* is indicated by the perpetual rainbow. What mind is not enlarged, what soul is not filled with ennobling emotions by the contemplation of such wonders ? Let man behold with awe, and learn HUMILITY.” As if the beneficence of God were never clear to this shallow brain until he saw the rainbow, and as if the mountains and the ocean were not as much proof of beneficence as the iris in the spray ! One visitor, pestered no doubt by this mock piety and crooked logic, and who modestly signs himself “ Snooks,” very properly rebukes the filagree devotion of people who, if they are to be taken at their words, never had an elevated thought of the Deity until they saw Niagara. He says : “ The most insignificant plant, the minutest insect, the smallest drop of water, when examined through the

medium of the microscope, proves beyond a doubt to every reasoning mind the existence of an almighty creating and sustaining power. Must, then, the circumstance of a large body of water rushing down an inclined plane, and over a precipice of one hundred and fifty feet in height, urged merely by the power of gravitation, be selected as the most striking demonstration of the greatness of the Almighty?" The practical and philosophic Snooks is right in his inquiry.

One characteristic of the visitors to Niagara must not be omitted. The British or Canadian, commonly called the Horse-shoe Fall, is far more magnificent than the fall on the American side of the river, although the latter is so grand and beautiful in itself, that it only suffers by comparison with one grander and more beautiful still.

"Should the United States and England ever be involved in war," said a well-known American of literary fame, "England will of course be whipped" (American English for beaten). "But we shall not be hard upon the old country. We will annex the Canadian side of the Niagara river and the Great Horse-shoe Fall; and then we will make a treaty of peace to last until England chooses to break it." The Americans make no secret of their desire to possess the whole of Niagara. One of them writes: "The Yankees generally take, and keep, too, whatever they set their hearts upon having." To this "John Bull" replies: "Boast not your greatness, Yankees tall, your arrogance may catch a fall." "John Bull, junior," appends, "May be so, but not the Horse-shoe Fall." Another American, after an ardent apostrophe to the "land of the stripes and stars," narrates how

I stood on Table Rock,

Felt the earth's tremor at the wondrous shock,
But here, I own, I felt a thrill of shame,
No patriot's triumph warmed my drizzled frame;
My pride was humbled, and my boast was small,
For England's queen possessed the noblest Fall!

The travelling English are proud of this imperial possession, and the Canadians, whether of British or French extraction, share these feelings to the fullest extent, and are in no humour to brook this covetousness of their American neighbours without remark. "Blue Nose," from New Brunswick, has appended to one of these boasts:

Uncle Sam! Uncle Sam, you're a bully and a swaggerer!
But you shall not—no! you shall not steal a wave of our Niagara!

"Should," writes a Yankee, "the British lion ever come to the Falls of Niagara, he will see the proud eagle of American liberty soaring in his majesty, and will go roaring down the mighty cataract in despair." "A Lion's Whelp" appends: "If the American eagle comes to the British side of the Falls, that same old lion will pluck his feathers, and compel him to take refuge on a dunghill."

But the British and Canadian entries in the album are, as a rule, pacific, and manifest no disposition to quarrel with the Americans. On the contrary, they express and desire peace—peace for its own sake, and peace for the scandal and shame it would be on two kindred peoples, speaking the same language, springing from the same parentage, inheriting the same history, traditions, and literature, to go to war, on any pretence whatever, that diplomacy could smooth over or common sense and Christianity avoid. Under the date of May, 1849, occurs the following entry:

"May the mighty waters of the Niagara smother, in their eternal vortex, all the animosities and rancours that may ever have existed between Great Britain and her fair daughter of the West, and remain, to succeeding generations, an everlasting and indestructible monument of the harmony which, I trust, will never cease to exist between the two nations (of one blood), at once the most enterprising and the most enlightened in the world."

Every good Englishman and every good American will say Amen to this sweet prayer. Perhaps the last extract, bearing the signature of "Morpeth," and written by the late accomplished and amiable Earl of Carlisle, is the best in feeling, as well as in versification, that the sublime scenery of the Falls has prompted any one to write in the album:

There's nothing great or bright, thou glorious Fall,
Thou mayest not to the fancy's sense recal;
The thunder-riven cloud, the lightning's leap,
The stirring of the chambers of the deep;
Earth's emerald green, and many-tinted dyes,
The fleecy whiteness of the upper skies;
The tread of armies thickening as they come,
The boom of cannon and the beat of drum;
The brow of beauty and the form of grace,
The passion and the prowess of our race;
The song of Homer in its loftiest hour,
The unresisted sweep of human power;
Britannia's trident on the azure sea,
America's young shout of liberty!
Oh! may the waves that madden in thy deep,
There spend their rage nor climb th' encircling steep,
And till the conflict of thy surges cease,
The nations on thy banks repose in peace!"

His lordship was not content to leave

his graceful little poem to the obscurity of the Visitors' Book, but gave it publicity on his return from America. And cordially re-echoing the philanthropic and statesman-like wish expressed in the concluding couplet, I shut up the Visitors' Book, and bid farewell to Niagara.

THE LOSS OF MY SPECTACLES.

I HAVE worn spectacles for nearly twenty years, and they have become to me a necessary of life, secondary only to food and clothing. I can indeed take my walks abroad with unarmed eyes, being fortunately able, without artificial assistance, to discern objects of comparatively large magnitude. But, if I would read even for a short time, my glasses become absolutely indispensable. A few lines, printed in exceptionally bold type, I can perhaps wade through, with the untrustworthy aid of guessing, by holding the paper at a distance from my face, my defect being the reverse of that endured by the short-sighted. But in a few minutes the annoyance of a process, which may be compared to the observation of stars through a fog, not quite dim enough to render them utterly invisible, amounts to physical torture. Hence, as reading constitutes the chief occupation of my life, I rarely lay my spectacles aside, but wear them even when they are not altogether needful. The consciousness of depriving myself of a power which I am accustomed almost perpetually to use, is repugnant to my habits. Satirical friends, who see me not engaged in study, affirm that I look over not through my spectacles, and thus infer that I wear them through some species of affectation. Blest themselves with strong natural vision, they cannot realise the fact that the consciousness of a diminution of sense is intolerable. Yet they might reflect that nobody likes to have his fingers numbed, even though there is no tangible object at hand which he wishes immediately to grasp.

I am of what is called a careless temperament. The incessant loss of umbrellas in the course of my earlier years, culminating in the involuntary exchange of a new silk for an old gingham, has induced me to abandon the possession of the commonest shield against inclement weather. I have not owned an umbrella for years, nor do I venture to borrow one, being certain that if I did so, I should infallibly find myself guilty of a breach of trust; and I have

acquired an art of encountering rain, which to some would appear unattainable. Thriftless enough to expend in cabs money sufficient to convert an entire hall into an arsenal for umbrellas, I am content, when a sudden shower has rendered the supply of those useful vehicles inadequate to the demand, to join the very mixed assemblies which stand under archways and porticoes till the violence of the visitation has abated. There is sure to be in such assemblies a topic of discourse, in which all can take an active part. Englishmen are proverbial all over the world for opening conversation with remarks on the state of the weather, even when the subject is of no vital importance. It is, therefore, a matter of course, when a little crowd is gathered together under an archway, through the strong influence of one and the same desire in every individual composing it, the desire, namely, of not being wetted to the skin, that the importance of this particular subject should be to the highest degree intensified. "Do you think this shower will last long?" is assuredly a question, under the circumstances, of absolute interest, and the reply that the shower is too violent for long continuance, if it does not denote profound research, or imply the possession of prophetic gifts, is hailed with pleasure as a welcome truth. The appearance of a patch of blue, which gradually enlarges itself amid an expanse of dark clouds, is a thing of joy to every anxious heart, and he who, like myself, is habitually destitute of an umbrella, may occasionally derive an amount of unnamable gratification when the owner of a costly silk protector humbly takes his place beneath the arch or portico, averring that its protecting powers are unequal to the fierceness of the attack.

Necessity, in the shape of an April torrent, of the true cat-and-dog kind, makes strange arch-fellows, but of all the chance companions the most unbearable are those persistent optimists, who are sure to crop up, like other ill-weeds, under the influence of a pelting shower. The optimist of the arch, by whom probably the rain is secretly detested more than by any other sufferer, obtrusively calls the attention of all hearers to the immense benefit that will arise from the affliction of the moment, and expresses his mock delight in the most offensive form.

"Ah, sir," said one of these to me, on one occasion, when there was an uneasy suspicion that the arch was leaky, "ah,

sir, this rain will do more good than ever you or I shall."

I felt nettled not a little. When we are reflecting on our own personal inconveniences, we have no wish to disperse our sympathies over the whole of mankind, and a hat varnished brightly by Jupiter Pluvius does not suggest grateful meditations or glad prospects of the crops. I felt inclined to tell the optimist that he had better apply his remarks to himself exclusively, and that if he felt convinced from arguments drawn from his own experience that he would never do as much good as a pelting shower, I was not, for my own part, inclined to become the subject of so humiliating a comparison. Very glad was I when the abatement of the rain released me from his companionship, and I can well recollect that when, after leaving my place of refuge, I looked back, I saw that the grateful man, who had been so ecstatic in his admiration, remained longer under the arch than any of the rest.

Careless with respect to umbrellas and other articles, I am extremely careful of my spectacles. It is with a sort of nervous instinct that, whenever I am going out, I clap my hand hastily to my waistcoat-pockets to ascertain that they are safe. And here let me lament, with well-placed grief, that the most convenient form of spectacle-case has suddenly become obsolete. I refer to the thin, flat sheath, open at both ends, which glided into the waistcoat-pocket without occupying any sensible room, and some years ago drove out of fashion the thick unwieldy case, which requires the side-pocket of a coat for its abode, and opening at one end, is closed with a tongue like a pocket-book. Oddly enough the useful innovation has of late disappeared, and the ancient mass of leather is restored to supremacy, without a single claim to public favour. Rarely can one of the closing cases be found long enough to contain your spectacles, without unduly bending the delicate arms of metal that press lightly on the temples; whereas in the neat, flat sheath any spectacles can be inserted. Nevertheless, this sheath is not to be obtained save by a remarkable stroke of good fortune. To me its disappearance is a source of constant trouble. Disgusted with the clumsy article, I have given up the use of cases altogether, and carry my spectacles unsheathed in my waistcoat-pocket. Under these circumstances, the normal transparency of the glasses is occa-

sionally interrupted, and they are brought into a semi-opaque condition, which necessitates the employment of a pocket-handkerchief. Now, the restoration of glasses to their proper transparency is by no means a pleasant operation. The foggy speck that has dimmed the centre will often, after being skilfully rubbed away, reappear near the circumference, where it is less easily removed. Breathing on the glass, too, though sometimes successful, is a hazardous experiment, inasmuch as you may sometimes produce a mist which you will find yourself unable to dispel.

But whatever inconvenience may attend the use of spectacles, they are so great a blessing to those who require them, that, like health, their true value cannot be ascertained until they are lost. This truth was impressed upon me by bitter experience one Saturday night. At about half-past eleven, when I was on my way home, a sudden instinct told me that my spectacles were gone. My hand, thrust successively into all my waistcoat-pockets, confirmed the truth of the mysterious revelation, which was still further confirmed by a plunge into the breast-pocket of my coat. The sense of my bereavement then began to force itself upon me in all its horror. The lost spectacles were the only pair I possessed in the world, and as all the shops would be very properly closed on the morrow, I should be in a state of semi-blindness till Monday. Moreover, I knew that, from circumstances which need not be narrated, I should be unable to leave home till the Sunday evening, and there was the possibility before me of dying for want of occupation. In a frenzy of desperation I thrust my hands into places where the missing treasure would certainly not be found. I rifled the pockets of my coat-tail; I opened a letter-case, likewise a book I commonly carried about me, and of course, as I expected, my search was without profit.

I hurried home, went with all possible speed to bed, and speedily buried the consciousness of my loss in sleep, though I believe I dreamed of the horrible fate of *Œdipus*. Sleep is an admirable balm for misery, but it brings with it this disadvantage, that the repose which it affords is almost certainly followed by a strong reaction. When we wake in the morning, the misfortune of the previous day does not present itself at once in perfect distinctness, but we have at first a vague notion that there is something wrong, and then

the abstract wrong gradually reveals itself in horrible perspicuity. With Sunday morning came first the consciousness that my property had been in some way diminished. But how? Had I been robbed of my watch, or had I unwittingly given a sovereign instead of a shilling to a cabman? No. According to a more worldly calculation, my loss had been much less heavy than it would have been in the event of either of these calamities. I had merely lost my spectacles, mere glass set in steel, but the immediate prospect of blank hours was hideous. I never before felt the intense pathos of the concluding lines of Wordsworth's beautiful poem :

Few knew, for very few could know,
When Lucy ceased to be;
But now she's in her grave, and ah!
The difference to me!

There is an etymological connexion between "Lucy" and "lux," or light, and a practical connexion between light and spectacles.

What would I have given on that dreadful morning for a slight—not a racking—headache, that would have rendered all mental occupation disagreeable? The loss of my spectacles would then have harmonised with my mental and bodily condition. But, ah! far from having a headache or desiring repose, I had a morbid longing to read something. My only defect in health was an absence of appetite, of all defects the most painful under the circumstances. Had I been sharp set, as the vulgar have it, I could have become for the nonce a gourmand, and passed more than my usual time in the consumption of my breakfast. But even this refuge for a "far niente," that was anything but "dolce," was denied me. I could scarcely eat at all.

After awhile I bethought myself of the possession of a powerful magnifying-glass, which I use to distinguish small words in maps, and in pocket dictionaries. And a very serviceable instrument it is when employed on rare occasions. But, as I soon found when I sought its aid to relieve me from my distress, it became, when employed for the purpose of continuous reading, an instrument of torture worthy the invention of an Oriental tyrant. The page before you is broken up into a number of circular lakes, which appear in uncertain succession—thickly studded, like Lake George in the United States, with islands, every island consisting of successive letters—lakes which it is impossible to reduce into one

uninterrupted surface. To take a long walk, and meanwhile to read Young's Night Thoughts chalked in huge characters on a wall, would be a cheerless occupation, but it would probably be perfect bliss compared to the effort to read a book or a newspaper with one eye armed with a magnifying-glass of high power.

My magnifier having proved a disastrous failure, and being cast fiercely on the floor, I was again thrust back into a state of internal contemplation, when it occurred to me that in some drawer or other I had an eye-glass, made to be worn on a chain, and expanding, when required, into a spectacle form by means of a pivot. It is an old family treasure, not made for me, and, as it does not exactly suit my sight, I am not in the habit of wearing it. Nevertheless, my forlorn condition forced its image into my memory, and I recollected that on rare occasions I had used it for purposes not merely ornamental. So I rummaged the drawer, and, having found it, was delighted to perceive that it suited my sight much better than I expected. My joy was transient. I was not, indeed, hurled at once into despair, as by the magnifier, but I glided down on an inclined plane to the same undesirable abyss. The glasses themselves are tolerable, but the machinery of the pivot is loose and capricious, so that the instrument sits uncertainly on the nose, and requires constant adjustment to be in a proper position with respect to the eyes. A pen that only marks at hap-hazard would check the fine frenzy of the most inspired poet, and certainly was never plucked from the wing of Pegasus. In like manner an optical instrument that keeps on oscillating between chiaro-oscuro and partial blindness is not favourable to reading, even if we set aside the galling inconvenience occasioned by holding a book in one hand, and something else in the other. I did not dash my eye-glass to the ground with the fury I had lavished on the magnifier, but I laid it down with a sigh, and, folding my arms, calmly resigned myself to my misery.

Much time had not elapsed when a resident in the house cheered me with the glad tidings that a friend of his was about to call, who wore spectacles, and would no doubt lend them for an hour or so. There was a vague belief that the condition of his eyesight was similar to mine, though on what fact this hypothesis was founded I have been unable to discover. However, the most fallacious hope is better, while it

lasts, than none at all, as Dante clearly perceived, when he excluded hope of every kind from the place of torment. I greedily swallowed the welcome theory, and my anxiety for the arrival of the wealthy visitor became intense. He came, my deplorable case was stated to him, and the spectacles were brought into my room. I snatched them up, I put them on, I grasped a newspaper, and I beheld—an impenetrable fog. Still, I had suffered too much not to struggle a little with adverse destiny, and I found that by making the paper almost touch the tip of my nose, I could read with tolerable facility. For about half an hour I got on pretty well, but soon a new source of oppression came upon me. As I have already stated, I am naturally long-sighted. Now, by the borrowed spectacles, my whole habit of life was reversed; I had become artificially short-sighted, and I could not bear my changed condition. I sent down the newspaper and the spectacles with thanks, and relapsed into melancholy.

On the previous evening I had heard of a remarkable gentleman, who excelled all the rest of his species in the art of doing nothing. When at the seaside, he could, I was told, sit on one chair, and lean forward on the back of another, contemplating the waves for hours, and deriving the utmost satisfaction from the contemplation. Ah! I could envy him. I had no waves to contemplate, and if they had been before me, I should have grown weary of looking at them after the first half-hour. There is a fine old English song entitled *My Mind to Me a Kingdom is*, which may be found in *Percy's Reliques*, and which inculcates the expediency of relying exclusively on one's own mental resources. Happy those who can follow its teaching, but this does not suit every temperament. The Malcontent in *John Marston's* old play strongly despises the song, and all who use it. I simply admired and envied. Then I remembered how Spinoza, that he might live in a state of independence favourable to the pursuit of his bold metaphysical speculation, earned his daily bread by grinding optical glasses. Had he no secondary motive for his choice of this particular branch of industry? May he not have conceived the possibility of a wretched condition like mine, and resolved to do his best to avert the dire calamity? If I had been able to make for myself a pair of spectacles, whenever I was at home, what hours of misery would have been avoided! Thought followed thought, until at last I hit

on the notion of recording my sufferings in black and white, and this notion resulted in the paper which I now conclude.

SHIPWRECK.

On the smiling sea was never a curl,
On the bright sky never a frown;
Never an omen of coming fate,
When my beautiful bark, with her costly freight,
In the glory of noon, went down.

Boldly launched from a quiet shore;
Well framed with storms to cope;
By Youth and Courage nobly manned;
The sails were woven by Love's own hand,
The rudder was held by Hope.

The merciless sun shone full and fair,
The pitiless waves were calm.
No whisper of woe in the wooing breeze,
The gulls poised over the sleeping seas,
The treacherous air was balm.

With happy laughter, with joyous dreams,
We glided in fearless faith;
Then—the sullen jar on the sunken rock;
The grinding crash, the horrible shock;
The headlong plunge to death.

A moment's whirl of boiling foam,
A shriek through the slumberous day,
Then, smooth blue waters and calm blue skies,
And the startled birds with their keen dark eyes,
Intent on their darting prey.

The bright sea dimpled, the bright sun shone,
With nor cloud nor white crest flecked;
A thousand barks sailed gaily past,
A thousand flags light shadows cast,
Where my beautiful boat was wrecked.

Wrecked, with its hopes, its loves, its trusts,
Sunk deep to the sea—weeds brown,
The great world turns and the great waves break;
What should either heed of the moan we make,
When a life or a ship goes down?

A TRIP TO THE LAND OF SCOTT.

PART IV.

OBAN, or the "White Bay," that at the beginning of the present century was a little, unfrequented, almost unknown fishing village, consisting of a few white huts or cottages along the shore, with a population of two or three hundred people, scarcely one of whom could speak a word of English, is now a fashionable resort and a place of so much bustle and activity, from June to October, as to be well entitled to the sobriquet it has acquired of the "Charing Cross of the Highlands." Even so recently as the winter of 1842, people bound for the island of Mull, scarcely eight miles distant, have been detained by stress of weather at Oban for as long as three weeks, before a vessel would venture into the Sound, to convey them to Tobermory. But steam has changed all this, and brought, not alone

Mull, but all the islands of the Hebrides within reach of civilisation. Were there but bathing accommodation, and were the landed proprietors not so churlish as to extend their supposed, but very questionable, rights of seclusion down to high-water mark, and virtually to shut out the public from the sea-shore in front of their domains, Oban would be one of the pleasantest summer residences in Great Britain. But to behold the sea, and be prevented from getting a dip into it except from a boat, is disappointing, if not exasperating, and drives many people away, who would otherwise be glad to spend the summer months in a place so beautiful. Scottish landed proprietors—especially of the smaller order—seem to treat the public as an enemy, and jealously exclude both the native and the stranger from their picturesque domains; offering in this respect a very unfavourable contrast to their English counterparts. If the Oban people had public spirit enough to keep the sea-shore free for promenaders, and at certain times of the morning and evening for bathers, they would add much to the existing attractions to summer visitors.

Few remain even for a couple of days in Oban without making an excursion to the ancient castle of Dunstaffnage, one of the most remarkable ruins in Great Britain. It is but five miles distant, and if the traveller wishes to extend his walk or his ride, he has but to proceed two miles further to the inn at Connell Ferry, to the Falls of Lora, mentioned in Ossian, and to the wild scenery of Loch Etive. The old tower of Dunolly Castle, one of the most prominent objects in the bay, the grounds of which extend to the skirts of the town, is first visited, if permission can be obtained. The castle was formerly the stronghold of the Macdougals of Lorne—one of the most ancient families in the Highlands, whose descendants are among the few who can boast of a similar antiquity, and still retain the original homesteads of their race. Of the old castle nothing remains but a square tower, which, like all its contemporaries, has been rendered useless by the invention of artillery. The fancy of Wordsworth seems to have been greatly excited by an eagle which was long held captive in the tower, for he indited no less than three sonnets, by no means among his best, to this poor bird—on behalf of which he declared both the castle and the rock to be dishonoured. He must have been in distress for a subject when he wrote:

Dishonoured rock and ruin! that by law
Tyrannic keep the bird of Jove embarras'd
Like a lone criminal whose life is spared!
Vexed is he, and screams loud!

This was once thought to be poetry; and, as nine people out of ten scarcely know the difference between prose and verse, it is quite possible that many excellent persons admire it still. The eagle, celebrated by Wordsworth's lament over its hard fate, was worried to death by thoughtless or brutal visitors, who, but for Wordsworth, would never have heard of it. Alas, poor eagle! and alas for the penalties that have to be paid by the famous!

Dunstaffnage claims attention as one of the most ancient castles in Great Britain—so ancient that its builder's name is lost in the darkness of the mythologic ages. Some date it from the third century before the Christian era, some from the fifth century after; which latter is by far the likelier supposition of the two. It occupies the summit of a mass of rock, varying from ten to thirty feet in height, the sides of which have been partially cut away, so as to give it the appearance of a component part of the building. The ruin is about four hundred feet in circumference, and the walls are about fifty feet in height, and of an average of ten feet in thickness. The castle was the royal residence of the kings of the Dalriadic race, who ruled over the west of Scotland from the early part of the sixth century till the year 850, when Kenneth Macalpine united in his own person the sovereignty of the Scots and Picts. Here Kenneth is reported to have held parliaments and assemblies of his nobles; and here was placed, though nobody knows when, the celebrated stone, afterwards removed to Scone, and now in Westminster Abbey, which for upwards of a thousand years has been considered the palladium of Scotland. The tradition was, that wherever that stone was placed, there should the Scots hold regal sway, or as Boethius expressed it:

Ni fallat fatum, Sooti, quocunque locatum
Inveniet lapidem, regnare tenente ibidem.

From the time of Kenneth to that of John Baliol, every king of Scotland was crowned upon this stone (said, it should be added, to be the identical stone which served the patriarch Jacob for a pillow, when he had his memorable vision of the ladder and the angels); but King Edward the First carried it off in triumph to Westminster Abbey, where it still remains. Thus the charm was broken for upwards of three

centuries, until the accession of James the First, the son of Mary, Queen of Scots, restored the authority of the legend. Patriotic Scotsmen still assert that the stone, though in Westminster and not in Scotland, vindicates its ancient renown as the symbol of Scottish supremacy, inasmuch as the House of Hanover, all whose members have been crowned upon it, are the descendants of the royal House of Stuart, through the mother of George the First. As butterflies are not to be broken on the wheel, nor legends to be as solemnly treated as historical facts, it would be idle to argue seriously about the stone of Scone, or to say any more about it than that it is a very remarkable and ancient relic, with a very curious history. On the broad top of the castle wall are placed the little brass guns, dredged up some years ago from the entrance of Loch Etive, which the guide and the guide-books represent to have belonged to one of the luckless vessels of the Spanish Armada. But as that expedition came to a disastrous end in the year 1588, and as the largest of the guns bears the inscription, not very legible, but to be made out easily enough by an expert, that it was cast in Amsterdam by one Abasuerus Costen in the year 1700, the original ownership of the guns is palpably not such as tradition asserts. Dunstaffnage is still nominally a royal castle, authority over which, in the queen's name, is vested in the Duke of Argyll, as keeper.

From Dunstaffnage to Connell Ferry is an easy walk. If the tide be favourable, the traveller will be delighted with the Falls of Lora, and the view up and across Loch Etive, to the land of "Selma of storms," of which Ossian makes frequent mention. The narrow entrance to Loch Etive is barred by a line of low rocks, which are covered at high water. When the tide has partially ebbed, the upper lake retains a portion of the flood water at a higher level than that of the outer sea, and the consequence is the not very usual, but highly picturesque phenomenon, a salt water cataract. The roar of the falls is sometimes heard, with a favourable wind, at a distance of six miles.

But the great excursion, which brings travellers from all parts of the world to Oban, is not the little inland trip, varied and agreeable though it be, but the voyage round the island of Mull, and a visit to the wondrous Cave of Staffa, and the ancient ruins of Iona, where Christianity found a home and a seminary long before Saint

Augustine preached to the men of Kent. The voyage exceeds a hundred miles, and, with the stoppages at Staffa and Iona, occupies a long summer's day—a day well spent, whether the traveller be antiquary, philosopher, poet, or valetudinarian, or none of these, but simply a lover of nature, and a seeker after change and recreation. A bell rings on the quay at seven o'clock to summon the guests from the hotels, great and small, and from the numerous lodging and boarding-houses that line the bay, to be up and stirring, so as to be in time to start at eight o'clock. It depends on the state of the wind whether the southern or the northern route be taken; but the north is the favourite, and at once brings the traveller, while yet his attention is fresh, into the midst of scenery, to every mountain and rock and crag and ruined castle of which is attached a legend, a romance, a history, or a tragedy; though it must be admitted that tragedy seems to predominate in all this misty, gloomy, but most magnificent land. Passing the northern extremity of Kerrera, and obtaining a fine view of Dunolly, and afterwards of Dunstaffnage, the steamer emerges into the great arm of the sea called Loch Linnhe, that runs up to Fort William, and then bears off to Ben Nevis. On our right is the fertile and pastoral island of Lismore, or the "great garden," about ten miles in length and two in breadth, and right before us the Sound of Mull, which separates that large island from the mainland of Morven. "A grander and more impressive scene," says Sir Walter Scott, "both for its natural beauties and associations with ancient history and tradition, can scarcely be imagined." At the extremity of Lismore stands a much-needed lighthouse, attention to which is more specially directed, that the eye may be guided to a small rock, several hundred yards out to sea, which is left bare at low water. It is called the Lady's Rock, and was the scene of an act of atrocious cruelty, attempted towards the end of the fifteenth century, by Lachlan Maclean, of Duart, on the person of his wife, a sister of the Earl of Argyll. Either from settled aversion, or a design to be rid of the lady that he might marry some one else, he had her conveyed at low water to this rock, and there left, as he thought, to be overwhelmed by the rising tide. But, fortunately, as the water was rising above her waist, her cries for help were heard by some of her brother's clansmen, who were fishing in a boat off

Lismore. She was rescued from her peril just as the advancing tide was on a level with her breast. Maclean, unaware of her deliverance, had a mock funeral celebrated in Duart Castle, and assumed all the outward symbols and shows of grief of a distressed widower. It has been said, in extenuation of this very eccentric conduct, that the lady had twice attempted to stab him, that she was an untamable virago, and that as Maclean did not like to shed her blood, he thought it a milder, but equally effective process, to try the tranquillising power of cold water. However this may be, the lady's friends were indignant, and vengeance speedily overtook the wicked husband, who was assassinated in his bed in Edinburgh, by John Campbell, the lady's second brother. On this incident Thomas Campbell, the author of the Pleasures of Hope, founded his well-known but mediocre ballad of Glenara, and Joanna Baillie her fine tragedy of the Family Legend.

Duart Castle, now in ruins, is almost immediately opposite, on the eastern extremity of Mull, and commands the entrance of the Sound. It is asserted to have been originally erected by the Norwegians, when they exercised the sovereignty of the Hebrides; but this, though probable, is doubtful. Duart Castle is first mentioned on sure authority in a deed under the great seal of Donald, Lord of the Isles, in the year 1390, by which the castle and lands adjoining are granted to Lachlan MacGillean, or Maclean. The Macleans of Duart have since that time been considered the chiefs of the Clan Maclean. It is related of one of them that, in the year 1542, wishing to proceed to Edinburgh, and being naturally anxious that he should come to no hurt, in a civilised capital, at the hands of a king and a government whose laws—like all other Highland chieftains of his time—he had systematically violated whenever it suited his interest, his passion, and his caprice, he procured, after a great deal of negotiation, a safe-conduct from King James the Fifth, the father of Queen Mary. The document set forth that "Hector MacClane of Dowart," might visit the king at Edinburgh, "unattached, unarrested, unpursued, unvexed, untroubled, undisturbed, unhurt, and unharmed!"

The castle of Ardtornish, on the other side of the Sound, is finely situated at the entrance of Loch Aline, on the "beautiful lake," and is built upon a grassy point, projecting from the Morven shore. It was the residence of the Lords of the Isles, in

the days when those potentates exercised regal sway in the Hebrides, and where, at least on one occasion, they treated with the King of England as potentate with potentate—king with king. The admirers of Sir Walter Scott's poetry will remember the splendid opening stanzas of the Lord of the Isles, in which he introduces a description of the rugged walls of the castle of Ardtornish, and of the sylvan scenery of green Loch Aline.

The castle of Aros is the third that claims attention, and is situated at the opening of the bay of the same name, and finely perched upon the summit of a rocky hill, a landmark visible for many miles. This also was a residence of the Lords of the Isles, among others, of the "mighty Somerled."

The castles of Duart, Ardtornish, Aros, Mingary, and others that are not visible from the course taken by the steamer, seem all to have been constructed on the same principle, and after the same, or nearly the same design. "Nothing," say the Messrs. Anderson of Inverness, in their elaborate Guide Book to the Highlands and Islands, "can be more wild than the situations chosen for these fortresses; sometimes as detached islets or pinnacles; more generally as promontories surrounded on three sides by the sea; and on high precipitous rocks, commanding an extensive view, and ready communication with the water. Straight and narrow stairs, little better than stone ladders, and arched vaults, were a frequent mode of access, and in some cases between the tops of these stairs and the main building, yawning chasms intervened, across which, as occasion required, a slender drawbridge was lowered. Rude but strong buttresses propped up the walls, which occasionally were constructed at a distance from the principal keep, so as to form a court or ballium." Not one of these ancient places of strength is either inhabited or inhabitable, and few remain in the families of their ancient possessors. Successful trade has invaded the Hebrides, as well as all other beautiful spots within the British Isles, and the grand and gloomy Ardtornish itself—once the abode of royalty, when royalty meant something more than show—is the property of an English gentleman enriched by commerce.

Rounding a little island, which acts as a breakwater and protection, the steamer enters a bay surrounded by steep and beautifully wooded banks, and lets off steam at the quay of Tobermory, or the "well of Mary,"

the largest town or village, and the nominal capital, of the island of Mull. Tobermory knows nothing of ancient feudalism, or of the Lords of the Isles, or other warlike Highland chieftains. It is a place of the present, not of the past, and was never heard of in the world until the year 1788, when it consisted but of two cottages. In the year 1861 it contained a population of upwards of sixteen hundred, principally engaged in the deep-sea fisheries and the coasting trade. It owes its existence to the British Society for extending the Fisheries, under whose auspices cottages were built, fishing-boats procured, and encouragement held out to the population of the interior to devote themselves to the cultivation of that great farm, the sea, which has no proprietors, for which there is no rent to pay, and which yields a harvest as bountiful as the corn or potatoes of the land, in the shape of herrings, ling, and codfish. The experiment was only partially successful, but it created Tobermory. Its inhabitants, with the internal trade of a large island behind them, and the wants of coasting vessels to supply, manage not only to live, but to prosper; and did the neighbouring landed proprietors see fit to "fue" or let out their land on building leases for ornamental villas and seaside quarters, there can be little doubt that Tobermory might be made one of the pleasantest and most fashionable resorts in the Highlands.

On the dispersion of the great Spanish Armada, one of the storm-tossed vessels of the fleet, the Florida, took refuge in the bay of Tobermory, but shortly afterwards went down like a shot with all hands on board. The true cause of the catastrophe was never ascertained, but popular superstition was at no loss to account for it. There was said to be on board a beautiful Spanish lady—young, fascinating, and loving, with whom Maclean of Duart, the greatest man in Mull, became desperately enamoured at first sight. In vain did his lawful spouse remonstrate with him on his guilt and folly; in vain did she resort to the artillery of tears and sighs to win back his allegiance; in vain did she, with jealous anger, threaten all sorts of vengeance; her infatuated partner could not be withdrawn from the side of the Andalusian charmer, who charmed him too completely and too well. In this emergency Lady Maclean took counsel of the witch who dwelt in the corries of Ben More, paid her fee, whatever it was, and was promised a speedy deliverance from the

fascinating wiles of her successful rival. And the witch kept her word; in fact, went far beyond the original bargain or the real necessities of the case; for she not only immolated the fair Andalusian, but the whole crew and officers of the ill-fated Florida, to the vengeance of the slighted wife. By infernal agency she bored a hole under the water-line of the ship, scuttled her, in short, in the dead of night, none on board escaping but a cabin-boy, who declared, in the words of the ballad which records the story—

... as he battled for life with the tide,
That he saw the fair lady of Spain by his side,
And a lank skinny hand that came up through the
spray,
And twined in her tresses as floating she lay,
And heard the loud laughter of fiends in the air
As she sank mid the waves with a shriek of despair.

The false lord of Duart was not on board at the time, which, all things considered, may have been as lucky for him as it was for his injured wife.

On emerging from the bay of Tobermory, the steamer quits the Sound, and enters Loch Sunart, having the bold coasts of Mull on the left, and the gloomy steepes and mountain fortresses of Ardnamurchan on the right. Turning to the westward, she proceeds in a direct course for the far-famed Isle of Staffa, and "the group of islets grey," as Scott calls the Treshnish Isles, which sentinel the approach to that wonder of the ocean. On the shore of Mull, the headland of Calliach, or of the Old Woman, is generally pointed out to the passing traveller as the favourite resort of the poet Campbell, when, in his youth, he acted as tutor to a Highland family at Sunipol, and where, in the contemplation of the surrounding scenery, he imbued his mind with those poetic images which afterwards found expression in the Pleasures of Hope. Further south is Ulva, where is supposed to have resided that Laird of Ulva whose abduction of the fair daughter of Lord Ullin, and unhappy fate, forms the subject of one of the poet's most spirited ballads. The Treshnish Isles, of which there are five important enough to their owners to possess names, are all uninhabited, but yield good pasturage during the summer months to the flocks and herds of the Mull farmers, of whose farms they form a portion. One of them, called the Dutchman's Cap, from its resemblance in shape to an old-fashioned hat of the Vandyke period, remains long in sight. Far beyond it, if the weather be clear, may be discovered two others, the outermost of

all the British group on the western shores of the Atlantic, the low but populous and fertile islands of Coll and Tiree.

Staffa, until a near approach, looks but an unshapely rock, alone amid the melancholy main. And, were it not for its marvellous cave, no stretch of admiring fancy could make it anything more. If the weather be rough, the Atlantic swell renders a visit to the cave a work of difficulty, not to be undertaken except by the young and active. In calm weather, which is rare on these coasts, boats from the steamer can be rowed to the extremity of the cave; but in most instances the boats land their passengers at a sheltered cove on the island, from which there is a steep as well as a boggy track of about half a mile to the entrance of the cave. It has been my good fortune to visit the cave on several occasions; once, in the calmest and sunniest of all possible weather, in a little boat, which put off from Calgary, in Mull, with a party of half a dozen, including a fair Highland maiden, who sang Gaelic songs with the exuberant gladness and generosity of a skylark in mid-air; once again with a piper on board of our small yacht, who caused the vaulted roof of the cave to re-echo with the weird melodies of a pibroch; and thrice, if not oftener, in company with all the miscellaneous and motley crowd of tourists from the steamer. It is in this last fashion that ninety-nine people out of a hundred see the Cave of Fingal, which, seen in any way, at any time, and in any company, is one of the grandest sights of Nature. The admiration of a crowd of visitors usually vents itself in shouts, and yells, and whoops, and halloos, possibly to try the effect of the echoes in a place so unlike anything else with which their experience has familiarised them; and though I prefer to see Fingal's Cave without such noisy accessories, I am gregarious enough not to find fault with the almost childish delight which people vent in this manner, when they enter into this grand vestibule of Nature's palace.

Doctor Johnson, in his celebrated visit to the Hebrides, with his faithful Boswell in company, was prevented by the stormy weather from landing upon Staffa, so that the world has lost the description he might have made upon it; but the learned doctor was less struck with the great aspects of Nature than with the traces left by man upon Nature's face, so that perhaps the world has not lost very much by his en-

forced silence. Scott and Wordsworth have both described the cave in eloquent passages, with which nearly all readers are familiar, and which have been hashed and rehashed in every guide-book that has been published during the last forty years. Other poets have been inspired by the same high theme, and have written true poetry in its praise, as perhaps the authors of future guide-books, who may not choose to follow in the old ruts of their predecessors, will perhaps discover.

The tower of the little ruined cathedral of Iona, distant about nine miles, is plainly visible from the Cave of Fingal, and thitherwards, having reassembled her scattered passengers, the steamer directs her course. Once more disembarking in small boats, the passengers are rowed ashore, and are accosted almost before they land by a motley group of barefooted children, ragged, unkempt, but bright-eyed and healthy-looking, assembled on the shore to welcome them, after a fashion peculiar to the island. All these children, with a few of their elders among them, are bent upon a commercial attack on the pockets of the stranger, and present him with sea-shells and small green pebbles that abound on the coast, in return for such pence or shillings as his liberality may offer. These children are for the most part so utterly ignorant of English, that I for one would be wholly reconciled to their importunity if it could be arranged that half the money given to them should be set aside for the payment of an English schoolmaster. The Gaelic, like its cognate branches of the Celtic spoken in Ireland, Wales, and the Isle of Man, is a very ancient, beautiful, and interesting language, which every philologist should study, and without a thorough understanding of which no one should presume to compile an English dictionary. At the same time, it is an impediment in the path of knowledge in every part of the British Isles where the people speak no other. If the Highlanders can be taught both English and Gaelic, there is no reason why the beautiful Gaelic should be forgotten or uncultivated; but if they are to have but one language, Gaelic should unquestionably be allowed to die out.

Iona is the Icolmkill, or island of Columba's Church, of the geographers of the last century. It was anciently called the Druid's Isle, the Isle of the Saints, and the Holy Isle. Its present name is either derived from I. Shona, the Holy Isle, or

I. Thona, the Isle of the Waves (in both words the "Sh" and the "Th" are silent). It is not remarkable for beauty or grandeur, and is absolutely without natural charms or attractions of any kind. But its early history is such as to render it one of the most interesting places in the world. During the four first centuries of the Christian era, a Druidical college or university was established in this remote corner, far away from the perturbations and wars of Continental Europe, during all which time it kept alight the lamp of knowledge, and of a civilisation very superior to that which prevailed in more southern and more accessible regions. In the sixth century, how and by what means does not appear to be very accurately known, this illustrious island, as Dr. Johnson calls it, became the home of an equally remarkable brotherhood of Christians, called Culdees, under the abbacy of Colm, or St. Columba. Beyond the limits of a circle of forty or fifty miles in diameter from this Holy Isle as a centre, the British Isles of England, Scotland, and Ireland, were sunk, if not in the darkest mists of paganism, in the twilight of Druidism; but here the light of Christianity, as then understood, burned pure and bright; and hither came students of theology from Ireland, Norway, Denmark, and even from France, Switzerland, Italy, and Spain. Why the Christian brotherhood of Iona were called Culdees, has never been satisfactorily explained, though it may be conjectured the name belonged originally to their predecessors, the Druids, who taught the Chaldean mysteries of the stars, and brought their religion into Britain from the plain of Shinar. Of the many Gaelic derivations of the name, that of Gille or Ceille De, the servants of God, seems to be the most probable. From Iona a regular propagandism of the Christian faith was organised under St. Columba and his successors, of which the members spread themselves all over Europe, as will be seen from the eloquent history of the Monks of the West, which the world owes to the late Comte de Montalembert. In consequence of its sanctity and presumed inviolability, Iona became the sepulchre of the kings of Scotland and of Norway, and of most of the great feudal chieftains of Scotland and Ireland. The cathedral of St. Oran, and the surrounding grave-yard, received their remains; and many elegant crosses of exquisite stone workmanship were erected to mark their place of sepulture, of which some few, the admiration

of all travellers, have escaped the ravages of the ignorant, and the perhaps crueller ravages of the learned, and still testify to the piety and the civilisation of an age, which it has been too much the fashion to condemn as quasi-barbarian. A Gaelic tradition, that still holds its ground among the people, asserts that before the last day the whole world shall be submerged by a second deluge; but that Iona alone, of all the green places of the earth, shall float above the waters. Another tradition asserts that annually, upon New Year's Eve, St. Columba, in a spectral ship or boat, sails through the Hebrides to Iona, that all the royal, noble, and sainted dead rise from their graves to meet him on the shore, and that he ascends to the tower of St. Oran, and deliberately counts his beloved Isles of the West to see that none of them are missing. The readers of Shakespeare will remember that the body of the gracious Duncan, after his murder, was conveyed to Icolmkill, to be buried among his ancestors.

Iona is about three miles in length, by one and a half in breadth, and contains a superficies of somewhat less than two thousand acres, of which about six hundred are in a state of cultivation, yielding a not very bountiful subsistence, eked out by the tribute of the sea, to a population of between three and four hundred. The sole proprietor is the Duke of Argyll, who has recently published a volume on the history and antiquities of his venerable possession.

All the way from Iona, round the southern shore of Mull and back again to Oban, the scenery is wild and majestic, and the whole voyage, for beauty and grandeur to delight the eye, and for suggestion and instruction to captivate the mind, is not to be paralleled in any part of the world.

From Oban to Glasgow the traveller has a choice of routes, if he would not pass twice over the same ground. The most beautiful is that by the Pass of Brander, Loch Awe, and the bases of Ben Cruachan—the scenes of Sir Walter Scott's painful story of the Highland Widow—and thence to Glenfalloch and the head of Loch Lomond.

During all our course in this Trip into the Land of Scott, the recollections of the great poet and novelist have everywhere accompanied us; and in taking leave of him, and of those parts of Scotland which his genius has more particularly made his own, I cannot do better than borrow the words of Lord Meadow-

bank, when he proposed Scott's health at the great dinner of the Theatrical Fund in Edinburgh, in July, 1827, when the author of *Waverley* first publicly avowed the authorship of his immortal fictions: "The Scotch owe to him, as a people, a large and heavy debt of gratitude. He it is who has opened to foreigners the grand and characteristic beauties of their country. It is to him that they owe that their gallant ancestors, and the struggles of their illustrious patriots, who fought and bled in order to obtain and secure that independence and that liberty which they now enjoy, have obtained a fame no longer confined to the boundaries of a remote and comparatively obscure nation, and who has called down upon their struggle for glory and freedom the admiration of foreign countries. He it is who has conferred a new reputation on the Scottish national character, and bestowed on Scotland an imperishable name, were it only for having given birth to himself."

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LXIV. AT ROYDON.

LADY VERNON was, as usual, busy in the library at Roydon, noting letters to be answered by her secretary, and answering others which she thought deserved the distinction of an autograph.

With a face marble-like and serene, she is promoting the conversion of the human race to Christianity. To make them all, even as she is, is worth a great sacrifice. And, beside teaching them to walk in the light, and tend to heaven, she promotes, as we know, all sorts of benevolent designs, schools, mild reformatories, temperance associations, savings-banks on new and liberal principles, building societies for the poor, farms for their employment and sustentation, loan societies, convalescent hospitals, asylums for all sorts of deserving and suffering people.

If this pale, still lady, with the black hair and large grey eyes, had her way with the world, you would know it no longer. There would not be a sorrowful soul or a writhing body on earth. It would be a paradise, and heaven, anticipated, would reign in every corner of the globe. One wide, universal heaven, musical with angelic joy and gratitude. Ay, good reader, it would be all heaven; except that one small hell, very deep, very murky, in which stands motionless the white figure of her child.

In momentary reveries, as she pens her letter to the president of the Benevolent Society in Aid of Children, by Death, or other Causes, bereft of the Tender Care of Parents, the eye of her spirit opens, and she sees, through the letter, beneath her feet, far below, in the nether earth, that pale hell, and raises her face momentarily, as if from the breath of a furnace.

She looks round on books and busts, and through the windows on the majestic trees, and is reassured by a sight of the material world about her.

"I have duties, some painful, but many happy," she thought. "I try to acquit myself of all."

And when she looked on the long list of her charities and benefactions, and on the antique binding of the folio, containing no less than fifty-seven distinct addresses from as many admirable societies, each acknowledging with decorous panegyric her magnificent benefactions; addresses or resolutions, proposed and seconded by bishops, eminent dissenters, and religious peers, amidst the unanimous applause of meaner Christians—could she feel otherwise than reassured?

She could not say she was happy; some of her duties pained her; but she heaved over these latter a comfortable sigh, and her irrepressible self-esteem reasserted itself.

It was at this moment, just as she had resumed her writing, that her tall footman stood at the door, and informed her that Mr. Dawe and Mr. Marston had arrived in a chaise, had come in, and had asked particularly to see her.

"Did you say I was not very well?"

"Yes, my lady."

"I don't think those gentlemen can have understood—go and tell Mr. Dawe that I am not sufficiently well to see any one to-day."

So said Lady Vernon a little peremptorily, with her head high, and the footman backed from the door and vanished.

Lady Vernon sat, with a very still respiration, and her pen resting on her desk, without a stir, awaiting the issue of a diplomacy which she feared.

She could have had no difficulty if it had been any one else on earth. But with Mr. Dawe it was a different matter. His relations with her were very peculiar. His persistence was formidable. And she knew, if he thought himself right, he would, not very improbably, carry his point.

The hectic fires, those signals of danger,

were already burning in each cheek, under her cold steady eyes.

"What detains him all this time?" she asked, in her solitude, with an angry tap on her desk.

There is more suspense in this trifling situation than is pleasant. She is in the acutest irritation of impatience.

The footman returns, and finds her apparently busily writing.

"What is it, Edward?" she asked, a little peevishly, glancing toward the door.

"Please, my lady, Mr. Dawe says that his business is particularly hurgent, and that you would be displeased, my lady, if he went away without acquainting you with it."

"Oh!" said Lady Vernon, gently; "then you had better show him, and the other gentleman, his friend, into the great drawing-room. And let some one tell Latimer that I want her, and tell Mr. Penrhyn that I should be obliged to him to come here for a few minutes."

"Yes, my lady," and again the footman disappeared.

The maid arrived before the secretary.

"Latimer, I may have to speak to Mr. Dawe about business; he's here now; and I don't feel strong, and I think the best thing I can take is a little sal-volatile, and do you just put some in water, the same quantity you did yesterday, and fetch it to me."

"Yes, my lady—you're not looking very well—they should not come to trouble you about business now."

"I think not, Latimer," she answered.

"But it is old Mr. Dawe, and I suppose he fancies I should see him if I were dying; people are so selfish. I won't if I can help it; but if I must, I must, and at all events let me have my sal-volatile."

"She's worriting herself over everything, and she looks as if she was a good half-ways into a fever this minute," remarked Mrs. Latimer, straight and thin in her black silk dress, as she hurried up the stairs to execute her message.

She had hardly gone when a knock came at the door.

"Come in."

The secretary came in, with the peculiar drowsiness of air and face that tedious work, too long continued, bestows. He was not sorry of the little interruption, and an opportunity of lifting his head and shaking his ears, and although Jack was growing a dull boy, he smiled politely, and I think, could have yawned.

"You wished to speak to me, Lady Vernon?"

"Yes, won't you sit down? I wanted to tell you that Mr. Dawe, with a friend, has called, and wants to talk with me about business; and I should be so glad to avoid it, if possible, I feel so poorly. So I'm going to ask you kindly to see him for me, and, if it is anything that you can settle, I should be so much obliged if you would arrange it, as I really don't feel able to talk at any length to-day, and you could make him understand that."

"Oh, certainly—of course he could not think—I have only to explain," said the secretary, with polite peremptoriness.

"Thank you so very much," she said, more glad of his confident prognostics than her pride would have confessed.

In came Latimer with the sal-volatile and water.

"Thanks," said Lady Vernon. "I'll take it now."

And she drank it off.

"Well, my lady, I must tell you, you're not looking yourself; and don't you go and bother yourself about Mr. Dawe's business, my lady; it is a shame all the trouble they puts upon you."

"I've sent Mr. Penrhyn to try whether he can't arrange it for me, and I'm in hopes he can. Thanks, that will do, Latimer, you can go."

Mr. Penrhyn's return was delayed long enough to raise a strong hope in her mind that Mr. Dawe was, after all, avoidable.

In a few minutes more the secretary returned.

"Well, what is it about?" asked Lady Vernon, affecting to raise her eyes from the letter she was *not* writing.

"Upon that point, Lady Vernon, I'm as much in the dark as when I left you."

"Oh!"

"I pressed him all I could, but he insists he can open the matter only to you, Lady Vernon, and he seems a very obstinate old gentleman."

The secretary she fancied was curious; but his eyes, as he related the result of his interview, were lowered steadily to the table.

"And I then asked him to write a note. I hope, Lady Vernon, I did as you would have wished?"

"Certainly," said Lady Vernon. "Thanks—and that is it?"

She extended her fingers to receive it.

It was a pencilled note, merely turned down at the corner. She did not open it.

"He is still in the drawing-room?"

"He and his friend," acquiesced Mr. Penrhyn.

"Did he say it was anything of much importance?" she asked, looking wistfully at the note which she was, somehow, reluctant to open.

"No, not exactly; he said he must decline opening his business, I think those were his words, except to you, Lady Vernon; and it required some little pressing to get him to write."

"Yes—I dare say—and he indicated nothing more?" and she looked again wistfully at the note.

"Nothing. He is more of a listener than a talker. I don't think he uttered twenty words."

"Yes, he is silent. Thanks, Mr. Penrhyn, I think you have done everything possible for me—thank you very much."

"You don't wish me to return to him, Lady Vernon?"

"No, thanks, I'll look into this, and send him an answer. I shan't trouble you any more at present."

So Mr. Penrhyn made his bow, and Lady Vernon was alone.

She knew perfectly what Mr. Dawe had come about. But her case was too strong. She defied him to pick a hole in her proofs. Was there not a responsibility and a duty?

She opened his note. It said:

DEAR BARBARA,—I must see *you*. Your secretary will not do. What I have to say is too harrowing. You may anticipate.

She read these words with a sullen chill and sickness; for the first time a maternal thrill, like a pain in an unknown nerve, stole through her. The words had touched a thought that had before been peremptorily "laid."

Has the miserable girl made away with herself?

She felt faint for a moment.

But the next words cleared his meaning up:

I have preferred seeing you, and obtaining your prompt acquiescence, to taking a public step. If you deny me an interview, my next measure will be decisive. I shall not postpone action in this grave matter.

Yours faithfully,

RICHARD DAWE.

She touched the bell.

"Show Mr. Dawe, but not the gentleman

who came with him, into this room," she said to her footman.

And now, leaning back a little, with her cold gaze fixed on the door, she awaits the conflict.

CHAPTER LXXVIII. DEBATE.

THE servant announces "Mr. Dawe." And that swarthy little gentleman, with wooden features and black wig, walks in, and approaches. There is, as it were, a halo of darkness round him. His countenance shows no excitement; nothing but its customary solemn reserve.

The door closes.

Lady Vernon receives him standing, and does not sit again for some minutes. Mr. Dawe is thus kept standing; and thus the meeting acquires an odd air of formality. He steps up to her as if he had to announce nothing more important than a purchase of fifty pounds' worth of Three-per-Cent stock.

He extends his hand, as usual; but she does not take it.

This coldness, or severity, does not seem to disconcert Mr. Dawe in the slightest degree; in fact, he seems scarcely conscious of it.

"Your reluctance to see me, assures me that you anticipate the subject on which I mean to speak," he began.

"It might have assured you, if my words had not, that I was not well enough to see any one. I can't be certain what subject you mean; but I am pretty sure it is nothing pleasant; you never trouble your head about anything pleasant."

"That is rather true, Barbara," he said. "and this is *not* pleasant. Your daughter Maud has been placed in the madhouse at Glarewoods."

"I have acted with too much reluctance: I have acted under strong pressure from my advisers; I have acted in obedience to urgent medical advice. She is an inmate of Glarewoods, under the care of that good and able man, against whom, even you, will hesitate to venture an ill word—Mr. Damian."

"I know. But Mr. Damian is not there. He's at Brighton. Doctor Antomarchi, no worse and no better, I suppose, than an ordinary mad-doctor, received her, and has, at present, and will have for some time to come, the sole control of that place. The fact has become known to your daughter's friends, who, believing her to be sane, wish to know why she is in a madhouse."

"She is in a madhouse, I answer in the coarse terms you seem best to understand, because she is mad."

"She's not mad; not a bit mad; not half so mad as you," replied the little man, sternly. "The people who intimately associated with her immediately before her imprisonment in that place, are convinced of her sanity, and prepared to depose to it."

Lady Vernon's rising wrath subsided suddenly as these words opened a new vein of suspicion.

"Captain Vivian, you mean," she said, growing deadly pale, with a smile of horrible scorn.

"No, I don't; I mean people who are more likely to be attended to," he answered as sternly.

There was a silence. Lady Vernon looked down. She still thought that Captain Vivian was the mainspring of this untoward movement.

"You seem to think I am bound to give account to you of all I do," she said, in sarcastic tones.

"You, Barbara, seem to think you are accountable to *no one*," he retorted, dryly.

"I am answerable to my God," she replied, with flashing eyes. "My stewardship is to Him, not to you. I'll give no account to you, farther than to say, and *that* only to stop slander, that all responsibility is removed from me; that I have been directed by the advice of as able and conscientious men as are to be found in England; and that copies of the depositions, for I chose to reduce the evidence to that shape, are lodged with Mr. Damian."

"May I see them?"

"He has got them, not I," she said, coldly.

Mr. Dawe grunted, after his fashion, and with brows more knit than usual, looked down for a few seconds.

"You have the originals—you can let me see them?" he persisted.

"You have no more claim than any other person; perhaps less. I shan't show them to you without consideration: certainly not now; possibly never. Why, what motive," she broke out, fiercely, "but the noblest, can a mother have in making so terrible a sacrifice of feeling?"

"I, and I *only*, know the existence of a motive," said Mr. Dawe; "and if Satan has put it in your mind to do this——"

"Satan! How dare you talk of Satan to me, sir?" cried the lady in a choking voice, rising with a crimson flush, and

stamping on the floor with pride and hate glaring in her face. "Do you know who I am? Satan in *my* mind! You wicked old-man! You *alone* know my secret. That's true. Tell it where you will, and have done with these infamous threats. You may wound, but you can't disgrace me. The world knows something of me. The Christian world. I've done my duty in all things; especially by my daughter; and all the false tongues in England shan't frighten me!"

"You ought to know me, Barbara, by this time. High words, hard words, don't affect me, no more than flatteries do—in at one ear and out at the other," and he touched alternately the sides of his black wig. "Be reasonable. Your violence deprives you of the power of considering consequences. You *have* a powerful motive; and motives, often unrecognised, control our actions. I know what power the death of Mand unmarried would give you by your father's will. I know what it would enable you to do for Elwyn Howard—Captain Vivian, as we style him—your son. I know the sad story of his birth, and of your secret marriage, that turned out to be a nugatory one, with that weak, strange man, Elwyn Howard, the vicar."

"Stop, in God's name!—spare the dead. My noble Elwyn, my pure, noble, heart-broken Elwyn; my first, and best, and only beloved, in his grave!"

And she burst into shrill screaming sobs, and, ringing her hands, walked to and fro in the room.

The little man in the black wig said nothing, but waved his hand toward her again and again, as one beckons a child to be quiet.

The paroxysm subsided, and she stood before him with stern eyes.

"You come to me always like a messenger from the grave. Have I ever seen you but for trouble? Have you ever had a pleasant or even a merciful word for me? Have you ever spared me one pang, or spared the dead or the living in your mission of torture?"

"If it be torture, Barbara, the fault is yours, not mine. I believe she is in her right mind; and I have come to make you an offer. Liberate her, and let her case be examined into, here or in London, with her own solicitor to watch her interests, and such of her friends as she may choose to name to attend and lend their aid. If you won't do this I'll take a course you may like less, for I'll not allow her to be

immured there, without an effort to set her free."

"Then you propose to put me formally on my trial, in my own house, on a charge of having entered into a conspiracy to imprison my daughter in a madhouse?"

"You are a self-willed, impetuous woman, Barbara. You are intolerant of argument, and prefer error and illusion to truth when it stands in your way. Look into your heart. Is there nothing there to startle you? When you have done that, call up the past. Consider what happened. You would believe whatever favoured your wishes. You would listen to no warning. With headstrong infatuation you married Elwyn Howard, without the consent or knowledge of your parents. And have you ever known a quiet hour since? All are dead, but I, who knew your secret. Your father, your mother, your old nurse, and your husband; he made a cowardly and cruel use of it; but his cruelty does not justify yours, wreaked upon your child. No lesson instructs you. You are what you were—perverse, one-ideal, headstrong. Where you have a sufficient motive nothing will stop you. You don't, perhaps, see the motives that rule you now. You dread, as well you may, the complication which your secret threatens. It would be a brief way of solving this horrible danger to hide Maud Vernon in Glarewoods for the rest of her days. Moreover, it would be a short way to a provision for the child you love, to consign the child you hate to what must attend the incarceration of a spirited girl in such a place, an early death. You live in delusion, a serenity of egotism, from which the stroke of death alone will startle you too late. I will invoke in this case the intervention of the Chancellor, unless you consent to the proposition I have made you."

With these words Mr. Dawe closed the longest speech he was ever known to deliver at a single spell; and in his face and voice there was something more threatening than they had ever evidenced before.

Whiter and whiter grew the handsome face of Lady Vernon as Mr. Dawe proceeded. She rose like an evoked spirit to his incantation, and stood with a countenance in which fear, and rage, and derision were blended with a force worthy of an evil spirit.

"I have listened to your hideous calumny till it is expended. Let it be your comfort that your last act has been worthy of all your former malignant intercourse with me, and that you leave a broken-hearted woman with a curse, and a falsehood, and a threat on your lips. It is our last meeting. I shall never hear your ill-omened voice again. I disdain your offers; I defy your threats." She rang furiously at the bell. "And I command you never more to enter this house, or to presume to claim acquaintance with me."

She turned and walked away from him, into the room.

Hearing the door open, she turned again, and said to the footman who had come in:

"This gentleman is going; show him to the hall-door."

Dawe nodded sullenly at the door of the room, and said in his accustomed tones:

"I shall act strictly on what you have said to me: and as it can't be mended, I accept the terms you prescribe. Farewell, Barbara."

The little figure in the black wig withdrew at his customary gait; his dark wooden face presenting its solemn furrows and accustomed carving, and his voice and his whole demeanour, dry and phlegmatic, as if nothing of interest had occurred.

Trembling, Lady Vernon sat down. There is always a "devil's advocate" to pervert the motives and distort the conduct of the saints, and so it had just been with her. His insults still quivered on her nerves. Does not Satan plague scrupulous consciences with doubts and upbraidings utterly fantastic? The "still small voice" within her had been whispering vaguely the same thing that now she had heard croaked with coarse distinctness by an external voice. It was this harmony and iteration that made that croaking voice eloquent, and when it ceased, left Lady Vernon trembling.

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS, JUN.

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CASTAWAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN PORT," &c. &c.

CHAPTER VIII. "IN THE DEAD UNHAPPY NIGHT."

In her room at last. Unseen by Miss Cave, who had remained at the theatre to settle accounts with Dunsany, and to talk over the pros and cons of the suggested Avonmouth season with manager Dobson. Scarcely seen by her sister Rose, who had been awaiting her arrival impatiently, and who rushed forward, directly she entered, to ask her what had been the purport of Gerald Hardinge's communication, but whose love was greater even than her curiosity, and who, on seeing that Madge was ill and suffering, at once consented to postpone her inquiries until the morning.

In her own room at last, with the door locked, her hot heavy clothes thrown aside, and a light dressing-gown donned in their place. There she is, seated at the dressing-table, her hair thrown back over her shoulders, and her chin resting on her hand. The time was now arrived when she could think it all out, the time that she longed for during her weary walk homeward up the Dumpington-road, the time that she longed for as she lay prostrate, dazed, and semi-conscious upon the bed before going to the theatre. She could think it all out now—all—all. Why, good Heavens! even since she was last in that room what a change had swept over the current of her life! What a new vista for the future had been opened up before her!

He did intend that the Australian journey should be merely an excuse for a separation, not merely temporary, but final. When she taxed him with it he acknow-

ledged it. She was glad she had been beforehand with him there; that was one instance, at least, where the cunning on which he so prided himself had not been able to cajole or deceive her. What a moral coward he was! He would have taken leave of her with fine promises and pleasant speeches, and let her go away, and then, when he knew himself to be far beyond her reach, he would have let her know the truth, that he had deserted her and cast her off for ever. Not even then, perhaps: he might have allowed her to go on wearing away her life, hoping against hope, and ignorant of the state of widowhood to which she had long since been abandoned.

Now she knew the worst. Come what might in the future, at least she would not drift into it unprepared. He had spoken plainly enough, said in so many words, that marriage was dissolved between them. He must have had that step in contemplation for some time past; such a resolution was not taken on the spur of the moment. And as she passed in review the recent occasions on which she and Philip Vane had met, and the tone of the few short letters he had written to her, she saw clearly how he had, bit by bit, been loosening the tie—never very strong, save in its legality—which existed between them, and preparing for the final rupture.

And now it had come. "You will never look upon my face again;" that was what he said. What had she done? Had she been so specially wicked, had her life been so specially happy, that she should be visited by an affliction like this, that she should be forced to bear the brunt of the battle alone, quite unaided; more than that, even having to succour and provide for one weaker and younger than herself, without one friend to turn to in her extremity.

without one living soul to speak to her a kind word, or to lend her a helping hand?

Gerald Hardinge! As the thought flashed across her the name rose simultaneously to her lips, and was spoken aloud.

She raised her face from between her hands, where in the agony of her grief she had buried it, and catching sight of its reflection in the glass before her, could nothelp noticing, all blurred and tear-stained as it was, the delicacy of its features, the sweetness of its expression. She peered at it long and curiously, as though it had been another woman's face, now pitting a dimple with her finger, now tracing with her nail the track of a line or two which had already begun to appear near her eyes. Then suddenly pushing her chair aside she rose to her feet and again muttered aloud, "Gerald Hardinge!"

"The last time that Gerald spoke to me," she continued, pacing to and fro in the room, "I listened to him carelessly and talked to him lightly. Knowing the barrier that existed between us, there was no harm, I thought, in so listening, for it was a break in my dull and dreary life, and a pastime to me, and I knew that Gerald was too much of a gentleman to say anything that might not properly be said to—what he imagined me to be—a good and virtuous girl. Now that barrier exists no longer, and he must learn the truth; I must tell him that I am the deserted wife of another man, that the confidence and companionship which have hitherto existed between us must now be brought to an end, that the terms on which we have hitherto lived, were they to continue, would be dangerous to him and compromising for me. Yes," she added, after a pause, during which she had remained rapt in consideration, "the retribution which Philip Vane will inflict upon me for refusing to obey his commands will be bitter indeed. He can disappear, 'efface himself,' as he says, banish all remembrance of me, if it be not already banished, blot out all traces of his married life, commence a fresh career of dissipation, and look for a new victim to wheedle, and make use of, and desert. He can do all this, for he will be free, while I must remain here, fettered and heart-broken and solitary."

She flung herself prone upon the bed, and clasping her hands behind her head, lay there motionless for some time. When at length she raised her face from the pillow in which it had been hidden, there was on it a strange, odd expression, such as those

who were most intimate with it had never seen there. A bright scarlet patch burned on each of her cheeks, there was a wild restless look in her large brown eyes, and her lips, ordinarily so soft and mobile, were set and rigid.

"Why should I be solitary?" she broke forth, raising herself on her elbow, and gazing eagerly before her. "Why should his be all the triumph, and mine all the misery? Why, while he creates a fresh life for himself, should I settle down in apathetic wretchedness and dull despair? He said, truly enough, that our secret was our own, that our marriage was known to none but ourselves, and that when he decided upon ignoring it, it would be just as though it had never happened. It was known but to ourselves and to two others, hired witnesses, whom in no human probability I shall ever come across. What is to prevent me, then, from shaking myself free from the shackles, and seeing whether in life there is not yet some happiness in store for me? What is to prevent? My conscience? Duty? The duty I owe to Philip Vane would sit lightly enough upon me; and is it not his wish? 'I will never interfere with your plans and projects, be they what they may,' he swore that, and he will keep his word, only too thankful to lay hold of any act of mine which would tend to our further estrangement and ratify the separation between us.

"And here is Gerald, whose only thought is to take me to his heart, and make me his wife, who, hard worked as he is at the theatre, has been devoting his extra hours in labour to gain a position which he could consider worthy to offer me, and who is steeped to the lips not merely in patient devotion to me, but in the desire to rid me of the burden which I now have to bear, and to render life smooth and easy to me.

"Gerald Hardinge's wife! He asked me to become so at once, why should I refuse? I am older than he is it is true, and my youth has been passed in toil, and, to a certain extent, in privation. But," she added, stopping before the glass, and again surveying her features in it, "I do not think I show the traces of it, I do not think, speaking dispassionately, as Heaven knows I feel, there are many who are better or more attractive-looking, however much my beauty may have palled on Philip Vane.

"Gerald Hardinge's wife! Could I return the love he gives me? My capabilities of loving have not been put to any

severe test; it was that silly admiration of a good-looking face and specious manners which led me to like Philip Vane; the idiotic folly of a schoolgirl, which raves about the colour of a man's eyes, or the shape of his nose; but I doubt whether there was much question of love in the matter. I was sillily fascinated by him in the first few days of our married life; I remember I showed it as much as he would let me, but that is so far off that it seems like a dream. Since then I have been almost constantly separated from him, and when we have met there has been no question of love between us, certainly none shown, even of regard, on his part. I wonder whether I have ever possessed the faculty of loving, and if so, whether it has died out? I think I can answer that question," she said, smiling gravely. "Last night, when Gerald's arm was round me, holding me closely to him, when his face was bending close to mine, when I felt his soft breath on my cheek, and saw the love-light trembling and fading in his eyes, a shiver ran through me from head to foot, and my soul yearned towards him with a passion hitherto strange to it. Ah, why," she cried, clasping her hands above her head, "why should my life be solitary and blank? Why should this wealth of love which I possess be thus wasted? Why should I not solace what remains to me of my youth, and give up such beauty as I still possess to him who prizes it so dearly? I cannot, I will not, let slip this chance which is offered me so opportunely. I will write a line to Gerald telling him that I accept his offer, and am only impatient to call myself his wife, and thus at the same time I will gratify my love for him, and my revenge on Philip Vane."

The scarlet spot on her cheek burned more brightly than before, and the light was still in her eyes, but the muscles of her mouth, instead of being rigid and set, were moving involuntarily, and her lips were full and humid.

She took her blotting-book and ink-stand from off the chest of drawers, arranged them on the table, and sat down to write. But her brain was too much excited, her heart beating far too quickly to admit of her sufficiently steadying her thoughts; and the next moment she was up and pacing the room again to and fro, to and fro. No reminiscences of past misery now; all visions of future happiness with Gerald! How handsome he was, how high-bred and gentlemanly he always

looked! Not even his coarse, common painting-clothes could disfigure him; how softly he always spoke to her, and how he always looked straight into her eyes, not boldly, not triumphantly, but with a strange mixture of diffidence and love. She recollected, too, the long, clinging pressure of his hand. Ah, how she would love him, how she would make up for past years of coldness and neglect. She longed to have him there by her side, that she might tell him how warmly she reciprocated all he had said to her on the previous night. Unable to see him at that instant, she must write to him; that was the next best thing she could do, and she would do so at once.

Seated at the table once again, one hand drumming on the blotting-book, the other idly stretched on the paper in front of her. How should she commence her letter to him? How should she end it? She knew that, she thought. She should put "your wife." His wife? And then the pen slipped from between her fingers, and the other hand ceased drumming, and convulsively grasped the table.

His wife? Not his, but Philip Vane's.

That fact remained indisputable, notwithstanding Philip's repudiation of it, and in spite of all the sophistry which he had talked, and which she had allowed herself to be persuaded into accepting. Philip Vane's wife, in the sight of Heaven, and in the eye of the law. Philip Vane's wife, that was her condition, only to be released therefrom by her or his death.

Ah, what vague hopes she had cherished in placing herself on an equality with him, what fruitless boasts she had made to herself of claiming as much freedom in her future as he had insisted on his! Were she to take the step she had contemplated, were she to accept the position offered to her, the mere prospect of the expectation of which had filled her with happiness and joy inexplicable, what would be the result? In her own secret soul she would know herself, whatever she might pass for to him and to the world, not to be Gerald Hardinge's wife, but his mistress, and to be Philip Vane's wife still. Even if, looking at the happiness which such a prospect opened up to her, and contrasting it with the certain misery of her future, misery embittered a thousandfold by the omnipresent recollection of what might have been, she could have stifled the voice of conscience, and clung to the chance thus offered, what guarantee had she that Philip

Vane might not some day or other put in an appearance upon the scene, and seek to gain advantage by her default? He had sworn that he would not do so, but she knew well enough that to such a man such an oath meant nothing; and then for the mere passing gratification of two passions, revenge and love, she would have entailed misery not merely upon herself, but upon the boy who had offered his life for her disposal, and so frankly and loyally had placed his future in her hands.

Following out with strictest scrutiny her self-examination, Madge felt compelled to confess that there were several reasons for giving up the step on which she had so recently determined. The difference of age between them must not be lost sight of. It was well enough now while Gerald was under the influence of his boyish passion, and while she yet retained enough of her youthful beauty to keep him in thrall, and to render her an object of admiration among his friends. But in a few, very few years' time she would have lost her bloom and be advancing towards middle age, while he would yet be in the prime of early manhood. What should she expect then but what she had already undergone! Not that it was possible Gerald could ever treat her as Philip Vane had treated her; he was too manly, too high spirited, too tender hearted; but would it not be worse for her than anything she had yet endured, to see that she was merely tolerated by a man to whom her whole soul was given, and in whom the wild ardour of love had been superseded by a feeling of mere tenderness and compassion?

No! no! a thousand times no! She could bear anything but that! Better pluck out this passion of recent growth, though she plucked out her heart and her life at the same time, than let it have a short season of bloom and a long period of withering decay! The mirage was fast vanishing away, and again the long level sands of the desert of life which she was compelled to travel, with no well of hope, no oasis of rest and happiness in sight, lay stretching out before her. The shining sands had to be traversed, and the bubbling fountains and the palm-trees' shade had proved mere mockeries of mental vision, so let her proceed upon her pilgrimage at once, and give up all further thought of those unsubstantial and impossible delights! It could not, must not be. And when Madge Pierrepont had once faced that fact, although in facing it

she went through such mental torture as since the world's creation has been suffered only by those white-robed few who sacrifice their all in all for duty's sake, she determined in carrying out her resolutions, and came out of the conflict worn, and pale, and haggard indeed, but victorious and determined.

What was to be done? The proper course for her to pursue was, as she knew, to see Gerald, and tell him all. But that she could not do. She dared not trust herself. Her courage was insufficient, not merely to carry her through the story of her wrongs, but to bear her up in what she knew to be the unavoidable result, his appeal to her to throw her past life to the winds, and entrust him with her future. She dare not trust herself to see him again; she must hurry away from that place, within the next few hours, in the early morning, and leave what she had to say to him in a note which would be given to Miss Cave. What should she say in that note? Tell him the real state of the case, and appeal to his sense of honour, to his feeling of pity, not to attempt to follow her? That would never do. Madge Pierrepont's experience of the world was not large, but it was sufficient to tell her that when a man, and especially a young man, is madly in love, appeals to such sentiments are generally made in vain. Such a confession would probably act as a provocative to his pursuit, and that must be stopped at any cost. Seeing Gerald under such circumstances as those, Madge would not have answered for herself, and all the mental anguish which she had undergone, and the triumph which she had obtained, would have been in vain.

After reflection, then, she came to the conclusion that there was but one way by which the end she sought for was to be obtained.

And that way was to strike his kind and trusting heart a blow which, coming from her hand, would numb and paralyse its action, and prevent its ever again throbbing in response to hers. She must "be cruel only to be kind," and must be content to pass as cold and heartless in Gerald's eyes rather than let him know her for what she really was. Knowing Gerald as Madge did, she never doubted for an instant that he would refuse to take from her lips any denial which was dictated by prudence or policy, and that the only method by which he could be restrained from further pursuit would be by touching

his pride. That must be done, no matter at what cost to herself; wittingly and knowingly she must degrade herself in the sight of the man who so loved her, and had just asked permission to dedicate his life to her.

So she sat down to do it. There, spread out before her, lay the paper which was to have borne his summons to her side, whereon was to have been written her acceptance of his offer. She thought of all this, and the pen which she had taken up dropped again from her fingers. Ah, surely the task was too cruel, the self-imposed burden too heavy for her to bear! Was it not too much to expect that she should not merely continue in the strait and thorny path, closing her eyes to the temptations of the lovely gardens stretching on either side of her, but that she should be called upon to wound and outrage him who offered to share that paradise with her? She could not do it—she could not do it! And Madge hid her face in her hands, and the bitter tears burst forth again. When the paroxysm was over, she rose and bathed her face, and once more returned to the table. Then, stopping for some time to try and get more command over her trembling fingers, to try and still the audible beating of her heart, to try and find words in which her meaning might be, with as little harshness as possible, expressed, she wrote the following letter:

MY DEAR GERALD,—If you have ever had any kind feeling for me, and I know you have, Gerald, you will need to remember it all when you read this. What I write now I ought to have said to you last night, if not before. No, not before, for up till last night I had only looked upon what you have said to me from time to time as so much boyish nonsense, not to be thought of seriously by either of us. I knew that most boys—don't be offended, Gerald, there will come a time when you will consider youth a thing not to be ashamed of—that most boys admire women older than themselves, and there was a greater reason for your liking me, as we have been thrown so much together, and there are not many people—in the company, at least, I mean—with whom you seem to have much in common. I have always, as you will remember, Gerald, endeavoured to stop you when you were going to say anything definite to me, I have always refused to give you any definite answer, on the plea that it would be sufficient to ask me for one when

you were in a position to speak seriously to me. Last night you told me that time had now arrived, and it is my duty therefore to speak definitely to you.

Gerald, I cannot be your wife! I must not even be to you what I have been, a chosen companion, a woman in whose society you have been happy! In saying this I am not hard nor worldly. I have no doubt of your success in life, and I know that, should you continue to think as you do at present, your pleasure in that success would be doubled if it were shared by me. Should you continue to think? Ah! that is one point, Gerald! You have not seen enough of the world to know your own mind, and the woman whom you worship now might seem very homely and very dull to you in a few years' time!

But my chief reason for writing to you is to tell you that I am no longer free, that I have for some time been engaged to be married to a gentleman who now claims my promise. I ought to have told you this last night, Gerald, but I was overcome by the extra fatigue which I had undergone during the past week, and my dread of the annoyance which I knew my answer would give you was too much for me, so I write it to you instead! You must try and not think very badly of me for not telling you before. I had my reasons, reasons which I cannot explain now, but may be able to do so some day. I am going away from this at once, and am to be married very shortly. Good-bye, Gerald! God bless you! Most likely we shall never meet again, but I shall always think gratefully of the kindness that you have shown to me, and pray for your welfare. Once more, good-bye!

Yours sincerely,

MARGARET PIERREPOINT.

It was finished at last, after many alterations and much delay. As Madge read it over she said to herself, "This is doing evil that good may come of it, may God forgive me this bitter, bitter lie." Then she folded the letter, addressed it, shut it in her blotting-book, and went into Rose's bedroom.

The sun had risen by this time and was pouring in through the thin white curtains. Madge stepped softly up to the bed, and could not help noticing Rose's delicate beauty as she lay with her face upturned and her head resting on one of her arms.

"Too delicate and too sensitive to do much in the great battle of life," said Madge, as she bent over her. "Poor little

flower, it's lucky she has me to stand between her and the rough wind outside. Smiling in her sleep, too," she added, after a moment's pause; "it seems a shame to rouse her from a pleasant dream to the dull realities of packing and departure, but the time grows short, and we have much to do."

Then she touched her sister lightly on the shoulder, and the girl awoke and sat up in bed, looking before her with large eyes full of surprise.

"What is it, Madge?" she cried. "What has made you awake so early? I am generally up long before you; and your eyelids are all red and swollen too. I don't believe you have been to bed all night. What is the matter?"

"No, dear," said the elder sister, quietly, "there is nothing the matter, only you must get up at once and pack your own things, and help me to pack mine; we are going away."

"Going away!" repeated Rose. "When?"

"Now directly, by the seven o'clock train. We have scarcely time for our packing and our breakfast."

"But where are we going to, Madge, and why?"

"I don't know yet, dear, where, though probably we shall stop first at Springside, and as for why, Rose, the answer is, because I wish it."

Then Rose, who knew that when her sister was in what she was pleased to call "one of those tempers" there was no gain-saying her, promised to get up immediately, and Madge returned to her room, and began emptying her chest of drawers of its contents.

As she was in the midst of her packing, Miss Cave, who had been roused by the dragging about of the boxes, came in full of wonder and surprise at all she saw and heard. For Madge told the old lady a long story about her being not merely much fatigued, but more seriously out of health than she had imagined, adding, that Doctor Kent, whom she had consulted, had recommended her to try the mineral waters at Springside, and that she was about to proceed there with that object.

It was a great blow to Miss Cave to lose sight of her favourite, even for, as she imagined, a very short period, as she had fully calculated on their being together at Avonmouth. However, as the old lady remarked, an extra pound a week and half a clear benefit were good things in their way, but not to be compared to health, and

Doctor Kent's opinion should be followed to the letter.

The packing was completed, the preparations for departure were all made, and they were standing on the platform just before the train started, when Madge handed to Miss Cave a letter, and requested that it might be sent round to Mr. Hardinge's lodging. Her hand did not tremble in the slightest degree, nor was there in her face, which was closely scanned by the old lady, a trace of any unusual expression. Once resolved that the sacrifice was due from her, Madge went to the stake not merely with courage but with dignity.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

"TOM OF TEN THOUSAND."

JOSCELINE, the eleventh Earl of Northumberland, who died in 1670, at Turin, at an early age, left an only daughter. This little heiress of half Northumberland, in 1679, when only thirteen, was nominally married to Henry Cavendish, Earl of Ogle, and son of the second Duke of Newcastle. A year only after the death of the Earl of Ogle, the child-widow, much to the anger of her proud relatives, was married to Thomas Thynne, Esquire, of Longleat, in Wiltshire. This wealthy country gentleman, generally known as "Tom of Ten Thousand" (the rich Issachar of Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*), was a sworn friend and ally of the young Duke of Monmouth, who had advanced his suit, and won over the intriguing grandmother, who guarded the heiress, by eulogies of Thynne's vast estates and great rent-roll. The Cavendishes had also given him a helping hand; the prize sighed for by all the needy bachelor nobles of the corrupt court was Tom's now, and lucky Tom's only. The Whig party was delighted at the matrimonial triumph of one of their side, one especially who, on presenting a factious petition from Wiltshire, had been personally rated by the angry king for encouraging the people to mutiny and rebellion. The girlish bride being even now not yet fifteen, her mother agreed, with the consent of her husband, to send her for a year to the Continent.

This natural delay of the union seems to have roused fresh hopes in the minds of some of the former lovers of the little heiress. In one especially it kindled thoughts that were not only revengeful, but murderous. A certain Count Charles John Königsmark, a young Swedish nobleman, aged twenty-three, descended from

one of Gustavus's generals, had seen the child-widow in the spring of 1681. He had fallen in love either with her or her money-box, had proposed, and had been rejected. This young Swede had distinguished himself at several courts by his chivalrous gallantry, courage, and accomplishments. He had fought with the Knights of Malta against the Turkish galleys. The Countess d'Annoy saw him venture his life against a ferocious wild bull in the Plaza Mayor, at Madrid, in 1677. In 1681, he came for the second time to England, then posted fast through Spain to help our Tangier garrison against the Moors, and joined with great courage in some desperate and successful sallies. Having made a cruise against the Algerine pirates, in January, 1682, he returned secretly to England, his hot brain bent on some plot against his victorious rival, Tom of Ten Thousand, that might at any risk secure him the heiress snatched from him. The count's brother, Philip Christopher Königsmark, was at this time a young Oxford undergraduate, learning riding at the academy of M. Foubert, at the upper end of the Haymarket (afterwards at Foubert's-place, Regent-street). On the 2nd of February, 1682, the elder Königsmark arrived in London, and assuming a false name, hid himself in obscure lodgings at the corner of the Haymarket; but this proving too public a thoroughfare, he left the broad street of the country hay waggons, and took a fresh lodging at the corner of Rupert-street, further eastward; but there the chimney smoked, and quitting that retreat in three days, he went to rooms in St. Martin's-lane. No flowing blonde Chedreux periwig fragrant with maréchal powder, no lace cravat blowing in the wind, no coat of rose-coloured velvet, no handkerchief exquisitely scented with eau-de-Portugal, no laughing evenings at Spring Gardens, no riding in the ring or riscing of foils at a French fencing-school, but all day he lay down on his bed in night-gown and night-cap, and sipped physic for an eruption he had caught from overheating himself in riding that mad race through Spain, eager to get to work among the Tangerine Moors. His excuse to those about him was that he wished to remain private till his coach could be got ready, and he could appear as a man of quality should. Immediately on arriving in England, the count had written a letter, signing himself "Carlo Cusk," to Mr. Hanson, his brother's tutor. In 1681,

on the previous visit of the count to England, the count had told Hanson that he had heard that Esquire Thynne had used some abusive language about him and his house, and he wanted Hanson to ask the Swedish envoy what the consequences would be if he called Mr. Thynne to an account and gained the advantage. Would such an event mar any hopes or pretensions he might have to the hand of "my Lady Ogle?" The old ambition—we can scarcely call it love—was still working in his mind. The envoy's answer was, that if the count meddled with Mr. Thynne, "he would have no good living in England," and as to the legal consequences of the meddling he would inquire. Upon Friday (February the 10th), a Polish groom, named Borosky, for whose arrival the count had been for many days extremely anxious, came to Foubert's riding academy, where Hanson and the count's young brother lodged, to ask where the count's lodgings were. Hanson took the Pole apart, and after half an hour's mysterious conversation, sent back the Pole and the man who guided him from the Cross Keys in Throgmorton-street, telling the man to bring the Pole again on the morrow, as "he must despatch him about his business," and a terrible business it presently proved, as we shall soon see. The Pole came the next day, bringing a sea-bed and a portmanteau, a gun with a wheel lock, and some other things, and, not liking to take these things to the count's lodgings, he went to a tavern, called for a pot of ale, and left his luggage there. On the Saturday, a little before noon, Mr. Hanson, who hung about the count and made himself generally useful, took "the Polander" to the count, who asked him where he had been all that while. The Pole replied he had been at sea, tossed up and down, for it had been stormy, and he had like to have been cast away. The count then said to the faithful Hanson, that the fellow was all naked, and he had no means to send to buy him a riding-coat, a broad hint which Hanson at once took. After dining he went to a shop near the Haymarket, bought a riding-coat for the Pole, and took it to the count. Königsmark then said his man had never a sword. Hanson asked how much his lordship would please to bestow upon a weapon. The count replied, "A matter of ten shillings or thereabouts." Hanson did not see his way clear to such a sword, but at last undertook the commission, and went to St. Martin's-lane sword-hunting, still could not find a blade

worth a groat. Then he walked to Charing-cross, and there ordered a servant's sword. "I leave it to your discretion," he said to the cutler. "Use my friend well, and use yourself favourably." Hanson was to come back for it after he had been to the play with young Count Königsmark. When Hanson called for it, he was angry to find it not ready, and said "it was strange a gentleman could not get a little sword ready for him in a whole afternoon." That same Saturday Doctor Harder, a German surgeon, took the Pole to his lodgings, and sent him to the house where Captain Vratz, one of the count's retinue, lived. On the Sunday morning the Pole, who had slept at the count's lodgings in St. Martin's-lane, received the sword by a porter from Mr. Hanson, and in the forenoon went away with a buff coat on, and over that a campaign coat, a pair of jack-boots under his arm, and the strong basket-hilted broadsword, ready for active service of any kind, by his side. According to the count's story, there being no chance of war, or of England and Holland uniting against France, he had at once handed over the Polish groom who had arrived from Hamburg to Captain Vratz.

On that same Sunday morning the count asked his page, a boy of fifteen, the son of a porter, whom he had hired for sixpence a day, whether people were suffered to ride about London streets on Sundays, and the boy told him that they might before and after sermon. Now, as the count, a man of fashion, and above such considerations, had often ridden out on Sundays in Hyde Park, the question, to say the least, seemed uncalled for. The count, nevertheless, appeared pleased at the answer. That same day Captain Vratz, with no apparent reason, changed his lodgings from King-street, Westminster, to Doctor Harder's, in Leicester Fields. In the evening, he, the Polander, and another of the count's retainers, named Stern, a lieutenant, met at the Black Bull in Holborn—the Polander armed with a blunderbuss, the other two with swords and pistols—and thence sallied forth. They inquired their way to Temple Bar that quiet Sunday evening, about six P.M., and rode up the Strand towards St. James's.

That same evening, at a quarter after eight, Mr. Thynne's great gilt coach came rolling along Pall Mall from St. James's-street, where he had been calling on the old intriguing Lady Northumberland. It swept round the corner by the brick gateway of

the palace, past Nell Gwynn's house, now the office of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and bore down towards Charing-cross. Footmen with Thynne's livery swung behind it, and a footman ran before with a flambeau. At the lower end of St. Alban's-street (the present turning to Waterloo-place), three horsemen rode past the coach, then turned; one of them called, "Stop, you dog!" to the coachman; and another at once fired a blunderbuss straight into the coach. The running footman with the flambeau, looking back, saw a cloud of smoke, and heard his master call out, "I am murdered." The three horsemen instantly dashed off up the Haymarket. The footman followed, shouting "Murder!" but at last exhausted, gave up the chase, and returned to find his master dying. Four bullets had entered Mr. Thynne's body; two of them had lodged in the spine. The wounded man lingered till six the next morning, then expired in the presence of the Duke of Monmouth and other friends who had watched all night by his bedside. Lord Mordaunt and several Whig gentlemen, who thought their lives were in danger from Popish plotters, searched all night for the murderers. Sir John Resesby (the memoir writer) was active in the hue and cry. At last a sedan chairman was found who deposed that he had secretly brought Captain Vratz on the Sunday from his King-street lodgings to the Black Bull in Holborn, where he took horse. They also found a Swedish servant of Vratz's, who had been sent to watch for Mr. Thynne's coach, and had seen the three murderers boot, mount, and start to intercept it. At six in the morning, Resesby and Lord Mordaunt found Captain Vratz in bed at the house of the German doctor in Leicester Fields, his sword at some distance from him on the table. He made no resistance, and seemed quite unconcerned.

In the mean time, the Duke of Monmouth, Lord Cavendish, and others of Thynne's friends continued an incessant search for Königsmark, who had fled in disguise. The advertisement issued described the count as, "Age about twenty-five or twenty-six years (he was only twenty-three), of a low stature, pretty full set, fair long hair, but sometimes wears a periwig, a round face, with a few pock-holes in it," and offering two hundred pounds reward. At a quarter to nine o'clock on the night of the murder, Vratz came to Königsmark, and stayed with him

for some time. A little after seven A.M. the next day the page came to Königsmark's room and found him up, and being asked by his master what the hubbub he heard in the street was about, the boy told him that some were taken who had killed Esquire Thynne. The count then asked when he was murdered, and what sort of a man he was. The boy replied, "He heard he was a man of great estate, and well beloved; and that the Duke of Monmouth had been in the coach but a little while before, and had been killed too had he not alighted before the murder." The count made no reply; but at half-past eight the page's father, a porter, was sent with two "portmantles" to Charing-cross for the Windsor coach. That same evening the count, disguised in a black periwig and in a light-coloured suit, with gold buttons, came to the house of a Swede at Rotherhithe, with whom he remained closely shut up till the Thursday. He left dressed in a black suit and velvet cap, which he borrowed of the Swede. A boatman took him down to Deptford, the next day he went to Greenwich, and the day after to Gravesend, pretending to be a foreign jewel merchant in trouble, and paying the boatmen five shillings a day.

Two officers of the Duke of Monmouth, getting on his track, and hearing that he would embark in a vessel on the following Monday, came to Gravesend about nine o'clock on Sunday evening. One of the men jostled the count first, as he came on shore, to see what was under his campaign coat, and kept close to him as he called to the watermen who were stowing the boat to come away. As the first man caught him and held him hard, the count cried, "What, do you come to rob me?" The man replied, "My lord, you are my prisoner. I am the king's messenger, and have waited several days for you." The other man then came up, and said, "Your lordship shall not want for anything that is convenient." He inquired whether they knew him. On their telling him that he was Count Königsmark, he replied, "That is my name; I do not deny it." But when the name was pronounced he gave a slight start, dropped his sword, and a black periwig and cap fell off his head. He was then taken up the street to the Custom House, and searched for arms by the Custom House officers, before the mayor. The crowd being rude, he desired to be well used. The next day the deputy-governor sent a file of musketeers to guard the count to Whitehall, to be examined before the king and

council. Before he left Gravesend, he asked if Captain Vratz had confessed anything, and he said he believed he would not confess anything. When one of the king's messengers told him that, had not Providence ordered it otherwise, the count might have killed his particular friend and master whom he had served many years, Königsmark replied, "I don't think they would have done the Duke of Monmouth any injury," and seemed very sorry at that suspicion. He then walked up and down awhile, and presently said, "'Tis a stain upon my blood, but one good action in the wars, or a lodging upon a counter-scarp, will wash away all that." The mayor was in the room at the time. On being, however, told that the Polander had confessed, "and wept mightily," the count for the first time seemed much disturbed, bit his clothes, and desired to lie down. On the Monday, the fashionable murderer was brought before an extraordinary council. Sir John Reresby, who was present, says that Königsmark, who was a fine man, with the longest hair he had ever seen, displayed all the assurance imaginable. He said he had fled by the advice of a friend, who feared the mob would suspect him of having committed so black a deed, because an intimate of his had been mixed up with it. Being at the king's "couchee" the night after, Reresby perceived by his majesty's discourse that he was willing the count should get off. Cromwell would have acted differently, but vice and self-indulgence had corrupted Charles the Second's heart, and party feeling had warped his naturally good judgment. It was, after all, only Tom of Ten Thousand, one of the Monmouth set, and no great loss to the court party.

On Friday, Borosky, the Pole, and the Swedish lieutenant, Stern, both confessed to their share in the murder. Borosky had been for some time in the count's service, and had been sent for to groom in the German manner English horses, bought by the count on the rumour of a war between England and France. On Saturday, the 11th, the captain told him that he had had a quarrel with an English gentleman, who had set six persons upon him in the road, in which conflict he was wounded, and two of the assailants killed. Therefore, since the said Mr. Thynne had attempted to kill him, he would make an end of it. On the Sunday the count gave him a sword, and told him to do whatever the captain ordered, which was plainly equivalent to

sanctioning, if not openly commanding, the murder. About noon the captain handed him a musketoon, a case of pistols, and a pocket-pistol. Vratz then said to the unhesitating vassal, and repeated it five or six times, "When we go out together, if I stop a coach, do you fire into it, and then follow me."

The lieutenant said that in October he was lodging near the Royal Exchange, at the City of Amsterdam, a Dutch ordinary. There he had met Vratz, a fellow-lodger, and had entered into his service, consenting to be his second in a duel. Vratz said to Stern that if he could get one who would kill a gentleman he would give him two hundred, nay, three hundred dollars. He afterwards gave him money to buy a musketoon. After a short absence in France, Vratz talked to Stern of Thynne. "I must see now," he said, "how to order it that I may come at him, if I could but get some stout fellows. Do you know no Frenchman about town, or an Italian, who might despatch him?" Vratz then bought four brace of pistols and two long swords, and said, "Now he is a dead man!" He then begged Stern to get two poniards made, and drew the shape he required. Vratz wanted to engage more men in the business, but Stern objected to so many persons, and said, "Three horsemen are enough; you will have use for no more." After that Captain Vratz purchased three horses, accepting the lieutenant's economical proposition. "I must have the rogue now," said Vratz, as he patted the flanks of the three horses. The Sunday the Polander came he told Stern, "Now I have a brave fellow," and, after a private conversation with the storm-tossed Polander, exclaimed, exultingly, "This is a brave fellow, indeed, for he says those that will not fight must be killed." The same Sunday of the murder Vratz and Stern loaded the musketoon together. The captain, eager for blood, bid him charge the piece with fifteen bullets, but Stern replied "that that would kill the footmen and every one about the coach." "It matters not for that," said Vratz. Still Stern persisted, and put in the barrel only five or six bullets, some iron wrapped up in rags rubbed with rosin, so that the wadding should burn. The captain told the Polander that if the Duke of Monmouth were with Mr. Thynne, nothing should be done. One day when Stern sat by himself, melancholy, the captain came in and asked him how he ailed. Stern replied he had had a disagreeable and unlucky dream; he had

dreamed that four dogs flew at him; two were chained, but the others seized him. Upon this the captain seemed concerned, but presently plucked out a tempting letter, signed Königsmark, giving the captain full power to present him with a captain-lieutenant's place in his regiment; below this were the figures of six thousand (six-dollars) in German.

The four prisoners were tried at the Old Bailey on the 27th of February. Vratz, the dark, imperturbable captain; Stern, the repentant lieutenant; Borosky, the slavish executor of his master's cruel wish; and Charles John, Count Königsmark, as an accessory before the fact. The three judges who presided, all bent on dragging the young Swedish murderer out of the fire to please the king, were Sir Francis Pemberton, Chief Justice of the King's Bench; Sir Francis North, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas; and Sir William Montagu, Chief Baron of the Exchequer. Pemberton, who had learnt law while in jail for debt, was a bold, self-confident, artful man; North, a little, sharp, dexterous partisan, Tory to the extreme; and Montagu, a creature of the court, afterwards displaced by James for not going far enough in advancing despotism. Vratz's defence was, that having challenged Thynne for insulting expressions used by him respecting his master a year before at Richmond, he had sent him a challenge, which had never been acknowledged. He therefore resolved to stop his carriage, and compel him to fight. The Polander was only told to act in case Mr. Thynne's men surrounded him (the captain), or pursued him to knock him on the head, but, mistaking his orders, he fired. The count denied all privy with the revenge taken by his servants to defend his honour. The Polander had been sent for four months before, after the siege of Strasbourg, when war seemed imminent. He himself had only fled because Mr. Hanson, his brother's travelling tutor, had sent to tell him that the Duke of Monmouth and several noblemen had been to Foubert's looking for him, and his tailor assured him the common people named him as concerned in the murder, and would tear him in pieces. He had only taken ten or eleven pounds with him, and that did not look like much preparation for flight. What he meant by the suspicious remark about the stain on his blood was, that being imprisoned would be a greater disgrace to him than even murder itself, it not being the custom in his country to take persons

of quality prisoners in that manner. Then, to rouse the Protestant sympathies of those days, the count, through his interpreter, said that he was a Protestant, as his forefathers had been. "They, under Gustavus Adolphus, were soldiers, and died with their swords in their hands, endeavouring to settle the Protestant religion in Germany, and protect it there; and there had never anything been done by his family but for the honour of his country and his religion;" and he said "that if any of his former actions could give any the least suspicion of his being guilty of this or any foul act, he was very willing to lay down his life immediately. He was ready on all occasions to serve the King of England, and he loved the English nation well, and was always eager to serve them. Without any interest in the world, and against the will of his relations, he had brought his brother to England to be educated in the Protestant religion, to show his inclination to the English nation."

Sir Francis Winnington, who conducted the prosecution, dwelt much on Vratz going straight to the count, his patron, reeking hot with Mr. Thynne's blood, and within an hour of the murder, and also on the count's pretended ignorance of the murder, as shown in his conversation with his boy. His disguises and his flight were also pointed out in detail. The jury retired for half an hour, then found Borosky, Vratz, and Stern guilty, and acquitted the wild young gallant who had notoriously given the order to kill poor Tom of Ten Thousand. Afterwards, in the calmer and juster days of William the Third, Sir John Hawles, the Solicitor-General, pronounced the trial illegal, because the Chief Justice had never asked the lieutenant and Polander what they had to say for themselves, the court being unwilling that they should openly accuse their master, the count; for the same reason not permitting the justice of the peace to read the examinations of Stern and Borosky. There was no doubt that the principals should have been tried first, and the count afterwards on their evidence; but the king and court had from the first been resolutely bent on Königsmark's escape, the more especially that the Monmouth faction were eager for the death of the murderer of Thynne.

Doctor Burnet (the historian whom Swift hated so bitterly), and Doctor Horneck, the excellent minister of the German chapel in the Savoy, had many interviews with the three condemned men. The

Polander, a poor ignorant boor, slavishly obedient to his master, and guilty of no previous crimes, was free and ingenuous in his confession, and expressed great sorrow for what he had done. He said that when the count first made that proposition to him, at one o'clock on the Sunday, he was troubled at it, and went into another room and kneeled down and said the Lord's Prayer, but concluded that since his mind was not fortified against the crime by that prayer, that God had appointed that he should do it. He said that in his own country he had been bred up in such an opinion of the duty he owed his master, and such an obligation to maintain his honour, that hearing of the attempt to assassinate his master, he thought himself in some sort absolved if he should revenge such an attempt. He was also deluded by the captain telling him that if they happened to be taken, he (the captain) would suffer for it. A day or two after his imprisonment, the vision of a woman (seen by him before in Germany on extraordinary occasions) had appeared to him, and he believed it was sent from God to touch his heart. He felt an assurance of God's mercy, and longed for death more than ever he did for anything in his life, and from his heart he forgave the captain and lieutenant, and prayed earnestly for them.

Stern, too, was equally penitent. He was a thoughtful and naturally well-intentioned man, the illegitimate son of a Swedish count, and had fought for twenty years in the great German wars. He was proud of the courage he had shown, and stood much on points of honour. Being poor and out of employment, he had come to England to try and get into the Guards. He had gone out determined to fight if occasion required, but to do nothing else. But as for Vratz, he remained stern and obdurate from the beginning. He would confess nothing, but that the Polander had overshot his orders. He sneered and swore at Stern as a poor pitiful scoundrel, who had told lies about imaginary bribes and promises, and who had been decoyed into a false confession by promises of a decent funeral. Moreover, he taunted the English divines, who, though opposed to auricular confession, yet pressed him to make declarations of things they had a mind he should say, though they were false. He would never utter the falsehood that the count had been the contriver of the murder. He was resolved to confess no more than he had done publicly before the council.

He feared no hell, and he trusted in Christ's mercy. "It was enough for him," said this proud soldier, "to be humble to God, but he knew of no humility he owed to man; God, he believed, had a greater favour for gentlemen than to require all those punctilios at their hands, and said it was absurd to think that so many thousand gentlemen abroad in the world, that stood upon their honour and reputation as much as he, should be damned, or for ever made miserable, because they could not stoop to things which would prejudice and spoil the figure they made." This unbending man had not long before commanded a desperate forlorn hope at the siege of Mons, when only three out of fifty-eight men escaped with life, and for this service the Prince of Orange had made him a lieutenant of the Guards, and the King of Sweden had given him a troop of horse. A little before his death he grew gentler to the lieutenant, but otherwise he remained hard as a flint, and nearly his last words were that he did not care a rush for death, and that he hoped and believed "God would deal with him as with a gentleman." His last wish was to ride to the gallows in a coach and not in a cart. Stern particularly begged his head might be cut off, as being hung was unlike a gentleman. He wrote a long harangue, divided into twenty-five heads, exhorting all professions and trades to good works and to repentance. The morning of his execution he and the Polander sang the Fifty-first Psalm in High Dutch three times, dwelling particularly on the verse, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation."

Vratz continued silent and firm to the last. The gibbets were erected at the foot of St. Alban's-street, in Pall Mall, on the very spot where the murder had taken place. Burnet had warned Vratz not to be a "faux brave," so directly Burnet came up to the cart Vratz smiled, and said to him, "You shall see that it is not a false bravery, but that I am fearless to the last." He said he was now to be received into heaven, and that his sins were forgiven him. To use Burnet's own words: "I observed he had some touches in his mind when I offered up that petition, that for the sake of the blood of Christ the innocent blood shed in that place might be forgiven, and that the cry of the one for mercy might prevail over the other for justice. At these words he looked up to heaven with the greatest sense that I had at any time observed in him." Seeing Sir John

Reresby, the justice who had first examined him, in a coach near the gibbet, the captain bowed to him and to several other persons whom he knew, resting his eye very often upon the Duke of Monmouth, who stood in an adjoining balcony. He continued in an undaunted manner for a quarter of an hour with the rope round his neck, looking up to heaven and round about on the spectators. He refused to have his face covered like the others. As for Stern, he was deeply penitent, but he did not change colour nor show any fear. When the three were asked when they would give the signal for being turned off, they answered they were ready, and that the cart might be driven away when the sheriff pleased to order it. In a little while after it drove off. The corpse of Vratz was embalmed, and, by permission of the king, was sent to his Swedish friends, "he being of good family." As for that poor, stolid, faithful henchman, the Polander, his carcass was hung in chains (not to come between the wind and our nobility) on the roadside between Mile-end and Bow. The count, as soon as he had paid his Newgate fees, made straight for France, and went careering on along the primrose path to an early death. No one seems to have thought the worse of him for the murder, and Louis Quatorze at once gave him the Furstemberg regiment to command. Eager for pleasure and excitement at any cost, he was wounded at the siege of Cambray in 1683, and afterwards figured at the siege of Gerona, in Catalonia. In 1686 he accompanied his uncle to Greece, and fought against the Turks at Navarino, Athens, and Modon. At Athens he distinguished himself by blowing up the Parthenon, where the Turks had stored powder. He fell at last in a desperate sally at Argos, only surviving his victim and rival four years. His brother, the young gallant at M. Foubert's riding academy, came to a more miserable end twelve years after the murder. As he was secretly retiring from a farewell visit to Sophia of Zell, the young and beautiful wife of the Elector of Hanover, afterwards George the First, who had shared his guilty passion, he was set upon by halberdiers, cloven down, and buried at once under the floor of the passage of the palace where he had fallen dead. His skeleton has since been found there, and some letters of the electress, still preserved at Upsál, have established her guilt. The unhappy woman remained thirty-two years a

prisoner immured in the castle of Ahlden—a fortress on the little river Aller. Aurora, one of the murdered man's sisters, became mistress of the Elector of Saxony, and mother of the celebrated Marshal Saxe.

The child-widow, in the May of the year of Mr. Thynne's death, married the proud Duke of Somerset. Singularly enough, the duke himself had obtained his title by the murder of his elder brother, who had been shot in a fray near Genoa. The marriage proved an unhappy one. The duke turned out the Godolphin ministry, but refused to join their Tory successors. His wife became a special and firm favourite of the queen, and it was the duchess's resentment of a cruel and ribald attack of Swift's that prevented Swift ever obtaining the great aim of his selfish life—a bishopric.

Poor murdered Tom of Ten Thousand lies buried at the west end of the south aisle of Westminster Abbey, among good and wise men, who had no voice to resent the intrusion of a silly and worthless rake, and under a grand dusty marble monument, erected at the cost of his executor, John Hale, Esquire, of Bradford, Wiltshire. At the base of the monument is a clumsy relief representing Borosky firing the blunderbuss, Vratz stopping the coach, and Stern watching the assassination. A long Latin inscription, openly denouncing Königsmark, was written for this tomb, but poor servile Sprat, the dean, was too courtly to allow it to be used. As Tom of Ten Thousand left no children, Sir Thomas Thynne, a cousin, succeeded to the beautiful Wiltshire estate of Longleat, and all the money, and from him the present Marquis of Bath is descended.

THE GLOVE.

From morning time to night time,
Dark time and bright time,
I haunt the pleasant places

My love hath rendered sweet.
Down by wood and meadow,
In the sun and shadow,
I follow the sweet traces
Of fairy hands and feet.

Though I love her dearly,
We are neighbours merely,
She boweth to me daily,
In a distant way;
Then while I am staring,
Dead to my despairing,
Trippeth past me gaily,
Smiling on her way.

In the woodland shady
Walks my little lady,
And botanises under
The pines that sigh above.

There in sweet green places
I follow in her traces,
And one glad morn, O wonder!
I found a little glove.

So tiny, so tender,
So silken, so slender,
Still moist and warm and scented,
From fingers warm and white,
I found it softly blowing,
Where ferns and flowers were growing,
And like a man demented
I seized it in delight.

And while the warmth within it
Grew fainter every minute,
"I love her! how I love her!"
I cried with burning eyes.
"O sweet as rose-scent fingers,
The touch of rosebud fingers!"
I sighed, and ten times over
I kissed my little prize.

Then thought I with glad laughter,
"Shall I now follow after,
And find my love and give her
Her own, and look my love?"
But as I questioned duly,
My heart leapt up unruly,
My lips began to quiver,
I could not lose the glove.

No! let me keep and kiss it,
Her white hand will not miss it,
And tears of gladness wet it,
As still I stooped to kiss.
And all my bosom yearning
To touch it, on my burning
Heart of hearts I set it,
And thrilled with sudden bliss.

From morning time to night time,
Dark time and bright time,
I kept it thrilling through me,
In guilty sweet delight.
All day its sweet touch fired me,
All day the joy inspired me,
Sleeping I held it to me,
And dreamed of it all night.

Three days my bliss possessed me,
Three days and nights it blessed me,
And on the fourth mad morning
I wandered o'er the grass.
And as I viewed with rapture
The sweet spot of the capture,
Suddenly with no warning
I saw my true love pass.

With distant bow and stately,
She would have passed sedately,
When red as fire advancing
I held the prize of love;
And while my low voice muttered
Wild wandering words, she fluttered,
Blushing and brightly glancing,
And took the little glove.

Then she with self-possession,
Blind to my eyes' confession,
Said "Thank you, sir," and pondered,
A moment, adding low,
"My aunt, who lost it lately,
Will also thank you greatly,
She missed it while we wandered
A day or two ago."

Her aunt? That maiden lady,
So prim, and stiff, and shady!
I gasped, by fate perfidious,
Cast out of fairy-land.

While from my side repairing,
My little love tript, bearing
The worthless, wretched, hideous
Old glove in her white hand.

AN ITALIAN PEASANT PLAY.

IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

ALL the world has heard or read of the Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau, in the Bavarian highlands. The present writer witnessed, in eighteen hundred and sixty-eight, the performance of a Passion Play at Brixlegg,* in the Tyrol, which was precisely similar in manner and matter to that of Ammergau, and differed from it only in dimensions, being on a smaller scale as regards the number of spectators and performers engaged in it. The spectacle was a very impressive and curious one, and the remembrance of it was so vivid in our minds, that we resolved, in spite of some obstacles in the way, to make an effort to see a performance which we supposed would be in some degree analogous to that of Brixlegg, and which took place in Italy last year.

The pretty watering-place of the Bagni di Lucca, standing amidst chestnut woods, and on the edge of a river full of rapid sparkling water, is well known to foreign tourists. Less well known is the city of Lucca, about fourteen English miles from the Bagni, with its quaint cathedral, and other picturesque ecclesiastical edifices. And probably the village of Pon San Pieri (contraction of Ponte a San Pietro, or, as we should say, St. Petersbridge), although close to the latter city, is not known at all save to inhabitants of the district. This latter place, however, was our destination when we started from Florence by a very early train on the morning of the 22nd of May.

A few preliminary words must be said in explanation of the nature of the spectacle promised us. From time immemorial the peasants in the Lucchese province have been in the habit of giving an annual series of performances, the subjects of which are mostly taken from Scripture, or from the Lives of the Saints. These performances are termed "Maggi," literally Mays. They are given on each successive Sunday during the month of May, and very often they extend into June. It is not clear why the month of May should be especially chosen for them. May is, as is well known, the month dedicated to the Madonna by the

Roman Catholic Church. In this month, too, were celebrated many festivals of heathen antiquity; and traces of the worship of the old gods linger with tenacious vitality throughout the length and breadth of this classic land. In any case the Maggi is doubtless a lineal descendant of the Mystery, or Miracle Play.

If it suffice to constitute a "religious drama" that the subject of it should be taken from the Bible, or from the legendary adventures of some holy personage, then the Lucchese Maggi is a religious drama. Some few exceptions there are to this rule, inasmuch as the *Gerusalemme Liberata* of Tasso, and the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto, have both furnished subjects for Maggi. But in the former case the argument of the play is confined to the adventures of the Christians Olinto and Clorinda; and, moreover, the expedition of the "Gran Capitano," who freed the Holy Sepulchre from Paynim power, is in itself a religious subject, or may be treated as such.

Of the *Orlando Furioso* certainly so much cannot be said. The title of a Maggi taken from it runs thus: *The Fury of Orlando*; or, *Bradamante and Ruggiero*. But my own intimate belief is that the personages of that romantic poem are quite as authentic and venerable to the spectators who habitually attend a Maggi as are Santa Oliva, or Judith and King Ozias, who figure in other Maggi.

The actors are, without exception, peasants and tillers of the soil. The impresario is any enterprising individual who happens to have at his disposal a locale suitable for the purpose. The price of entrance to a native patron of the drama I believe to be from twopence to threepence. Whatsoever can be cleared over and above the expenses is divided amongst the actors. The same troupe travels from village to village (throughout the somewhat narrow limits of one district) to give its performances.

The 22nd of May was a very hot day; the sun poured down scorching rays from a cloudless sky, and the roads were carpeted with thick soft dust, which the least movement of foot, hoof, or wheel sent flying in suffocating clouds. The Maggi was to commence at eleven o'clock A.M. We left our inn, on the shady side of a quiet street in Lucca, very reluctant to venture forth into the pitilessly bright country. We seated ourselves in a jingling hackney-carriage, drawn by one of those swift, slight, uneducated looking horses so com-

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, First Series, vol. xx., p. 397.

monly seen in Italy, who rattled over the highway briskly enough. His driver was attired with dandified smartness. The occasion was one of unalloyed festivity to him, for he was to wait and carry us back to Lucca at the end of the performance, and thus would not only spend a few hours of perfect idleness, and see the *Maggio*, but would be well paid for doing so. Beside him on the box was perched our servant, a native Lucchese, whom we had brought with us as one cognisant of the ways of the place. The Lucchese have the reputation of making the best domestic servants in Italy, and enjoy a character for integrity which my experience leads me to think thoroughly well deserved. Our man was a member of a simple peasant family in the Lucchese; and not the least amusing part of the day's spectacle to me was to observe the condescending town mouse air with which he tolerated and apologised to us for the rusticity of the crowd, and the humbleness of the theatre. For had he not lived five years in Florence? And were not the glories of the Pergola known to him? And yet his genuine country-bred delight in the *Maggio*, familiar to him from boyhood, would crop up through the city varnish every now and then. And before the day was over he confided to me his notion that if *Giuditta e Leoterne*—so he pronounced *Giuditta e Oloterne*—could be represented in, say, the *Teatro Principe Umberto* (a new theatre rather bigger than *Drury Lane*!), it would make a fine effect.

We were set down at the entrance of a narrow passage in one of the few rambling stone houses that constitute the village of Pon San Pieri. Having gone through the passage we were conducted up a very steep ladder-like staircase which led at once into the theatre itself. The staircase creaked beneath our tread, and the gallery into which we were ushered creaked also, perilously as it seemed to me. However, the event proved that it was sufficiently solid for its temporary purpose.

The theatre had been at no distant date a large barn or granary. The walls were of rough stone. The roof was a complication of massive beams, with here and there a patch of tiling left bare to the inspection of the public. There was one gallery running round three sides of the oblong rectangular space. The floor was covered with closely-packed rows of rough wooden benches. A sort of hutch of unplanned deal boards formed the orchestra. The stage was hidden by an act-drop, the like of

which, I dare swear, few of my readers have ever beheld. It was of painted canvas, and so far resembled all other act-drops; but the picture limned upon it defies description. It appeared to consist of broad patches of boiled spinach, alternated with parallelograms of bath-brick. These, however, being interpreted, after some anxious study, proved to be grassy lawns and marble steps. The perspective was of the willow-pattern school. I do not think that the artist of Pon San Pieri had ever heard of modern pre-Raphaelitism, so I conclude his peculiar "manner" to have been either derived direct from the Chinese model, or to have been an original inspiration leading him to the same remarkable results.

The whole place was packed with a dense crowd of peasants, and the heat and evil odours became almost insupportable before the day was out. They would indeed have become quite insupportable, but for the welcome fumigation afforded by a great deal of coarse tobacco, which was freely smoked in all parts of the house.

What a contrast, one could not help mentally exclaiming, to the Tyrolese audience of the *Passion Play*! The Tyrolese were mostly in their national costume; sombre and ungraceful enough in the case of the women, but decent, solid-looking, and suitable to the rank and habits of the wearer. Here, on the other hand, were exaggerated crinolines, lingering in Pon San Pieri long after the tide of fashion had swept them away from other spots, bright bows of ribbon, gaudy hats with impossible flowers stuck on them, and chignons—chignons that raised a shudder in any one of a speculative turn of mind who took to conjecturing how, and with what, those glossy, oily masses of hair were stuffed out to such preposterous dimensions. The great majority of the men took off their coats and jackets very early in the proceedings, and gave to view shirt-sleeves, which it must be said were mostly clean, and neckties of all colours of the rainbow. They were all poor people. The effort to be fine at a cheap rate was unpleasantly apparent. But also it must be noted that the combination of cheapness and finery appeared to have succeeded in fulfilling their aspirations. Every one looked contented and self-satisfied. There was none of the consciousness of being but tawdry and shabby when all was done, which would under similar circumstances have been apparent on English faces; and which would possibly have rendered them

sullen towards ourselves, who obviously belonged to a higher class. On the contrary, we were treated with perfectly good-humoured courtesy. And though they stared at us—as well they might, our apparition in their midst being certainly unexpected, and I am inclined to believe unprecedented—they were free from any intention of offence.

Their complacency, and utter absence of self-distrust, were moreover amusingly displayed in their condescending endeavours to explain to us the argument of the play; and in their inquiries, often repeated, if we had ever seen anything like that before, and how we liked it. I am convinced that they regarded us with much the same sort of curious observation as we should bestow on a respectable mandarin who should be taken for the first time to the opera at Her Majesty's Theatre.

The manager with his own official hands brought a couple of rush-bottomed chairs with chintz cushions for us to sit upon. And our neighbours right and left cheerfully made way on their hard wooden benches, to permit these seats to be lugged into the front row. This post of honour was one we by no means coveted, but it would have hurt the impresario's feelings to refuse it, so we submitted. He lamented that we had not forewarned him of our coming, and promised that if we would attend another performance, to be given on the 15th of June following, he would provide accommodation suitable for our "rispettabilissime persone." Where he contemplated putting us in state I know not; unless perhaps in the wooden hutch that served for orchestra.

I may as well state at once that whoso should have sought for a vestige of religious sentiment, or a spirit of veneration, in this Maggio, would have sought in vain. Author, actors, and spectators, were all equally devoid of the least approach to such feelings. In the intervals between the acts the noise of shouting, laughing, and opening bottles of fizzing Chiavenna beer, was incessant. And, indeed, during the performance there was a good deal of loud talking throughout all the less interesting portions of the play. The Maggio represented (Judith and Holofernes) was a well-known one. The audience were up in all the points, and bestowed their applause and attention exclusively upon these, disregarding the main action of the drama. This trait struck me very much; for I saw in it an instance of that spirit of conventionality in all artistic matters, which,

in my opinion, is characteristic of the modern Italian, and to which I shall have occasion again to allude. No fine company in a private box at the Scala or the Pergola could be more indifferent to the spectacle as a whole, and more knowing in bestowing their attention on the regulation points, than were these Lucchese contadini.

It is not necessary to dwell on the music, a pitifully dissonant scraping and too-too-ing, which preceded the rising of the curtain. It did rise at length, and displayed a stage which looked a little wider than that whereon Punch is wont to enact his popular history. The first was a front scene, so very much a front scene that the performers had some difficulty in edging their way off the stage without coming in contact with the canvas screen on the one hand, or the row of footlights on the other; for there were footlights, and the stage was illuminated, in singular contrast with the broad sunshine which reigned in the audience part of the theatre.

Scene the first showed us a chamber with Judith and her lady's-maid. (Thus designated in the libretto.) And Judith forthwith began to bewail the death of her beloved husband, Manasses, and to protest that she could never be consoled for his loss. But what was our surprise to find that Judith did not speak, but sang her sorrows; that the attendant respectfully offered her comfort in the same manner; and that, in brief, throughout all the play, no word was uttered in a speaking voice. The sounds adopted were a sort of chant, something between a recitative and a street cry, with occasional turns and flourishes at the will of the performer.

The wearisome effect of this monotonous chant, which never varied (save by more or less tremulous flourishes, as of a goat aspiring to sing) throughout a long drama, cannot easily be conceived by those who have never undergone a similar experience. Tenors, basses, sopranos, and contraltos, each and all uttered their speeches by means of the same succession of sounds. Only now and then the owner of an exceptionally high or an exceptionally low voice would abruptly change the key, and give out his lines two or three tones above or below the others, without the slightest previous warning or preparation. Preparation, in the way of modulation, was in truth impossible, for there was no orchestral accompaniment; and these sudden changes of pitch, when at rare intervals they did occur, came upon one with a singular jar and general sense of dislocation.

Altogether the chanting was terribly trying. Indeed, after we had sat at the performance about an hour and a half, my companion observed, plaintively, that he could not have believed such utter weariness and exhaustion to be producible by the sense of hearing.

The play was in octosyllabic verse, and in stanzas of four lines each, whereof the first and last, and the two middle ones, rhymed. The argument followed the apocryphal book of Judith closely; but the language was certainly neither Biblical nor Oriental in its character. Such few poetic, or quasi-poetic, images as were to be found in it, were imitated from Tasso and Ariosto. Perhaps the expression "l'alto Motore," which frequently occurs, meaning the Almighty, may be held to have a Dantesque flavour.

No conscious attempt to caricature the heroic poems alluded to, or, indeed, one might say, to caricature the high-flown and heroic in general, could approach the absurdity of this composition. I am the fortunate possessor of three original manuscripts of Maggi in an unadulterated condition as regards orthography and syntax. And I look upon them as rare and valuable specimens growing in a little-known by-way of literature. To any one with a relish for the humorous they are a real treasure.

But it is time to return to Judith and her faithful attendant, who were discovered on the rising of the curtain.

Judith's appearance was striking. She was a short, broad, powerful-looking woman, with a wig of brown hair hanging in stiff curls all round her head, and at each side of her face. Her cheeks were highly coloured with some coarse powder, which looked like the "raddle" used for brick floors in some country parts of England. She wore a straight black gown of the pattern of the patriarch's garments in a child's Noah's Ark, high to the throat, and with long sleeves, and on her head was a turban of sombre hue. For the widow of Manasses has been, and still is, mourning the departed in "rozzi panni"—coarse clothing—and announces her intention of continuing in the same all the days of her life. The scene is of the briefest; Judith wails, and the lady's-maid reminds her that "sorrows pass away, but the eternal glory remains for ever." Upon which not very definite piece of comfort Judith replies: "You console me. Let us go to pray l'alto Motore, that he will give us vigour to surmount our woe." And

exent heroine and confidante. We are next shown the Royal Palace in Nineveh, and are introduced to King Nabuchodonosor, Amurath, Holofernes, and Shem (a heterogeneous assemblage of names truly), together with other warriors and nobles. The costumes worn by these nobilities are of the poorest and tawdriest kind. But brightness and glitter are not the most intrinsically valuable elements in costume any more than in other things, and brightness and glitter are accordingly displayed more or less profusely by all the performers. Tinsel and coloured foil-paper play a large part in the production of the general effect. The dresses are Turkish in style, great turbans, wide trousers confined at the ankle, and so forth. Every head bears a wig, a strange stiff wig, like the wigs which are used for cheap wax dolls; every face is violently reddened, and the eyebrows blackened with enthusiastic liberality of pigment. On the whole the aspect of the dramatis personæ resembles that of the coloured theatrical portraits which used to adorn the cheap print-shops in the days of my youth. The actors move in a wooden, constrained manner, and reveal in the course of the play every conceivable kind of voice except a good one. There is the guttural, the nasal, the wiry, the gruff, the bawling. After attentive observation I am unable to say that we discovered any scintillation of dramatic instinct save in one solitary instance. The exception to the rule was a young man who represented Amurath, a captain in the army of Holofernes, and he certainly had some notion of moving and speaking like a living human being, and of assuming the bearing of a gay insouciant young soldier, very advantageously placed on the staff of the great commander-in-chief.

It is far from my intention, to inflict on the reader all the tediousness which our artists, with Dogberryian generosity, so lavishly bestowed upon us. And I renounce any attempt to follow the play scene by scene. But one or two salient points may be noted.

On his first appearance, King Nabuchodonosor plunges at once into the heart of the matter. He declares that:

Of Media now the vast empire
Having fallen 'neath my command,
The whole round world my warrior band
With you to conquer I desire.*

A modest aspiration, which is, however, far

* Della Media il vasto impero
Già caduto è in poter mio,
E di vincere ho desio
Con voi, prodi, il mondo intero.

surpassed by his next sentence, to the effect that he (Nabuchodonosor) is divine, and requires to be adored accordingly. The simple brevity of his statement may perhaps shock English readers; he observes without circumlocution or ambiguity, "Io son Iddio." And adds, addressing his braves, "and I hope you recognise me!"

This being the state of the case, the Assyrian monarch is naturally incensed at the stiff-neckedness of a certain "popolo d'Israel"—Hebrew recalcitrant wretches, who it appears have not yet satisfactorily "recognised" him. And he sends forth his armies to convert them to orthodox principles in a fashion which has been largely employed for similar ends since the days of Nabuchodonosor—to wit, with fire and sword.

The captains, with Holofernes at their head, make no difficulty in adoring their king as a divinity, and eagerly promise to reduce the Israelites to obedience, or to put every one of them to death by the cruellest methods. Also by the king's express command they are to destroy the Temple of Sion, and to "break the idols" in it.

This touch may be intended as a subtle indication on the part of the author that Nabuco was entirely ignorant of the nature of the Jewish religion. But in my opinion by "idols" he means nothing more than the images of the Madonna and the saints, which would naturally be found in the place of worship of so pious a people. My neighbours among the audience—especially one stout, gentle-faced matron with a little child in her arms—were anxious to explain to me that this was a war of religious persecution by the Pagans against the Christians. "Giuditta, you know, was a Christian." And of course a devout Roman Catholic.

How Nabuco fared in his enterprise must be told next week.

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LXXIX. LIGHT APPROACHES.

In a situation in any degree resembling Maud's—a captivity in which all contact with the outer world, and all communication with friends, are effectually prevented—delays unexplained appear supernaturally long; time moves so slowly; the idea of neglect and oblivion is so often uppermost; and despair always near.

One morning, some time after the scene

at Roydon between Lady Vernon and Mr. Dawe, Mercy Creswell appeared before Maud, with an unusually reserved countenance.

"You'll be wanted down-stairs, miss, at twelve o'clock, in the doctor's office, to-day," she said.

"And what is this for?" asked Maud, startled.

"Well, miss, I do believe it is a gentleman from the Lord High Chancellor as is come down to ask you some questions," answered Mercy.

"Oh! oh! Really?" faltered Maud, with a secret prescience of a coming crisis. Her message had not been in vain, and here was the result of a powerful and friendly interposition.

"You need not be frightened, miss, they won't do you no harm. There was one came down here last year to see a very rich patient, and I dessay the Chancellor was making a nice thing of his money and estates, while he was locked up here; I should not wonder: anyhow, he would not let him out from here till he found he could not keep him shut up no longer. So before he took him out he sends one of his gentlemen down here to make, as we thought, all the fuss he could about letting him away and home again to manage his own business, but home he went for all that. His name was Hemenfeldt, a tall thin man of fifty, with a hooked nose, and gold hy-glass, and used to wear a white hat and blue frock-coat, and buff waistcoat, and them varnish boots."

Maud looked at her watch. It was past eleven.

"Did you hever see the Honourable Mr. Marston, Lady Mardykes's brother, miss?" inquired Mercy, who had grown to be on easy terms with the young lady in her charge.

"Yes, I have. What about him?" inquired Maud, as carelessly as if her heart had not fluttered up to her lips and dropped down dead again.

"Because I saw him, and a little black gentleman, just up to his elbow, talking to Doctor Antomarchi, and Miss Medwyn is in the waiting-room."

Perhaps Mercy thought that these signs betokened the early liberation of Maud, and became more communicative as the likelihood of her again emerging into light, and becoming a personage in the living world, improved.

Maud knew now that battle was actually waged in her behalf, and that a few

hours might see her free, and on her way to Wybourne with dear old Maximilla Medwyn.

But, oh, no! she would not allow herself to believe anything so incredible. It could not happen. To admit a hope so immense would be to insure a plunge into the deepest hell of disappointment. And yet that hope possessed her, and she was nearly wild with its excitement.

"Do you think Miss Medwyn will be allowed to see me?" asked Maud.

"I don't know, miss; they was jealous of you seeing any one; and I'm sure there's no good in you asking, whatever they may say when *she* does."

Maud, being quite of the same opinion, made no move, well knowing that Maximilla would leave no stone unturned to obtain a few minutes' sight of her.

Mr. Darkdale arrived, with a knock at the sitting-room door. His business was to deliver a formal intimation from Doctor Antomarchi that Miss Vernon was to hold herself in readiness to come to his room, at twelve o'clock, to answer some questions which an official person would have to put to her, and to request that she would be good enough not to leave her rooms until his messenger should arrive to conduct her to his office.

In a state of suspense Maud awaited Antomarchi's summons in her sitting-room. Twelve o'clock came, and no summons yet. Ten minutes, twenty minutes, half an hour passed. The little timepiece in her room struck one.

Mr. Darkdale arrived a minute or two later. He looked stern and thoughtful. Mercy Creswell was summoned. She was to go alone with Mr. Darkdale. Miss Vernon was to be so good as to await her, or his, return where she was. These attendants would wait upon her in the mean time.

Two of the stalwart housemaids in the Glarewoods uniform entered quietly, and stood near the door.

Mercy Creswell looked a little disagreeably surprised at the occurrence; but she accompanied Mr. Darkdale in silence; and Maud remained in utter ignorance of all that was taking place down-stairs, upon the issue of the ordeal that was to decide her fate.

In less than ten minutes Mercy Creswell returned, looking hot and agitated. The temporary attendants were withdrawn, and Maud, being alone with her maid, questioned her as to what was going on.

"I'm not to tell nothing about it, miss; them's my orders."

"The inquiry is about me, isn't it? Surely you can tell me so much," urged Maud.

"Well, yes, miss; it is about you, and not another thing will I say about it. Where's the use of me running that risk without no good to no one?"

Mercy was obstinate and held to her resolution spite of all Maud's importunities and promises of secrecy; and Maud in the burning fever of her agitation walked from room to room, and from window to window, unable to rest for a moment.

If she could only tell how it was going! By what right was she excluded from her own trial? How unfairly her case might be dealt with! And, oh! but to think of all that depends on the next hour.

In the waiting-room Mr. Marston and old Miss Medwyn had met Mr. Dawe, and were in high chat when Mr. Tintern was shown in. He had not perhaps expected to meet Miss Vernon's friends in such force. He knew only that he was to see Mr. Dawe there. He would have preferred not meeting Miss Medwyn. He smiled pensively, and shook hands, and shrugged pathetically over the melancholy state of things which had called them there.

"And poor Lady Vernon, what a deplorable thing for her! Only think, a mother, you know, and all that kind of thing; so awfully distressing! I know, for my part, I should rather lose a child by death outright, and be spared the anguish of such an affliction as this."

He looked round upon them with a sad shake of the head, and a slow wave of his hand, which was intended generally to indicate Miss Vernon, the lunatic asylum, its inmates and apparatus; and this pantomime terminated in a slight but expressive elevation of the eyes and hand, and another desolate shrug.

"Lady Vernon lives in hopes," he continued, liking, I fancy, to talk rather than to be talked to, on this subject. "She thinks this will not be a very tedious—a—illness. All this is, of course, quite dark at Roydon. No one there—I have not even mentioned it to my wife—not a human being but I and Doctor Malkin——"

"Ho! Doctor Malkin! Well, that does not surprise me," exclaimed Miss Medwyn, in an angry parenthesis.

"Not a living person but he and I, and Lady Vernon herself, in all that part of the world, has the least idea there is anything

of the kind; and you know we may look to see her very soon, I do hope, quite as we could wish."

"Very soon, I should hope, Mr. Tintern; sooner even than some of her friends expect," said Maximilla, with a tart emphasis. "She is under very special restraint here. They won't permit me so much as to see her! What can be the reason of that? I don't suppose I can hurt her; and as to my share of the danger, I'm quite willing to risk that, ha ha, ha!—poor little Maud!" and with these words Maximilla Medwyn suddenly burst into tears.

Mr. Tintern looked with much feeling at Mr. Dawe; but a blacker shadow seemed to have gathered about that odd figure.

Mr. Marston, at the further end of the long room, was trying to read some papers connected with the proceedings, but his eye every moment wandered to the door, through which he expected the summons of a messenger from the commissioner.

Maximilla's tears disconcerted Mr. Tintern, who walked first to the window, and then to Mr. Dawe, to whom, with another shrug, he murmured:

"Most harrowing! No place for ladies, this!"

Mr. Dawe grunted.

Maximilla's sobs did not last long. A footman entered and presented a little note to Mr. Dawe.

Mr. Dawe read it. The eyes of Mr. Marston and Miss Medwyn were now directed on him very anxiously.

"It is all right," said Mr. Dawe, in his dry tones.

"Thank God!" exclaimed Maximilla.

And Mr. Marston looked as if he would have said the same.

Mr. Tintern eyed them curiously. What was "all right?" He would have given something to know.

Mr. Dawe walked up to Maximilla briskly, and saying, "Read that," placed the note in her hands.

It said:

DEAR MR. DAWE,—I have very great pleasure in saying that Mr. Commissioner Steele has no objection, under the circumstances of this case, to your being present, although your request, coming from one who is not related to the family, is not usual; and the only condition he imposes is, that you make no public use of what you are permitted to witness; and he reserves to himself, of course, the right of dispensing with your presence at any time he may

express a wish to be more to himself. I write this with pleasure, as I look upon your presence as a protection to myself.

Yours truly,

MICHAEL AN TOMARCHI.

P.S.—You are at liberty to accompany Mr. Tintern when the commissioner sends for him.

This summons was not long in coming. Mr. Tintern looked with an air of studied curiosity and polite surprise at Mr. Dawe as that gentleman accompanied him.

Mr. Dawe did not care. Those looks did not overawe him.

CHAPTER LXXX. BEFORE THE COMMISSIONER.

THEY found the commissioner, with Doctor Antomarchi, in the oval-room, to which the servant conducted them.

Mr. Commissioner Steele is a tall, gentleman-like looking man, with a dark face, closely shaved, black curly hair, a little streaked with white, growing close over his broad, but not high, forehead. He looks at them with eyes nearly shut, and a little frown, after the manner of near-sighted people, and he is twirling round his finger an eye-glass. He rises, and receives these gentlemen with a short bow, and looks to Doctor Antomarchi to explain them. The doctor, who has seen them before, does so.

"Oh! Mr. Dawe? The gentleman who wishes to be present on behalf of Miss Vernon?" asked the commissioner.

"Yes," said Antomarchi.

"Have you considered, Doctor Antomarchi," hesitated Mr. Tintern, "whether Lady Vernon would quite wish that arrangement? The young lady's mother," he explains to the commissioner, "she is naturally extremely anxious that as little as possible of this very painful case should become generally known; she wished it, in fact, as private as possible."

"Yes; but in this case it is not a simple relation of mother and child," said Mr. Steele, fluently, while arranging his papers. "The young lady has quite different interests, and on a very great scale; and it is only reasonable that some one, in whom her relations have confidence, should be permitted, in her interest, to hear what passes. Mr. Tintern, you are a magistrate?"

"Yes, sir."

"The depositions in this matter, were sworn before you?"

"They were, sir."

"You have brought with you the original depositions?"

"Yes, sir."

"Be so kind as to hand them to me. Thanks; Mr. Dawe, while I read these, you can read the attested copies which Doctor Antomarchi will be so good as to give you."

Doctor Antomarchi placed the papers before Mr. Dawe, who received them with one of his stiff bows, and read them with characteristic care.

"Lady Vernon is not here?" asked the commissioner.

"No," answered Antomarchi.

"Nor that man, Elihu Lizard?"

"He is not here."

"These affidavits are very strong. Lady Vernon deposes that her daughter, the subject of this inquiry, has for some years exhibited a growing eccentricity and violence, which have caused her extreme anxiety; that latterly these peculiarities had, in her opinion, become distinctly morbid, and that on a certain evening, the date of which she states, Miss Vernon intimated an intention of putting an end to her own life. That this had been preceded by two distinct occurrences of a similar kind, within little more than a year antecedent to the last threat of this sort, at Roydon Hall."

The commissioner paused and looked at Mr. Dawe.

"Doctor Malkin, the family physician, states that the young lady is of a highly nervous temperament, with strange ideas, such as are popularly termed flighty, that she is hysterical and impetuous, and without sufficient self-control to counteract the obvious tendencies of such a mental and nervous condition. That with this knowledge of predisposing causes at work, he cannot refer the facts set out in Lady Vernon's and Elihu Lizard's depositions to any cause other than insanity too considerably developed to be safely committed to any but the constant supervision and treatment of an able physician, residing under the same roof, and experienced in the treatment of insanity. He says he cannot undertake the responsibility of advising Lady Vernon to keep the young lady at home, an experiment which has often been attended, he remarks, especially when suicidal tendencies have existed, with fatal consequences. That is very strong, you observe," he said, throwing his head back, and glancing at Mr. Dawe.

Mr. Dawe grunted.

"You think that very strong?" said the commissioner.

"No," said Mr. Dawe, "I don't mind Lady Vernon; and the Roydon doctor is in her pocket. He thinks what *she* thinks, and *she* thinks whatever she likes."

Mr. Commissioner Steele popped his glass in his eye and stared at this outspoken little man, as he might at a curious creature in a menagerie, and then he resumed.

"Well, here's Elihu Lizard," said the commissioner, who had opened another paper; "I think *here* perhaps it will be as well to ask Miss Medwyn to be good enough to come in—she may, possibly, have something to explain."

Mr. Steele leaned back in his chair, and Doctor Antomarchi again touched the bell, and the servant in a minute more announced Miss Medwyn.

The commissioner rose and made his bow. Miss Medwyn glanced shrewdly at him, to ascertain what manner of man the judge might be.

"I'll tell you what Elihu Lizard states, if you please, Miss Medwyn, and you can make any remarks that strike you."

"So I shall," said Miss Medwyn.

"He swears he followed Miss Vernon from place to place."

"Who sent him?" asked Mr. Dawe.

"I know no more than the affidavit states; you have the copy. He found that she acted with very marked eccentricity during a tour she made with her cousin, that was you, Miss Medwyn; she concealed her name, and passed herself off as a Miss Maud Guendoline; she represented herself as being, and the deponent seems to think, for the time, actually believed the statement, obliged to make her livelihood by selling her water-colour sketches; she told people that she was miserably poor, and, in social position, extremely humble; and Elihu Lizard believes that, at the time, she seriously thought that all these statements were true."

"She thought no such thing," said Miss Medwyn. "It was all done in the spirit of frolic; just what any young creature a little wayward, and quite wild with spirits, as she was, in the enjoyment of a little holiday, would do; and no one ever dreamed of supposing her mad."

"Did she tell you, Miss Medwyn, during your excursion, at any time, that she did not believe these representations herself?"

"No, certainly, it was quite unnecessary;

she knew that such an idea had never entered my mind."

"You have a strong opinion, then, in favour of Miss Vernon's sanity?"

"It is not an opinion, I am quite certain of it."

"But suppose it were proved to you that she has, at three distinct times, threatened her own life while at Roydon; and that once, since she came here, she has not only threatened, but attempted it; would not that modify your opinion as to the expediency of removing at once all restraint and superintendence in her case?"

"It's quite untrue. I have no other answer. It is utterly false."

"I only say, as a supposition, *suppose* it were proved——"

"It would not make the least difference; I could not believe it," she answered peremptorily; "I never shall."

The commissioner smiled and shook his head.

"There is another odd circumstance deposed to here," he resumes; "at a ball at a place called Wy—Wymering, I think it is; where she went with—you, Miss Medwyn, to join the party of a Mrs. Tintern——"

"My wife," interposed Mr. Tintern, softly.

"Oh! I see, thanks; where Miss Vernon went to join Mrs. Tintern's party," continued the commissioner. "She insisted on visiting the gallery of the town-hall, before the company had assembled, and once more, in an unreal character, she presented herself as your servant, the deposition says."

"That was precisely in the same spirit; a mere whim; she had been looking forward, for a long time, to the ball, and was in such spirits, poor little thing!"

Miss Medwyn was as near as possible crying again, and had to pull up suddenly.

The commissioner offered no criticism on Miss Medwyn's explanation. And after a little silence, for he saw she was agitated, he asked:

"Perhaps you would like to look over Lady Vernon's statement? There is no objection."

Miss Medwyn thanked him, and took the paper, which she read over, her face frowning a little, pale and scornful, as she did so.

When she had conned it over, and returned the paper, he asked:

"Have you anything, Miss Medwyn, by way of explanation, or generally, to state,

which you think might throw light on this inquiry?"

Miss Medwyn had a great deal to say, and said it, more than once, with great volubility, and in high scorn of all opposition. When her harangue was over, the commissioner thanked her very much, and rose, with a bow or two, and Doctor Antomarchi politely conducted her again to the waiting-room, where Mr. Marston received her with intense anxiety.

Mr. Dawe had, on hearing his narrative, peremptorily forbidden his appearance as a witness, and blew up Maximilla roundly, in his proper laconics, for having permitted all that masquerading which now furnished the chief material of the case.

Maximilla answered that she *could* not have prevented it; and that if that had never happened, still a case would not have been wanting, because it was plain, from different things in Barbara's statement, that she had employed people to watch Maud wherever she went.

As Mr. Marston and Maximilla Medwyn were now conversing, Mr. Dawe, whose chief object was to note carefully in his memory the facts on which the theory of Maud's insanity was based, with a view to action of a different kind should this measure fail, had the pleasure of listening to Mercy Creswell's description of what she had termed Maud's "parrokism."

Then came an account of her attempt to get into the hall in pursuit of Lady Mardynes; of her throwing herself on the stairs, of what was called her violence, and ultimate reduction to submission under moral influences. Then Doctor Antomarchi made his statement, stronger, abler, more learned than the opinion of Doctor Malkin, and in conclusion he said:

"This is a case, I admit, I should be happy to be relieved of. It is a case round which family feuds and jealousies gather and prepare for battle. We have never been in litigation here; and although I cannot conscientiously recommend Lady Vernon to take the young lady home, I should be very much obliged if she would remove her to some other house."

CHAPTER LXXXI. MAUD IS SUMMONED.

"I SHOULD like," said the commissioner, "to see the young lady now; and after that, Doctor Antomarchi, if you please, I could have a few words with you. Mr. Dawe, are you acquainted with Miss Vernon?"

Mr. Dawe assented.

"What do you say, Doctor Antomarchi, to Mr. Dawe's remaining while Miss Vernon answers a few questions?"

"I should be most happy if I were not certain that in her present state a meeting of the kind would be, as respects the progress of her recovery, almost the worst thing that could happen to Miss Vernon. I speak with the responsibility of her medical adviser; and I must request Mr. Dawe to withdraw, unless you, sir, should direct otherwise."

"Then, Mr. Dawe, I must ask you to retire," says the commissioner, making him a little bow.

Mr. Dawe rose, and returned it with a nod; the servant conducted him to the waiting-room; and Doctor Antomarchi turned the key in the door through which he had retreated.

Doctor Antomarchi and Mr. Commissioner Steele had a little bit of earnest conversation. The long period of Miss Vernon's suspense at length expired.

Never did imprisoned lady in the Reign of Terror hear herself summoned to the presence of the tremendous Fouquier Tinville with a colder pang of horror than that which unnerved Maud Vernon, at the tap at her door, and the intimation that the time had come, and her presence was required by the commissioner.

"Are there many people in the room with him?" Maud asked, rising quickly, very pale, and feeling a little dizzy.

"Only the doctor, please, miss."

The young lady followed the servant; Mercy Creswell stumping after, with a supernaturally solemn countenance.

Maud did not know how she reached the office door. At sight of that solid barrier, its well varnished panels and oak veining, her heart bounded as if it would suffocate her.

"Wait a moment," she whispered to the man who was about opening the door to announce her. "Not yet."

She must not seem flurried. All for her depended on her perfect self-possession in presence of this stranger, who held the key of her prison.

She signed to the man, who opened the door, and she heard her name announced.

Now she is in the room. Antomarchi, whom she distrusts and fears, rises and makes her a very grave and ceremonious bow. She turns from that smooth face, that frightens her, to the commissioner, who has also risen, and makes her a less elaborate bow. Intelligent, energetic, nar-

row, utterly unsympathetic, is the face of her judge. Instinctively she is dismayed by it.

She sits down, hardly knowing what she does, in a chair opposite the commissioner. He asks her some question, the purport of which she does not distinctly catch. She sees nothing but that cold, shrewd, self-complacent face which dismays her.

The stern ringing voice of Antomarchi repeats the question, and she turns. He is looking at her. She finds herself under the spell of those baleful eyes.

"Mr. Commissioner Steele asked you whether you are aware that you are sworn to have on three distinct occasions, at Roydon, threatened to take away your life?"

"I was not aware, that is, I don't know what is said against me," she says with an effort, and a little confusedly.

"May I ask her a few questions?" inquires Antomarchi.

"Do, pray," acquiesces the commissioner.

He bowed to Mr. Steele, and then said:

"Be so good as to look a little this way." She had averted her eyes. "I want to be assured that you hear me."

She submitted, and he proceeded.

"You are frank, Miss Vernon, and would not mislead this inquiry. Did you not intend to commit suicide at Roydon?"

Miss Vernon faltered; she tried instinctively to raise her hand to her eyes, but she did not raise it higher than her throat, where she felt a great ball rising.

"I'm sorry to press you, but we must accept your silence as an admission," said the cold bass of Antomarchi. "Is it not true," he persisted, sternly, "that you intended suicide, three distinct times, when at Roydon?"

"I—I can't," faltered Maud.

"I know you can't," he repeated, and you could not *there*, I believe."

"I could not there—I believe—if—if— What am I saying? Oh, God! what am I saying?"

"Never regret speaking candidly to friends; Mr. Commissioner Steele, of whom you seem so much in awe, can have no object in this inquiry but what tends to your good. Now, as to what occurred *here*—up-stairs—when you told Mercy Creswell you would make away with yourself, and she locked you into your room in consequence, and you then threw up the window. Come, be frank, Miss Vernon, did you not do so with the intention of taking

away your life, by throwing yourself from it; you confessed it."

"Did I—did I confess it? I confessed——" she murmured, with white lips.

"You did—that's right—it is hardly necessary to do so again, but if you can deny it, or explain it, you are at liberty to do so."

Mr. Steele was, while this was passing, glancing at his notes, and marking the papers before him with his pen, and saw nothing of the fatuised look that had stolen over Maud's face, and if he had, would have attributed it to her imputed mental condition.

"You *can't* explain, or deny it—I am to infer *that*," persisted Antomarchi; "you *can't*."

"I can't—can I?—I can't—oh! what is it?—I feel so strangely." She shook her ears as if a fly was humming at them, and lifted her pretty fingers towards her temple vaguely.

"You say you can't, and that is quite enough—I expected no less from your candour; and as you say you feel a little oddly, it will perhaps be better that you should return to your room, if Mr. Commissioner has no objection?"

"Certainly not," acquiesced the official, who, with half-closed eyes, was now eyeing Miss Vernon curiously.

"You may go, Miss Vernon. See Miss Vernon to her room," said Antomarchi to the servant. "Instantly, please; she is agitated."

Maud was standing now, and looked a little about her, bewildered, as if newly awakened from sleep.

"Oh! what is it? What have I said? let me remember——"

"Never regret having spoken truth, Miss Vernon," said Antomarchi; "you must go," he said sternly to her, and added quickly in a whisper to Mr. Steele, "If she stays we shall have a paroxysm."

The commissioner, who had no fancy for anything of the kind, rose at the same moment, and made a hasty bow.

"Oh, sir; no, don't send me back; have mercy on me! It is false," she screamed. "If I said anything against myself, I re-

tract it all. You are here to try me; God sees us; oh, my last hope!"

This last cry was heard in the passage as the door shut; and the commissioner and Doctor Antomarchi were left tête-à-tête.

The doctor smiled and shrugged.

"Retract, retract; they all retract after an admission. People who don't know something of them, as you and I do, have no notion how much cunning belongs to that state, and how little scruple. You see the excitement she has gone away in, and simply from having seen you and me! What would it be if she were to see an intimate friend? How could we separate them? And yet, I venture to say, Miss Medwyn thinks it a great hardship she has not had an interview with the young lady—I should not wonder if the patient became violent; I rather expect to be sent for."

This, and a good deal more, said Doctor Antomarchi; and, after some conversation, invited the commissioner to luncheon, which that semi-judicial functionary, having first consulted his Bradshaw, agreed to partake of; and over it he relaxed, and conversed about fifty things, very pleasantly, and laughed over the agreeable doctor's amusing stories. While up-stairs, Maud Vernon, on her knees, with her face buried in the coverlet, writhed and sobbed wildly in the solitude of an immeasurable despair.

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CHAPTER IX. DOUBT.

WHEN Gerald Hardinge saw the street-door close, shutting Madge Pierrepont from his view, he remained stationary for a minute, gazing on the spot whence she had disappeared, and then turned away with an indescribable feeling of happiness and elation in his breast. Her last words to him had been but feebly uttered it is true, and had told him that she was ill, but he believed this illness to be merely the result of mental excitement and physical prostration, which would speedily pass away, never to re-appear in the calm, happy future which he had planned for her, while the thrilling pressure of her hand, as she left him, gave higher hopes than could be given by any words that this future was accepted by her.

As the young man walked with a light quick step along the deserted streets, he lifted his hat to catch as much as possible of the cool night breeze, which retained some of the freshness of the sea, whence it was blown, mingled with the fragrance of the gardens and orchards which it had traversed in its career towards the old city, and raising his eyes to the star-strewn blue heavens above him, felt half inclined to believe that all nature gloried in his happiness, and shared in his success. Conscious presently of the creeping, shambling female figure by his side, which addressed him in whining tones imploring alms, he stopped and handed to it such largess as to evoke a shower of fulsome thanks from its recipient, who hurried away, fearful lest a second thought should make him repent

of his munificence. Needless to say that no such thought crossed Gerald's mind. Not on such a night as that at least could he be appealed to in vain; he had himself been made supremely happy, and only delighted in doing what he could to increase the happiness of others.

Supremely happy indeed! The silence of the streets was almost oppressive to him. He wanted to take not man but nature into his confidence. He wanted to be alone in a garden, on a mountain top, in a boat upon the river or the sea, anywhere, so that without rendering himself ridiculous he could put into words the gratitude that filled his heart, the joy that thrilled his frame, and tingled in his pulses. Even there, in the precincts, hemmed in by the high old gabled houses, inside of which the decorous dignitaries of the cathedral and their staid families lay wrapped in dreamless slumber, he felt inclined to cry aloud, to break into a swift running pace, to do anything which would give vent to the unspoken joy then pent within his breast.

It was lucky that he refrained from giving way to any of these eccentricities; for the next moment, as he turned the corner of the street, he found himself confronted by a group of men who were advancing from the opposite direction. Scarcely gazing at them—assuredly not recognising any of them—Gerald was stepping into the roadway with the intention of allowing them to pass, when he heard his own name called out in a loud tone, and immediately recognised the voice pronouncing it as belonging to Mr. Dunsany. The speaker was indeed that histrionic genius, who followed up his salutation by seizing Gerald lightly by the collar, and, as he turned round to his admiring friends, call

ing out with tragic emphasis, "Trapped at last."

"Trapped at last," echoed a tall man, with a thin hatchet face, bright beady eyes, and a thick moustache. "Deuced good title for a three-act drama; see my way to it at once. Act the first, Setting the Snare; act the second, Nearing the Noose; act the third, Trapped at Last. Lapse of ten years is supposed to occur between the second and third acts. There you have it!"

"Oh, drop that gaff, Hayward," said Dunsany; "and you, Gerald, don't stand there looking like old Blowhard when he plays the Idiot Witness."

"A part which comes quite natural to him," interrupted Mr. Hayward.

"Well, come along, Gerald," continued Dunsany; "we have got a little supper at the Swan, and I have been looking everywhere for you to make one of the party. Now I've got you, so come along."

"Not to-night," commenced Gerald; "I am awfully tired, and was on my way home to bed. Not to-night, please."

"Oh, no, not to-night," repeated Dunsany in a bantering tone, "certainly not to-night; let us say we will meet this night twelvemonth, and at Philippi, please! Come out of that, you villain! Do you think I am going to let you go now I have once got hold of you? More especially when old Blowhard told me just now you were not coming back to him, and he should have to look out for a new scene-painter. Put your arm in mine, and come along."

"But I really am horribly tired," pleaded Gerald.

"If you are tired, count" (the nickname which Gerald Hardinge's looks and manners had gained for him amongst the company, and by which he generally went), "if you are tired, count," said another of the bystanders, Mr. Minneken, a dashing young roué of fifty-eight, with a purple head and a ragged purple moustache, and who was the light comedian of the company, "go to your bed at the natural hour of four A.M. Never invoke the miserable Morpheus at a time which should be sacred to the blisses of Bacchus and the kisses of Venus."

A general chorus of "Bravo, Minny!" rewarded this flight of fancy.

"Letting alone the fact that I sleep next to you, my dear Gerald," said Dunsany, "and that when I arrive at the hour so neatly indicated just now, I am likely to disturb you from your slumber."

The proposition to end his evening in this manner was assuredly very different from

what Gerald Hardinge had either expected or wished. He had longed for some place in which he could commune with himself, for some solitude where he could orally convince himself of the happiness which he had just secured; and he was now bidden to make one of a party of convivial roysterers in a tavern reeking with liquor and tobacco. But he did not like to urge any further the refusal to the invitation thus pressed upon him. Several of those present, and especially Dunsany, had shown him much rough kindness and attention during the time he had passed among them, and he was conscious that there was prevalent in the company an intuitive suspicion of the difference between his former and his present position in life, which would render them doubly susceptible to any apparent slight. So he ceased to make any further opposition to their wishes, and his assent being received with a shout which awoke the slumbering echoes of the old Guildhall portico, and brought the policeman down a by-street with hurried footsteps very different from his usual measured pace, the party proceeded on their way rejoicing.

The Swan, towards which the convivial company was making its way, was a regular type of a theatrical tavern. Ordinarily, the house "used" by the actors and their friends is to be found in the immediate vicinity of the theatre. But the inhabitants of Wexeter had scruples about allowing any establishment of the kind to flourish in the proximity of the cathedral; while the church dignitaries, who were potential in such matters, took care that the precincts dwelt in by them should be kept free from the contamination of a tavern of any kind, and especially one which was likely to be frequented by the lower class of theatrical performers. So that the Swan was compelled to build her nest at some little distance off, down at the bottom of the hill indeed, and near the wharves abutting on the navigable portion of the river Wexe, where huge balks of timber lie strewn about, where the road is always gritty with coal-dust, and where there is a perpetual maritime smell of boiling pitch and fresh tar. None of the bargemen, Jacks-in-the-water, or river-side idlers, however, dream of going into the Swan, which is known as the actors' house of call, and is given up exclusively to them. The landlord is a retired "heavy man" from the Norfolk circuit; his wife, stout and unwieldy though she be now, was once the brightest

of singing chamber-maids at Portsmouth; and his two sons, with their celebrated dog Beppo, are now extracting money from the pockets of Australian diggers, by their splendid performance of the Forest of Bondy. All day long, lounging in front of the street-door, or leaning listlessly against the portal, are to be seen sallow, keen-eyed men, whiskerless, indeed, but with an outline blue map on cheek and chin, showing what tremendous hirsute power is kept in abeyance by the exigencies of the profession. From time to time they will enter the house and drop into the bar—a snuggery where not one scrap of wall is to be seen, so covered is it with play-bills, and placards, and portraits of celebrated theatrical characters—take a drink standing, chat with the barmaid, who, like every other inmate of the establishment, is steeped to the lips in dramatic lore, or glance through the pages of the Haresfoot, the theatrical journal, especially conning the advertisements of managers in quest of talent.

In the course of the theatrical season many banquets were usually given at the Swan, actors being proverbially of a hospitable and generous disposition, and no success of even the smallest kind was ever gained by any member of the company without its being duly commemorated in liquor. But there was never any noise or disturbance at these entertainments, and as the house was thoroughly well conducted, the police never interfered with its arrangements, and winked at occasional infractions of the law which prescribed a certain hour for closing.

That hour had pretty nearly arrived when Mr. Dunsany and his friends reached the Swan, and most of the ordinary guests had taken their departure. For the expected party, however, a room was prepared, and in a few minutes they were all seated round the table covered with the materials for a substantial meal. As the host, Mr. Dunsany took the chair, having Gerald on his right, and Mr. Minneken on his left. They were all too hungry to talk much at first, and, when their appetite began to be appeased, the conversation which ensued was such as might be expected in such a circle. The performances of the evening and of the past season generally, the short-comings, meannesses, and vanity of the manager Dobson (always spoken of as Blowhard), the chances of London engagements, and the gratitude due to the press, of which Mr. Hayward was the esteemed representative then pre-

sent. All these subjects were in turn discussed, and Gerald, who had taken very little part in the conversation, thought he saw the longed-for opportunity to slip away unperceived, when he heard a remark which instantly changed his intention.

Mr. Minneken was the speaker. "A divinity, sir," he exclaimed; "Madge Pierpoint is a divinity, nothing else. There is nothing to touch her on the stage now-a-days, nor has there been in my time. I've seen them all, sir; the finest women in London, by George! and there is not one of them you can compare to our Madge. Such an arched neck, such pouting lips, such a mass of capillary attractions, such a magnificent mane. By Heavens, sir, she is delicious!" And Mr. Minneken first kissed the tips of his fingers, and then waved them in the air.

When Gerald first heard the name of the woman he loved thus mentioned in a public company, he felt hot and angry. But it was impossible to be annoyed with Mr. Minneken, so earnest and impulsive was he, so chivalrous, and withal so respectful. Gerald recollected, moreover, that he had heard Madge speak of the kindness, which it was impossible to think of as influenced by any ulterior motive, shown to her by the old bean on her first joining the company. But he feared that the subject might be taken up by others, who would not handle it quite so tenderly, and he was right.

"She is all very well to look at," said Mr. Hayward. "What you call a fine woman, and that sort of thing, but she's no actress."

"No actress!" cried Dunsany.

"When did you find that out, Hayward?" asked Minneken.

"Ever since she refused to play the heroine in Hayward's five-act tragedy of Boadicea," said Gerald Hardinge. "Our friend has had no opinion of Miss Pierpoint's talent since then."

"Has Hayward written a five-act tragedy?" asked some one from the end of the table.

"I vote he stands a dinner, and reads it to us before it," said Mr. Potts, the prompter, who had been steadily eating ever since he arrived, and whose first utterance had reference to future food.

"No, no; after, after," cried Dunsany.

"If he read the tragedy first none of us would be alive for the dinner."

"Who was Boadicea?" asked Mr. Potts's neighbour.

"Some Roman cove, I think!" said the prompter.

"It sounds to me like a name in the Bible," said his neighbour.

"Can't say," said Mr. Potts, whose biblical lore was limited.

"Well, I dare say you think all this is devilish funny," said Mr. Hayward, whose naturally sallow complexion seemed to be growing into a bright green, "but with all deference to that very excellent young gentleman over there, I repeat my opinion that Miss Pierpoint is no actress."

"By Heavens, sir, how you can say that I cannot understand!" said Minneken, wisely stepping in to intercept the outbreak of wrath which he anticipated from Gerald Hardinge. "Don't even the benighted clodhoppers in this semi-agricultural, semi-ecclesiastical neighbourhood, worship her? Don't they start at the smallest scintilla emitted by her glorious eye? Don't they follow every murmur of that deliciously soft voice, which comes to them through those rows of pearls like the sighing of the west wind over a summer sea? What more would you have, sir?"

"What more?" said Mr. Hayward, savagely. "I would have a little more go; a little more life; a little more passion! You, Minneken, have a reputation of having seen a good deal of life, and you have lived long enough, Heaven knows! but did you, in your experience, ever see a woman so cold, and statuesque, and passionless? Take her from first to last in all the love scenes she plays, and tell me is there a scrap of heart, a scrap of warmth in one of them?"

Before Mr. Minneken could reply, a little man, sitting midway down the table, said, with a low, chuckling laugh: "Perhaps she keeps her heart, and her warmth, and her passion, and all that, for private use. Don't do to parade 'em in public; oh no!"

The speaker was Mr. Snick, who was the "second old man" of the company, and who was generally regarded as having been allotted in life the same line of character which he had sustained all along in the theatre, namely, being sent on to make play for others, and only speaking in order to give other people the chance of reply. The expression by him of any original idea would have astonished the company, but such an opinion, emphasised as it was by him with his chuckle, caused intense surprise, and a short silence ensued, which was broken by Gerald Hardinge, who inquired, in rather a savage tone, what grounds Mr. Snick had for his statement.

To find the old man's remark taken

seriously, delighted the company in general, and Mr. Potts's neighbour, who had made the inquiry about Boadicea, rising to his feet, said gravely, "That he thought their friends would agree with him that no gentleman had a right to ask any questions about Mr. Snick's little love affairs."

The applause and laughter which greeted this remark incensed Gerald Hardinge still further. His cheeks flushed, and his eyes sparkled, as he rose from his chair, and said, hurriedly: "I care nothing about Mr. Snick, or his love affairs either, but he alluded to a lady, whose acquaintance I have the pleasure of possessing, in an offensive way, and with a certain innuendo in his manner which I think demands explanation."

Some of the company cried "hear," some "bosh," and Mr. Dunsany called out, at the top of his voice, "Come, Snick, you innuendoing vagabond, make a clean breast of it, and explain!"

Mr. Snick did not seem in the smallest degree put out by the hubbub and excitement he had created. On the contrary, he sat quietly sucking away at his long pipe, and when thus directly appealed to by Mr. Dunsany, he indulged in a few more chuckles before he remarked: "What I said I will stick to. Only when I spoke before I said perhaps she kept her warmth and her passion for private use; now, I say, there is no perhaps at all about it, I am sure she does!"

"Sure! How the devil can you be sure?" asked Mr. Hayward, looking across at him with a glance in which surprise was mingled with contempt.

"How can I be sure?" said the little man, with another chuckle; "why, from what you call in your newspaper language, ocular demonstration. I have seen her!"

"Seen your grandmother," roared out Mr. Dunsany, not liking the expression on Gerald Hardinge's face, and wishing to put an end to the discussion as quickly as possible. "Come out of that, Snick, and don't let's have any of your anecdotes."

"Not at all!" called out Gerald Hardinge, starting to his feet. "Mr. Snick, coming out of the region of possibility, has now made a positive statement respecting Miss Pierpoint, and I demand that he now enters fully into detail concerning what he alleges he saw."

"What right have you to demand anything of the kind?" asked Mr. Hayward.

"I will answer that question by-and-bye," said Gerald Hardinge, very quietly.

"Oh, sit down, Gerald, and don't be

bothering about an old omadhoun like that Snick," said Mr. Dunsany. "Sure, in addition to being always moithered, he has got about a pint of punch under his belt now, and is half-drunk already."

But Gerald Hardinge was deaf to all such entreaty; the accusation, he said, had been made, and must be given in detail. The others, by degrees, came round to this opinion, and even Mr. Dunsany said, in a half-jocular, half-savage manner: "Come, Snick, down on your marrow-bones, and confess your peccadillo, and I'll promise you absolution."

The various stages of these proceedings seemed fraught with the greatest delight to Mr. Snick, who still sat calmly sucking at his pipe, and chuckling after the emission of every separate whiff; and when he was at length called upon to speak, he spoke slowly and deliberately, but without the smallest hesitation.

"Some of you may know," he said, "and some mayn't, that owing to the screw I get from old Blowhard not being too magnificent, I endeavour to earn a little money by acting as agent for the sale of mineral waters and ginger-beer. There may be some among the company present," said the little man, looking round him with a leer and a chuckle, "who may have had soda-water from me which they have not paid for, and there may not. But that's neither here nor there. What I am coming to is this, that about a fortnight ago, it might be, I cannot say the exact day, but you will recollect it by that tremendous thunder-storm which we had, the only one there has been this summer, I thought to myself that not being in the bill that night, I would just walk up as far as Dumpington turnpike, where the tollman owed me a small account for ginger-beer, which he manages to sell a good deal of, it being good stuff, and not like the penny bottles, all pop and froth. Accordingly, soon after it was dusk, I strolled out there, and smoked a pipe with the tollman, and got the money from him, and set off to come back. I hadn't gone a hundred yards before I saw—it was a dark night, but I've got eyes like a cat—I saw a tall woman coming towards me, and I recognised her figure in a minute as Miss Pierrepont.

"What are you doing here, my lady, at this time of night?" says I to myself. "I may as well see," I says to myself, and with that I slipped into the hedge. She passed me so close that her dress almost brushed against me, and then I set out after her. She went along the road, and passed the turnpike,

and up that narrow lane, which, as some of you may know, runs by it. There she waited, walking up and down, as though expecting some one. I had hidden myself in another hedge, and was looking on, and presently I heard a heavy footstep, and I saw a tall man approaching. She walked straight up to meet him, and he stooped down, and put his arms around her, and kissed her. That's what he did!" And having made his point, the little man looked round to see the result.

Mr. Snick had expected, on reaching his climax, he would have been hailed with a shout of delight from his audience, but there was no such outburst. On the contrary, a feeling of awkwardness seemed to prevail among them, and, after looking stealthily at each other, they, with one accord, glanced towards Gerald Hardinge. The expression on Mr. Dunsany's face was especially anxious, and when Mr. Snick stopped speaking, Gerald felt his knee clasped by his friend's hand in protest against any outbreak on his part.

The young man, however, needed no such warning. His lips twitched a little when Mr. Snick made his point, but all sign of emotion had passed away as he asked: "The night was dark, and I think you say you did not recognise the gentleman's face?"

"No," said Mr. Snick; "I could only see that he was a tall man."

"The darkness must have deceived you in that respect too," said Gerald, with an attempt at a smile, "for," turning to the company, "I cannot be considered tall, and yet I was the man who met Miss Pierrepont on the night in question, when this estimable gentleman was good enough to play the spy upon our actions."

"You!" cried Mr. Snick.

"You!" cried Mr. Hayward.

"You!" echoed Mr. Potts, the prompter. "You been kissing and making love to our leading lady?"

"Yes," said Gerald Hardinge; "yes, Mr. Potts, and making love to her successfully, I am happy to say, for Miss Pierrepont is now my affianced wife."

A SCOTCH FEEING MARKET.

AMONG the more characteristic scenes connected with the rural life of Scotland, and especially the rural life of the north-eastern counties of Scotland, the feeing market holds its own distinctive place. It corresponds with the statute fair of some English counties, and in it, at the two

terms of Whit Sunday and Martinmas, the tenant-farmers and farm-labourers meet to form their six-monthly engagements. Where railways have penetrated, the character of the feeing market has been modified in a slight degree, from the fact that the trains take people early away from the market, and carry them promptly to their homes. It is Burns who has said:

When market nights are wearin' late,
And folk begin to tak' the gate,
While we sit bousin' at the sappy,
And gettin' fou and unco happy.

But where the railway trains run, in place of "taking the gate" on foot, loiteringly, and in small detachments, the market frequenters are all carried off together. This serves to bring the market earlier to a close, and very perceptibly to curtail the noise and uproar that invariably mark its later stages. In other respects the feeing market continues to be the same strange medley of business, holiday-making, and rough dissipation it has been for many years, and that in defiance of all attempts by philanthropists and clergymen to put down the system, or in some way improve it.

The relation between the tenant-farmer and his labourers is of this sort: I take, in the way of example, my friend the tenant of the hill-foot farm, known as Mains of Yawal, who will very fairly represent the class of hard-headed, indastrious men to whom he belongs. By habit and custom of long standing in that region, the tenant is always known by the name of his farm. And thus, if one would avoid the suspicion of desiring to degrade him socially in the eyes of his neighbours of the glen, he must address my friend, not by his own proper name and surname, but as "Mains of Yawal," or, if brevity is aimed at, as "Mains," simply. He is a farmer of good medium position, and, apart from his domestic establishment, carries on the operations of the farm by means of six or seven labourers. Two or three drive his horses, in cart and plough; the special function of one trustworthy man is to tend and feed his cattle, and the others do such odd jobs as must be attended to from day to day. They live in a separate apartment in the homestead known as the "bothy," without female society, and doing their own cooking, which is not of an elaborate sort.

They are vigorous, powerful fellows these bothy men, or "boys," as Mains of Yawal is in the habit of styling them; somewhat rough in manner, no doubt, but by no

means either destitute of opinions of their own, or afraid to give expression to them. Coming between them and their master, as a kind of buffer, there is the "working grieve," who is simply a married labourer of good experience, whom Mains provides with a cottage for himself and his family. He takes orders from his master, conveys them to the boys, over whom he exercises a general supervision, and is expected to be careful about the affairs of the farm generally, but is invested with no special powers of independent action.

And thus it is that when the period of the half-yearly feeing market comes round, and the bothy men have got to be re-engaged for another term, or others engaged to take their places, Mains of Yawal himself must come face to face with the boys in discussing and adjusting the rate of wages, and all other disputed points. On the morning of the feeing market day, but not before, Mains will address himself to each of his bothy men in succession, for the purpose of ascertaining whether he is willing to "bide" in his present situation for six months more. The answers may vary from a blunt negative to a qualified and hesitating affirmative; but one thing is certain, that Mains shall be left in no doubt of its being the full intention of every one of the boys to appear in person at the feeing market that day. And, very probably, even those who have returned the most favourable answers to his inquiry have likewise indicated their belief that the feeing market is the fitting place for completing any contemplated transactions between them.

So they come together, farmers and farm-labourers, on the village-green—a representative assemblage of each class. The farmers drive thither in gig or dog-cart, or astride all sorts of steeds, from the thick-set cob, fit for plough or harrow, to the hardy Highland pony. The labourers come trooping in in groups of three, four, or half a dozen in company. They are all dressed in full holiday attire; and many seek to gain additional effect by carrying a stout walking-stick, and assuming a little bit of swagger in their gait. Women are not numerous, as the better class of female servants prefer engaging themselves privately to appearing in the noise and bustle of the feeing market. There is a proportion of these, however, chiefly out-door workers, who dress yet more showily than their male companions, in whose somewhat boisterous society they seem to be very much at

home; and when the little groups of acquaintances meet, their words of mutual recognition and greeting are loud and emphatic. Here and there, about the margin of the market-green, and very handy for all comers, are canvas tents for the sale of refreshments (mainly whisky, let it be said). These have been put up for the occasion by the alehouse-keepers gathered from a radius of half a dozen miles round. They have come to supplement the services of the village publican in the way of providing "entertainment for man and beast," or rather to share the market profits with him; and the village publican will return the compliment by packing up his whisky measures, and other business apparatus, and transporting himself to the other feeing markets in the district, as they successively occur during the fortnight that precedes what is known as the "fitting" term. Near by the tents are abundance of hucksters' stalls for the sale of ginger-bread, confections, and much else meant to tempt the eye or the palate. Here, in the centre of a very dense throng, we find the voluble hardware man in his cart loudly proclaiming his desire to benefit all who can be persuaded to buy his goods at greatly less than prime cost; there stands the professional ballad-singer, with his sheaf of dubious-looking sheets under his arm, and endeavouring to be audible in unmelodious notes, which meet a formidable rivalry in many surrounding noises, not to mention the ear-piercing sounds of the bagpipe blown by a hairy and kilted Highlander in the background. And yet again—strangest sight of all perhaps—we have in the very centre of this Babel of sounds a group of "revival" preachers prosecuting their work. Two or three stand aside, and one has mounted a sort of temporary platform, and is delivering a fervid address, full of solemn adjuration, which is met by words of horrid blasphemy from several half-tipsy men near by. From his white neckcloth we conclude that he is a minister by profession. His appearance indicates that he feels his present position to be anything but comfortable; yet when we begin to think of the folly that would lead any man to attempt preaching in such a scene as that, we cannot help this further reflection, that if the preacher's sense of duty has been strong enough to compel him to brave the insolence of the rude crowd, he has, after all, some claim to our respect too. But he stops, and a broad-shouldered, vigorous-looking layman ascends the plat-

form. He glances over his audience with a firm, self-possessed look, utters the words, "Let us pray," and, taking off his hat, proceeds, in stentorian tones, to offer up an extempore prayer. There are one or two attempts at interruption, but they speedily cease; heads are generally uncovered near the speaker; a few of the noisier men slip away from the place, and by the time the prayer is finished there is a wonderful amount of quiet. The lay preacher at once goes on with an address, in which he manifests an exact knowledge of the habits and mode of life of those to whom he speaks. His style is familiar, though pointed and severe; but it is neither canting nor mawkish. He has caught the ear of an audience even there; and, incongruous as it may seem, his solemn discourse of sin and salvation is listened to with as close attention on the one side, as the coarse buffoonery of the mountebank vendor of hardware, declaiming only ten yards off, is on the other.

But we are concerned with the business done in the feeing market. We have seen Mains of Yawal preparing for the market; let us now look on as he proceeds to accomplish what he has got to do there. Mains stands in the centre of a dense and constantly shifting crowd, with a couple of men by his side, and engaged in negotiation with one of them.

"Nine pun' ten's a heavy wage for a man wi' no charge," urges Mains, speaking to the younger of the two men, to whom he is addressing himself. "Ye'll better be taken't; here's your arles," and he holds out a shilling in his hand to the man.

"It winna du, laird; mak' it the even siller, an' we'll think about it."

By the even siller the young man means the sum of ten pounds. He has asked ten pounds ten shillings as his half-year's wages, and has been offered nine pounds ten shillings. Then Mains and he have an arduous haggie over the duties he is wanted to perform, which are those connected with driving a pair of farm horses, and the rate of wages usually paid for such work. The master loudly declares that the "fee" asked is unreasonably high, and such as he has not been accustomed to pay, and the servant retorts by desiring to know what sort of men he has got at less fee, at the same time very broadly hinting that his own capabilities entitle him to the highest rate of wages going. "Speer" (ask) "at your grieve there," he adds, pointing to the other man, who, after a

short absence, while the negotiations have been going on, has just returned with a younger stripling in tow. It is on the preliminary recommendation of the grieve, who had had some knowledge of the man before, that Mains has been proceeding; and, after an abrupt renewal of his offer, "tak' it or want it," he turns about to commence similar negotiations with the stripling, whom he wishes to engage as "orra man," and concerning whose previous history the grieve can give no information whatever. He has simply stumbled upon him in the crowd, and deeming him, from physical appearances, a "likely loon," has brought him to his master. The man previously in hand has uttered a half-indignant exclamation, and turned to leave; but while Mains and the lad are "argle bargling" in a precisely similar way about work and wages, he returns, judiciously prompted to that course by the grieve, and exclaims: "Weel, ca't nine fifteen, an' I'll refer the croon to yoursel' an' the grieve." This means that the five shillings to complete the ten pounds shall be payable when the term of service is up, but only at the discretion of the master and grieve should they consider the amount fairly earned. Mains of Yawal pronounces this amended offer to be mere "haivers." But at this point in the negotiations he asks his three present companions to accompany him to one of the refreshment tents.

The tent is entered by an irregular sort of doorway at one end, over which is the owner's sign-board, roughly fastened; through an opening at the other end we can see a sort of gipsy fireplace, and, over the wood and peat fire, there is a large metal pot, in which the staple of the dinner supplied (boiled beef and "broth") is cooked. The tent is crowded with farmers and farm-labourers, horse and cattle dealers, and other marketing folks, seated on long wooden seats, and most of those present are occupied in the concluding stages of bargain making, while some have met there to enjoy each other's society and a dram through pure love and friendship. Mains of Yawal calls to a ruddy-cheeked damsel, who aids the master of the tent, to bring "a half-mutchkin;" and we hear similar orders right and left. The din of voices, and the hot vapour from the steaming toddy on the tables, are, to be sure, somewhat trying to our inexperienced sensibilities, but we are not prepared to say that the atmosphere of the tent does not facilitate the adjustment of

contracts and covenants. At any rate, by the time that Mains of Yawal's half-mutchkin of whisky is finished—he distributes it impartially between the men and himself—he has fully engaged his two servants, whom he then dismisses with an intimation of the exact date at which he expects them to enter his service, and his hope that they will turn out as good servants as they have professed themselves to be.

His own particular business over, Mains of Yawal takes a stroll through the market to learn the general run of things affecting his interests, and to meet a friend or two, and then at a reasonable hour mounts his gig and rides home. To the farm-servant, however, the feeling market is much more than a day for the transaction of business. He does not call it a holiday; yet it is a day on which he is bent upon pleasure in a very determined fashion. The number of friends he meets on feeling day is great. Vociferous are the greetings that pass, and voluble the inquiries made as to the health and fortunes of those long separated. The feeling of hospitality is at its zenith, and as it too generally finds expression by the friends who meet entertaining each other under the shade of the canvas tent, the effect of the drink imbibed becomes widely apparent in the various forms of outrageous hilarity, obscene and blasphemous talk, and open quarrelling, with occasional exchange of blows. The later stages of the feeling market are indeed a good deal more stirring than pleasant to the on-looker. Yet when we think of the pitch of frenzy to which raw whisky, often of the fieriest sort, will stir the man who chooses to drink himself drunk therewith, it is in its way rather creditable to these rough farm-labourers that scenes of violence are not more common in the feeling market than they are; the results, as they bear generally on the morality of the people, are confessedly deplorable enough.

While the young men have been engaged with business and whisky, the young women who have been in the market to engage have been walking about in their finery, seeing and being seen. As they pick up, or are picked up, by their male friends, their understood right is to be presented with parcels of "sweeties" from the confection stalls in the first place, and in the next place to be escorted home by such of the chevaliers as are not too far gone in inebriety to be capable of performing that office of gallantry. The close of the feeling market, when the whisky tents are struck,

and the latest loiterers on the market-green stagger off to their distant homes, is a spectacle which the eye of the Christian philanthropist can scarcely regard with complacency.

AN ITALIAN PEASANT PLAY.

IN TWO PARTS. PART II.

AMONG the population of Bethulia is a pair of betrothed lovers rejoicing in the names of Sileno and Gisbina. They are both warriors of proved valour. The notion of making Gisbina fight, sword in hand and helmet on head, for her country, is evidently taken from the heroines of the poems of romance and chivalry. Ariosto's Bradamante probably furnished the immediate model for Gisbina. As represented at Pon San Pieri, she is tall and long-limbed; wears a tunic to the knee, martial greaves upon her legs, a sword by her side, a tin shield on her arm, and on her head a fireman's helmet surmounting the inevitable curly wig.

After a recapitulation by the lovers of the circumstances which threaten Israel with destruction, they conclude a rather long scene as follows :

SILENO. Dearest come! All fear eschew!
GISBINA (very loud). A fig for fear! I'd have you know
My heart with martial fire doth glow,
And I can fight as well as you.*

By-and-bye Holofernes, with Achior, a general of the Ammonites, and other officers, is reconnoitring in the neighbourhood of the city of Cilicia. And there is brought to him a shepherd whose errand to the army is to implore protection for his family and his flocks. This "pastore" is the comic character of the drama. He is dressed in a wide-flapping coat, knee-breeches, coarse blue stockings, a red waistcoat, and a huge hat turned up in front with a bunch of flowers. He bears a shepherd's crook in his hand, and exhibits, to the uproarious delight of the audience, the most extravagant terror and amazement at sight of Holofernes. An amazement, be it remarked, not wholly unjustified by the aspect of that champion, who has a terrible bushy black beard, rolls his eyes beneath their thickly painted brows, and bears a general resemblance to the sign of the Saracen's Head.

The pastore is interrogated as to his religious views, which prove to be limited.

He is asked whether he knows Nabuco and answers, humbly, "No, signori." "Aha!" says Shem; "well, he is the real divinity. Adore him!" "Certainly," answers the pastore; and, moreover, undertakes to inform his friends and neighbours of their duty in this matter. Whereupon he is set at liberty, and promised every safety and protection.

After this there is an infinity of tedious scenes between Holofernes and his party on the one hand, and the Israelitish warriors and their friends on the other. Holofernes quarrels with Achior for "speaking up" in favour of the Jews, and has him bound to a tree, and left in the wilderness to perish.

Achior is invariably called by the spectators around me Achilles. And, indeed, not until I was favoured with a sight of the manuscript was I sure that it was not the Grecian hero who was represented. Since we had Shem and Amurath at the siege of Bethulia, one did not altogether refuse to believe that Achilles might have been there also!

But a more interesting spectacle is presently afforded by the interior of the Temple at Bethulia, with King Ozias, and the high-priest, and the populace, worshipping. They sing a sort of psalm in chorus, which is only welcome as being a change from the intolerable monotony of the chanting. In itself it is not melodious. And here must be noted another instance of the spirit of conventionality before alluded to.

None of the performers attempted to conduct themselves as they would have done in real life. There was no trace of imitation of nature; of trying (however uncouthly) to behave like real men and women. But there was a very evident attempt to imitate the conventionalities of the opera stage. They divided themselves into two parties, one left and one right, just as the chorus-singers do. They knelt on one knee (carefully choosing the knee next the audience), and sawed the air with their arms, with the unanimity only seen in stage crowds. They sang and moved at the audience, and were never unconscious of the footlights for one moment. Doubtless every one of these peasant actors was in the habit of attending the solemnities of his own church, and many of behaving with respect and devoutness on such occasions. But it had never entered into their heads that, in representing the worship of the Jews in their Temple, they should try to seem to be really pray-

* SIL. Vieni, oh cara, e nell' obbligo
Si deponga ogni timore!
GIS. Che temenza! Ho sempre il cuore
Di guerriera, e pugno anch' io!

ing. No; there were rules and precedents for the conduct of such a stage scene, and these were to be followed. In this, as in all the rest, the contrast between the Italian and Tyrolese peasant players was very striking.

To the assembled worshippers enters Judith, blazing with tinfoil, and otherwise radiant, and announces her intention of delivering her country. She does not reveal her plan, but recommends the Israelites to pray fervently for its success, which they promise to do, and are evidently encouraged by her hopeful demeanour. They break forth into enthusiastic compliments about her beauty and the brilliancy of her appearance. And when I state that her attire consists of a red damask gown cut in the same fashion as her black one, trimmed in an open-jam-tart pattern down the front with gilt paper, a mass of coloured beads round her throat, a crown stuck all over with pieces of red, blue, yellow, and white glass (from beneath which hangs the wig, inflexibly curly as ever), and an extra coating of raddle on the cheeks, it will be readily understood that Ozias and the high-priest should be immensely struck by so dazzling an apparition.

I must not dwell on minor incidents—such as the shepherd's possession of a miraculous ointment, prepared by himself from simples, by means of which he instantaneously cures Gishina of a terrific wound inflicted by an Assyrian scimitar; or the introduction on to the scene of a vivandière dressed in the Italian colours, who provides refreshment for Nabuchodonosor's army, and is much admired by the junior officers—but must come at once to the grand catastrophe.

Judith gains admission to the camp of Holofernes, fascinates him at a glance, and is treated to a banquet served on a little round table about the size of a Cheshire cheese, and apparently consisting (the banquet, not the table) of three empty bottles, several ditto glass tumblers, and one flask containing wine. There is nothing whatever to eat; which circumstance (combined with the intoxication of his passion for la bella Giuditte) may account for the fact that Holofernes becomes very drunk in the course of the banquet. For the three empty bottles and the one full flask could hardly have produced this result under ordinary conditions, one would fancy. Howbeit, a profound somnolency falls upon the great captain. He hastily arranges with Judith that the ceremony of their marriage shall take place with great pomp at an early

hour on the following morning, dismisses his army (the literal stage directions in the manuscript are, "Amurath, Shema, and the army go off"), and throws himself on his bed in the tent, carefully drawing the curtains behind him.

After a brief pause, la bella Giuditte returns on tip-toe. She takes the sword which is hanging by the side of the tent, expresses a little natural repugnance to the deed she is about to do, overcomes this as a despicable weakness, and rushes upon the tent. The curtains are withdrawn, and reveal a stuffed figure, representing, with a good deal of revolting detail, Holofernes, who has just been decapitated. The stuffed figure is made to jump and writhe convulsively, whilst Judith triumphantly rushes off with its head! which head may be vividly imagined by such of my readers as have seen the grotesque masks in a Christmas pantomime.

At this point the audience displayed, I am sorry to say, a good deal of ferocity; whooping with delight at the extremely horrible, though ludicrous, spectacle of the headless Holofernes, and encouraging Judith with shouts and yells partly savage and partly derisive.

This scene was, of course, the climax of the play. There was a fifth and last act, wherein Judith appeared in a triumphal car, bearing aloft the Saracen's Head, stuck upon a spear, and receiving the fervent congratulations of the liberated Hebrews: the whole concluding with a repetition of the hymn in the Temple, sung by the entire strength of the company, including, I doubt not, our friend Leoferne, behind the scenes. But the true culmination of interest was attained when the tyrant was decapitated.

For real comicality, and a pathos which parting burlesque writers toil after in vain, I think, however, that the Maggio of Santa Oliva triumphantly bears away the palm from all competitors in the same line. I scarcely hope to find implicit credence when I state that wheresoever I have done into verse any snatches from this composition, I have, whilst preserving the measure and the rhyme, rendered the phrases literally, and that my translation falls far short of the original in genuine absurdity. Nevertheless, such is the unvarnished truth.

The incidents in this Maggio are of so stupendous, nay, miraculous a nature, so numerous, and extending over so long a series of years, as to preclude my attempting to give any but the very faintest out-

line of the plot. An individual denominated *Lacché* (lackey) appears before the curtain, and speaks a brief prologue, to the effect that the audience are now to prepare themselves to witness the most admirable and wonderful adventures gone through by Saint Oliva, who was a great devotee of the Madonna, and proved to be specially under her holy protection. "Of the Emperor Julien this saint was the daughter, and wife, with great affection, of the King of Castile." Ask not, oh, reader, "What emperor? Which King of Castile?" No further elucidation, either historical, geographical, or chronological, is vouchsafed on these points throughout the play. Only it may be mentioned that the emperor was a Christian, and that there was a pope in his days, of whom the monarch sought counsel.

The lackey withdraws, and the actors appear on the scene. The emperor confides to a faithful "baron" that he finds himself in a somewhat difficult position. His late adored spouse is dead. "Come, calm yourself," observes the baron, parenthetically. "In your position you will have no difficulty in finding another." And he is determined, when he marries again, as he is resolved to do for the good of his kingdom, to wed no lady inferior to the deceased in beauty and virtue. A combination of both, such as the late empress exhibited, he can nowhere find. Especially, his wife was remarkable for the exquisite symmetry of her hands. He has sought far and wide, but such hands, together with such exalted Christian piety and general fascination, are only discovered in his sole daughter Oliva. Her accordingly he intends to marry, and is only waiting until the dispensation he has sent to demand shall be accorded by his holiness the pope. It will be, the emperor admits, a troublesome job (*una cosa faticosa*) to get the dispensation, but he expresses no doubt of ultimately succeeding.

Oliva, however, who is singing a canticle to the Virgin with her maid when the proposition is broached to her, views the matter with the horror and amazement which one would expect from a young lady so excellently brought up. Nothing will induce her to yield to so unheard-of a proposal. And after various long colloquies with her father and with persons about the court, she resolves to cut off her own hands, in the hope that this fatal attraction once removed, the emperor may abandon his scheme. How she accomplishes the

feat of cutting off both her hands there is nothing to show. The task would be one beyond the powers of any ordinary mortal, but Oliva is a saint, and behaves as such. But the result of this heroic sacrifice is to make her father furiously angry. He turns her out in her helpless condition into the wilderness full of carnivorous beasts, which wilderness appears to be in strange and uncomfortable proximity to the emperor's capital city, and leaves her there to be devoured.

This dreadful fate does not, of course, overtake her. She is rescued by the huntmen of the King of Brittany, and is finally hired by that monarch as nursemaid to his little boy, although a nursemaid without hands would seem to be an unprofitable kind of servant. Indeed, the Queen of Brittany's maternal instincts tell her so much, and she makes a little objection to the engagement of the stranger maiden. But the queen is won over by the beauty and sweetness of Oliva's countenance, and consents to intrust her baby to the care of that damsel. Oliva steadfastly refuses to state who she is, and where she comes from, and under these hopeful circumstances the little victim is placed in her arms.

A wicked courtier (also a baron like the confidant of the emperor) makes love to Oliva. She repulses him indignantly. He is surprised at the disdain of a servant-girl, tells her she doesn't know what a great and noble signore he is; gives her a push (*sic*) by way of proving his nobleness, and what might have been anticipated happens: the wretched baby tumbles down on to the ground, and, Oliva being unable to pick him up, remains there.

A learned doctor, called in by the distracted parents, makes an exquisite speech, in which he states that in the course of his studies he has read and pondered the medical works of "Aristotle, Plato, Asclepias (*Æsculapius*), Socrates, Galen, Hippocrates, Varro, Pratarco (Plutarch), Ponderio, Aveteo, and Carivaccio!" And that he has their aphorisms (aphorisms) by heart. All this, however, profits nothing; and despite the aphorisms, the baby dies, and Oliva is cast forth with execration into the wilderness once more, with the fervently expressed hope on the part of the king and queen that she may speedily be devoured.

Nothing of the sort occurs. The Madonna presently appears to Oliva in person, and—apparently as a reward for having

smashed the baby—miraculously causes her hands to be restored to her more beautiful than ever.

Then follows a wondrous and protracted chain of events. Oliva is again and again rescued from impending death. Once she is thrown into the sea in a chest full of holes, which floats on the stormy ocean as well as the most seaworthy of ships, and brings Oliva safely to shore. Her enemies are extraordinarily numerous and ferocious, but of course they cannot prevail against the protection of the Madonna. Amongst other incidents in her extremely chequered career, Oliva marries the King of Castile, becomes the mother of a hopeful son, and is condemned to death by her husband, who is deceived by the fiendish machinations of his mother the queen-dowager. This old lady—a somewhat forcible specimen of the typical mother-in-law—hates the young queen for no particular reason except that she is her son's wife. She has vainly tried to prevent the match, and urged upon the king that he is doing an imprudent thing in marrying an utter stranger (for Oliva still preserves her incognito).

Son, your mind don't let her blandish;
Reasons I could give you many.
Wed a girl without a penny!
And, besides, she's quite outlandish!

This last touch ("à forestiera") is intensely Italian.

After a long lapse of years crowded with amazing adventures, the King of Castile, who supposes himself to be a widower, and now regrets his lost Oliva (having discovered her innocence), goes to Rome to meet the emperor, who likewise believes Oliva to be dead years ago. The King of Castile, on learning the treachery which destroyed his wife, had taken the strong measure of burning his mother alive as a punishment for her iniquities. In course of time he is troubled by scruples as to whether his warmth of temper may not have hurried him a little too far. To burn one's own mother alive is perhaps rather harsher than is consistent with filial virtue. So the King of Castile goes to Rome to seek for absolution from the pope. And here the author leaves us in disagreeable uncertainty as to whether the Emperor Giuliano was reigning in Rome (together with the pope—a circumstance which might be worth considering in the present state of affairs in the Peninsula), or whether he too had arrived there as a visitor. The former seems to be the real state of the case, for the emperor receives

and welcomes the King of Castile in the manner of a host doing the honours of his own house. But be this as it may, the following verses will give an idea of the style of colloquy between the two potentates, and afford a pleasing picture of the familiar moments of the great:

EMPEROR. Was your journey fair and fine, sir?
KING. Very.

EMP. Feel you appetite?

KING. Well, rather.

EMP. Lo, I you invite!

KING. What to do?

EMP. Good sooth, to dine, sir!

(Enter a servant in great haste.)

EMP. How! What means this hasty runner,
Flurried mien, and foot unsteady?

SERV. Majesty, the dinner's ready!

EMP. Will you come, sire?

KING. Too much honour!

After numerous vicissitudes Santa Oliva is brought into the presence of her husband and father, who both have deemed her dead. Upon their first sight of her follows a sort of duet, which for sheer, solid, unconscious absurdity, I have never seen surpassed. The father and husband alternate breathless sentences as follows:

EMP. 'Tis not she! Or do I see her?

KING. Do I see her? Is it she?

EMP. Yes! No! Yes! It cannot be!

KING. No! And yet! How can it be her?

Finally, of course, all is made clear. The saint is restored to her loving spouse (who, we trust, is absolved for the peccadillo of roasting the queen-dowager in a hasty moment) and to her imperial papa, now quite a reformed character, and on the best possible terms with his holiness the pope. Rejoicings are commanded on a magnificent scale. All the kind Christians who have befriended Saint Oliva in her troubles are amply rewarded. And the emperor, in the joy of his heart, breaks out into vast schemes for the popular rejoicings, which have quite an Oriental flavour in their unlimited and impossible hugeness. A deputation of nobles, coming to congratulate him on his newly-recovered domestic felicity, is received with so much warmth and affability as apparently to overwhelm them altogether. At least I can only thus account for the comparative feebleness of their reply, ending in almost an anticlimax:

O dread king, we thank you duly
For your great magnificence,
And we all in consequence
Shall remain obliged most truly.

But the emperor's final speech rises once more into real enthusiasm. He speaks thus:

Tenor, bass, and eke soprano,
 We command three days to sing,
 With instruments, both wind and string,
 The Te Deum Ambrosiano.
 Also let a dining-table,
 Full a mile square in extension,
 Be prepared. And pay attention
 To spread it amply as you're able!
 No one's absence will I pardon.
 I expect each noble cit
 About my festive board to sit,
 And all assemble in the garden.

The notion of having a supper-table spread in one's garden is Italian and local. But the idea of inviting indiscriminately "each noble cit" to partake of unlimited food at a board "full a mile square in extension," belongs to the lofty realms of poetry, in which the mind bursts the fetters of fact, and where there is nothing to pay.

The foregoing is an imperfect account—imperfect, owing to the limits of time and space, which are more regarded by an English editor than by a Pon-San-Pierian author—but a perfectly faithful one, as far as it goes, of the Mystery or Miracle Play as it has come to exist in rural Italy—as it has come to exist by a kind of "natural selection," all the features of a religious drama which are not consonant to the nature of the people having been eliminated in process of time. Had there been any ecclesiastical supervision—the presence even of a parish curé—we may suppose that a little more reverence and a little less ignorance would have been exhibited in the performance. But, be it observed, I say expressly, "a little."

THE PRAYERS.

STILL as glass was the ocean,
 In a calm light and pale,
 A hundred ships lay on it,
 Each with a windless sail.

A hundred skippers were fretting,
 Each search'd the sea and the skies,
 Each for a wind was praying,
 But never a wind would rise.

The prayers rose up to Heaven,
 In English, German, Greek,
 Each of the hundred skippers
 In his own tongue did speak.

Each of the hundred skippers,
 Loath in the calm to stay,
 Wanted the wind to waken,
 To blow him on his way.

Each in his own direction
 Would have his good ship blown,
 And a hundred winds were wanted
 If each was to get his own.

Each on the deck was pacing
 With discontented mind,
 And when the wind would come not,
 All thought the Lord unkind.

Poor fools! Had He granted their wishes
 Sad were the end to see!
 The hundred winds would have hurled them
 To the bottom of the sea.

CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

FIVE FLEET-STREET TAVERNS.

THROUGH a narrow portal, a few doors north-east of Temple Bar, over which a gilt bird proudly struts, have entered many generations of hungry Englishmen. There is no habitué of the Cock Tavern in Fleet-street who has not at some period or another of his prandial existence been informed of the extreme antiquity of that ancient dining place. As you nibbled up the last green leaf of your salad, or drained with a lingering plaintiveness the last drop in your tankard, the head-waiter, after gently correcting the fire, or adjusting the burnished kettle, was in the habit of mitigating the painfulness of Rabelais's "mauvais quart d'heure," by gravely producing a round snuff-box, containing a farthing-token of the house at the time of the Plague, and with it a greasy volume of Pepys, thumb'd black by Templars and ink-handed lawyers' clerks, alluding to the following advertisement of the period, watching you with benignant condescension as you read words that, though two hundred years old, seem just written:

"This is to certify that the master of the Cock and Bottle, commonly called the Cock Alehouse at Temple Bar, hath dismissed his servants and shut up his house for this long vacation, intending, God willing, to return at Michaelmas next, so that all persons whatsoever who may have any accounts with the said master, or farthings belonging to the said house" (the plump waiter watched your face as you came to a certain line, and pushed the venerated box nearer your plate) "are desired to repair thither before the 8th of this instant, and they shall receive satisfaction."

At this time the fatal red cross was to be seen on thousands of barred-up doors, and according to that amiable and trustworthy gentleman, Mr. Evelyn (then a commissioner for the cure of the sick and wounded in the Dutch war), there were then dying in London of the plague about ten thousand persons a week; he writes, August the 7th, 1665: "I went all along the City and suburbs from Kent-street to St. James's, a dismal passage and dangerous to see so many coffins exposed in the streets, now

thin of people. The shops shut up and all in mournful silence, not knowing whose turn might be next." All who could afford it were flying from London, huge pits for the dead were digging in Bunhill Fields. Dying people, mad with the disease, were occasionally met in the suburban streets, and at stated hours the doleful dead-carts came round to collect the dead. In due time, however, the scourge abated, and the landlord of the Cock returned, re-lit his fires in his rusty grates, scoured bright his gridirons, and that old carved Jacobean mantelpiece, still over the Fleet-street fireplace, shone cheerily again in the dancing flame.

On April the 23rd, 1668 (the year after the Dutch were in the Medway), we find Pepys, then a busy, well-to-do, important man, in court and in city, being Clerk of the Acts of the Navy, and living in some style in Seething-lane, Tower-street, disporting himself at the Cock Alehouse in Fleet-street. Mr. Pepys, then only thirty-six, was foad of music, the theatres, and the company of pretty actresses—sometimes, indeed, roasting the jealousy of Mrs. Pepys—and seldom forgot in his delightful diary to note all "great beauties" and "fine ladies" he met. He was at this time very partial to the society of Mrs. Knipp, an actress of the King's House, a pretty, "excellent, mad-humoured thing," who sang divinely, and visited frequently at Seething-lane, in spite of that ill-natured fellow, that "ill, melancholy, jealous-looking" churl, her husband. "Dapper Dicky," Knipp, it appears, used to playfully call Mr. Samuel Pepys, while he named her "Barbary Allen," after a little Scotch song, in which the artful and somewhat dangerous syren excelled. Bustling Pepys worked hard in his office, and had been personally thanked and praised for his diligence and fidelity by the king and the Duke of York. Anxious not to overstretch the bow, he had laid down, March 10th, 1666, the following very sensible rule of life: "The truth is, I do indulge myself a little more in pleasure, knowing that this is the proper age of my life to do it, and out of my observation that most men that do thrive in the world do forget to take pleasure during the time that they are getting their estate, but reserve that till they have got one, and then it is too late for them to enjoy it." After this secret peep at the short-head diary of the busy man at the Admiralty, we can follow him through Temple Bar, and understand better the thoroughness of his enjoyment.

On April 23rd, 1668, then (in his wife's absence apparently), Pepys invites a Mrs. Pierce, her daughter, a Mrs. Foster, and the irresistible Knipp, to dinner at noon in Seething-lane, and after that takes them to see the crown jewels at the Tower (not yet snatched at by Blood) "which I myself," he says, in his quaint, simple way, "never saw before, and I mightily pleased with it." Then comes the bit we want. "Thence by water to the Temple, and there to the Cock Alehouse, and drank and eat a lobster, and sang, and mightily merry, to almost night. I carried Mrs. Pierce home, and then Knipp and I to the Temple again, and took boat, it being darkish, and to Fox Hall (laid out in 1661), it being now night, and a bonfire burning at Lambeth for the king's coronation day. And there she and I drank; and so back, and led her home, it being now ten at night, and I got a link, and, walking towards home, just at the entrance into the ruins in St. Dunstan's (where the Great Fire stopped), I was met by two rogues with clubs, who came towards us. So I went back and walked home, quite round by the wall, and got well home and to bed weary, pleased with my day's pleasure, but yet displeas'd at my expense and time I lose." We can, perhaps, hardly wonder that at last Mrs. Pepys grew dismally jealous (January 13, 1669), and, as Mr. Pepys lay in bed, opened the curtains, and threatened to pinch him with the red-hot tongs, which effective weapon, however, she was eventually persuaded to lay amicably down.

Tennyson's verses on Will Waterproof, a plump head-waiter at the Cock, long since dead, has made the Fleet-street hostelry known to thousands who have never trod its sawdust-strewn floor. In early days, when the then unknown poet dwelt in lofty chambers up behind the balustraded parapet of No. 57, Lincoln's-inn-fields (west side), he used to resort to the Cock for his quiet five o'clock dinner, and, after a pint of the special port, he probably wrote those verses on Will. The humour in some of them, it must be allowed, is forced, but how graceful and thoughtful are the choicest lines such as—

And hence that hale lives about
The waiter's hands that reach
To each his perfect pint of stout,
His proper chop to each.

And again :

But whither would my fancy go?
How out of place he makes
The violet of a legend blow
Among the chops and steaks.

Ah, let the rusty theme alone,
We know not what we know,
But for my pleasant hour 'tis gone,
'Tis gone, and let it go.

An odd frequenter of the Cock tells us that he remembers when the whole room was lined with carved wainscoting, and the bar hung with silver cups, the property of special customers from the Temple opposite.

The door of the Rainbow reminds us what an outcry there was on the first introduction into England of that pleasant and harmless Arabian drink, coffee. Its weaker and innocent Chinese brother, tea, secured a footing amongst us with far less trouble. The Rainbow, near the Inner Temple gate, as Mr. Timbs proves clearly, was the second coffee-house opened in London. Lord Bacon, in his *Sylva Sylvarum* (James the First), mentions coffee as a Turkish drink, made from a soot-black, scented berry, which the Turks grind into a powder, and drink in boiling hot water, to comfort the brain and heart, and assist digestion. Burton, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1621, in the same reign, speaks of Turkish coffee-houses. In 1632, Sir Henry Blount, who wrote a book of travels in the Levant, mentions Turkish coffee with praise. Evelyn describes drinking it at college in the rooms of a Levant friend, and Antony Wood tells us that in 1650 (ten years before the Restoration), a Levant Jew opened a coffee-house at Oxford. Two years later, Pasqua Rosee, a Ragusan servant of Mr. Edwards, a Turkey merchant, and Bowman a coachman, opened the first coffee-house in London in George Yard, Lombard-street. Rosee advertised coffee as a berry grown only in the Arabian deserts, and a drink as used generally throughout all the grand seigneur's dominions. A simple, innocent thing, he called it; mighty good to help digestion; it quickened the spirits, suppressed fumes, cured the gout, dropsy, and scurvy, and was an excellent remedy, according to Rosee, for the spleen and hypochondria, the steam was efficacious for sore eyes, and the use of it made the skin clear and white. About 1656, Mr. Farr, a barber, who had perhaps been in the Levant, opened the second coffee-house nearly opposite the Cock, and Sir Henry Blount, the Levant traveller, became one of his patrons and frequent visitors. There seems at first to have been a foolish notion among coffee drinkers that the coffee should be taken scalding hot, and its enemies naturally made great fun of the rueful faces of the suffering enthusiasts.

The squib writers of the day ridiculed the broken English of Rosee and his partners, and their quack praises of the new drink, which was black as a coal, and looked like physic. But coffee was not to be laughed down, and a satirist soon had to confess that it lessened drunkenness.

And now, alas! the drench has credit got,
And he's no gentleman that drinks it not.

The coffee-house keepers seem the first to have tried to institute fines for swearing, and they allowed no wagers to exceed five shillings. The coffee-house walls were often hung with cases containing popular pills, elixirs, and perfumes, and scurrilous Ned Ward (1679) compares a coffee-house so adorned to the consulting-room of a quack doctor. The vintners soon grew alarmed at the growing popularity of coffee, and did their best to hinder its sale. Coffee was said to be deleterious in the highest degree, and it was prophesied that the children of coffee drinkers would prove apes and pigmies. Those who remembered the stalwart days of Ben Jonson, when men drank beer or canary, lamented the degeneracy of the age, and described the coffee-house keepers as laughing to themselves at their success till they could hardly pour out the sooty broth, the "loathsome potion" which had taken the place of "the vine's pure blood." These denouncers of coffee were the conservatives of those days. Farr prospered, but he seems to have been rather careless about his flues, and the pungent scorched smell of the coffee roasting, and the occasional setting on fire of his chimneys, vexed his envious neighbours at the Devil (now Child's bank). He was accordingly proceeded against as a nuisance at a presentment at St. Dunstan's, December the 21st, 1657, that is, a year after he had set up. The indictment ran:

"We present James Farr, barber, for making and selling of a drink called coffee, whereby in making the same he annoyeth his neighbours by evil smells, and for keeping of fire for the most part night and day, whereby his chimney and chamber hath been set on fire, to the great danger and affrightment of his neighbours."

Farr was, however, not to be turned out so easily. He attended to his chimneys, and repressed the fumes of the coffee roasting. The Devil no doubt grew more friendly; and after all the vintners might as well have complained of the smell of scorched hair at a barber's, or the cloying vapours from a perfumer's; so Farr

went on shaving and making coffee boldly, and prospered. He issued tokens in 1666, one of which still exists in the celebrated Beaufoy collection at the Guildhall. The sign was an old one; for it appears on the frontispiece of a History of England, 1636 (Charles the First). The Rainbow had a bookseller's shop facing Fleet-street then, and a stall of the same kind existed there the year of the Great Fire, which had all but roasted poor Farr's coffee and himself too. The barber had a very narrow shave indeed when the Temple caught fire, and the lawyer's parchments began to frizzle and hiss like so many scorched snakes. Farr had much to endure. In 1660, the restored proof of Divine Right laid a duty of fourpence on every gallon of coffee made and sold. In 1663, Charles had required all coffee-houses to be licensed. In 1675, in a rage at some Whig sedition of the day, the king issued a proclamation to shut up all coffee-houses as chattering seminaries of treason; but in a few days (luckily for the persecuted barber), the king found he had gone too far, and suspended the tyrannical and impossible proclamation. In the Spectator (Addison), No. 16, there is an allusion to the Rainbow as a fashionable resort. "I have received a letter," says the amiable censor of manners, "desiring me to be very satirical upon the little muff that is now in fashion; another informs me of a pair of silver garters buckled below the knee that have been lately seen at the Rainbow Coffee-House in Fleet-street."

About 1780, according to Mr. Timbs, the Rainbow was kept by Alexander Moncrieff, the grandfather of the author of Tom and Jerry. It was a different place then; snugger, and less grand—more wainscoting, less Pompeian decoration—cosier, though less resplendent with the silver glitter of plate and the golden glow of gas. There was a lofty bay window at the south end of the coffee-room, a harbour of refuge, with a look-out into the Temple, for the old benchers. A glazed partition alone separated the apartment from the kitchen, so that the cheering frizzle of chops and the hissing of sausages was not be altogether unheard. Some years since the old rooms were cleared into one large hall, and the old Spartan severity of dark wainscots and stable-stall partitions have now disappeared.

The Fleet-street taverns and coffee-houses seem to have been, originally, the inner part of houses, the fronts of which

were occupied by other trades that required external shop windows. Dick's, which derives its name from one Richard Turner, who took the house in 1680 (Charles the Second), like the Rainbow, was occupied in front by a bookseller. It was the printing office, according to the best authority, of Richard Tottel, law printer and publisher of Edward the Sixth, Mary, and Elizabeth, who lived at Nos. 7 and 8, at the Hand and Starre, Fleet-street. No. 7 was afterwards occupied by Jaggard and Joel Stephens, law printers in the reign of the first three Georges; and Messrs. Butterworth, the present occupiers (such a stable and firm-set country is ours), possess the original leases from the time of Henry the Eighth to their own accession.

In 1737 (George the Second), the frequenters of Dick's were up in arms about the Coffee-House, a dramatic piece written by the Reverend James Miller, and performed at Drury Lane Theatre; Kitty Clive and Colley Cibber's son taking the two important parts. This satirical comedietta, a modification of a piece by J. B. Rousseau, was supposed, by the hot-blooded Templars who frequented the favourite Fleet-street house, to be intended to maliciously ridicule and slander Mrs. Yarrow, the landlady of the house, and her daughter, the belle and toast of Hare-court and King's Bench-walk, and the young beaux of the sword and pen damned it accordingly, and threatened the sarcastic author, in spite of his cassock. The dramatis persone in this unlucky piece were a scrivener, an officer, a gentleman of the Temple (Kitty's lover), a poet, a comedian, a politician, a foxhunter, a solemn beau, a pert beau, two gamblers, a boy of the coffee-house, the mistress of the coffee-house, and her daughter. The play, which is by no means devoid of wit and character, gives one an excellent picture of the coffee-houses of Hogarth's early time. The second scene shows us the widow at the bar, crowned with its punch-bowls and glasses, flirting with two beaux. At one table two gamblers are wrangling over backgammon; a pragmatical poet is sitting conning verses, with pen, ink, and paper before him; a scrivener and politician is smoking, and, with a paper in his hand, discussing with excitement the tremendous news that the grand vizier is marching fast with two hundred thousand men to besiege Belgrade; while a foxhunter, in boots and spurs, is extended in plethoric sleep. Presently one of the widow's

beaux adjusts himself in the glass, combs his wig, and denounces his peruke-maker, while his companion laments the loss of Farinelli, who has been engaged in Spain, while the new singer refuses to come for less than a thousand a year more than Farinelli, the fashionable idol whom Hogarth frequently ridiculed. The dogmatic politician complaining of the players frequenting the house, the landlady gets angry, and rails at him soundly.

"You come here," she says, in her shrillest voice, "and hold your paper in your hand for an hour, and disturb the whole company with your politics, and call for pen, ink, paper, and wax, beg a pipe of tobacco, burn out half a candle" (they used wax candles at coffee-houses), "eat half a pound of sugar, and then go away and pay twopence for a dish of coffee. I should soon shut up my doors if I had not some other good people to make amends for what I lose by such as you, sir."

"Ha, ha, ha!" cries the pert beau, in the fashionable slang of the day; "smoke him, smoke him."

The fox-hunter then awaking with a stupendous yawn, boasts that he has been drinking all day, from six A.M. to that moment, past nine P.M.; with his friends, he had emptied twenty-five bottles of claret, and had now come to drink a bottle of citron to drive away the fumes of the wine. "The world declines greatly," says the toper. "I keep up a little of the old English spirit; but I must go like the rest in time. However, I can bear a tight tug or two more, little Cibber. 'Tisn't a five-bar gate shall stop me, nor a bumper or two knock me under the table, nor a brisk young lass throw me out in the chase."

By-and-bye, in the mother's absence, pretty, lively, coquettish Kitty (by no means ill drawn) comes into the bar, and chatters pleasantly enough.

"Lah!" says the toast of the Inner Temple, "how pure it is to sit here, and have all the fine gentlemen crowding about one, one saying this, and another saying that; one doing one pretty little thing, another another pretty thing. Lah! I don't wonder mother loves it; I wish some of them would come in now, with all my soul. Here, Thomas, what's at the fire there; is everything in order? The gentlemen will be coming from the tavern presently. Make some fresh coffee, d'ye hear, booby, and a pot of the fine tea with the hard name, that mother keeps for her own drinking, for, by the stars, I'll have the

best of everything, Mrs. Kitty. And why not, Madam Saucebox? Oh! here comes somebody. Your servant, sir, your servant, gentlemen. Will ye please to drink anything, gentlemen—fresh coffee, tea, chocolate, or a dram of anything this evening, gentlemen."

Boy.—"Madam, you forget we must not sell drams."

Kitty.—"Hold your tongue, booby. I'll sell ratsbane if I please."

She then scolds the boy for being clumsy and slow, and comes from behind the bar with all her pretty airs and graces, like the chocolatière in the famous Dresden picture, to serve the gentlemen herself, upon which the modish poet says with ridiculous gallantry:

"Madam, you bring ten thousand blushes into my face to see those fair hands, which should be only employed in sacred rites, profaned by ministering coffee to us."

The other beau orders a pinch of snuff, which she brings, upon which he kisses her, and she curtsies and thanks him naively. Then Gaywood, the officer, begins to rattle out an account of his night's adventures, just such as Hogarth has painted in his Covent Garden scene. Two or three of his friends had been chased into a tavern merely for cracking a few street lamps and two or three watchmen's heads; they were pursued by a whole army of watchmen. The rakes treated the noisy fellows to glass after glass till they forgot what they came for, fell to blows among themselves, and drubbed each other heartily, upon which the constable, who was drunkenest of all, carried the watchmen to the round-house for disturbing the public peace. Soon after this narrative, Cibber (who represented himself) comes in, having won one hundred pounds of the scrivener at piquet and cribbage. A sham quarrel is then got up, and a sham fight with swords, which ends in Cibber being apparently seriously wounded by the scrivener.

"A chair, directly," calls out one of the characters.

In comes a sedan, Cibber is bundled into it, a porter runs for a constable, and the door is secured. By this stratagem the widow, to prevent being sent to the round-house, signs a contract surrendering Kitty to her lover, who has contrived the scheme. He appears of course at the right moment, and every one is happy ever afterwards.

Owing to the charge of slander in this piece the author wrote a defence of himself,

showing that all the supposed personal allusions were from Rousseau and the French. He had never entered Dick's coffee-house but once for ten years previous, and had merely made the scene of his play *Temple Bar* because, as "the centre of the town," that was the most likely place for so many different characters to meet. In Rousseau's play the landlady of the coffee-house was a widow. Unluckily for poor Miller (whether honest or not in this apology), the play appeared with a well-executed frontispiece, the background of which was taken from the coffee-room at Dick's. It represents a wainscoted room, with low-backed seats, and a high southern window, through which trees are visible. A brass sconce with four wax candles hangs from the ceiling. This selection of the scene the Reverend Miller still maintained to be entirely accidental, but the Templars, now more furious than ever, swore eternal vengeance against all that the reverend gentleman should ever write. He did, however, anonymously translate Voltaire's *Mahomet* for Garrick, and died during its success. The edition of the *Unlucky Coffee-House*, printed for Mr. Watts, Wild-court, Lincoln's-inn-fields, contains an advertisement of "Fifty-one New Fables, in Verse (invented for the Amusement of His Highness, William Duke of Cumberland, by Mr. Gay), Third Edition." It was the indifference of the court to these charming fables, written for the young duke, as yet unconscious of even the existence of such a place as Culloden, which drove Gay to exert his genius in a fresh direction, and to write the *Beggars' Opera*, which at once raised him to the highest pinnacle of popularity.

A sadder event, and one relating to far a greater man indeed than Miller, also took place at Dick's. In December, 1763, the poet Cowper, then a student in the Inner Temple, aged thirty-four, was appointed Clerk of the Journals of the House of Lords. Always delicate in health, indolent, shy, exquisitely sensitive, and with a strong predisposition to insanity, the dread of having to perform public duties, before an arena of criticising noblemen, at once disturbed the balance of his morbid brain. In the August previous Cowper had written to his favourite cousin, Lady Hesketh, describing himself as unlike other people, and unfitted for life. His madness broke out one morning at Dick's. His own account of his feelings is painfully interesting. "At breakfast," he says, "I read the newspaper, and in it a letter, which the further

I perused it the more closely engaged my attention. I cannot now recollect the purport of it; but before I had finished it, it appeared demonstratively true to me that it was a libel or satire upon me. The author appeared to be acquainted with my purpose of self-destruction, and to have written that letter on purpose to secure and hasten the execution of it. My mind probably at this time began to be disordered; however it was, I was certainly given to a strong delusion. I said within myself, 'Your cruelty shall be gratified, you shall have your revenge,' and flinging down the paper in a fit of strong passion, I rushed hastily out of the room, directing my way towards the fields, where I intended to find some lane to die in, or if not, determined to poison myself in a ditch, when I could meet with one sufficiently retired." This paroxysm ended in Cowper trying to hang himself; the rope breaking, he went down the Thames, to the Custom House Quay, and there tried to drown himself; something preventing his succeeding in the latter mode of death, and Cowper abandoning the attempt, was soon after sent to Doctor Cotton's asylum at St. Albans, where he remained for eighteen months.

Perhaps of all the historical taverns of Fleet-street, the *Mitre* calls, or did call up, the most interesting associations. It was here that Boswell and Johnson often met. Boswell, then a young fellow about town, just about to start for Utrecht to study law, was introduced to the great despot of literature, on May the 16th, 1763, at the shop of Davies, the bookseller, in *Bussell-street*, Covent Garden. He met him after that three times, and was very graciously received. On Saturday, June 25, Boswell met his hero by accident at an eating-house in *Butcher's-row*, where he upset the temper of a hot Irishman by dogmatizing on the cause of negroes being black. Boswell followed him as he left, and they arranged to meet in the evening at the *Mitre*, where Johnson loved to sit up late. Johnson was then living at No. 1, *Inner Temple-lane*, and there, at nine, the strangely assorted friends met. Boswell says, with solemn awe: "We had a good supper and port wine, of which he then sometimes drank a bottle. The orthodox high-church sound of the *Mitre*, the figure and manner of the celebrated SAMUEL JOHNSON, the extraordinary powers and precision of his conversation, and the pride arising from finding myself admitted as his companion, produced a variety of sensations, and a pleasing elevation of mind beyond

what I had ever before experienced." That night, over his wine, Johnson justly ridiculed Colley Cibber's birthday odes, and Paul Whitehead's "grand nonsense," and unjustly depreciated a real poet, Gray, who it seems disliked him, and had declined his acquaintance. He praised Doctor Goldsmith as a worthy man and an excellent author, he talked of ghosts (the Cock-lane ghost had been trapped the year before) rather credulously, and promised to draw up for Boswell a plan of study. Boswell gave him in return a brief sketch of his life, and confessed a half-conquered scepticism on religion. The frankness and flattery of the young Scotchman won the doctor, whose rugged heart was thawed by the Mitre port, and he called out to him at last with warmth: "Give me your hand, I have taken a liking to you."

And that social compact held good till Death chilled the hand that then grasped Boswell's. They finished a couple of bottles of port, and sat till between one and two in the morning, no doubt to the extreme disgust of the sleepy waiters. As they parted Johnson said: "Sir, I am glad we have met. I hope we shall pass many evenings, and mornings too, together."

July 1st, Boswell supped again with Johnson at the Mitre, and Goldsmith (already renowned for his poem of the Traveller) was present. Goldsmith was full of respectful attachment to Johnson, and said to Boswell of some unfortunate man: "He is now become miserable, and that insures the protection of Johnson." The doctor talked contemptuously of Churchill, and praised some facetiae of Bonnell Thornton, and that is nearly all Boswell remembered of the evening. On July the 6th, Boswell and Johnson supped again at the Mitre, Boswell's landlord in Downing-street having complained of his revels. Goldsmith was present, with also Davies, Mr. Eccles, an Irish gentleman, and the Reverend Mr. Ogilvie, a Scotch poet.

On July the 14th, Boswell and Johnson met again at the Mitre, though Boswell confessed his nerves were much shaken by the quantity of port and the late hours. Johnson laughed at the outcry raised against him, as a Jacobite, for accepting a pension from the House of Hanover. "But, sir," he added, "I think that the pleasure of cursing the House of Hanover and drinking King James's health are amply overbalanced by three hundred pounds a year." He urged Boswell to keep a journal, which Boswell indeed had already

began. The next meeting at the Mitre, February, 1766, was less sociable, for Johnson had left off wine. Johnson urged Boswell to publish his travels in Corsica, and scolded him for praising Rousseau, whom he had visited when abroad. Another evening Boswell and Goldsmith went arm-in-arm to Bolt-court, to prevail on Johnson to sup with them at the Mitre, but he was indisposed.

"Come then," said good-natured Goldsmith, in his playful way to the little Scotch lion hunter, "we will not go to the Mitre to-night, since we cannot have the big man with us."

On the 30th of September, 1769, Boswell states that Johnson uttered that grand eulogium of the metropolis so grateful to all who love Bow bells.

"Sir," he said, after laughing at Boswell for praising the happiness of a savage life; "sir, the happiness of London is not to be conceived but by those who have been in it. I will venture to say there is more learning and science within the circumference of ten miles from where we now sit than in all the rest of the kingdom."

In other conversations at the Mitre we find Johnson condemning Foote's unfeeling fun, advising Boswell on a law-suit, and praising Boswell as being the least Scot-tified of Scotchmen. The last interview that Boswell describes at the Mitre was on May the 9th, 1778. The bustling, vain bear leader here mentions one little incident very characteristic of the kind rough giant. Before going to the Mitre, and leaving blind old Mrs. Williams to dine alone, Johnson gave her the choice of a chicken, a sweetbread, or any other little dainty, to be sent her ready-dressed from the tavern opposite. The conversation was grave that day at the Mitre, for the clouds of age were settling on the Doctor. Unfortunately for the young enthusiastic visitor of such localities, the present Mitre is not Doctor Johnson's Mitre, which was pulled down some years ago, and absorbed by the supplementary buildings to Hoare's bank.

The Cheshire Cheese—that old-fashioned tavern of Wine Office-court—is connected by tradition with Goldsmith and Johnson, as the Mitre Tavern is with Johnson and Boswell. In the low ceilinged room, looking into two alleys, with sawdust on the floor, and rude benches of a hundred years ago, they still point out, by tradition, the favourite nooks of the two great

men. Poor, warm-hearted Oliver—poor, blundering, despised, kindly Oliver, who loved his fellow-men though they laughed at his harmless vanity, fine dress, and poverty—must needs have frequented this hidden-away haunt. Doctor Johnson it is certain did. In this court Goldsmith came to lodge at the end of 1760, says Mr. John Forster in his admirable life of the poet. A hard life his had been, for after his tramp through Switzerland and Italy he had returned to England to slave as a journeyman to an apothecary, a proof reader at a printing office, a slavish usher at a Peckham academy, and at last, in 1757, as an author by profession. Then he drudged at the *Monthly Review*, tried to get appointed surgeon at Coromandel, failed, and nearly starved in that miserable Green Arbour-court, Old Bailey, now destroyed. At last came the summer of fame; the weather softened, and one slant thread of sunshine glanced even into Goldsmith's garret. Smollett solicited his help, Johnson claimed his friendship, he wrote the *Citizen of the World*, earned money and leisure to project the *Traveller*, and even boldly gave a supper to Johnson and Percy at his rooms in Wine Office-court.

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LXXXII. DOCTOR DAMIAN.

MR. TINTERN had more than was pleasant to think of, as he glided homeward upon the rails. His matrimonial plans for his daughter had found in that young lady a very stubborn resistance. He could divine no reason for it; and he took to sulking and bullying by turns. It was very desirable to establish his daughter just now, and to secure the particular son-in-law who sought the young lady's hand, because he was very wealthy, and, owing to peculiar circumstances, in a position to make certain difficulties of a very pressing nature easy to Mr. Tintern. He had "gone into a mine," which was insolvent; and he had made the directors an offer, by way of compromise, which would save him; and his intended son-in-law was one of these directors. There was another trouble, a foolish bank speculation, in which the same gentleman had also a potent influence, and might modify the urgency and rapidity of coming calls, of which Mr. Tintern, as well he might, stood much in fear. Mr. Tintern, therefore, in his homeward drive,

had ample matter for reflection. On his arrival at the Grange, he asked for Miss Ethel. There was an inexplicable cloud over the household. The servants were solemn and laconic. No one knew distinctly where she was; and all were agreed in referring him to Mrs. Tintern, who was not very well, and in her room.

Up the stairs, with very uncomfortable qualms and vague misgivings, he ran; and, in the darkened room of his wife, learned that Ethel had eloped!

All was mystery. Mrs. Tintern had not a great deal of energy or judgment in an emergency. She had sent a carriage express to the town of Roydon to bring the Reverend Mr. Foljambe, the vicar, and Mr. Puntles, the antiquary, to advise her in her perplexity. The assistance of these admirably selected counsellors did not result in very much; except, indeed, that the occurrence became speedily well known throughout the whole town of Roydon.

A sage servant, on a steady horse, was sent off, at a jog-trot, to the nearest railway station to make inquiry, and returned some hours later a little tipsy, and in other respects as wise as he set out.

The only clue to the mysterious disappearance of the young lady was that a carriage had been seen for some time on the narrow road in the rear of the Grange, where the wooded ground affords the closest cover for an unobserved approach. The same carriage, or one very like it, had been seen in the village of Crowpton, near which five roads meet; and here, in bewilderment, the pursuit was, after a time, abandoned.

When Mr. Tintern arrived, nearly five hours had passed since Miss Tintern's flight. That did not deter him, however; he started without delay, and did not return until late next day, to find that Mrs. Tintern had received a short and rather distracted letter from her daughter, who was, in fact, married to Captain Vivian. For many hours after his arrival, under this great blow to all his plans, Mr. Tintern quite forgot Roydon Hall and its concerns.

Lady Vernon was, however, far too important an influence in the general scheme of his speculations, to be long out of his thoughts. Lady Vernon, therefore, had a note from him, a part of which she did not very well understand, not at all in Mr. Tintern's usual neat style.

It said that not knowing whether Lady Vernon was well enough to see him, he had been compelled, without even taking off

his hat at the Grange, to run on upon business of the very most momentous kind. He had been in attendance at Glarewoods, and he and Antomarchi were both of opinion that the commissioner took precisely the same view of the case in which so many concur, who are profoundly and painfully interested in the case of Miss Vernon.

"Captain Vivian, whom, owing to special circumstances with which I shall acquaint you, I cannot, for a moment, dismiss from my thoughts, has behaved like a villain. It pains me to apply that term to any person who was ever honoured by your notice or consideration."

At that moment, not a living creature, except Mr. and Mrs. Tintern, and the absconding lover, was aware that Captain Vivian had any but the slightest acquaintance with Miss Ethel Tintern, or dreamed of connecting her disappearance with him.

Lady Vernon, who was always perfectly up in the Roynon news, without making the least apparent effort to learn it, had heard of Ethel's flight, without knowing whether quite to believe it or not, or, in any case, caring about it. Mr. Tintern's words respecting Captain Vivian—Elwyn, as she called him—she, with a morbid terror, referred to the suspicion that was nearest her own heart. Fate seemed driving her into a corner. Must she avow the grand folly and humiliation of her life? Must that proud, conspicuous woman stand in the gaze of the world in abject penance?

In the mean time Mr. Marston, furnished with a report of what had taken place before the commissioner, noted down from the careful narrative of Mr. Dawe, ran up to London that night to talk the matter over with an able Chancery Q.C., who always lingered late in town, and who was leader in all the Warhampton business. This gentleman knew Mr. Steele officially, and could estimate the view he was likely to take.

"Damian's establishment, and Damian's opinion, stand very high in our court," he said. "Antomarchi has only appeared once or twice, second fiddle, you know; Damian's thinking the depositions sufficient, will go a great way; and the evidence is so strong and clear——"

"So plausible and audacious," said Marston.

"That I am quite satisfied," continued the barrister, "there is not a chance of getting the court to order the young lady's discharge. I don't think by habeas corpus, at

common law, with such evidence, you would have the smallest chance, either. You must lie by for a time, and if it be as her friends think, the medical people there will find it out, and all ultimately be as you would wish. But I should not advise public proceedings. They would fail; and the young lady occupying so conspicuous a position, the affair would become the talk of all England. It is better to wait."

A gloomy and distracted letter Marston wrote to Maximilla Medwyn; and one as gloomy, but more reserved, to Mr. Dawe.

What was he now to do? Inaction in such a state of things was intolerable! A few hours later saw him at Brighton, on the door-steps of the house in which Mr. Damian for the time resided; it was night, and the moon shining, and a thin chill mist made sea, and shipping, and houses vague.

"Can I see Doctor Damian?" he asked of the servant who opened the door.

"If you please to wait a moment, sir, I'll inquire; who shall I say?"

"He does not know me, and my name will hardly help him; give him this card, however, and say that I call upon urgent business connected with Glarewoods. I'll wait here till you come down."

He stood on the steps, looking toward the sea, wondering whether Mr. Damian would see him, and without any distinct plan as to how to order and arrange what he had to say.

The servant returned; Doctor Damian would see him.

He followed to the drawing-room, in which were an unusual number of candles burning, and for the first time he saw Doctor Damian, of whom he had heard a great deal in the course of his life.

He saw, standing at some distance, a tall, lean man, broad-shouldered, erect, with hair white as snow, a broad square forehead, and a resolute face.

He had heard that this man was benevolent and pious. He saw nothing in his face but cold command and sternness.

He placed a chair for Mr. Marston, with a slight bow, and asked him, by name, to sit down.

"You are a son of Lord Warhampton, I conjecture, from the address upon your card?" said the old man, in a voice still clear, and, like his aspect, somewhat stern.

Mr. Marston assented, and the doctor, taking a chair, asked him to state the object of his visit.

Doctor Damian listened to the young

man's fluent and sometimes vehement address with a countenance unmoved and impenetrable.

"We have never had at Glarewoods a single case of fraudulently imputed insanity," he said with cold decision. "The statement on which Miss Vernon was admitted, and furnished in the form of attested copies of affidavits, was conclusive upon that point; I assume them to be true; you mention the inquiry just held at Glarewoods, on the motion of friends and relations, into this case. I have heard from Antomarchi on the subject. Have you about you the report you said you had of what occurred there, and if so can you permit me to read it?"

Mr. Marston placed the paper in his hands. He glanced through it. Mr. Marston could not help admiring the large, cold, grey eyes with which the old man read it. To judge by his countenance, it had not made the slightest impression upon him.

"When shall we know the nature of the commissioner's report?" he asked.

"In a day or two, I believe," Marston said.

"And what particular request, Mr. Marston, do you urge upon me?" he inquired.

"I want you, with the immense powers you possess in this matter, to recognise the awful obligation so obviously imposed on your conscience, and to take this inquiry actively into your own hands."

The old man smiled coldly.

"You are frank, Mr. Marston. You may fail to persuade, but you don't mince the matter."

"I hope, Doctor Damian, I have not spoken too strongly; I would not offend you for any consideration."

"I am never offended, sir, by bluntness. Will you take some tea, sir, or a glass of sherry; or will you allow me to order some supper: it is later than I thought."

All these hospitable offers were declined with thanks.

"I don't say I am not obliged to you, Mr. Marston, for this call; but you must remember that I speak with a knowledge of Doctor Antomarchi's great ability, and of the statement on which the patient was received at Glarewoods. I quite accept the responsibility that rests upon me; but, from a rather long experience, I can assure you that relations are often very much at issue upon the question of a patient's insanity, when a medical man can entertain no doubt either of its existence or of its very advanced development. I will bear

your request in mind. That is the utmost I can say. But I counsel you not to be sanguine. I don't share your hopes."

"But, Mr. Damian, you will not let the matter rest?"

"I shall make the inquiries necessary to satisfy the friends and relations whom you represent, sir; I can say no more on the subject."

There was something harsh in the tones in which this was spoken that warned Charles Marston that he might possibly do wisely to forbear any further pressure. The old gentleman was accustomed to command, and his air and looks were peremptory.

"Not much sympathy there," thought Charles Marston, as, with a heavy heart, he descended the steps, and walked back toward the London railway.

CHAPTER LXXXIII. THREE DOCTORS.

A LETTER reached Mr. Dawe two days later, from his solicitor, stating that the commissioner had reported strongly against removing Miss Vernon from the restraints of her present position; and that the court would not intervene.

This letter made its dismal tour of the three principal promoters of the inquiry; from Mr. Dawe to Miss Medwyn it flew, and from Miss Medwyn to Mr. Marston.

Mr. Marston, on receipt of it, took wing instantly for the Hermitage, in the vague pursuit of sympathy, and longing for some one to talk to.

There are situations and states of mind in which it is quite impossible to remain stationary; a universal irritation of the nervous system, which can only be subdued by overpowering bodily fatigue, and in which nature instinctively impels to change and exertion.

Things were looking very black. He was not aware, until the adverse result was actually made known, how much hope he had secretly cherished.

Whirling up the embowered avenue of the quiet Hermitage, with four reeking horses, at a canter—he would have had six if they would have brought him there five minutes sooner—Charles Marston reached the steps of the old-fashioned house, and running up them he rang at the hall-door as impetuously as if his best-beloved lay within, in the agonies of death, and he had arrived with a specific in his hand.

On learning that Miss Medwyn was in the drawing-room, without waiting to be announced, he hurried to the room, and

found her with Mr. Dawe, who had arrived only ten minutes before.

Mr. Dawe had other things beside this to trouble him. A letter had reached him from Captain Vivian, in whom, by a kind of adoption, he took a very near interest, relating what had occurred. Mr. Dawe was angry. He had been tricked in return for years of kindness.

Why should he be surprised or angry? If it were not that every child of earth must learn wisdom for himself, in the school of pain and labour, and if experience were orally communicable, as old people are prone to fancy it is, and if youth were less conceited and selfish, comparatively few foolish things would be done, and this life would lose, in a large measure, its efficacy as a place of discipline.

Mr. Dawe is going on with this particular news to Lady Vernon. She may or may not see him, as she thinks fit; but she ought to hear it as soon as he; and he is not deterred by the language she held to him a few weeks ago.

"I must see Lady Vernon first, upon quite another matter," said Mr. Dawe, therefore, mysteriously. "But I will meet you, Mr. Marston, in town, at my attorney's, this day week. I have put my hand to the plough, and will not look back."

"Could you not name an earlier day?" urged Mr. Marston.

"This day week, if you please," said Mr. Dawe.

"And where will a letter find you in the mean time?" asked active Miss Medwyn, who rather liked writing notes.

"I shall sleep, to-morrow night, at the Vernon Arms; and I shall not leave Roydon till evening. I have business in the neighbourhood."

And so Mr. Dawe took his leave.

A week's delay, to a man upon the rack, is a good deal. It was quite impossible that Charles Marston should be quiet all that time.

Maximilla liked his impatience, and sympathised with all his unreasonableness.

"Quite accidentally," she said, "I heard such a character of Doctor Antomarchi, from our rector, here; he had a cousin who was confined at Glarewoods, and discharged about a year ago; and he says that Doctor Antomarchi is quite a charming person, and the kindest man you can imagine; and he thought Mr. Damian, on the contrary, a severe man, with hardly a human sympathy, although his establishment is conducted on very genial and in-

dulgent principles. His view of Mr. Damian corresponds very much with your impression, on seeing him at Brighton. He thought him conscientious, but cold and stern. Now I have taken a whim into my head; I don't know why, but I do fancy if we went to Glarewoods and saw Doctor Antomarchi, to-day, some good would come of it. I think he would allow me to see Maud, and I have been two or three times on the point of ordering the carriage and setting out for the railway."

Full of this whimsical presentiment, I shall leave her, still in conference with Charles Marston, who is only too well pleased to find the active old lady almost as restless as himself.

Night descends on Glarewoods, and all the country round. Moonlight falls on lofty trees and dark yew hedges, on high, carved chimneys, steep roofs, and black oak cage-work with white plaster between. From long rows of windows overlooking the croquet-ground peeps the peculiar soft light, emitted through the dull globes fixed in the ceilings of the patients' rooms. This is not one of the festive nights at Glarewoods, and neither ball nor concert stirs the strange gaiety of the colony that dwells there.

The great house, with its sylvan surroundings, looks all serenity and happiness; more like fair Belmont, as Lorenzo and Jessica beheld it, in the moonlight, than a madhouse.

A visitor is closeted with Antomarchi. It is Doctor Malkin, who has come from Boydon, to talk and hear, on Lady Vernon's behalf, all that it may at this moment concern her to learn.

They have had their conference, and have dined together. They are sitting now at an open window, looking out on the moonlit croquet-ground. A small round table, with decanters and glasses on it, stands close by; they are sipping their claret, with their eyes turned toward the drooping flowers and dewy foliage, while they talk for a minute longer about Miss Vernon.

Candles are burning at the further end of the room. They prefer the open window and the moon.

"You and Miss Medwyn are at issue respecting the young lady's state of mind," said Antomarchi.

"I am a very secondary opinion on the question," answered Malkin, peering into the claret in his glass; "you may observe that I contribute, myself, next to nothing to the proof, and rest my opinion entirely

upon the assumption that the evidence on which I found it is strictly true; and I have been looking the subject up, and I'm not afraid to maintain that opinion anywhere."

"Nor am I; nor is Damian," said Antomarchi. "She is violent; she was troublesome this morning. To-morrow, at twelve, I have arranged to give that young lady a fright that will a good deal tame her."

"It is very sad it should be so," murmured Doctor Malkin, still looking down with a gloomy shake of his head.

"It is very sad," echoed Antomarchi, abstractedly.

And there followed a silence, during which Darkdale entered the room.

"Miss Medwyn, the old lady who was here before the commissioner," Mr. Darkdale said softly, leaning over his shoulder, "is in the waiting-room, with a friend, and hopes that you will see her, and desires me to say, that she is most anxious to visit Miss Vernon, for ever so short a time, in her room."

"Tell her I regret I can't possibly permit an interview with Miss Vernon; but that I shall be very happy, in a few minutes, to see Miss Medwyn in the waiting-room."

"I remember you, Antomarchi, in Paris," said Doctor Malkin, as soon as Darkdale was gone. "You and I have played billiards there, and could hardly afford our demitasse of coffee after. I little fancied I should see you what you are. If I had your cards to play, I should die a baronet with ten thousand a year, and you can play them better than I. I wish you'd tell me your secret; what god do you worship? Æsculapius, Fortune, Satan? Do give a poor devil a wrinkle."

"Fill your glass; take comfort; I'm not quite so prosperous as you fancy. I have burnt my fingers a little in that cursed thing that old Tintern went into; but, as you say, I am making way, notwithstanding."

"Making way? Why, my dear fellow, you know all this must belong to you, it *must*, and managed as you would manage it, it is the revenue of a principality. When does old Damian return?"

"In a month, perhaps; perhaps in six; perhaps *never*," says Antomarchi, who was in a state of luxurious good-humour. "It is high time he should take a little rest; it is

only fair. He can't be many months on this side of seventy, and he may sing *Non sum qualis eram*."

"I am not what I used to was," translated Doctor Malkin, facetiously.

"He does not like work as he used," continued Antomarchi, "and he has confidence in me; and he feels he need not fatigue himself as he used; he may take his ease, and yet all go well."

"All go better," said Malkin.

"I did not say that; but it is not a great way from the truth. He is sometimes a little bit in one's way; but his name in the concern is valuable, and he is a good man, and always, at least, means well."

"He'll make over the whole concern to you before a year, on an annuity, and he won't live three years after; and then you are monarch of all you survey! You'll be wanting a sharp fellow to play second fiddle, eh? And if you think I would answer, it is the kind of thing I should like."

"First make me monarch of all I survey. It would be idle choosing my man Friday till I step into my island."

A slight noise at the other end of the room attracted the eyes of both. They saw a tall man with a resolute face, and hair white as snow, standing near the door, hat in hand, as if off a journey.

With an odd sensation, for he did not know at what moment he had entered, Doctor Malkin, sitting in the moonlight, with his claret glass in his fingers, recognised Mr. Damian, exhibited, like a figure of Schalkin's, in the oblique candle-light.

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CASTAWAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN PORT," &c. &c.

CHAPTER X. DESPAIR.

THE silence which fell upon the company at Gerald Hardinge's unexpected announcement was broken by Mr. Dunsany, who called out in his most melodious tones:

"My dear Gerald, I am delighted that you have thought the time has arrived when it is expedient to make this announcement, to the public as it were. When, weeks ago, you first mentioned to me, as your intimate friend, the fact of your engagement with Miss Pierrepont, I told you, if you recollect, that it would be advisable to make your friends acquainted, as speedily as possible, with the exact position of affairs, in order that there might be no possible misunderstanding. And you will acknowledge I was right, for I am sure if our friend Hayward had known how matters had stood he would not have hinted a doubt as to Miss Pierrepont's ability; while as to Snick——"

"I beg your pardon, Dunsany," said Mr. Hayward, "I said nothing about Miss Pierrepont's appearance or conduct, of both of which I have the highest admiration; but I cannot allow that even the great fact of her marrying the count here is likely to endow her with ability, or to render her a modern Mrs. Siddons."

"Perhaps it will be advisable to change the subject," said Gerald Hardinge, haughtily. "After the announcement that I have made, it is perhaps scarcely in good taste to discuss Miss Pierrepont's qualities or qualifications in my presence. The restriction, however, need be but very temporary, as I am about to take my departure;

the season is broken up," continued he, rising from his chair, "and this will be the last time of our meeting; but I hope at some future period, gentlemen, to renew the pleasant impressions which I have had during my companionship with you, and to come amongst you once again."

"And bring your wife," suggested Mr. Snick, who, since the conclusion of his story, had remained perfectly quiet, sucking away at his pipe with great enjoyment.

"And bring my wife, sir!" echoed Gerald, angrily. He would have said more, but for the warning pressure of Dunsany's foot. As it was, he merely bowed and left the room, amidst general cheering and expressions of good wishes.

When Gerald Hardinge left the tavern, with his brain on fire and his heart aching within him, he felt the necessity for solitude and self-examination; and accordingly skirting the wharves on the edge of the Wexe, and crossing by the lower railway station, made the best of his way to the gardens of North-Hedge. These gardens, given up during the day to nursemaids and their charges, and to feeble valetudinarians of both sexes, who, screened by large banks of greenery from the cutting winds, sit idly watching the railway traffic beneath them, are closed at sundown, and supposed to be deserted during the night. In the earlier days, however, of his sojourn at Wexeter, Gerald had often used them as a short cut from one part of the town to the other; and recollecting a gate which could be scaled with tolerable ease, he proceeded to climb it, and speedily flung himself down on one of the benches which nestle under the avenue of broad elms intersecting the garden. The business carried on at the railway station at Wexeter has apparently

been affected by the general quietude of the place; there are but two passenger trains during the night, and the goods traffic is very limited, so that the station upon which Gerald Hardinge was looking down lay hushed in repose, and, save by the sighing of the night winds through the trees, the silence around him was unbroken.

This was as he wished it. The thoughts which racked him might be too deep for concealment, and he would have had no human eye to play the spy upon such consequences as would result from his contemplated analysis of his own feelings, and the determination which he would then arrive at. To stop a ribald laugh, to controvert the effect of a sneer upon a woman whom he had loved, he had in the heat of the moment publicly assumed a position, the retention or resignation of which, fraught with the deepest interest as it would be on his future life, must be determined upon at once.

A woman whom he had loved! Was he, then, to think of as past and bygone that passion which thrilled his soul and tingled in his veins, when he held Madge in his arms but a few short hours previously; as faded and vanished that love-lit light which had cast its glamour over the ordinary occurrences of every-day life, and steeped them all in roseate hues? Was the temple of his love so fairy a fabric that at an idle or a lying word uttered by a gossip it should suddenly collapse, burying in its ruins the idol which he had set up therein and worshipped so tenderly? An idle or lying word? No, to the tale told by that wretched old man neither of these terms could be applied.

Alas! what Gerald did know tallied completely with what Mr. Snick had said. It was on the night of the thunder-storm that he had called at Madge Pierrepoint's lodging, and found her absent, attending, as her sister Rose had told him, to a business engagement. He recollected how he had waited for her, patiently walking up and down the street, heedless of the raging elements, and how he had seen her return at a late hour. He recollected how he had accused her the next day of having been to meet some man, and how, without positively denying it, she had put aside the question in her soothing way. And all that time, while he was waiting for her in the storm, not even with a hope of speaking to her, and going away as it might be almost contented when he had seen her safely shut

within her own door, she had been to meet another man, who "stooped and put his arms round her and kissed her!" Gerald remembered the exact words which Mr. Snick had used, and cursed him aloud for using them.

And yet, in the full knowledge of her treachery and deceit, he had acknowledged her before them as his affianced wife! His affianced wife! That was the position that he had publicly declared her to hold; that was the position that she actually held; for from her manner that evening, her last words, her parting touch, Gerald had but little doubt as to Madge's answer to his appeal. His affianced wife! who went to meet another man in secret, and refused to give him, who would have died for her, any account of her proceedings on that eventful evening.

Now what was he to do? The idea of withdrawing the proposal which he had made, of breaking away from the compact which, as he imagined, was virtually agreed upon between them, never entered into Gerald's mind. What he had said to Madge Pierrepoint was, according to his view, quite sufficient in itself to bind him, without taking into consideration the quasi-public announcement which he had made. And this act of hers—the meeting with this unknown man—took place before he had actually proposed to her, and while she was yet a free agent. What was he to do? He must go through with it, carrying the burden which he had laid upon his own shoulders as best he might. He would see Madge the first thing in the morning, tell her exactly what had occurred, repeat the story as it had been told to him, and ask her what she had to say in her defence. She would be truthful in her reply, he had an innate conviction of that, and then he should know what to decide. If she acknowledged that there was a foundation for Mr. Snick's story—and it seemed impossible to think that anything so circumstantial could be the work of mere invention—where would be that happiness in the future which he had so joyfully pictured to himself?

He would keep his word; she should have nothing to complain of on that score: he would marry her, and take her away with him to London; but as to living with her, that could never be. If she had deceived him then, with what confidence could he trust his honour to her keeping when surrounded by flatterers and tried by temptation! No! that is the only course

open to him, and the one that he must follow, provided always that their manner of living can be kept a secret from the world. If the secret of his betrayed trust, of his blighted life, were once known, Gerald felt that the exposure would kill him. Those were the only terms he would exact from Madge: that it should be a life-long secret between them, and so long as she kept to them, she should share his income, and be left to do as she pleased. And having settled this in his own mind, Gerald rose from his seat, and made the best of his way home.

When he arrived at his lodging, he let himself in with his key, and was proceeding straight to bed, when, thinking he saw a light in the sitting-room occupied jointly by himself and Mr. Dunsany, he opened the door, and discovered that worthy stretched at full length on the sofa, and snoring in a remarkably resonant manner. Gerald was about to retire quietly, when a snore of extra power awoke the sleeper, and Mr. Dunsany, rubbing his eyes, sat upright, apparently considerably refreshed by his slumber.

"Come in, Gerald," he cried, "and don't be after scuttling off to bed like that, when I have been sitting up here broad awake, and denying myself natural sleep, for the chance of a talk to you. I went straight to your room directly I got back, and finding you were not there, I determined to sit up on the chance of catching you before you turned in, as I have something very important to say to you."

"Say away, then," said Gerald, throwing himself listlessly into a chair, and plunging his hands into his pockets; "say away, I'm listening."

"Listening!" echoed Mr. Dunsany, who had gone to a little sideboard, and placed some bottles and glasses on the table. "But I want you to talk as well, and with a view to that, hadn't you better put a pipe in your mouth? I have no hopes of improving your accent, which is essentially English, and bad, but tobacco is a great tranquilliser, and brings out the philosophy in a man's nature, and that is a quality of which you have decidedly no superfluity."

"It is a quality which all of us require more or less," said Gerald, "and most of us more."

"Don't be sneering, and going in for the Diogenes business, my dear Gerald," said Mr. Dunsany, who, meanwhile, had mixed himself a tumbler of grog, and lighted a large pipe; "it's not natural to you, I

know; but you are upset and worried just now."

"I am utterly miserable, Dunsany," said Gerald, with a groan.

"Don't say that, my dear lad, for Heaven's sake," cried his friend. "I've made a good many blunders in my time, but I never made a greater than when I persuaded you to come to that confounded supper to-night, or when I permitted that preposterous old idiot Snick to tell that cock-and-bull story."

Gerald raised his head, and looked up earnestly:

"You don't believe that story?" he asked.

"Which part of it?" asked Mr. Dunsany.

"Any part," said Gerald.

"Which part would you wish me to believe?" asked Mr. Dunsany. "I am open to conviction, my dear lad, and I will oblige you to the best of my ability."

"Don't be fooling, Dunsany! It is scarcely a subject for jest. Give me a plain answer if you can."

"My dear Gerald, the question is rather a complicated and a delicate one, and I wanted to deal with it as delicately as I could. It resolves itself into this: do I believe that a certain lady, a common acquaintance of ours, went on a certain evening, memorable as the occasion of the thunder-storm, up the Dumpington-road, and, in a lane near the turnpike, was met and embraced by a gentleman? Is that the question, or rather one of the questions?"

"It is."

"Well, then, upon my honour, I do believe it! In the first place, I do not think that old Snick has the power of inventing anything at all, much less anything so circumstantial as that story was in its details of ginger-beer, turnpike, tollman, and all the rest of it; and, in the next place, I have noticed, for the last few days, a certain absence of mind and preoccupation of manner in the lady in question. Now, as to the other part of it; do I believe that one Gerald Hardinge was the gentleman who met the lady in the lane near the Dumpington turnpike? Upon my conscience I do not. Now, am I right?"

"So far as I am concerned you are quite right," said Gerald, with a heavy sigh.

"Exactly," cried Mr. Dunsany; "and it was a fine manly thing of you to dash in as you did, my dear lad, and endeavour to save a lady's character, which was being roughly handled. Only, like most other

spirited and inexperienced persons, you went too far, and you proved too much. Why the deuce couldn't you content yourself with vindicating Miss Pierrepont's character, without asserting that she is your affianced wife?"

"I said so because it is the fact," said Gerald, quietly.

"The devil it is!" cried Mr. Dunsany, with a long whistle; adding, after a little pause, "that quite alters the case. You should have told me that before you asked me my opinion."

"It was scarcely a subject you would have expected me to joke upon," said Gerald.

"No," said Dunsany, "not to joke; but when a point is stretched here it may easily be stretched there. However, it's no use for us to be beating about the bush in this way. You say you are utterly miserable. I have been your chum as yet, and, as a man who is older than you, and has had much more experience of the world, I want to see what can be done to help you."

"Nothing can be done," said Gerald, moodily; "nothing."

"Bah, nothing!" said Mr. Dunsany. "Now let us see how the land lies. You say you are engaged to Miss Pierrepont?"

"Well, not exactly engaged. I have asked her to become my wife."

"And she has not replied?"

"Not exactly."

"Faith, that's a fine sort of engagement," said Mr. Dunsany; "like my countrymen's reciprocity, all on one side."

"What I mean is, she has not replied in so many words," said Gerald; "but there is no doubt of her understanding the offer I made her, and of her accepting it—unfortunately."

"And why unfortunately?"

"Do you ask me that after having heard Mr. Snick's story?"

"To the devil with Mr. Snick and his story," said Mr. Dunsany. "When did you lay your title and lands at Miss Pierrepont's feet?"

"I asked her to become my wife to-night, not half an hour before I met you."

"To - night!" echoed Mr. Dunsany. "And you are grisling your head off because she chose to meet somebody two or three weeks ago."

"But she knew that I was fond of her then," pleaded Gerald.

"Knew that you were fond of her! A young lady of her beauty and powers of

fascination must know that there are hundreds of men who are fond of her, but she cannot be expected to reserve her hand for any one in particular, unless he asks for it."

"No, certainly, but——"

"But me no buts, as I have no doubt Hayward says in his five-act tragedy, which Miss Pierrepont would not play. Seriously, Gerald, you are making a donkey of yourself. Instead of being ready to jump out of your skin with delight at the fact of being about to be married to one of the prettiest and cleverest young women possibly to be met with, you are crooning over a cock-and-bull story of her having met some one else some time before you did her the honour to propose to her."

"There is something in what you say," said Gerald, brightening a little.

"Something! There is more than you will ever be able to compass, unless your mind expands a great deal, and that's not likely now that you are going away from us, and you will lose the chance of my tuition. Besides, take my word for it, that meeting was not exactly as it was represented by that old Snick, who is a malevolent little wretch, and would put the worst construction on anything. Even you must have sense enough to see that Miss Pierrepont is not the sort of woman likely to allow herself to be mixed up in any compromising affair."

"I am afraid there is no question about the meeting," said Gerald, doubtfully.

"No," said Dunsany; "but granted that a meeting took place, the whole force of it, for good or for evil, depends upon the person whom she met."

"It was a man," said Gerald.

"No doubt," said Dunsany; "even Snick is not idiot enough to make a mistake in that. But, as I said before, Miss Pierrepont is not the sort of person to make promiscuous assignments, and you may take your oath that this man was her father, her brother, or something of that kind."

"She never spoke to me of any of her relations, except the sister who lives with her," said Gerald.

"The very reason why she would be more likely to meet them in secret," said Dunsany. "When you have known a little more of the profession, my dear Gerald, you will find there are numbers of persons in it, especially the female members, who have relations whom they are very shy of noticing in public. Thus, for instance, Miss Montmorency has picked up a bit of

education here and there, has a fine figure and a good voice, and is leading lady on the Worcester circuit; while her papa, who is not called Montmorency at all, but Glubb, keeps a small shop or shed in the New Cut. Her line is light comedy, his is coal and potato. Depend upon it, something of that sort is the case in this instance, and you will be very good friends with the old gentleman some day and let him supply the Wallsends when you settle in town."

"Snick said it was a tall man," said Gerald.

"There is no particular reason that I know of why a father should not be tall," said Dunsany, "though most of them do run short and broad. However, this might be the brother, the Wife's Secret business. You recollect the play? A brother who has come to griet, and is in hiding, and comes to visit his sister secretly, and is suspected by the husband to be her lover. Just our story, by George! Perhaps Miss Pierrepont's brother has come to griet, frisked the till, or climbed up behind somebody's back on a bill-stamp, or some ingenious little proceeding of that nature, and is keeping out of the way. Depend upon it, it is something of that kind. Now finish your grog, and get off to bed easy in your mind; you are sure to find it all right in the morning."

"I shall go round and call upon her the first thing," said Gerald.

"Do," said Mr. Dunsany. "So long as you have a good sleep to-night you may do what you please to-morrow. Well," he muttered to himself, looking after the young man's departing figure, "I hope I'm right: I do not think the girl is the sort to play double, particularly with such a frank, honest nature as his. Bnt, even if it comes to the worst, I have postponed his misery twelve hours, and it was worth while sitting up a little later and drinking an extra glass of grog to do that."

"And what is the matter with my Susan?" said Mr. Dunsany, coming down to breakfast the next morning and meeting Miss Cave on the staircase. "Has she come to say that she can conceal her passion for her Mike no longer? And has she a carriage and four outside waiting to convey him to the village church?"

"Get along with you, do, Dunsany," said Miss Cave, grinning. "I was not looking for you, but for Mr. Hardinge."

"As I tapped at Mr. Hardinge's door just now he roared out that he was in his

bath," said Dunsany; "consequently he is not in a position to meet my Susan's gaze."

"Well then I will give this letter to you to take to him. It's from Miss Pierrepont, and important I am sure, because she begged me to bring it to him myself."

"Right your are," said Dunsany. And he took the letter to Gerald, whom he found in his dressing-gown. Gerald turned very pale when he saw the writing.

"It's from Madge," he said.

"I know it," said Dunsany. "Miss Cave told me; open it now. It's all right, depend upon it."

Gerald opened the letter and read it through. Then tossing it to his friend, he fell back in his chair, and buried his face in his hands.

"My poor dear fellow, what can be the matter?" said Dunsany. Then casting his eye over the letter, added, "By George! old Snick was right after all."

END OF BOOK THE FIRST.

MEMORY AND ABSENCE OF MIND.

MEMORY is nearly as much a puzzle as ever. Why in some men memory should be strong and in others weak; why the memory should be stronger at one time than another; why the same man should have a strong memory for some subjects, and a weak one for others; why illness should obliterate some subjects completely from the mind—are problems still undergoing patient and attentive scrutiny.

The memory for figures, or power of mental calculation, is well known to all of us, either by its presence or its absence. Jedediah Buxton, George Parker Bidder, and Zerah Colburn, are instances too familiarly known to need detail here. George Watson, the Sussex calculator, could tell the dates of every day since he was a child, and what he was doing on that day; he could show many other strange freaks of memory, but was a heavy, ignorant fellow generally, very vain of his one acquirement.

The memory of languages is quite a distinct faculty, so far as can be judged from recorded instances. Mithridates, we are told, could converse, in their own languages, to the natives of twenty-three countries which were under his sway. Cardinal Mezzofanti appears to have had this faculty in a stronger degree than any other person that ever lived. While educating for the priesthood, he learned Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, Spanish, French,

German, and Swedish. As a professor at some of the Italian universities, he constantly added to his store; until at the age of forty-three he could read in twenty languages, and converse in eighteen. In 1841, when he was sixty-seven years old, he was as well acquainted with Portuguese, English, Dutch, Danish, Russian, Polish, Bohemian, Servian, Magyar, Turkish, Irish, Welsh, Wallachian, Albanian, Bulgarian, Illyrian, Lettish, Lappish, as with the languages which he had first learned; while to Arabic he added Persian, Sanscrit, Koordish, Georgian, Syriac, Chaldee, Samaritan, Chinese, Coptic, Ethiopic, Abyssinian, and other Asiatic and African tongues. At the time of his death, in 1849, Mezzofanti could write eloquently, and converse fluently, in more than seventy languages.

All the other accounts of memory for words are poor compared with this; nevertheless, many of them are sufficiently remarkable. John Kemble used to say that he could learn a whole number of the *Morning Post* in four days; and General Christie made a similar assertion; but it is not known how far either of them verified this statement. Robert Dillon could repeat in the morning six columns of a newspaper which he had read overnight. During the Repeal debates in the House of Commons, thirty-seven years ago, one of the members wrote out his speech, sent it to the newspapers, and repeated it to the House in the evening; it was found to be the same verbatim as that which he had written out. John Fuller, a land agent in Norfolk, could remember every word of a sermon, and write it out correctly after going home; this was tested by comparing his written account with the clergyman's manuscript. Scaliger could repeat a hundred verses or more after having read them a single time. Seneca could repeat two thousand words on hearing them once. Magliabechi, who had a prodigious memory, was once put to a severe test. A gentleman lent him a manuscript, which was read and returned; the owner some time afterwards, pretending he had lost it, begged Magliabechi to write out as much as he could remember; whereupon the latter, appealing to his memory, wrote out the whole essay. Cyrus, if some of the old historians are to be credited, could remember the name of every soldier in his immense army. There was a Corsican boy who could rehearse forty thousand words, whether sense or nonsense, as they were dictated, and then

repeat them in the reversed order without making a single mistake. A physician of Massachusetts, about half a century ago, could repeat the whole of *Paradise Lost* without mistake, although he had not read it for twenty years. Euler, the great mathematician, when he became blind, could repeat the whole of Virgil's *Æneid*, and could remember the first line and the last line in every page of the particular edition which he had been accustomed to read before he became blind.

One kind of retentive memory may be considered as the result of sheer hard work, a determination towards one particular achievement, without reference either to cultivation or to memory on other subjects. This is frequently shown by persons in humble life in regard to the Bible. An old beggar-man at Stirling, known some forty years ago as Blind Aliok, afforded an instance of this. He knew the whole of the Bible by heart; insomuch that, if a sentence were read to him, he could name book, chapter and verse; or, if the book, chapter, and verse were named, he could give the exact words. A gentleman, to test him, repeated a verse, purposely making one verbal inaccuracy; Aliok hesitated, named the place where the passage is to be found, but at the same time pointed out the verbal error. The same gentleman asked him to repeat the ninetieth verse of the seventh chapter of the book of Numbers. Aliok almost instantly replied, "There is no such verse; that chapter has only eighty-nine verses."

There are no phenomena of memory more strange than those in which — usually through some illness, or some accidental injury to the brain — some particular facts or classes of facts baffle the recollection altogether. The instances recorded by Abercrombie, Winslow, Wigan, Carpenter, Holland, and other physicians, are too well founded to admit of any doubt. There was a gentleman who, when in disturbed health, uniformly called coals, paper, and paper, coals, quite unconscious of any anomaly in the matter. Another called his snuff-box a hogshead; and it was remarked that, in earlier life, he had been connected with the tobacco trade in the West Indies. Doctor Scandella, an Italian physician resident at New York, was attacked with yellow fever at New York; he spoke only English when first attacked, only French in the height of the fever, and remembered only his own original Italian just before his death. A Frenchman, at the age of twenty-seven,

spoke English well; he received an injury in the head, and could then for some time only remember French, believing and asserting himself to be but sixteen years old. At St. Thomas's Hospital an invalid suddenly began to talk in Welsh, a language which he had entirely neglected for thirty years. One lady lost the memory of exactly four years, well remembering events before and after that period; and in another instance the lost years amounted to eight or ten. A gentleman forgot the names of his friends, but remembered their ages, and adopted that as the most convenient mode of referring to them. Another lost so completely the meaning of nouns - substantive, that he unconsciously gave the names of places to things, persons to events, and so on, rendering his talk unintelligible. A lady, similarly under temporary ailment, could not remember the names of any of the ordinary things in her household; she was forced to go from room to room, and point to the articles concerning which she had any orders to give, or any observations to make. A military officer, mentioned by Doctor Winslow, sometimes remembered his own name, but not his address; at other times remembered his address, but not his name. He would occasionally, with a perplexed expression of countenance, accost a stranger, "I am Major —, can you tell me where I live?" Under his other frame of mind, "I live at —, can you tell me my name?"

Corroborative instances of a kind more or less analogous are so numerous, that we need only cite a few more as illustrations. There was a man who could remember the first syllable of long words, but no others. A soldier, after receiving an injury in the head, forgot the figures 5 and 7, and everything connected with them. A gentleman in a similar way lost the memory of the letter F. An old French lady could express herself intelligibly in any ordinary conversation; but if a direct question were put to her, her memory seemed to depart from her at once, except in reference to two words; her regular reply was "Saint Antoine." In another case, of a wounded French soldier, he evidently understood the meaning of what was said to him by others, but his memory could only assist him to the uniform reply, "Baba." John Hunter, the great surgeon, called on a friend at a time when indisposed; for a few hours he could not remember anything concerning any person or object beyond the walls of the room he was in;

it was a painful time to him, for, without any hallucination, he knew perfectly well that his memory had in great measure temporarily deserted him; he walked to the window, as a possible means of getting back some recollection of the outer world. An artillery officer, in 1785, could read out well when a book was open before him, but could not remember a word of the contents when the book was closed. A Spanish tragic author forgot his own writings; when reminded of them, he declared they must have been written by some one else. A French scientific man could scarcely ever remember the names of his colleagues; he was accustomed to speak of them as the authors of such and such works or papers, or as the discoverers of such and such facts. One gentleman forgot the names of the whole of his children for a time. An agriculturist, a man of extensive business and good intelligence, was obliged to use a dictionary to understand the ordinary implements of his trade; the sound of each word suggested the shape of the letters, and the sight of the latter suggested the sense; but the sound did not directly suggest the sense. A lady, after an illness, forgot all pronouns, and all inflexions of verbs except the infinitive; when wishing or intending to say, "Stop, my husband has just come," she said, "To stop, husband to come."

Another variety is what may be called perversion of memory, memory running to wildness, generally manifested during or immediately after an illness. One instance is that in which we imagine other persons to be doing or feeling that which is really attributable to ourselves. There was a gentleman who, when thirsty, believed that others experienced the thirst; and after he had coughed, said to a friend near him, "I am sorry you have so bad a cough." Samuel Rogers, when very aged and declining, was riding in a carriage with a lady, who asked him about another lady well known to both; the name seemed a blank to him, and stopping the carriage, he asked his servant, "Do I know Lady M.?" "Yes, sir," was the reply. A gentleman, sitting with his wife in the evening, found his thoughts wandering back to a lady at whose house he frequently spent an evening in former years; ludicrously confounding time, place, and person, he rose up, and, addressing his wife as "madam," declared that it was getting late, and that he must return home to his family.

The forgetfulness arising from sheer absence of mind is different in its nature from any of the above. The man may be in good health, and may be the reverse of stupid, but he is so absorbed in a particular train of thought as to be nearly oblivious to surrounding sayings and doings. Sydney Smith cited two instances of absence of mind which struck his fancy. "I heard of a clergyman who went jogging along the road till he came to a turnpike. 'What is to pay?' 'Pay, sir, for what?' asked the turnpike-man. 'Why, for my horse to be sure.' 'Your horse, sir! What horse? There is no horse, sir.' 'No horse. God bless me,' said he, suddenly looking down between his legs, 'I thought I was on horseback.' Lord Dudley was one of the most absent men I think I ever met in society. One day he met me in the street and invited me to meet myself. 'Dine with me to-day; dine with me, and I will get Sydney Smith to meet you.' I admitted the temptation he held out to me, but said I was engaged to meet him elsewhere. Another time in meeting me he put his arm through mine, muttering, 'I don't mind walking with him a little way; I'll walk with him as far as the end of the street.' He very nearly overset my gravity once in the pulpit. He was sitting immediately under me, apparently very attentive, when suddenly he took up his stick as if he had been in the House of Commons, and, tapping the ground with it, cried out in a low but very audible whisper, 'Hear, hear.'" An absence of mind more or less similar has often been displayed by men habituated to deep study. Domenichino, the great Italian painter, became so absorbed in his own picture of the Martyrdom of Saint Andrew that he reviled, with the fiercest passion, a soldier who was represented insulting or mocking the saint. Caracci, who was present, was so struck with Domenichino's excited expression of face that he afterwards adopted it as an impersonation of rage. Crebillon, the French dramatist, impatiently said to a friend who entered his study, "Don't disturb me; this is a moment of exquisite happiness; I am going to hang a villanous minister, and to banish a stupid one!" Isaac D'Israeli says: "It has been told of a modern astronomer, that one summer night, when he was withdrawing to his chamber, the brightness of the heavens showed a phenomenon. He passed the whole night in observing it; and when they came to him

early in the morning, and found him in the same attitude, he said, like one who had been collecting his thoughts for a few moments, 'It must be thus; but I will go to bed before it is too late.' He had gazed the entire night in meditation, and was not aware of it." Doctor Stukely called upon Sir Isaac Newton, and was told that Sir Isaac would come to him directly. The waiting was long and tedious, dinner was brought in, and Stukely, feeling hungry, sat down and nearly demolished a tempting roast fowl. Newton at length appeared, and seeing the empty dish, exclaimed, "I protest I had forgotten that I had eaten my dinner!" The Count de Brancas, a friend of La Bruyère and Rochefoucauld, was one day reading in his study, when a nurse brought in a little infant; he put down his book, took up the infant, and caressed it admiringly. A friend came in, and Brancas threw down the baby on the table, thinking it was a book, not detecting his error until a loud crying announced it. On another occasion Rochefoucauld crossed the street to greet him. Brancas said, "God help you, my poor man!" Rochefoucauld smiled, and was about to speak, when the other interrupted him: "I told you that I had nothing for you; there is no use in your teasing me; why don't you try to get work? Such lazy idlers as you make the streets quite disagreeable." Rochefoucauld's hearty laugh at length roused him from his reverie. Men have been known to exhibit such instances of absence of mind as the following: Taking out a watch, looking at it, and then asking, "What's o'clock?" Going to a house where friends have lived, and forgetting that they had removed; going up to dress for dinner, forgetting the main purpose in view, and getting into bed instead; taking imaginary pinches of snuff while talking, forgetting all the time that the box is empty. Dante went once into a bookseller's shop to witness a grand street procession. He became so absorbed in a book that the whole spectacle passed without his noticing it; and when he went home was surprised at being reminded of it. Hogarth, dining one day with friends, rose in the middle of dinner, turned his chair round, sat down with his back to the company, meditated awhile, resumed his proper position, and went on with his dinner. Sheridan, conversing with his sister one day, unconsciously cut up into shreds an elegant pair of ruffles which she had just

made for her father. A gentleman, invited to dinner, sat in the drawing-room alone for awhile; by the time the lady of the house appeared, she found that he, in a brown study, had picked a hearth-brush to pieces; he had the denuded handle in his hand, while his dress was covered with hairs.

“COME, THE RECORDERS!”

AMONG the earlier emotions of the youthful playgoer, whose enthusiasm for dramatic representations is generally of a very fervid and uncompromising kind, must be recognised his pity for the money-taker, forbidden by the cares of office to witness a performance, and his envy of the musicians, so advantageously stationed for the incessant enjoyment of the delights of the theatre. But he perceives, with regretful wonder, that these gentlemen are habitually negligent of their opportunities, and fail to appreciate the peculiar happiness of their position; that they are apt, indeed, their services not being immediately required, to abandon their instruments, and quietly to steal away through the cramped doorway that admits to the mysterious regions beneath the stage. He is grieved to note that for them, at any rate, the play is not “the thing.” One or two may remain—the performer on the drum, I have observed, is often very faithful in this respect, though I have failed to discover any special reason why a love of histrionic efforts should be generated by his professional occupation—but the majority of the orchestra clearly manifest an almost indecent alacrity in avoiding all contemplation of the displays on the other side of the foot-lights. They are but playgoers on compulsion. They even seem sometimes, when they retain their seats, to prefer gazing at the audience rather than at the actors, and thus to advertise their apathy in the matter. And I have not heard that the parsimonious manager, who proposed to reduce the salaries of his musicians on the ground that they every night enjoyed admission to the best seats, for which they paid nothing, “even when stars were performing,” ever succeeded in convincing his band of the justice of his arguments.

The juvenile patron of the drama will, of course, in due time become less absorbed in his own view of the situation, and learn that, just as one man’s meat is another man’s poison, so the pleasures of some are

the pains of others. He will cease to search the faces of the orchestra for any evidence of “pride of place,” or enjoyment of performances they witness, not as volunteers, but as pressed men. He will understand that they are at work, and are influenced by a natural anxiety to escape from work as soon as may be. So, the overture ended, they vanish, and leave the actors to do their best or their worst, as the case may be. But our young friend’s sentiments are not peculiar to himself—have been often shared, indeed, by very experienced persons. We have heard of comic singers and travelling entertainment givers who have greatly resented the air of indifference of their musical accompanist. They have required of him that he should feel amused, or affect to feel amused, by their efforts. He has had to supplement his skill as a musician by his readiness as an actor. It has been thought desirable that the audience should be enabled to exclaim: “The great So-and-So *must* be funny! Why, see the man at the piano, who plays for him every night, who has, of course, seen his performance scores and scores of times, even *he* can’t help laughing, the great So-and-So is so funny.” The audience, thus convinced, find themselves, no doubt, very highly amused. Garrick himself appears, on one occasion, at any rate, to have been much enraged at the indifference of a member of his band. Cervetto, the violoncello-player, once ventured to yawn noisily and portentously while the great actor was delivering an address to the audience. The house gave way to laughter. The indignation of the actor could only be appeased by Cervetto’s absurd excuse that he invariably yawned when he felt “the greatest rapture,” and to this emotion the address to the house, so admirably delivered by his manager, had justified him in yielding. Garrick accepted the explanation, perhaps rather on account of its humour than of its completeness.

Music and the drama have been inseparably connected from the most remote date. Even in the cart of Thespis some corner must have been found for the musician. The custom of chanting in churches has been traced to the practice of the ancient and pagan stage. Music pervaded the whole of the classical drama, was the adjunct of the poetry: the play being a kind of recitation, the declamation composed and written in notes, and the gesticulations even being accompanied. The old miracle plays were assisted by per-

formers on the horn, the pipe, the tabret, and the flute; a full orchestra, in fact. Mr. Payne Collier, in his *Annals of the Stage*, points out that at the end of the prologue to *Childermas Day*, 1512, the minstrels are required to "do their diligence," the same expression being employed at the close of the performance when they are besought either themselves to dance, or to play a dance for the entertainment of the company:

Also ye menstrelles doth your diligence
Afore our depertyng geve us a daunce.

The Elizabethan stage relied greatly upon the aid of trumpets, cornets, &c., for the "soundings" which announced the commencement of the prologue, and for the "alarums" and "flourishes" which occurred in the course of the representation. Malone was of opinion that the band consisted of some eight or ten musicians stationed in "an upper balcony over what is now called the stage-box." Collier, however, shows that the musicians were often divided into two bands, and quotes a stage direction in Marston's *Antonio's Revenge*, 1602: "While the measure is dancing, Andrugio's ghost is placed betwixt the music houses." In a play of later date, Middleton's *Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, 1630, appears the direction: "While the company seem to weep and mourn, there is a sad song in the music room." Boxes were then often called rooms, and one was clearly set apart for the use of the musicians. In certain of Shakespeare's plays the musicians are clearly required to quit their room for a while, and appear upon the stage among the *dramatis personæ*.

The practice of playing music between the acts is of long standing, the frequent inappropriateness of these interludes having been repeatedly commented on, however. A writer in the last century expressly reports that at the end of every act, the audience, "carried away by a jig of Vivaldi's or a concerto of Giardini's, lose every warm impression relative to the piece, and begin again cool and unconcerned as at the commencement of the representation." He advocates the introduction of music adapted to the subject: "The music after an act should commence in the tone of the preceding passion, and be gradually varied till it accords with the tone of the passion that is to succeed in the next act," so that "cheerful, tender, melancholy, or animated impressions" may be inspired as the occasion may need. At the conclusion of the second act of *Gammer Gurton's Needle*,

1566, Diccon, addressing himself to the musicians, says simply, "In the mean time, fellows, pipe up your fiddles." But in a later play, the *Two Italian Gentlemen*, by Anthony Munday, printed about 1584, the different kinds of music to be played after each act are stated, whether "a pleasant galliard," a "solemn dump," or a "pleasant allemaigne." So Marston, in his *Sophonisba*, 1606, indicates particularly the instruments he would have played during the pauses between the acts. After act one, "the cornets and organs playing loud full of music;" after act two, "organs mixed with recorders;" after act three, "organs, viols, and voices;" with "a base lute and a treble viol" after act four. In the course of this play, moreover, musical accompaniments of a descriptive kind were introduced, the stage direction on two occasions informing us that "infernal music plays softly." Nabbes, in the prologue to his *Hannibal and Scipio*, 1637, alludes at once to the change of the place of action of the drama, and to the performance of music between the acts:

The place is sometimes changed, too, with the scene,
Which is translated as the music plays
Betwixt the acts.

The closing of the theatres by the Puritans, in 1642, plainly distressed the musicians almost as much as the players. Their occupation was practically gone, although not declared illegal by Act of Parliament. "Our music," writes the author of the *Actor's Remonstrance*, 1643, "that was held so delectable and precious that they scorned to come to a tavern under twenty shillings salary for two hours, now wander with their instruments under their cloaks—I mean such as have any—into all houses of good fellowship, saluting every room where there is company with, 'Will you have any music, gentlemen?'"

At the Restoration, however, king, actors, and orchestra all enjoyed their own again. Presently, for the first time it would seem in an English theatre, the musicians were assigned that entrenched position between the pit and the stage they have ever since maintained. "The front of the stage is opened, and the band of twenty-four violins with the harpsichals and theorbos which accompany the voices are placed between the pit and the stage." So runs one of the preliminary stage directions in the version of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, arranged by Dryden and Davenant for performance at the Duke's Theatre, Lincoln's-inn-fields, in 1667. The change was, no doubt, introduced by

Davenant in pursuance of French example. The authors of the *Histoire Universelle des Théâtres* state, regarding the French stage, that after the disuse of the old chorus in 1630, "à la place du chant qui distinguoit les actes et qui marquoit les repos nécessaires, on introduisit des joueurs d'instrumens, qui d'abord furent placés sur les ailes du théâtre, où ils exécutoient différens airs avant la commencement de la pièce et entre les actes. Ensuite ils furent mis au fond des troisième loges, puis aux secondes, enfin entre le théâtre et le parterre, où ils sont restés."

Theatres differ little save in regard to their dimensions. The minor house is governed by the same laws, is conducted upon the same system, as the major one. It is as a humbler and cheaper edition, but it repeats down to minute particulars the example of its costly original. The orchestra, or some form of orchestra, is always indispensable. Even that street-corner tragedy which sets forth the story of Punch and Judy, could not be presented without its pandean-pipe accompaniment. The lowest vagrant theatre must, like the lady in the nursery ballad, have music wherever it goes. No doubt this is often of most inferior quality, suggestive of a return to very early musical methods. But poverty constrains to primitiveness. Mr. Pepys, comparing the state of the stage under Killigrew to what it had been in earlier years, notes: "Now wax candles and many of them; then not above three pounds of tallow; now all things civil, no rudeness anywhere; then as in a bear-garden; then two or three fiddlers; now nine or ten of the best," &c. The orchestra of a strolling theatre has been known to consist of one fiddler only, and he has been required to combine with his musical exertions the discharge of secretarial duties, enlivened by occasional appearances on the stage to strengthen casts, or help fill up the scene. The strollers' band is often of uncertain strength. For when the travelling company meets with misadventure the orchestra are usually the first to prove unfaithful. They are the Swiss of the troop. The receipts fail, and the musicians desert. They carry their gifts elsewhere, and seek independent markets. The fairs, the races, the country in-door, attract the fiddler, and he strolls on his own account, when the payment of salaries is suspended. A veteran actor was wont to relate his experiences of fifty years ago as a member of the Stratford-upon-Avon com-

pany, when the orchestra consisted only of a fife and a tambourine, the instrumentalists performing, as they avowed, "not from notes but entirely by ear." Presently the company removed to Warwick for the race week. But here the managerial difficulties increased—no band whatever could be obtained! This was the more distressing in that the performances were to be of an illegitimate character: a "famous tight-rope dancer" had been engaged. The dancer at once declared that his exhibition without music was not for a moment to be thought of. One of the company thereupon obligingly offered his services. He could play upon the violin: four tunes only. Now, provided an instrument could be borrowed for the occasion, and provided, moreover, the tight-rope artiste could dance to the tune of *There's Nae Luck, or Drink to Me Only, or Away with Melancholy*, or the *National Anthem*, here was a way out of the dilemma, and all might yet be well. Unfortunately a violin was not forthcoming at any price, and the dancer declared himself quite unable to dance to the airs stated! How was faith to be kept with the public? At the last moment a barrel-organ was secured. The organist was a man of resources. In addition to turning the handle of his instrument, he contrived to play the triangles and the pan-pipes. Here, then, was a full band. The dancer still demurred. He must be assisted by a "clown to the rope," to chalk his soles, amuse the audience while he rested, and perform other useful duties. Another obliging actor volunteered his help. He would "by special desire and on this occasion only," appear as clown. So having played Pangloss in the *Heir at Law*, the first piece, he exchanged his doctoral costume for a suit of motley, and the performance "drew forth," as subsequent playbills stated, "universal and reiterated bursts of applause from a crowded and elegant audience." The experiment of the barrel-organ orchestra was not often repeated. The band of the Leamington Theatre was lent to the Warwick house, the distance between the establishments being only two miles. The Leamington audience were provided with music at the commencement of the evening only; the Warwick playgoers dispensed with orchestral accompaniments until a later period in the performances.

The absence of an orchestra, during the recent performances in London of the company of the *Comédie Française*, probably appeared strange and unaccountable to many of our untravelled playgoers. But

the Comédie has long dispensed with all musical accompaniments. It presents the drama pure and simple. It prefers that the histrionic art should run alone, unaided by the musician. But this abstinence in the matter of music, while it is not of course a following of the method of the ancient classical stage, is not, further, one of the elder traditions of the Théâtre Français. For it is clear that the lighter comedies of Molière, such, for instance, as *Le Malade Imaginaire*, or *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, could not have been presented originally without orchestral assistance. These works indeed avowedly pertain to the "comédie-ballet" class of entertainments, and are supplied with "intermédés," in the course of which all kinds of curious dancing and singing occur. They are plays still preserving some characteristics of the grotesque humour and buffoonery of Italian pantomime. The "intermédés," however, and their indispensable musical accompaniments, can be readily suppressed, without injury to the works from which they spring. They are a kind of fungous growth that rather saps the vitality of, than lends support to, the parent tree. The Comédie retains these plays in their repertory by discarding altogether their ballet or musical excrescences. We may note that it was while playing in the last "intermède" of *Le Malade Imaginaire*, that Molière was seized with the convulsive fit which proved fatal within an hour of the performance.

Did the London audiences of the Comédie long for the absent music? They did not seem to do so. They were at any rate resigned to the loss. They may even be said to have had the air of those who have met with what is called "a happy release;" for, after all, the departed was perhaps quite as much a foe as a friend. And this brings us to the consideration whether the alliance between music and the drama in England need be quite so enduring and insoluble as it is at present. Is the orchestra really necessary to the existence of all our theatres? Is it absolutely indispensable that every comedy should be preceded by a performance of the overture to *Fra Diavolo*, let us say, or its acts divided by the execution—an appropriate word—of a set of quadrilles from *La Grande Duchesse*, or the repetition of an endless and wearisome waltz? The orchestra escape from the play—may not the audience be permitted to avoid the orchestra? Of course when dancing and singing form part of the entertainments

of the evening, the band must be retained and endured. But their presence and performance, when the accompaniments to neither song nor dance are required of them, would seem to be superfluous and redundant. They are supposed to entertain the audience during the pauses in the representation. But if they fail to do this? In many cases they exist but as creatures of tradition, of superstition, of that inveterate conservatism which hinders all amendment in theatrical matters. And, no doubt, when an absurdity or an imposture pleads its antiquity or claims to be "a vested interest," the difficulty of suppressing it becomes prodigious.

Anyhow, our orchestras might surely mend their ways. They rejoice, at present, in the performance of the most hackneyed and inappropriate music. And they play, as a rule, execrably. Their usual repertory consists of about six overtures, three sets of quadrilles, and four waltzes. It must sometimes happen that all the orchestras in London are at the same moment occupied in performing the same piece of music—the overture to *Zampa* or *Stradella* possibly. No connexion is ever maintained between the nature of the play and the character of the music. *La Dame Blanche* does as well for *Othello* as for the *School for Scandal*; *Le Domino Noir* suits *Hamlet* equally with the *Lady of Lyons*. Offenbach intrudes upon Shakespeare, and Mozart introduces a sensation dramatist. And then the noise! No wonder that audiences carry away headaches from the theatres. Surely those must have been pleasanter and more peaceful times when violins and theorbos and harpsichals constituted the orchestra. With monster bands have come monstrous instruments for creating the greatest possible amount of uproar. The small orchestra imitates the large. So in theatres little bigger than drawing-rooms—which a pianoforte could probably fill sufficiently with sound—obstreperous drums are beaten and pantomimic trumpets blare, greatly to the torture of the audience. Some reform in this matter is urgently needed. For our own part we should regard with interest any experiment which had in view at once the greater comfort of the spectators, and the encouragement of the players to rely for support upon the simple exercise of their own art. A theatre devoted to acting, and intrusting its actors with the best works obtainable, need not encumber itself with a useless orchestra. Let it be added, in conclusion,

to obviate misconception, that no slur upon music or musicians is here for a moment contemplated. We only advocate a division of theatres into musical and non-musical, into dramatic and operatic, or partially operatic.

IF.

If—it had never shone,
That sudden star so strangely dear,
With a glory that flooded her atmosphere,
With a dreamy glimmer of silvery haze,
That haloed for her the nights and days;
Why—she still had thought the soft grey sky,
With its sober seasons gliding by,
Best shelter 'neath which to live or die,
That the quiet life had known.

If—she had never seen,
That radiant flower so fresh and fair,
With a scent so luscious, a hue so rare,
To thrill the senses, to dazzle the sight,
And lull the life to a vague delight;
Why—she still had thought the rose was sweet,
Still gathered the violets at her feet,
Nor deemed all garlands incomplete,
But just where one bloom had been.

If—she had never heard,
That strain of music, lovely and wild,
Now bidding her laugh like a happy child;
Now, calling for showers of passionate tears,
Such as we weep in our early years;
Why—she still had loved the sweet old air,
That murmured of children, home, and prayer,
That breathed of all things calm and fair,
And no rebel pulses stirred.

If—it were still undreamt,
The beautiful vision she loves too well,
With a passion she vainly strives to quell,
With a passion that haunts her night and day,
With a passion 'gainst which she dares not pray;
Why—with none of this feverish ill possess,
She still had been tranquil, calm, and blest,
Like a streamlet singing in shadowed rest,
From all sunlights or storms exempt.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

LA TUDE'S ESCAPE FROM THE BASTILLE.

M. MASERS HENRI DE LA TUDE, the son of a knight of St. Louis, and lieutenant-colonel of the Orleans dragoon regiment, was born in the year 1725 at the château of Croisail, near Montagnac, in Languedoc, in the diocese of Agde. La Tude's father, made king's lieutenant of Sedan in 1733, brought him up as became the son of an old soldier of rank and position. In 1749, La Tude was sent to Paris to complete his military education as an engineer.

Louis the Fifteenth had succeeded to the throne in 1715. The European war, which had ended at Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1747, left the French with a shattered fleet and twelve hundred millions added to their debt. The debased king, wallowing in pleasure at the Parc aux Cerfs, abandoned everything to his vain and ambitious mis-

trepreneur, Madame de Pompadour, the daughter of a government contractor, whom the nobles of the court hated, despised, and yet feared. The clergy, intent on hotly persecuting the Jansenists, were exercising the most despotic power, encouraged by this Roxana of the hour, who had just dismissed M. Machault, an honest and enlightened minister, who had endeavoured to equalise taxation, and to encourage free internal trade in corn. The king had already begun to act on the fatal principle laid down by himself in a subsequent speech to his parliament: "We hold our crown from God alone; legislative power belongs to the king only, without dependence and without partition."

It was at this period of corruption that the young military student, eager to plunge into the struggle of life, arrived in Paris. Clever, ambitious, and not over-scrupulous, La Tude resolved to climb the hill of fortune by a short and dangerous cut. A smile of Madame de Pompadour secured gold, rank, favour, success to him on whom it rested. By a wild, ill-planned scheme, as daring as it was rash, La Tude resolved to win that smile, and to secure a place at the sultana's side. The proud nobles, the Jansenists, and the strict and religious of all parties, hated her with an intense and insatiable malignity. One day La Tude heard some young men, over their wine, gasconading that they would rid France of the harpy. La Tude had been told that the fear of poison embittered the life of this woman, who declared that every day at Versailles was "a battle." He at once devised an incoherent project, full of shallow and short-sighted cunning. He filled a letter with some harmless powder, and posted it to Madame de Pompadour. He then rode to Versailles, obtained an audience of the favourite, revealed the conversation he had heard, informed her he had seen a parcel posted to her, communicated his suspicions respecting it, cautioned her to be on her guard, and assured her in lavish terms of the anxiety he felt, and the great satisfaction he experienced in being able to give her intelligence so important to herself and all France, to whom she was so dear. The vain woman, living amidst false friends and open enemies, was pleased with the zeal of the young student, and, after expressing her gratitude for the attention, politely offered him her service. He left the palace, and turned his face toward Paris, enraptured at the success of his stratagem. He had won that smile

that secured wealth, power, and all for which he longed. Mathematics were only for dusty pedants; for him now, by day, the perpetual sunshine that gold lace for ever spreads through Versailles corridors; by night the sparkling starlight of court diamonds, and an opening heaven of fair and welcoming faces. So youth's dreams arise, so they pass away. The next post brought the alarming packet. The supposed poison was tried by the court physicians on several animals, old court favourites, grown old and useless. The Pompadour, with Diaphorism, and some other of Molière's medical friends, stood round, in breathless expectation to see the creatures drop dead; but no—by all the saints of Paris no; on the contrary, they waddled, gambolled, crawled, and fawned upon the cruel hands held out to them, and no harm resulted in any way, no harm but to the young Languedoc student. He had won the smile, now he felt the frown; the sky over Versailles darkened as he rode to Paris exulting, then the lightning struck him.

On the 1st of May, 1749, a stern knocking came to La Tude's door, rough hands snatched away his sword, sharp cords tied his wrists, the next morning the poor, unsuccessful, detected cheat awoke in the Bastille. The fool's paradise had changed to a dark cell, whence no voice could reach the ears of justice. The world was dead to him, and he to the world. At three-and-twenty, with a brain full of hope and ambition, he was buried alive.

In the September of the same year, La Tude, treated as a mere indiscreet lad, was removed to the castle of Vincennes, where M. Berrier, the lieutenant-general of the police, showed him every possible indulgence. He was allotted the best room, and permitted to walk two hours every day in the gardens of the château. From his windows he could see over all Paris. Below his rooms stretched a private garden, in which another favoured prisoner, a Jansenist curé, was allowed to walk with his pupils, the son of the Marquis of Châtelet's steward and the child of one of the turnkeys, and there also he was allowed to receive visitors. The sight of the two boys playing inspired La Tude with longings for liberty, and roused his ingenuity, naturally of rather a secretive kind. Exactly at two o'clock every day the elder turnkey awaited him in the garden, while the junior unlocked his door to give him temporary liberty. La Tude commenced his scheme by getting into a habit of run-

ning down fast into the garden before the junior turnkey had time to lock the upper door and follow him. On the 25th of June, 1750, the plot was ripe. Tripping down-stairs as soon as the junior turnkey came, La Tude instantly slammed the door at the bottom of the staircase, in order to muffle the man's cries and to gain time. He then knocked boldly at the outer gate and cried to the sentinel:

"Dence take it! above two hours monsieur le curé has been waiting for the Abbé de St. Sauveur (one of the visitors); have you seen the puppy pass this way? Has he been gone long? I am on the hunt after him, and he shall pay me for this trouble."

The soldier at once opened the gate, and La Tude passed through. Another soldier, to whom he put the same hurried question, replied he knew nothing about it, and let him proceed. The third sentry, on the further side of the drawbridge, said he had not seen the abbé. La Tude replied, "I shall soon find him," and capering like a schoolboy, at four paces from the last sentinel he set up a run and brushed by him, the man not suspecting a young and beardless lad, so gay and careless, to be an escaped prisoner. In the mean time the turnkey who was locked in thundered at the door, and shouted to his companion from the garden, who instantly guessed the trick La Tude had put upon them. The first sentry, being questioned, declared he did not know La Tude by sight, and had thought he was a friend of the abbé's who had been to see the curé.

Six days after this escape, La Tude, with perfect innocence and trustfulness, through the king's physician-in-ordinary, surrendered himself to Louis the Fifteenth. He was immediately conducted to the Bastille. M. Berrier soon after came and told La Tude that the confidence he had placed in the king's clemency and goodness of heart was not misplaced. He had merely been sent to the Bastille in order to find out how he escaped from Vincennes, as only prisoners of the first quality were sent there, and it was important that the guards should be faithful. The young man describing his escape, stern M. Berrier condescended to smile, and affably asked La Tude if he had not always treated him with kindness. "As a father," was the reply; and M. Berrier then promised to give him his liberty in a few days, directly he had spoken to the marchioness. But the Pompadour was implacable in her hatred. She

was angry that La Tude had trusted the king's compassion rather than hers. She felt that the story would be another morsel for her enemies, and might make even the king suspect her of cruelty. La Tude was at once thrown into a dungeon, and left there eighteen months. At the end of that time he was brought up and placed in a common room with another of the marchioness's victims, named D'Alégre. Endless letters to M. Berrier at last brought an answer. The amiable lieutenant of police assured La Tude that his heart was not callous, that he sympathised with his misfortunes, and that he would have been long since set free, but that the woman held the reins entirely in her own hands. Any indulgence asked he would grant, and at the first change of public events both La Tude and D'Alégre were assured they should be the first persons restored to liberty, and compensated for their lost time and sufferings. Two years and six months already in darkness and solitude had been crushed out of La Tude's life, and these bland promises fell unheeded upon his ear. The Pompadour, clever and witty, might retain her hold over the king for another fifteen years; by that time his life would be half gone, and he would return to the world a boy in mind, no career open to him, his friends dead, and the world heedless of one whom it had forgotten. What hope could there be? He was shut in by walls six feet thick, and of enormous height, four iron grates at every window and up every chimney, sentries on every tower, deep trenches full of stagnant water; he had no friends to bring saws or files, no money to bribe turnkeys.

By the help of a very scarce book—the only work extant which gives us any clue or complete outline of the daily economy of the Bastille—we are enabled to sketch the detestable prison with all its towers, court-yards, and drawbridges. The volume, known and valued by Howard the philanthropist, seems to have quite escaped the observation of Mr. Carlyle, who has not used it in his fine chapter on the capture of the Bastille. The state prison was entered by a gate and an advanced corps de garde in the Rue de St. Antoine. A drawbridge and a second gloomy gate led to the governor's house, which was separated from the main prison by a ditch and a second drawbridge. A strong barrier, set with iron spikes, and with a gate of crossed palisades, divided the corps de garde from the great court, which was a parallelogram

about one hundred and twenty feet long and eighty broad. Within the barrier, on the right hand, was the barrack of the subaltern officers, the prison tailor, and two or three of the more favoured prisoners. The eight towers were De la Comte, Du Tresor, De la Chapelle, De la Bertaudière, Du Puits, Du Coin, De la Basinière, and De la Liberté. The inner, or well court, was divided from the larger court by a house in which were the examination hall, the turnkeys' rooms, the kitchens, and the king's lieutenant's apartments. The well court, which was very filthy, was about twenty-five feet long and fifty feet broad. All round the Bastille ran a moat twenty-five feet broad, enclosed with a wall sixty feet high, with a wooden gallery, on which sentinels paced day and night. Outside the Bastille rose a detached bastion planted with trees. On the other side of the Bastille stood another bastion. Between the two bastions stretched the stone bridge of the gate of St. Antoine, with the town ditches on either side. The bridge opened on a large square fronting the Bastille, and set about with stately houses. In the cells, which were black with the smoke of centuries, and dirty and full of vermin, there was no furniture but little curtained beds and some worm-eaten chairs. The double iron doors and small loophole windows, were grated, so that little light penetrated. The prisoners were stripped of all money and valuables on entering, and an inventory given them to keep in case they were ever released. The soldiers on guard covered their faces with their hats when a new arrival passed, and in the chapel the curtains before the cellular seats were only withdrawn at the moment of the elevation of the Host. The meals were at one A.M. and seven P.M.; a pistole a day being allowed for every prisoner, the diet should have been good, but the turnkeys stole half the food, and adulterated the rest. Every quarter of an hour during the night the sentinel on duty rang a bell to prove his vigilance. The most dreaded cells in the prison were the calottes or garrets in the roofs of the towers, the dungeons below the level of the ditch, and the rooms under the cannon platforms, which were shaken almost to pieces when salutes were fired. Such was this hell upon earth into which men were thrown for the slightest offence against a royal favourite, a priest in power, or a corrupt official.

From this cruel purgatory, with walls like huge cliffs, and girt in by enemies, did

La Tude resolve to escape. It required an amount of foresight, energy, and perseverance almost supernatural. No scissors, knives, or edged tools were allowed to a prisoner in the Bastille; nor, for a hundred louis, would a turnkey have brought any culprit even a quarter of a yard of thread. No news from the outer world, not even of a king's death, reached the eight towers. The officers, surgeons, and turnkeys of the prison had but one changeless formula, "Good morning! Good evening! Do you want anything?" La Tude's father or brother might have pined for years in the room over his head, and he would never have known it. A trunk of clean linen was all he had to help him to liberty. D'Alégre laughed as he pointed with a smile to that useless store; but after seven years of thought La Tude slowly hammered out a scheme. Step by step, inch by inch, he resolved, with the patience of a coral insect, to work this scheme out. He knew too well what he required; fourteen hundred feet of cord, two ladders—one of wood, thirty feet long, another of rope, one hundred and eighty feet. It would be necessary somehow to remove the heavy iron grates from the passage of the chimney, and to bore a hole, in one night, through a wall many feet thick, at the distance of only twelve or fifteen feet from a cruelly vigilant and unbribable sentinel. With their bare hands the two must do all this. But this was not all; they must also conceal the two ladders in a small cell, that was strictly searched by the turnkeys and officers many times a week. To every suggestion La Tude's less sanguine friend replied, "Impossible, pshaw! impossible." Impossible? To energy all things are possible.

La Tude had observed that in No. 3 of the Tower de la Comte—the room over his own—there was a prisoner who never made any noise, never audibly moved his chair or table, never even coughed. He went to mass on the Sundays and Wednesdays when La Tude and his friend did. He descended first and returned last. It being necessary to examine his room, La Tude arranged a simple but effectual plan. On the return from mass, D'Alégre was to pull out his handkerchief and let it fall down stairs. One day he did so, then asked the turnkey to go down and fetch it. The moment the man was gone La Tude darted up-stairs, drew the bolt of No. 3, and glanced in; the room was nine or ten feet high. He then measured quickly three

steps of the staircase, and counted the number of steps to his own cell. He saw at once that the ceiling of his cell had been made double, and five feet thick, to muffle sound; and guessed that in all probability a similar hollow space would be found between the floor of his own cell and the ceiling of that below. When they were bolted into No. 2, La Tude's eyes sparkled; he clutched his friend's arm, and cried:

"Patience, courage, and we shall escape. The floor is hollow, we can hide our rope there."

"Rope?" said his friend, "but we could not get ten feet to save our lives."

"In that post-chaise trunk," said La Tude, pointing to the trunk, "there are twelve dozen shirts, sixteen pairs of silk stockings, twelve dozen under-stockings, five dozen drawers, six dozen napkins; unravelling these we shall have more rope than we want." D'Alégre brightened up, but again asked how the iron bars in the chimney were to be removed, as they had no chisels, no crowbars. "The hand made all instruments, and the head planned them," said La Tude; "while we have those we cannot be at a loss for resources." Then he pointed out the iron hinges of their folding tables. These, sharpened on the tiled floor, and put into handles, became working chisels, the steel for lighting their fire could be made into a knife, which would shape tool handles, and serve for a thousand other purposes. They talked about nothing else all day. Hope whispered encouragement to those poor prisoners, rendered preternaturally cunning by seven years of slavery. After supper, when the place was safe for the night (one great security in these cases), they pulled a hinge off the table, and digging a tile out of the floor, dug towards the ceiling below. In six hours they found there were two floors below, three feet apart. They then carefully replaced the tile, which presented no appearance of having been disturbed. Next day they broke the fire steel, made a knife, and cut two handles in which to insert the sharpened hinges. After that they slowly unravelled two of the shirts, drawing out thread after thread. These strings, knit together, they formed into clews of an equal length, and then divided them into two clews, fifty threads to each sixty feet. They then twisted these clews, and formed a rope about fifty-five feet long, to be from time to time added to by more unravelled linen slowly woven in the long hours of the dreary nights.

Then came the hard task of wrenching the iron bars out of the chimney. To accomplish this they fastened their rope ladders with heavy weights, and, supported on them, worked at the bars. In a few months every bar was loosened and ready to be removed, but still left in its original socket. It was hard work. Every day the two men descended with bleeding hands, and so bruised that they could not recommence work below till after an hour or two's rest. The bars removed, there was still a wooden ladder required to ascend from the moat to the sentinel's gallery, the only way to the governor's garden, and beyond that to liberty. They had no saw to cut the firewood, eighteen inches long, daily supplied to them. The hinges would not saw through billets. In a few hours these ingenious men, with an iron candlestick and the other half of the fire steel, had made an excellent saw, which in twenty minutes would cut through a log as thick as a man's leg. With knife and saw they pared and shaped the billets into steps for the ladder, with joints to fix in one another, and holes to receive the cross-bars. They also made a pair of compasses, a square, a reel, blocks, and every requisite for their escape, all of which were, of course, concealed between the two convenient floors. They had also given every one of their implements a secret name, such as Faunns for the saw, Polyphemus for the floor, Jacob for the ladder, Dove for the rope, Anubis for the reel, Tubal Cain for the hinges, and the rule was that the man nearest the door, hearing the turnkey's foot on the stairs, instantly called out the cipher for the special object to be concealed, as the turnkeys sometimes by daytime entered the room unexpectedly. There not being wood enough, the ladder was only a pole twenty feet long, in which were twenty bars, thrust through six inches on each side, every round being pegged in and bound with thread to prevent its slipping. At last the ladder and rope were both ready and hidden snug in the cave of Polyphemus. It was evident to La Tude that the rope ladder would so vibrate, as they descended the vast perpendicular wall, as to turn the man using it giddy with fear. They therefore wove a second rope, three hundred feet long, or twice the height of the tower. This rope was to pass through a fixed pulley, and by this second rope the man above and below would be able to regulate and aid his comrade's descent, and render it steadier and less perilous.

They also made shorter cords to lash the block to a cannon, or some safe projection. Altogether, they had four hundred feet of cord. They then made, week after week, two hundred steps for the rope ladder, and, to prevent the cords rattling against the towers, they bound them with strips from the lining of their bedgowns and under-waistcoats. These preparations cost them eighteen months' work, nearly night and day.

All these things were needed to ascend the chimney and the platform of the tower, thence to descend one hundred and eighty feet to the moat, and climb up from there to the parapet into the governor's garden, then again to descend into the great outer moat, and to climb over the gate of St. Antoine. With all these precautions one thing was indispensable, and that was something no care could secure—a suitable night; for if rain, storm, and darkness lured them out, and then it grew fine, the sentinel would be sure to see them, and they would either be shot, or dragged back to solitary dungeons, there to pine till the detested woman died. But even for this difficulty La Tude in some degree provided. He calculated that the overflow of the Seine had corroded the mortar of the outer wall, and that it could be perforated with a rude gimlet he could manufacture from the screw of his bedstead, and so he might, with iron bars, force a passage into the outer street. Making, therefore, wrappers for these iron bars, and in spite of the water being four feet deep in both moats, they resolved to start on the evening of February the 25th, 1756. La Tude, knowing they would get soaked in the moats, took with him the singular encumbrance of a portmanteau filled with two complete suits of clothes. Next day, immediately after dinner, they fitted up the rope ladder, and hid it under their beds that it might not be seen by the turnkey who brought in supper. They then fitted up the cross-staff ladder, and made up their other implements into bundles; and as the officer had searched them both that morning they felt safe. They also removed the iron bars from the chimney, and put them into wrappers. They took with them a bottle of spirits in case they should have to work in the water. The moment had arrived; directly the turnkey, who had brought supper, closed the door, La Tude, though he had rheumatism in one arm, began to climb the chimney, but with no sack over his head, and no wrappers for

the elbows and loins, such as sweeps then used. Blinded with soot, flayed at the elbows and knees, black and streaming with blood, he emerged at last. Says M. La Tude, to use his own words :

"Finally I got to the top of the chimney, where I placed myself astride, and from thence unwound a ball of packthread that I had in my pocket, and to the end of which my companion had agreed to fasten the strongest rope that held my portmanteau; by this means I drew it up, and lowered it on the platform. I returned the rope, to which my companion tied the wooden ladder. I drew up, in the same manner, the two iron bars, and the rest of the parcels for which we had occasion. When I had these, I again let down my packthread to raise the rope ladder, drawing up to myself the superfluous length, that by the end my companion might mount the chimney with more facility than I had done; and at his signal I fastened it. He ascended with ease; we finished drawing up the remainder, and suspended the whole in such a manner across the chimney, that we descended both at once on the platform, serving for a counterpoise to each other.

"Two horses would not have been able to remove all our luggage. We began with rolling up our rope ladder, which made a coil five feet high, and a foot thick, and we wheeled this kind of millstone to the tower of the Treasury, which we thought most favourable for our descent. We fastened this ladder securely to a piece of cannon, and then let it gently down into the trench. In the same manner we fastened our block, passing through it the rope three hundred and sixty feet long; and when we had moved aside all our other parcels, I tied my thigh securely to the rope of the block, got on the ladder, and, in proportion as I descended its steps, my comrade let out the rope of the block; but, notwithstanding this precaution, every time I moved, my body resembled a kite dancing in the air, so that, had this happened by daylight, of a thousand persons who might have seen me reeling, not one but would have given me over for lost; yet I arrived safe and sound in the trench. Immediately my companion lowered to me my portmanteau, the iron bars, the wooden ladder, and all our equipage, which I placed in the dry, on a little rising above the surface of the water, at the foot of the tower. My companion next fastened the rope of the block, at the other end, above his knee, and, when he had given me a

signal of his being on the ladder, I performed the same manœuvre below which he had done for me above, to sustain me in the air, and prevent a fall. I took the further precaution to place the last step under my thighs, by sitting on it, to spare him the disagreeable vibration which I had experienced. He got down to me, though, during the whole time, the sentinel could not be above thirty feet from us, walking on the corridor, as it did not rain; which prevented our mounting thither, to get into the garden, according to our first plan. We were therefore obliged to make use of our iron bars. I took the gimlet, and carried one of the bars on my shoulder, and my companion the other. Neither did I forget to pocket the bottle of usquebaugh; and we proceeded directly to the wall that parts the trench of the Bastille from that of the gate of St. Antoine, between the garden and the governor's house. There was in this place a small trench, six feet wide, and about the same depth, which wetted us up to the armpits.

"At the moment that I began with my gimlet to bore a hole between two stones, to insert our levers, the major's round passed us with the great lantern, on a long pole, but ten or twelve feet at most over our heads. To conceal ourselves, we stood up to the chin in water, and when they were gone, I soon made two or three small holes with my gimlet, and in a short time we got a large stone out. From that instant I pledged myself to D'Alégre for our success; drank a draught on the occasion, and made him take another; we then attacked a second and a third stone. The second watch passed us, and we again slipped into the water up to our chin. We were obliged to perform this ceremony regularly every half-hour that we were disturbed by that cursed watch. Before midnight we had displaced two wheelbarrows of stones."

Once when La Tude stood by the rubbish, the sentinel stopped and spat twice on his head. La Tude fancied he had been seen, but the sentinel passed on in his patrol. D'Alégre then proposed a nip of spirits, and freshened by that, they worked for several hours at the breach till it grew large enough. The wall was four and a half feet thick. La Tude instantly made D'Alégre get through while he fetched the portmanteau. They left their ladders, &c. gladly behind, stepped down into the dry moat, and were free.

Yet even here dangers still awaited them. Sixty steps from the moat, on the road to

Bercey, the two men, carrying the portmanteau between them, fell, in the darkness, into an aqueduct six feet deep and five feet wide. D'Alégre, frightened in his first alarm, dropped the portmanteau, and clung to La Tude, who, jerking him off, clung to the other side, and dragged out his friend by the hair of his head. Afterwards, they scrambled out the portmanteau, which luckily floated. The horrors of that dreadful night had ended. The two friends embraced each other, and fell on their knees to thank God for their deliverance from so many perils. All had gone well. The clothes had escaped the wet, and, cold and shivering, the two men helped each other to dress. As they emerged from the moat it struck four o'clock. They took the first hackney-coach they met, and La Tude not finding his friend M. Silhouette, chancellor of the Duke of Orleans, at Versailles, they both fled for refuge to the abbey of St. Germain des Prez. After hiding a month, he and D'Alégre, disguised as peasants, made separately for the frontier. D'Alégre was arrested at Brussels, La Tude, in June, at Amsterdam.*

Reconsigned to the Bastille, La Tude was thrown into a dungeon, chained hand and foot, and had only straw for a bed. Still ingenious, hopeful, and persevering, the poor prisoner made a flageolet out of a reed, and tamed the rats which frequented his cell. He also wrote on cakes of dried bread, with his blood, schemes of reform that might be useful to the government, and excite their pity. Père Griffet, the confessor of the Bastille, at last touched by his sufferings, procured him paper and ink to write petitions. In 1758, he devised a plan for adding to the army twenty-five thousand men. In the same year he proposed to prevent bankruptcies by establishing public granaries. This plan was somehow to add twelve millions to the French revenue. In 1762, he wrote to Madame de Pompadour, who was still inflexible: "I have suffered fourteen years; let all be buried for ever in the blood of Jesus. Madame, be a woman, feel some pity for my tears, and those of a poor desolate mother seventy years old." But the woman had no mercy, she turned away her cruel face, and passed on to the ballroom, that echoed with music—music that drowned the recollection of such men's

groans. Restless at invention, La Tude now contrived to write on scraps of paper, which blew from his barred window to the house of some ladies in the Rue de St. Antoine, who, one April morning, in 1764, showed at their window a piece of paper, on which was written, in large characters:

YESTERDAY, THE 17TH, DIED MADAME THE
MARQUISE DE POMPADOUR.

La Tude at once wrote to the minister asking for his liberty. On his refusing to name his informant, he was again thrown into a dungeon, and in August was removed in chains to Vincennes. One foggy day in November, 1765, La Tude, while walking in the fosse, pushed through his guards, disarmed a sentinel, and escaped. Trusting to the mercy of the minister Choiseul, with untiring hopefulness, La Tude was seized and reconsigned to his Vincennes dungeon. On the accession of Louis the Sixteenth, Malesherbes became interested in La Tude, but was told that he was mad. La Tude was then sent to Charenton for two years, finally released, and banished from Paris. Foolish enough to return, he was thrown into the Châtelet, and in 1777 sent to a dungeon in Bicêtre. At the prison deliverances at the birth of the Dauphin, the Cardinal Rohan (afterwards entangled with the fatal diamond necklace), found La Tude ten feet under ground, his beard a foot and a half long, his clothes rags, his food bread and water; but, assured he was mad, the cardinal passed on to his court intrigues. A memorial of La Tude's sufferings, written by him at the request of a president of the Tournelle, was lost by a careless or drunken commissionnaire. Providence, however, threw it into the hands of a Madame le Gros, who found it lying in the mud in the Rue des Fosses, St. Germain l'Auxerrois. She was a warm-hearted and energetic woman, and set herself heart and soul to the task of releasing this victim of despotism. She won the wife of the Swiss of the Cardinal Rohan, then his secretary, at last the gay cardinal, then M. la Tour Dupin, next Madame Neckar. The Revolution was letting light into many dungeons. La Tude was at last liberated, March the 18th, 1784, but banished, with a small pension, to Montagnac. Of this exile brave Madame le Gros also obtained the revocation, and the same year the French Academy bestowed on her the Montyon prize of virtue. After the capture of the Bastille, La Tude became the lion of the hour, and a text for patriotic speeches. His papers, ladders, and tools

* Poor D'Alégre was destined to a sad end. In 1777, La Tude was taken to the madhouse at Charenton, and shown his friend, who was incurably insane. La Tude reminded him of their wonderful escape, but his only reply was, "No, I am God."

were exhibited, with his portrait, in a court of the Louvre. In 1792 he received a gift from the Assembly of three thousand francs, and in 1793 obtained a judgment against the heirs of Madame de Pompadour of sixty thousand livres, but of this sum he never touched more than ten thousand livres. He wrote his Memoirs, and in 1799 a plan of financial reform, and a scheme of saving the Republic in three months. The idol of a day then sank into entire oblivion, and died in 1805, aged eighty. After all the dungeon does not seem adverse to longevity.

The most affecting paragraph of this poor man's autobiography is the following, and it reads like a cry from the wretch Sterne saw counting the notches on the stick :

"I have groaned thirty-five years of my life in prison. Yet, while I implore the compassion of mankind, I can hardly persuade myself that I am of the same species, it is so long since I have lived among them. . . . Yes, I have languished twelve thousand and sixty-three days in different prisons. In those days, which appeared so long, I lay stretched on straw without covering, tormented by odious reptiles, reduced to a mere pittance of bread and water. I have groaned three thousand and sixty-seven days in the damp gloom and infection of dungeons, and twelve hundred and eighteen of those days, or rather endless nights of horror, my hands and feet have been bruised and torn by fetters. Such a length of torments would be thought a punishment too excessive for the most guilty criminal. Yet I was but a youth, who had appeared for a moment in society, and was allowed by all to have been the most gentle, patient, and resigned of men."

After narratives of suffering like these, can there be people who still ask, with inquiring wonder, "What were the causes of the French Revolution?"

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LXXXIV. LIGHT.

"How d'ye do, Doctor Malkin?" said Mr. Damian, with a short nod. "I called at Roydon Hall to-day, only an hour after you had left it. How d'ye do, Antomarchi?" Antomarchi had walked up to him, and extended his hand, which Damian took, and shook civilly, but with no great energy. "I have come here to-day," he continued, "about Miss Vernon's case; I'm not quite satisfied about it. I ought to have stayed perhaps to see her. We could then have

consulted. But it seemed on the statement a very clear case. Had I known that her family were divided on the point, I should have thought twice."

"I can't say *that*," said Antomarchi, promptly. "There is no division of the family, sir; but one dissentient, an old lady, Miss Medwyn, who said her say here, and nothing in it. Mr. Dawe is no relation, Mr. Marston is none; although I'm told he would have no objection to become one."

"I had a letter from Mr. Dawe this morning," said Mr. Damian.

"He's a very strong partisan," observed Antomarchi, with a satirical smile.

"Yes," acquiesced Damian, and turned to Malkin. "You recollect, sir, the substance of your statement?" said Damian. "May I put two or three questions to you upon it?"

Damian sat down, and he and Malkin had a short talk; and Damian thanked him in a gentle abstraction, like a man who is meditating on the materials of a hypothesis.

A few minutes later, Doctor Malkin had taken his leave, and was on his way to the railway.

Damian was still sitting in his cloak, his white head leaning on his hand, thinking. On a sudden looking up, he said gently:

"We may as well see the young lady now."

"Don't you think, sir, it may be a little late?" suggested Antomarchi.

Damian looked at his watch.

"I think not; only a quarter past eight," said he. "Let the young lady decide. I will send the message. We can see her in the office."

Thither they went.

"I am very glad on my own account you have come, sir. I was glad to have even Mr. Dawe, the other day; when a question is raised, it is not pleasant to be quite alone."

"I'm sure of it," said Damian.

He touched the office-bell, and told the servant to send Mr. Darkdale to him.

He charged that officer with his message to Miss Vernon; and when he had gone, he sent for the "register" and the "ledger" of the establishment.

"You will see in the ledger a reference to a letter of Lady Vernon's, it is intended only for *your* eye and mine."

"In the ledger? You mean the register, I suppose," said Damian.

"No—the ledger," said Antomarchi, coolly.

"Then it refers to terms," said Damian.

"Certainly; this is it,"

He had taken from the office desk a letter, which looked more like a law paper, folded attorney fashion, and he placed it on the ledger which had been laid before Damian.

At this moment the door opened, and Miss Vernon, followed by Mercy Creswell, came in.

The young lady was looking pale and ill.

Damian stood up, and received her with a bow, courteously, and, taking her by the hand, he led her to a chair.

"Don't be frightened, Miss Vernon," he said. "I merely want to talk a little with you, and to ask you how you are; I assure you there is nothing to make you the least uncomfortable in anything that has passed between Doctor Antomarchi and me. Therefore, you must not be nervous; and if you would prefer to-morrow, any time, we can put off our little conversation. Or we can repeat it as often as you please; so that should you feel nervous or put out at one time, you will not be so at another; and I will make every allowance for a little flurry and embarrassment."

"I should much rather you asked me any questions you please, now; but not here."

"And why not here?" he asked, with a smile.

"I can't answer collectedly while Doctor Antomarchi fixes his eyes on me; I am nervous while I am in the same room."

Antomarchi smiled faintly and shrugged, looking at Damian.

"Perhaps, Antomarchi, you would kindly leave us for a little——"

"Certainly," he exclaimed with sudden alacrity, and another little shrug; and so he left the room.

Then Damian, not looking at her otherwise than a well-bred old gentleman might, began to tell her of his journey, and fifty other things, and so drew her into talk; and now and then, adroitly, he insinuated a question; and after fifteen minutes or so, at the end of their interview, he said:

"You will be glad to hear I have no objection to your seeing Miss Medwyn, or any other friend who may call; you may write to any one you please, and your letters shall reach you without being opened. Your stay here will be a short one."

Old Mr. Damian, wrinkled, haggard, grey, as he spoke these words, looked, she thought, like an angel of light. She could have dropped on her knees, and kissed his feet. He talked a little more, encouragingly and kindly. Maud could say nothing; she was crying.

By his direction Mercy Creswell returned; and to her he put many questions; all which she answered with the directness of fear. So she, in turn, was dismissed.

A few minutes more and he was sitting there alone, in deep thought. Presently he touched the bell, and sent for Antomarchi.

"Where is the letter you spoke of? Oh, here," said Damian.

He put on his glasses, untied the red tape, and opened the paper.

"This is an agreement," he observed.

He drew back his head a little from it, as if he had seen a centipede or a wasp on the page. He knit his brows and held it closer to the candle, and his countenance darkened as he read on; and when he had come to the end, with the same severe aspect, he read it over again more rapidly, and threw it down on the table. Then he looked to the index of the huge ledger, and opened at the folio indicated as that containing the account of Lady Vernon of Roydon, for her daughter, Miss Maud Guendoline Vernon, for residence, expenses, advice, &c. &c. He let the ledger shut with a heavy slap, and took a turn or two in silence up and down the room. At last he stopped at the other side of the table, looking stern and pale, and said:

"The evidence in Miss Vernon's case looks very well on paper; but it won't stand the test. I saw Lady Vernon to-day. She could not evade my questions. Those threats of suicide melt into mere follies of temper. I have examined Creswell respecting the alleged threat and attempt here. That was temper also. The girl had no more real idea of killing herself than Creswell had. If I had not believed her mother's testimony on the point of suicide, I should have insisted on evidence of more developed symptoms than are set out in the statement. You observe there is no pretence of any delusion?"

Antomarchi assented and said:

"That is not necessary to constitute insanity."

"No, quite right," said Damian. "We have had here too many cases of melancholia, of mania, in its slighter degrees—and of suicidal mania fully developed—to require the presence of delusion as a test. But there is no impulse to suicide here. The evidence of Elihu Lizard without this is not enough. It is explained away by the statement, very clear and sensible, of Miss Medwyn, which reached me last night in a letter from Mr. Dawe.

and I am informed that Elihu Lizard is in custody, the judge before whom he appeared in a will case having directed a prosecution for perjury against him. Lastly, I have had a long conversation with the young lady. It has satisfied me. She shall leave this forthwith."

Antomarchi smiled, but his face darkened.

"I am very glad, sir, you take so decided a view. I told Mr. Steele, and all Miss Vernon's friends, that I should be for my part only too glad to be relieved of the responsibility. It is an ugly case."

"It was not an ugly case," said old Damian, sternly, "until that letter was written and received. Has it been acted upon?"

"There has been the outfit, and the furniture and decoration."

"How much money has been paid?"

"Two thousand five hundred pounds."

"Five thousand a year for the maintenance of one girl!"

"With servants and carriage for her exclusive use," said Antomarchi.

"All which would not have cost us seven hundred a year," added Damian. "I wish I had known of the existence of that letter to-day," and Damian struck the knuckles of his open hand upon it sharply, "and I should have held different language to my Lady Vernon."

He turned and resumed his impatient walk up and down the room.

"If I had thought it the least excessive, I should have been the last man to agree to it, sir," said Antomarchi, coldly.

"It can't bear the light," said Damian.

"It is a very black case."

"You'll please not to apply such terms to anything I have sanctioned," said Antomarchi. "I suppose we are to do something more than simply pay expenses here? I rather think we have a right to profits; and, considering all our labour and responsibilities, large profits too. I might have hid that letter from you if I had been what you, I think, dare not insinuate."

He might have added that he had seriously thought of doing so, but rejected it as too hazardous a game.

"I have passed through life with honour," continued Damian. "To think that my house and name should be abused to such a purpose!"

Antomarchi's pale face glared angrily after the old man as he walked toward the upper end of the room.

"It is the right course," mused Damian, gloomily, to himself. "I have been long enough here. I think I shall relinquish it."

Antomarchi heard these words with a presentiment that the retirement which he had long looked forward to was imminent.

After an interval, Damian arrested his walk opposite to Antomarchi, and looking him sternly in the face, he said:

"I shall break up this establishment."

"Break it up? Transfer it, I fancy, you mean," remarked Antomarchi.

"Transfer it; to whom?" said Damian.

"To me, of course," answered Antomarchi, doggedly.

"Certainly not," answered the old man; "we part, you and I, forthwith."

"You'll think twice, before you try that," said Antomarchi, his black beard and brows looking blacker as his face whitened and his eyes gleamed with fury.

"See, old man; I have given many of the best years of my life to maintaining your enormous revenues, and, by my priceless exertions, supporting your undeserved reputation. I have no notion of being sold by your caprice. I'm a partner, and if you presume intentionally to hurt the business of this concern to the value of a guinea, I'll make you repent it."

"My powers, under our deed, are clear; I mean to act upon them," said Damian, with cold decision.

"You mean to say that letter is a covenant to bribe us; that I have sold myself to a conspiracy, of which Lady Vernon is the mainspring, and her daughter the victim, and that your superior conscience or delicacy interposes to save her?" demanded Antomarchi.

Damian made him no answer.

"If you seriously meditate what you say, you have lost your head, and as your partner I shall look after my property, and see that you are restrained from inflicting the injury you meditate. I have more lines of defence and attack than you are, perhaps, prepared for." Antomarchi smiled with a baleful eye on the resolute old man, as he said this. "You have taken the letter," he added; "you will be good enough to replace it in the office desk."

"One moment," said Damian, who had been writing a few lines on two sheets of note-paper, and now rose and touched the bell. He desired the servant to send Mr. Darkdale, who forthwith was there.

"Take this copy, Mr. Darkdale, and compare, as I read the original aloud. Doctor Antomarchi, this is addressed to you." And he read aloud a formal notice of the dissolution of partnership, which he then handed to Antomarchi.

"And take notice, Mr. Darkdale," said

Antomarchi, "original and copy are no better than waste paper."

"To-night, or to-morrow, which you please, you shall have a cheque for the liquidated sum to which, on retirement, you are entitled by the deed," said old Damian.

"You expect to get out of all this, sir," said Antomarchi, with a sarcastic laugh, as Damian withdrew with the grim formality of a bow, "on particularly easy terms."

Antomarchi was not a devil to be easily cast out. His cool and vigorous head was already scheming mischief.

In the mean time, having learned that Miss Medwyn was in the waiting-room, Damian proceeded thither, and having heard her request, instantly granted it; shook Mr Marston by the hand, and added:

"I have carefully considered Miss Vernon's case, and I am perfectly clear that she is, and always has been, of perfectly sound mind."

After immense jubilation and many tears from Miss Medwyn, came the happy thought.

"And she may leave this, with me, to-night?"

"I see no objection; but you must give me a letter to say that you receive her only till her proper guardians shall have made their wishes known."

CHAPTER LXXXV. THE ANTE-CHAMBER.

I NEED not trouble you with details. That night Maud Vernon was free, and slept under the roof of the pleasant Hermitage.

Charles Marston passed the night at the Star and Garter, at Wybourne, whence he popped in upon the party at breakfast.

Never was so happy a breakfast; never was known, before or since, so delightful a ramble as followed, among the self-same grassy slopes and lordly trees, near the ivy-bound walls and arches of the ruined manor-house of Wybourne, among which Charles Marston had on a tumultuously happy afternoon, in the early summer, avowed his love for the beautiful stranger, who was resolved to remain a mystery.

Let us leave them to their happy recollections and foolish talk, and follow a less romantic Rambler to his destination.

Mr. Dawe had driven through the town of Roydon the day before. His carriage pulled up at the door of Doctor Malkin. But the physician was making a visit to Lady Vernon, preliminary to his departure for Glarewoods.

So Mr. Dawe, changing his plans, decided on taking Mr. Tintern first.

He had some difficulty in finding him. He was taking a furious walk in his wide plantations, switching the heads off nettles, kicking the withered cones of the pines when they came in his way, and talking fiercely to himself. He found him, at last, in the depths of his solitudes of pine and larch.

Mr. Tintern knew nothing about the "young people," and desired to know nothing. He hoped he might never see his daughter's face again. He hoped they might come to the workhouse, and he had many other pleasant things to say in the same vein.

Mr. Dawe talked as if he took an interest in the young man, and confessed that he intended doing something handsome for him, if Mr. Tintern would contribute in a fair proportion; and now came Mr. Tintern's bleak and furious confession of ruin, as he stood white under the black shadow of his pine-trees, shaking his walking-cane in his clenched fist in the face of an imaginary persecutor, and making the brown colonnades of his sober trees ring with threats, and boasts, and blasphemies; and then the thin old coxcomb, overcome by self-commiseration, on a sudden broke down, and began to cry hysterically.

"I say it's awful; you ought to consider; it was you who brought that d—d fellow down here; and he has been more than half the ruin of me; and now that the thing is past cure, I think you are bound to use your influence with Lady Vernon to exercise her power of appointment under the will in my favour. It would enable me to do what you wish—for I could raise money on it, and she might as well do that, as give it to strangers, or let it go to charitable institutions, that no one cares about. I wish you would—won't you? *Do*, like a good fellow; *promise* me; and, upon my soul, if I get it, I'll make whatever settlements you ask me, in reason. You may believe me; by Heaven I will."

Perhaps Mr. Dawe was thinking in the same direction, for he grunted rather in the tone of assent. And having heard enough of Mr. Tintern's declamation, and observing that the sun was near the horizon, he took his leave, simply promising to see what could be done, and so made his escape. The conversation had never once touched upon the situation of Miss Vernon. Mr. Tintern was absorbed, for the present, by his last and greatest misfortune.

It was too late, by the time Mr. Dawe

reached the town of Roydon, to think of going up to the Hall, to try whether Lady Vernon would see him. He therefore put up for the night at the Vernon Arms, and next day walked up to Roydon Hall.

Mr. Dawe, with his usual forethought, had come provided with a note, at which, he thought, her doors would most likely open to him; and while the servant took it to his mistress he stood upon the steps, looking down the avenue, between the double files of lordly trees, whose foliage was already thinned and yellowed in the suns and winds of autumn.

That queer little black-wigged man had, perhaps, his feeling for the picturesque, as handsomer people have. He had paid more than you would have thought for the exquisite little landscapes that hung upon his walls at East Mauling. I should not wonder if he had his secret poetry, and deeper still, his secret romance. It is hard to say what may be in a man so reserved as he, and so sensitive that he takes vows of silence, and wears the habit of a cynic.

The footman now came to say that Lady Vernon will see him, and he follows, not to his left, as he enters, where, at the front of the house, lie the long suite of drawing-rooms, but to the right, beyond the shield-room, where, at the rear, a different suite of rooms is placed.

Into one of these he is shown; a square room with a single window, through which you see the funereal yew worked into cloistered walls and arches, and a sombre tree standing near, which keeps the room in perpetual shadow. The heavy curtains hide part of the window, and increase the gloom. Some bygone Vernon seems to have got up this apartment under a caprice of melancholy.

There are three pictures, with something depressing in each. The first, a landscape; a cold, frowning forest glade, that looks as if sun had never shone there, nor bird sung in its leaves. Such a forest as Dante may have seen, with a black marble tomb with sombre weeds drooping over it, near the front, and a solitary figure like a shadow gliding away among the trees into the darker distance. Opposite the window is a fine picture of Cleopatra fainting, with the asp to her bosom. And at the right, scarcely the depth of a step, between the floor and the lower end of the frame, hangs

a large repulsive painting of the death of Sapphira. It is powerful, but odious. She lies distorted on the oak flooring, a bit of carpet, with Dutch anachronism, torn in her convulsion from the nails in the boards, is in her dead hand, her jaw fallen, her eyes all white; almost the only light in the picture is that one beam which strikes on the bald head of Peter, who looks ferocious as a brigand. The "young men," who are stooping to carry her out, smile like ghouls, and behind, row after row, till they disappear in the deepening shadow, the spectators, like ghosts awaiting judgment, stand with dim long faces, white and horror-stricken.

He has time enough to examine these saturnine old pictures, and has more than once peeped at his watch.

At length the thin figure of Latimer, in her accustomed black silk, appears in the doorway close beside the evil-minded "young men," and the corpse in the shadow; and she looks like a lean matron introduced to show them the way to the dead-house.

"Please, Mr. Dawe, sir, her ladyship has a bad headache; nothing more, she desires me to say; but she is not equal to much exertion, and if you would please to excuse her dressing-gown and slippers, and to make any business you may have as short as you can, she would feel it a kindness."

"Certainly, Latimer; not five minutes if I can help it," said he.

"This way please, sir."

And she led the way into a darksome, but long and stately room.

The shutters of the window next the door are partly open, but the blind down. Those of the remaining two are closed, and the curtains also. The whole room therefore is lighted by less than half a window; and so imperfectly at the upper end, that on first coming in you could not discern objects there.

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CASTAWAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN
PORT," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I. IN THE BUNGALOW.

TIME out of mind has Springside been the chosen resort of retired Indian officers, and of those civilians who, in the happy days when the pagoda-tree was easier to shake, and more productive in its droppings than at present, were enabled, after a comparatively short number of years spent in the East, to return to England, and settle down in comfort for the remainder of their lives in more than easy circumstances. Men of both classes, with their families, were to be found as settlers at Swetteringham, at Teemington, at Narrowgate, and at other spa-possessing places of the same class, which London physicians of repute had an interest in recommending to their patients. But neither as regards the number nor the social status of their visitors, or their residents, could any of them be compared to Springside. The waters, after all had been said, were not the real attraction of the place. They had their merits, no doubt; they were to the full as nasty as those of any other spa, and, as another advantage, the springs were more numerous, thus affording different degrees of nastiness. Their medicinal virtues were no greater and no less than those of their rivals. Taken internally, or externally in baths, which had the advantage of being larger and handsomer than those of any other place, they effected a certain number of real cures, and imbued hundreds of estimable persons with the belief, that by drinking or bathing in them a vast amount of good had been

achieved, a result which the most skilful physician would not hope to improve upon.

No, the real attraction of Springside was the society, and the inhabitants knew this, and were proud of it. What is Swetteringham? they would say; all very well in its way; very decent place for the country families and clodpole aristocracy of Costershire to visit, and certainly possessing one or two springs, which may or may not be good, but a mere new-fangled mushroom place just sprung into existence, and compelled to add to its attractions with the College for boys, and a Pittville, with fireworks and out-door amusements! Look at Teemington, only fit to live in during the winter, and then almost insupportable from the crowd of hunting-men who swarm in every hotel and lodging-house, and fill the air with their stable talk; look at Narrowgate, crammed with broad-shouldered men from Huddersfield, and fat women from Halifax—and then look at us! We are just the same as we were a hundred years ago; our city has not altered; it is just the same as it was when Beau Pash was its king, and when Sheridan flirted with Miss Linley in Bilsom-street. We have races at the proper time, but we are not overdone with turfites, and we should like to catch any excursionists or "trippers" from the manufacturing towns in our precincts. Our residents have been amongst us for generations, our visitors are people of position and family, and those retired Indians who have made Springside their home are not like the Indian settlers in the other places we have mentioned, who have made money anyhow, but staff officers in the Company's service, proprietors who have a star or two against their names in the books at Leadenhall-street, men who

had the entrée of Government House, or were well known at the Byculla Club.

So far as their remarks about their Indian settlers were concerned, the Springside people were decidedly right. All the best men of the day, both in the military and civil service, who had either finally retired or were spending their furlough at home, made Springside their head-quarters, and rarely left it save for a few weeks in the London season, when they established themselves in lodgings in the vicinity of the Oriental or the military clubs. The Springside Club, held in those days in the large rooms over the post-office, had amongst its members a majority of *Qui-bis*, testy old gentlemen, who were horribly irritated by the noise made in stamping the letters underneath, or by the rattling of the mail-carts outside. The bachelors lived in hotels and boarding-houses, the married men, who were in the minority, had houses of their own, or lived in stately old lodgings, which, whatever the Springsideites might say, were now in the days of their decadence, and had quite a flavour of powder and peruke about them, reminding one of their former glories.

Unmarried, indeed, but with a house of his own, which, for want of a better name, he has called the Bungalow, and which stands in the midst of a square trim garden, invariably spoken of by him as the compound, is our old friend Captain Cleethorpe. The stout major of the Cheddar yeomanry lies in Cheeseborough churchyard, and Captain Cleethorpe has succeeded to his rank, but the old familiar title seems to suit him best, and he is, at Springside at all events, generally addressed by it. Five years have passed away since the occurrence of that unhappy quarrel in the billiard-room of the George, but they have effected little alteration in the captain's appearance. His face is impressed with a few more lines, his hair is thinner, and what remains of it is a little grizzled; but his figure is still smart and soldier-like, and on horseback or on foot, he is as active as ever. See him now, on this bright evening in early autumn, standing in his dining-room, the large French windows of which open out upon the close-shaven lawn, carefully uncorking two or three bottles of prime wine, which he has just brought up from the cellar, in honour of the arrival on a visit of his old comrade, Captain Norman. See him now, with his bright eyes, his trim moustache, his long brown thorough-bred hands, well cut light grey suit, neat boots, and unmis-

takable air of ease, and you will acknowledge that there is no better-looking fifty-year-old to be found in the country.

"Well, Cooke," he says, as his tall, strapping, red-haired, soldier-servant appears at the door, "has the captain got everything he wanted up-stairs?"

"Yes, sir," said the man; "the captain wants to know whether it is full dress to-night, sir, or not?"

"Full dress?" echoes Cleethorpe, laughing. "Of course not; tell him there are no ladies coming, and that he and I will be alone at dinner, and that he can put on his shooting-jacket and slippers, or whatever he feels most comfortable in."

"Right, sir," replies Cooke, and away he goes.

"Jack will be glad of that," thinks Captain Cleethorpe to himself when he is alone again; "evening dress must be as bad as a suit of armour to him now. What an enormous size he has grown. But he seems just the same simple-hearted, dear old fellow that he has been ever since I have known him."

Further meditation is put an end to by the entrance of Captain Norman. As his old comrade had remarked, the captain had grown enormously stout. Looking at his double chin and slow ponderous gait, one could hardly recognise in him the handsome light dragoon who made so favourable an impression when told off on escort duty, and whose good looks and splendid horsemanship, when acting as "galloper" to the general commanding on a field-day at Aldershot, won the heart, hand, and fortune of the lady who was now his wife.

Dinner concluded, and the good wine duly honoured and attended to, the gentlemen took their cigars into the garden, where the table, with coffee, &c., had already been prepared for them.

"That's about the pattern to suit you, Jack," said Cleethorpe, pointing to an enormous bamboo seat, half chair, half sofa; "put your manly form into that, and make yourself comfortable."

"Right you are," said Captain Norman, following his friend's advice. "I have seen one of these machines before, on board a P. and O. boat, when I went to see some friends off from Southampton, I think."

"Yes," said Cleethorpe; "I brought it home with me from India."

"You must have pleasant associations with India, I should think, Cleethorpe," said Captain Norman, stretching himself

lazily. "You call your house the Bungalow, I see."

"Well, yes," said Cleethorpe; "a man who has been much out there never entirely rids himself from its associations, more especially if his lines of life be cast in such a place as this. Here we have a perfect eastern colony, eat Anglo-Indian dishes, talk Anglo-Indian slang, and look out more eagerly for our fortnightly batch of the Calcutta Englishman than for our daily Times."

"Ah," said Captain Norman, with a yawn, "rather dull, isn't it? Dreary old birds most of them, I should say."

"Well, they would not be lively to you," said Cleethorpe, laughing, "while just in the same way your county magnates, with their airs, and your bucolic friends, with their dissertations on mangolds and swedes, would be insupportable to me. However, we are likely to have a pleasant addition to our set; a charming place in this neighbourhood has just been bought by a man whom you know, I think; or, at all events, of whom you have heard me speak."

"Who is that?"

"Sir Geoffrey Heriot; the father of that young fellow who was in our regiment, and who had a row in the billiard-room, you recollect?"

"I recollect! I should think I did."

"Well: I had a letter from Goole, our colonel, you know, yesterday morning, telling me that Sir Geoffrey, unable to endure his solitary life any longer, had sold his place in the country, and knowing that there were sure to be many of his old comrades, and people with whose lives and tastes he had some affinity, about here, had bought a lovely little box within two miles of this, where old General Chowder died a month ago. Goole asks me to call upon Sir Geoffrey, and do the civil to him, but, beyond that, he intrusts me with a commission; he wants me to get Sir Geoffrey a housekeeper."

"A housekeeper!" echoed Captain Norman, lazily. "Then the old boy has never married again?"

"Not he; from my recollection of what Goole told me of his married life, he has acted on the 'once bit twice shy' principle."

"And do you know any nice motherly old woman whom you could recommend to look after the general's socks, and make his jams, and rob him herself, instead of letting the tradespeople rob him?"

Cleethorpe looked at his friend in admira-

tion. "Certainly marriage has developed you amazingly in every way, Jack!" he said. "It must be your domestic experience that enables you to give so accurate a description of the housekeeper's duties. I certainly do know a lady who is neither old nor motherly, but who is decidedly nice, and whom I thought of recommending to Sir Geoffrey Heriot, though I doubt whether she could fulfil all the functions which you have enumerated."

"And who is she—a protégée of yours?"

"No, indeed, I know comparatively little of her."

"Maid, wife, or widow?"

"A widow of the name of Pickering; her husband had held a very inferior position in some government office I believe, and when she came here after his death, some three years ago, she had an idea of seeking employment as a nursery governess, or companion to a lady, or something of that kind. But the reaction consequent upon the fatigues of nursing him in his last illness, so I understood, was too much for her; she fell ill herself, and would have died had it not been for the devoted manner in which she was nursed by a young sister, who accompanied her, and the kindness which she received from our parson and his wife."

"And his wife!" echoed Captain Norman. "Mrs. Pickering, then, is rather plain, I take it."

"Another observation springing from your domestic experience," said Cleethorpe; "but this time you are wrong. Mrs. Pickering is a remarkably handsome woman."

"And the parson and his wife attended to her in her illness?"

"Not merely that. During this illness they discovered that she was miserably poor; that her husband had left her no pension, no life insurance, absolutely nothing at all; that both she and her sister were quick and intelligent, and willing to do anything, no matter how laborious or how poorly paid, to earn their livelihood."

"Poor creatures, how very creditable," said Captain Norman, placidly sipping his glass of curaçoa.

"Well, our parson—Drage his name is, Onesiphorus Drage, queer name isn't it?—is the son of a man who is a great gun in the City, director of banks, and all sorts of things, and, amongst others, of one of the telegraph companies. Drage wrote up to his father, and the old man offered to have them put into the telegraph office

in London, but somehow or other Mrs. Pickering had a great objection to that, and so it ended in both of them being made clerks in the branch office down here. They got on wonderfully, especially the younger one, who displayed such singular ability that, when an important vacancy occurred in the head office in London, they offered her the berth, and as the salary and chances were really good, and they found a respectable person for her to live with, Mrs. Pickering made no further objection, and about a year ago the girl went to town, and there she remains.

"And what became of Mrs. Pickering?"

"Well, just before that, Mrs. Drage was taken ill and died, and on her death-bed she spoke to Mrs. Pickering, who had attended her throughout, and implored her to be a mother to the little girl whom she was leaving."

"Ah, ha!" said Captain Norman, "which means also to be a wife to the reverend old—what you call him."

"Not at all. The Reverend Onesiphorus, who is delicate on his chest, has been away for the last twelve months, yachting with his father in the Mediterranean, and left his flock in charge of his curate, while Mrs. Pickering, relieved of her telegraphic duties, has been living at the rectory, and educating and taking care of little Bertha."

"And when does the parson come back?" asked Captain Norman.

"Mrs. Pickering expected him the night before last, and cleared out into her old lodging to give him possession."

"And you propose to make Mrs. Pickering old Heriot's housekeeper?" asked Norman.

"Exactly."

"Then you are doing a decidedly unhandsome thing, Cleethorpe, and outraging the laws of nature and three volume novels."

"What do you mean?"

"Why of course this parson ought to come back full of gratitude and all that sort of thing, and ought to marry the telegraph woman, and live happy ever after."

"Yes," said Cleethorpe, "perhaps so; but then you see, Jack, you don't know Mrs. Pickering."

"No, and I don't know the parson, for the matter of that."

"You will have that felicity presently, for I asked him to come up here this evening to hear about my proposition. No, Drage is not a young man, nor scarcely what you could call a lady-killer, but he is young

enough to set the world talking if such a woman as Mrs. Pickering were to become his housekeeper, whereas with such a tough old bamboo-cane as Sir Geoffrey Heriot, the veriest Mrs. Grundy in Springside, and there are some good specimens of the breed amongst them I can tell you, could find no opportunity for scandal."

"Hem," said Captain Norman; "my experience of women is, that when they give their minds to it, there is nobody and nothing that they could not contrive to say something disagreeable about. By the way, what became of Sir Geoffrey's son, after the row with that great hulking brute, whose name I forget?"

"No one ever heard anything about him," said Cleethorpe. "I have asked Goole more than once, but could get no tidings of the lad. He told me that he received a polite but formal acknowledgment of a letter, which he thought it his duty to write to Sir Geoffrey after the row, and that when once, on the first occasion of their meeting afterwards, he was beginning to allude to the circumstances, the old man stopped him by saying, 'I have no son now, sir; you will oblige me by never mentioning his name again.' Goole and Sir Geoffrey have met several times since then, and are, I believe, rather intimate, as indeed this letter proves, but the subject has never been touched upon by either of them."

"It was a queer business, that funking of his, and one which I could never understand, for, from the little I saw of him, the lad seemed to have plenty of pluck."

"He was a nice boy," said Cleethorpe. "I think of him very often, always when his father is named; this letter brought all the circumstances fresh into my mind, and only yesterday morning I was wondering what had become of him."

"Taken the queen's shilling, perhaps," said Norman, "or gone out to Australia."

"No," said Cleethorpe, reflectively; "he struck me as more likely to fall on his feet in a better way than that. He was the sort of lad that people would take a fancy to, scarcely knowing why they did so."

"By Jove!" interrupted Captain Norman, striking his fist upon the table with such violence as to make the cups and glasses ring, "I have got it at last."

"So had I, very nearly," said Captain Cleethorpe, moving out of the way of some dripping coffee, "and hot too; but what is it that you have got, Jack?"

"An idea," said Captain Norman.

"Keep it, book it, and register it at

once as 'Norman's patent,' or no one will ever believe you came by it honestly," said Cleethorpe.

"Don't you be funny, but listen," said his friend. "Do you know what it is to be haunted by a face?"

"I did," said Cleethorpe, half sadly. "I have been haunted by a good many in my time."

"Ay, those were women's," said Norman; "but I don't mean that, nor in that way. Do you know what it is to see a face which you recognise at once as being familiar to you, but to which you cannot put a name; which you have seen somewhere, but you cannot tell whether in real life or in a dream; which perpetually rises before you, always in the same unsatisfactory manner; the identity of which it is impossible to discover, while the more you try to link it with a personality the more vague do your thoughts grow, and the more dispirited are you as to your chances of success?"

"Yes," said Cleethorpe. "You have a fine poetical flow, Jack, but I know what you mean."

"Well, I have suffered from this sort of haunting for months past," said Norman. "We were in town in the spring, the first time we had been there for some years, and, amongst other places, we went to the house of a Mrs. Entwistle, a kind of connexion of my wife's, who is a swell in her way, and had never taken any notice of us before. She is an eccentric old woman, but very well off, they say, and goes into very good society. At her house I noticed a young man, whose face and manner seemed somehow familiar to me, though I felt that both had altered since the last time I saw him. He was talking to the guests, giving orders to the servants, and altogether making himself so much at home that I had the curiosity to inquire who he was. I learned that he was a Mr. Hardinge, a young man whom the old lady for a year or two past had adopted as her son, but whether he was related to her by blood, or whether her adoption of him was only one of her many eccentricities, I could not gather. Having gleaned thus much from an old fellow who used to dine at the next table to me at the 'Rag,' and who seemed to know everything about everybody in town, I went from the staircase, where I had carried on the pumping process, back into the rooms, and found my young friend in full swing as before. This time he caught me looking at him, started, turned rapidly

on his heel, and for the rest of the evening carefully avoided coming near me. I met him several times afterwards in the park, at the theatre, in society, but invariably with the same result. He shunned me, sir, regularly shunned me; made a point of turning away whenever I approached him. During the whole of that time, and very frequently since, I have endeavoured to recal to my mind where I had seen that young man before, and who he was. As you spoke it suddenly flashed upon me, and I have not the smallest doubt about it. The place where I last saw him was the inn at Cheeseborough, and his real name is George Heriot."

"Singular," said Captain Cleethorpe, when his companion had finished speaking, "very singular indeed. You are not generally very clear in these matters, Jack, but your reasoning convinces me that in the present instance you must be right. Do you imagine the boy recognised you?"

"Now I think it over I have not a doubt of it, though I cannot understand how I failed to recognise him. He has just that same cheeky kind of way that he had when he told me that it would be good for my health if he were my player at pool, and that he would give me plenty of exercise in walking after my ball."

"Do you imagine that his father knows of his position?"

"I have no means of judging, but I should say decidedly not."

"Did you ever try to get anything out of the old lady, Mrs. Entwistle?"

"What do you mean—money?"

"No, no," said Cleethorpe, laughing; "any information about the lad?"

"No, I didn't myself, but now I recollect perfectly that Lou—that's my wife—told me that on one occasion when she was having luncheon with the old lady alone, she happened to mention Sir Geoffrey Heriot's name, that Mrs. Entwistle turned as white as a sheet, and asked her, in a very agitated manner, if she knew the general. When she found Lou did not she became all right again; but my Lou, who is a remarkably sharp woman, at least so I think, thought it was funny altogether, and told me of it when she came home."

"Mrs. Norman is a woman of great acuteness I am sure," said Cleethorpe, "and it is a curious business altogether. However, since the old general is left solitary, and likely to remain so, the greater reason that he should be provided with a comely housekeeper, who will do

her duty by him without ultimate designs on his person or his purse. Mrs. Pickering is exactly the lady for the situation, and no possible objection can be made by anybody to her undertaking it unless by—”

“The Reverend Mr. Drage, sir,” said Cooke, appearing at his master’s elbow.

PARIS VIGNETTES.*

I. ON THE ROAD.

COMING up that most sylvan of lines, the Rouen and Paris Railway, I might congratulate myself on there being only three other passengers—each, of course, with the Frenchman’s favourite canvas-covered valise—to crowd up the carriage. But after many allusions to a friend of theirs called Æneas, I am startled to find a great red dog, answering to that name, emerging from under the seat, where he has been secreted to avoid the little travelling dog-jails, where he can hear some of his kind yelping. The two stout Frenchmen become like children, all the way putting their hats on him, and embracing him. Æneas, behaving with far more dignity, raises himself up to look out at passing objects, showing great amazement at the flocks of birds floating over the fields below, following them with his eyes, and “setting” them as well as he can in that position. On an alarm of the ticket-taker coming round, the agitated friends try to force Æneas in again, kicking, pushing, striving to bend that back, which stubbornly but gently refuses. The alarm proves a false one, and at his own selected moment Æneas retires into concealment to sleep, and is not suffered to emerge again.

The other passenger is a stern-faced officer of the Ducrot pattern, who keeps his arms folded, in stern protest at what he sees as we draw near to Paris. These rent roofs, ruined houses—above all, the temporary bridge over which we creep cautiously, with a swarm of men busy repairing—are indeed sore reminders. The arches of the former bridge beside us seem like three old wire meat-covers, or dilapidated bird-cages, so torn and twisted is their iron-work. More significant still are the houses, now nearly restored, but all, I note, preserving the old bruises and holes of the shells. There is a suspicious amount of staring red-tiled roof, while those long vast sheds of iron and glass which are found as

we approach great railway stations, are all pierced, and singed, and shredded into jagged holes; and almost every single pane is shattered as though by an exterminating hailstorm. Considering the vast amount of trains and passengers that pour into Paris every hour, here must be an aggregate of mortification for every Frenchman really serious, and which can be read in the faces of my three companions. The officer mutters and folds his arms tighter, the friends become grave. The railway porters and officials are all in new clothing, while the proprietor of the well-known *Hôtel des Réservoirs* at Versailles feels so prosperous, after his late distinguished guests’ patronage, that he can advertise his house all over the show-boards, adding a tempting-looking picture. Coming into the great city, we miss the huge gathering of cabs and omnibuses which used to wait the arrival of voyagers. Horses are scarce, and the white and winnying Normandies of the omnibuses have not yet arrived in sufficient quantities.

II. TOKENS OF THE SPOILER.

EXACTLY a year ago, when I drove into this great city, a vast creaking waggon, drawn by a number of omnibus horses, and carrying an enormous-sized cannon, on its way to the ramparts, was the first object that met us. Every one had a sort of fevered look; amateur soldiers in new and fantastic dresses, borrowed from the stage, filled the streets. Now there is hardly a soldier to be seen. Everything has a faded air, and the garnishing of the streets, those smart, dandy lamp-posts and kiosks, have a shabby, unkempt air, like old-fashioned furniture dragged out of a store-room. As we turn into the Boulevards, once so glittering, and like a raree-show for crowds of figures and carriages, the change is more astonishing: it seems a desert. A stray omnibus rolls jangling by, then a long interval and a cab passes. Long slips of asphalté are seen almost bare. It is impossible not to admire the energy and spirit which have made the old shops put on their usual air, their windows seeming to be filled as of yore; but, alas! they are old wares and properties.

The constant change of names of streets, theatres, &c., according as the government changes, is very inconvenient. It looks pitiful to see the *Avenue de l’Impératrice* with a piece of paper pasted over it, on which is printed *Avenue Urich*, and the clumsily substituted “nationale” for “imperiale.” It might be thought that some compromise

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. iv., p. 378.

could be come to on this point, and that the next monarchical government might choose some neutral description. The climax of absurdity was reached at the fine theatre of the Châtelet, where the imperial arms over the proscenium are partly covered with a sort of napkin, like a bishop's apron, which as the air floats it about is lifted, revealing the obnoxious eagle and the crossed sceptres beneath.

After awhile the eye grows quite familiar with the signs of hostile destruction. All down the once gay Boulevard des Italiens, the great plate-glass windows are all starred and shattered into holes from bullets—holes which are clumsily patched up with paper or wax. The owners have not yet found opportunity to restore them. But the streets are in good order, and there is not a sign of a barricade visible. Most curious of all is it to look on the remains of the Vendôme Column. The bright "street of peace" has, indeed, lost its whole glory, and looks utterly mediocre for the lack of this handsome ornament. The Hôtel de Ville, even the Tuileries, and certainly those tame buildings, the Finances, Palace of the Legion of Honour, &c., could be well spared without leaving many blanks, but the column should be put up to make Paris what it used to be. The town-hall was never a thing of beauty, or a building that excited much human sympathy; not much could be said for the vaunted Ministère des Finances, which now lies a sort of amphitheatre of rubbish. The true attraction will always be Paris as a whole—its air and bearing of beauty; but a building or so will not be missed. In the Tuileries Gardens and Elysian Fields some of the statues have suffered cruelly; Hercules has lost his leg, Venus her arm. But through the stubby trees and mangy shrubbery—and it is amazing how little these have suffered on the whole—can be seen the "merry-go-rounds," and the open-air cafés, getting ready for the night's show; and in the broad daylight it is amusing to see a rehearsal going on—some music-hall lady practising her vivacious song to a full orchestra.

Paris jogs out merrily, as of yore, in the direction of the Bois, only there is far more to see now. The little open facres are, of course, in demand—the solitary youth in the strapped-down white trousers, loving to show himself, enjoying the luxury of a vehicle. As we get close to the great archway, it is a curious feeling to see and touch the evidence of "shell-work." The

arch itself is more bruised and maimed than has been described—a boy's leg (in stone) having been knocked off, corners of pediments showing clean fissure-like "bites," and the surfaces being scarred and indented all over. The mark of a shell is significant and unmistakable—a sort of scorched black star with a dint or bruise. But on the houses, asphalté pavement, and iron, the effect was terrible. Now hundreds of men are at work mending and renewing; but even the handsome houses that have gone through this process have a curious motley air, like a patched old coat, being covered with what seem like stains, and which are the newly inserted pieces. Their railings were all twisted and crumpled up like wire, and never could be straightened again; elaborate balconies were squeezed, as the saying goes, "into cocked hats." The pavement, as far as the eye could see, was all in great rents and holes, where the ill-omened messengers had alighted. Yet everybody was in spirits, the workmen on their scaffolds and the proprietors who employed them. There are signs of money everywhere, with indications of the luxurious taste peeping out cautiously. It can be seen with how little trouble damage of this sort can be set right, at least, externally; and it seems certain that, before another year is out, Paris will look very nearly the same as before.

One change will not be relished, namely, the new police—a set of buccaneer-looking, rowdyish fellows, with open collars and handkerchiefs, loose blue great-coats, coarse leather belts, and heavy steel-scabbarded cutlasses. They are not civil, as were the former petits maitres in the cocked-hats and tight waists. The soldiers, too, seem fallen off; most of them appearing in undress, scarce half made, and that so unfashionably that the dogs might fairly bark at them. That old impostor, the theatrical zouave, about whom we were all crazy once, has, I am glad to see, almost disappeared. I note a few, but very shabby and hang-dog in appearance, who walk along modestly, and without the old swagger.

English and American excursionists abound. At the hotel where I have put up I find them in that patronising humour of half-enjoyment, half-surprise, which is almost indescribable. I hear each recounting his exploits, and inexpressibly compassionate on the barbarous habits of the natives. The raw tourist is invariably affected by the spectacle of salt helped by

a knife. "Lord, ain't it droll!" Yet the companion of the lady who made the remark was eating with his knife! More amusing still was it to hear those with the advantage of a few hours' more familiarity with the place, instructing the tyros. "Oh, you should see the Pally-royle, the place where all the shops are—then there's the Bullyvars." But an American gentleman surpassed our British product, the present writer having heard him state (and being further prepared to make affidavit as to the literal accuracy of this report), that he was staying "at th' Hôtel de Londrays," with persons of no less distinction than "the Duke Dolmail (sic), and the Princes of Johnville and Condy."

The theatres are nearly all in full work again. Precisely as on the eve of the siege, the odious Theresa resumes the part she had to abandon through that awkward interruption, and displays her revolting attractions at the Gaieté in the White Cat. A better sign of the times was to find the Comédie Française crammed to overflowing, the musicians banished from the orchestra to make room, and the admirable Got and magnificent Favart holding all spell-bound. At another theatre was revived the Three Musketeers of the elder Dumas, with Melingue, who "created the original rôle" of D'Artagnan. According to innumerable puffs in the various papers, this actor was described as being an extraordinary attraction, but he seemed to me to have very average gifts. Indeed, the popularity of pieces of this kind with the French seems a mystery; they are absolutely dull, and beside some of our own "sensation" pieces, are positively tedious. Thus, there was a minute representation of all that led to the execution of that injured monarch Charles the First, his taking leave of his wife and children, the procession, &c., gracefully and even tenderly given, but dull and out of place. Everybody was noble, gallant, heroic, suffering, uttering such grand and beautiful sentiments, walking in so stately a fashion, their robes floating behind them, that though it failed to interest it could not but be an improving spectacle. An English historical character known as Crumvale, and who is much softer in his disposition than the hero presented by Mr. Carlyle, delivered himself of the following passage, which seemed singularly apropos to events then passing: "All are instruments, machines which I could put in motion. But then the parliament—yes, I know well, from thence is likely to

come the opposition. . . . Is it of the kingdom or of the king they are weary? It is of the latter—merely a name. I must find some name which has not been used as yet. I must find some office which can let him who obtains it gain all honours. One must have the look of protecting the country, although she has no need of protection. Yes, the very thing. Starting from below, passing by the peasantry, the Commune, the army," &c. It will hardly be believed that on the evening of the day when the nature of M. Thiers's future office was on every lip, this soliloquy passed without a sign of intelligence on the part of the audience!

III. COMMUNISTS ON TRIAL.

GOING down by that familiar road to Versailles, it is easy to see how it has been transformed into a little capital, so crowded are the trains. The old-fashioned place is now all in flurry; the long trains arrive full, and go away as full, with women in white frilled caps and large baskets, which the citizen sisters and brothers are in a perpetual struggle to force into trains, or under the seat, or, better still, on the whole length of the seat. The secret of this idiosyncrasy, as well as of the corresponding one of the stout gentlemen in white trousers and glossy silk summer coats, set off with a crimson rosette, and who will force in their canvas valises and queer composite carpet-bags, is of course to be found in the wretched love of scraping, of going through any discomfort sooner than pay for baggage or for lumps of sugar. I notice many other stout gentlemen, all of precisely the same pattern, who are singularly important, resemble the late M. Cavour, and perspire freely. They have rosettes, and handsome gold chains and rings, and talk to each other on the floor of the waiting-room, while we sit down. These I know to be deputies, who, in France, are mostly of M. Cavour's pattern. We have many officers, too, whose lace is of the newest and shiniest, and who on their own hill, as we may call this place, whence they had beaten the wretched Communist cocks, fancy they can crow a little. There is a great stream towards one wing of the palace, where the old theatre, now looking very shabby, is, as all the world knows, turned into a parliament. Servants in the state livery, scarlet and gold collars, and green coats, hang about the doors, with plenty of soldiers. Here there is a lobby, where crowds beg for tickets, and the stout deputy emerging, is surrounded by a troop, to whom he is most gracious, and takes

along with him in a queue "to see what can be done." I suspect that this is a flattering moment, and that the legislator is rather pleased on the whole.

Turning away from the great gilt railing and gates, through which I see the tempting park, I find a more exciting scene before me. Facing the palace are the stables, built, architecturally, into two vast hemicycles, and at the centre one, which is a riding-school, more soldiers are clustered. Every one is entering here, and I know that the trial of the Communists is going on. Entering at once, we are in the riding-school, which has the sawdust half a foot thick on the ground, and are astonished at the scene, which is like an effective tableau on the stage, as it was no doubt intended to be. Far away—very far away—is a sort of raised dais, with a long table stretching across, exactly the description of thing we see as the curtain rises, and discover the magnificos, or inquisitors, who distribute stage justice. There are two flights of steps, with a space between, with semicircular tables at each side. The court is composed of about a dozen officers, some of a "lopsided" character, with only one epaulette—all of a theatrical, showy bearing, twisting their moustaches. Behind them is an artistically draped festooning of green, and in the hasty decoration of this riding-school we can see the "tasty" style of decoration of the French. Our own upholsterers would have "tacked up" some calico all round, but all this is done with the most elegant drapery and graceful hangings. At the top, over the head of the president, is a great framed oil-painting of the Crucifixion. At each side, on the first platform, are two great orchestras. Below the second flight, and on the second floor of the riding-school, are reserved seats, and beyond these, again, standing room for the crowd. The orchestra to the right is crowded with the accused, each sitting between two soldiers and an alarming quantity of bayonets. At the circular tables in front sit the secretaries in full uniform. In front of these the huissiers of the court, who are in uniform, and who are in perpetual motion. The whole procedure, indeed, seems to be modelled on strict stage precedent, and is really most effective, the uniformed officials bowing gracefully, descending and ascending the steps solemnly to hand papers and give messages. Sixty reporters sit facing the Communists, and work their pens briskly.

Exactly in the centre was a little rail like

a prie-dieu, the "witness box"—a situation of most alarming publicity, but which, it must be said, in all justice, seemed to have little effect upon the occupants, who rather enjoyed their conspicuous position. The huge and appreciative bulk of the audience who could scarcely hear a word—they were placed so far away—was composed of soldiers, with loungers and innumerable strangers. The president of the court is "the Colonel Merlin," as he is called—a grey, dignified, yet bullet-headed officer of the Pelissier type; and it was impossible not to be struck with his extraordinary clearness of voice, his measured nicety of speech, which made nearly every word audible, travelling over the heads of the crowded ranks to that enormous distance. There was courtesy and even grace in all that he said. His comrades, who were singularly young, were mere lay figures. The faces of the Communist chiefs were characteristic enough. They fairly represented all the physical French types. We all know the trim, dark-bearded, bright-eyed, small-featured, intelligent face—that is Assi, the Creuzot workman, in his National Guard dress. There are several variations of this type. Lullier shows the rugged head, with a moustache only, and an intelligent eye. Pascal Grousset is the rather handsome French face, well moulded, such as the jeune premier shows on the stage. Courbet, the painter, a huge, burly man, has one of those German-bearded physiognomies. Some have a grotesque, semi-humorous expression, which reminds us of Grassot at the Palais Royal—such as Tony Moilin and Verdure. Ferré, the one to whom the evidence pointed as responsible for the murder of the hostages, has by no means a truculent face.

Some of the inferior Communists seemed poor, "dirty" fellows, and it was amusing to see how proud they were of their companionship with the more distinguished, of the soldiers' bayonets about them, and how they folded their arms with the dignity of a transpontine theatre. Every moment, as the trial proceeded and as the witnesses gave evidence, one or other was jumping up for short speeches.

It is the fashion to find fault with the French system of conducting a trial, and yet, it must be said, that where there are a vast number of accused, and a cloud of witnesses, the French system is more clear and lively, and more likely to leave an impression on the jury. We know the sense of wearisomeness, and even of unintelligibility, as counsel examines witness

after witness, with the tedious waiting while they think, and then answer, slowly and cautiously, and the further delay while the judge writes down. Here a witness was brought in, tripped up the steps, took his place at the rail, and at once started on a short but graphic, and sometimes vivid, narrative of what he had seen or what he had to tell. It was over in a minute or two. The judge then asked him more particularly as to what such and such a prisoner had done. The latter would then put his few questions, and the thing was over. Thus an abstract of a sentence or two would describe the value of each witness's testimony. Not so easy to perceive is the value of the personal interruption by the president of each accused. "You were on such a day at the town-hall; you were seen with a body of men," &c. For the prisoner's denial in the face of proof would not count for anything; neither would an ingenious explanation in his own favour, nor still less his admission of the facts. How much better and more accurate is the description, "the accused," than one of the "prisoner," which merely describes a person as being under arrest. Rather childish, however, were the verbal corrections and melodramatic expostulations of the president; as, when he pronounced glowing eulogies on the army, or when he interrupted the prisoner who was talking of the "deserted population of Paris." "Deserted! but by those whom it chassed with volleys of musketry." But the main impression left was certainly of the remarkable fluency and readiness of speech in all concerned, and the epigrammatic choice of phrase. It seemed, too, that the Communists were rarely at a loss for an excuse, even in the face of a most damaging piece of evidence. The president's remarks were sometimes even "gay"—as, when one of the accused dwelt upon some "plans" which he had submitted, and which had been only "flung in the dirt," "whither so many other plans," added the president, "have found their way."

A LUCKY PRESENTIMENT.

ABOUT sixty years ago a remarkable case was tried, at the criminal side, in the county of Cork.

The writer wishes to pledge himself at the outset to the literal authenticity of the narrative, which he heard from the lips of the late eminent queen's counsel, George Bennett, at that time a junior on the

Munster circuit, and himself an eye-witness and attentive listener at the trial.

On a fine summer evening, when the rustic hour of supper was approaching, there arrived at the door of a comfortable thatched cabin, of large dimensions, such as the class of persons known in Ireland as "strong farmers" usually inhabit, a stranger, dressed in the then peasant costume, corduroy shorts, frieze coat, caubeen, and brogues, and with a blackthorn stick in his hand. The wayfarer entered, with the usual salutation, "God save all here," and asked if this was not Denis Macarthy's house. The women who were in the cabin told him it was, and invited him civilly to sit down, "and take an air of the fire;" and with this invitation he complied, entertaining his new acquaintances the while with such news as he had collected while on his journey.

The man was dark-featured, of middle stature, and of square and powerful build.

In a little while Denis Macarthy, returning from his fields, entered the cabin-door, and the stranger introduced himself as his cousin, Phil Ryan, from Cappaghmore, in the county of Limerick, and told him what had brought him to that distant part of the world. His business was to say certain prayers, according to Irish usage, over the grave of a common kinsman of both, who had died two or three weeks before, and was buried in the neighbouring graveyard.

Macarthy received his cousin, although he had never seen his face before, with the customary cordiality of clanship, and told him that he must sup and sleep in his house that night, and eat his breakfast there before setting out in the morning on his homeward journey.

To all this the stranger consented, and then, as he was unacquainted with the situation of the graveyard, he asked Macarthy, if it was not far off, to show him the way to it, and point out the grave of their cousin.

Macarthy readily consented, and, as the potatoes were not quite boiled, it was agreed that they should set out at once, and return in time for supper.

In the south of Ireland simple burial-places, probably of immense antiquity, containing no vestige of a sacred building, rudely fenced with a loose stone wall, lichen-stained, and often partly overgrown with ivy, with perhaps two or three hawthorns, and an ancient ash-tree growing within them, are frequently to be met with. Possibly these small and solitary enclosures

were dedicated to the same funereal uses long before the dawn of Christianity broke upon the island.

A wild and narrow track, perhaps as ancient as the place of sepulture itself, crossing, at a short distance from Macarthy's cabin, the comparatively modern main road, leads over a little rising ground to the burial-place, which lies in the lap of a lonely hollow, seldom disturbed by the sound of human tread or voice, or the rattle of car-wheel.

Macarthy and the stranger walked up the ancient and silent by-road, until they reached the hollow I have mentioned. There, under the shadow of an old twisted thorn-tree, a stile crosses the loose wall of the burial-ground. At this stile they came to a pause.

"Go on," said Macarthy.

"Go you first," replied the stranger.

"Go first yourself," said the farmer, a little peremptorily, making a stand, he did not know why, upon the point of precedence.

"Arra, man; go on, can't ye, and don't be botherin'; what are ye afeard of?" insisted Ryan.

"Now I tell you what it is; I don't understand you, nor what you're at; but divil a foot I'll go over that wall till you go over it first," said Macarthy, doggedly.

The man laughed, and looked angry.

"To be sure I'll go over it first, if that'll please ye; and what does it matter who's first or who's last?" he answered, surlily. "But you're the biggest omadhoun I ever set eyes on."

And, speaking to this effect, he crossed the stile, followed by Macarthy, who pointed out the grave, and forthwith the stranger kneeled beside it, according to Irish custom, and began to tell his beads and say his prayers, an observance which usually lasts about a quarter of an hour.

When the prayers were ended, the farmer and Ryan, now quite good friends again, returned to the farm-house, where the stranger had his supper with the family, and in the morning, having eaten his breakfast, he took his leave, and set out on his homeward journey.

Irish ideas of hospitality in the peasant rank make it a matter of obligation upon the host to accompany his guest for a part of his way. Macarthy, in compliance with this courteous custom, set out with the stranger, and about a mile away from his house they entered a little village, where he shook hands with his guest, and bid him farewell.

testifying his gratitude, according to the custom of the country, by treating his kinsman to some drink, which he insisted on doing in the village public-house, the door of which stood open close by them.

Macarthy accordingly went in with him. They sat down at a table, and the stranger, having ascertained what his cousin liked best, ordered a pot of porter, making some excuse for not partaking himself.

When Macarthy raised the pewter pot to his lips, a sudden pain, which he afterwards described more particularly, in the back of his neck compelled him to set it down untasted.

The stranger urged him to drink it, and, without explaining the cause of his hesitation, he a second time raised the vessel to his mouth. Precisely the same thing occurred again.

Once more the stranger expostulated, and pressed him more vehemently to drink; and again he tried it, but with exactly the same result.

"What ails ye? and why don't you drink your liquor? Don't you like it?" the stranger demanded.

"I don't like it," answered Macarthy, getting up, "and I don't like you, nor your ways, and, in God's name, I'll have nothing more, good or bad, to say to you."

"To the divil I pitch you and it," said the stranger breaking into undisguised fury, and at the same time, through the open door, he flung the contents of the pewter pot upon the road.

Without another word, in this temper, the unknown cousin strode out of the door, and walked on his way, leaving the farmer in a state of perturbation and suspicion.

Happening to look into the pewter pot, which had contained the porter just thrown out, he saw a white sediment at the bottom of it. He and the publican put their heads together over it, but could make nothing of this deposit.

It so happened, however, that the physician was in attendance at the dispensary, only a few yards away, and to him they submitted the white powder that lay in the bottom of the measure. It proved to be arsenic.

The mud upon the road where the porter had fallen was also examined, and some of the same deposit was found upon it.

Upon these facts, and the short information sworn by Macarthy, a neighbouring magistrate at once issued his warrant, with which the police pursued the miscreant, who, without apprehension of his purpose

journey quite at his ease. He was arrested, and duly committed to prison.

The animus and purpose of the heinous enterprise came afterwards to light. The pretended cousin, whose real name was Mara, had been bribed to put Macarthy to death, by a person interested in the termination of a lease in which Macarthy was the last life.

The attempt to poison was only a resource in reserve. The primary plan, and that relied upon with good reason, was of a totally different kind. Under the pretext I have mentioned, Macarthy was to have been induced to accompany Mara to the lonely graveyard, the position of which, and the stile by which it was entered, were familiar to him. He was to have allowed Macarthy to cross the stile first, and, following him closely, as he descended it at the other side, he was, from above, to have dealt him, with his heavy loaded stick, such a blow upon the head as must have felled him to the ground, and, as he lay stunned in the graveyard, he would have easily despatched him. The sounds of violence in that sequestered place no ear could have heard, and no human aid would have interfered to prevent the consummation of his atrocious purpose.

The women, who, in the large barn-like room were attending to the preparations for supper at its further end, had caught nothing of the conversation of the two men who stood near the door. The effect of this might not very improbably have been that no one would have known in what direction their walk had lain, or could have conjectured where the body of Macarthy, if he had been murdered, was concealed. It might have lain under the wall of that rude cemetery undiscovered until the next funeral brought people into its solitary enclosure.

At this point all turned upon the prementiment which had so mysteriously determined Macarthy, without any motive of which he was conscious, against going over the stile before him. Macarthy was too powerful a man to have been assailed on fair terms, with a reasonable chance of the intending assassin's success.

When the trial was over, Mr. Bennett, my informant, who, though not in the case, and a very junior barrister at the time, had listened to the trial with deep interest, found an opportunity of speaking to the prosecutor, and asked him some questions upon the most extraordinary point in the strange occurrence deposed to.

What passed was to the following effect:

"You stated that you were prevented from drinking the porter by a pain in the back of your neck. Did that pain affect all the back of your neck; and if not, to what part of your neck was it confined?"

"It was in one spot only, close under the skull on the backbone."

"Was it a severe pain?"

"The worst I ever felt."

"Had you ever had the same pain before?"

"Never any pain like it before or since."

"Can you give me any idea of what the pain was like?"

"It covered about the size of the top of a man's finger pressed hard against the neck, and it felt like a red-hot bullet."

"Did the pain last long?"

"It came whenever I raised the porter towards my mouth, and stopped so soon as I set the vessel down again; and I could not drink or hold the vessel up while it lasted."

Some persons will account, upon natural, though complicated theories, for the mental and physical impressions which, they may suppose, resulted in this sensation, and in the consequent escape of the prosecutor, Macarthy, from a deep-laid scheme of murder. Others will see nearly insuperable difficulties in the way of such an explanation. It is, in any case, one of the most remarkable instances of justice satisfied and life saved by mysterious premonition that I have ever met with.

The hired assassin was convicted, and, although his intention had been defeated, his crime was then, I believe, a capital one. The wretch who employed him was, also, if I remember rightly, convicted and punished.

I relate this story with a very exact recollection of the terms in which it was told to me, and with a conscientious anxiety to reproduce the narrative accurately. It is extraordinary enough, I think, to merit being rescued from oblivion.

THE COVENANTER.

THE Lord beheld a cotter by the shore,
Leaning his cheek upon a hard brown hand
And gazing seaward; and the winds and waves
Were loud within this cotter's soul, the strife
Of wind and wave and cloud were pictured there
As in a trembling water; and the Lord
Breath'd on the forehead of the man, and said
"My storm shall have a tongue!"

But many a year

The cotter, Walter Logan, work'd and work'd
Within his shieling on the Argyllshire coast,
Wherein he dwelt unwedded and alone
A silence-lover, moody and unlearned.

One book he had, a Bible great and old,
Whose large plain characters his untutor'd eye
Follow'd with pain, till as a mother's face
All were familiar. Most he loved to sit,
His cheek upon his hand, upon a cliff
That overlook'd the sea; when the storm
Hung dark around him, and above, the Lord
Opened a rent among his drifting cloud
And looked upon him, and the man sat there
Unconscious of the Lord.

But night and day
Came tempest seaward: sea and sky were join'd
Together, to the roaring of the winds;
The blackness gathered like a frowning face,
Till floating downward—like a living thing
A sunbeam would alight on Ailsa Craig,
And smile upon the waves until they sank
With deep low murmurs brightening as they fill,
Like to the lions licking Daniel's feet,
His brightness growing human in their eyes.
There Logan sat, content to hear and see
In silence, for his lonely soul was stirred
To watch with face unmoved a mighty power
Whose very moaning calm was like a threat,
Wherefore his soul grew fashioned to the place,
And in his brain the elements kept time
Unto the solemn music of the book
Until the tempest of the waves became
The spirit of the Lord.

Thou knowest now
How in the after days this man became
The trumpet of the tempest, with one blast
Blowing together all the scatter'd souls,
To whom the Lord was a tempestuous sign
And portent! In that dreadful wind so raised
He perish'd. Here beside the lonely sea
His very grave is wild and like a wave!

CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

ESSEX-STREET, STRAND.

THE town house of the proud Bishops of Exeter once stood at the bottom of that sloping street that lies westward of Temple Bar, in a sort of small bay or backwater southward of the Strand. Through a sort of picture-frame gate, from whence steps lead down to the shore of the river, you catch a pleasant green glimpse of the young plane-trees that line the new Embankment. On the left a passage leads into the Temple, reminding us that Exeter House once formed the outer part of the domain of those semi-ecclesiastical knights whom the lawyers first robbed, then burnt; and on the right stands a Unitarian chapel of considerable antiquity. Many an unfledged barrister, innocent as yet of law, has passed up this street towards Westminster. Many a Templar Ranger or Lovelace has reeled down it, zigzagging his way to his airy den in King's Bench-walk or Pump-court, heedless of Coke and contemptuous of Littleton. Many a knotty legal argument have those heads on the Essex-street knockers overheard. The wise Mansfield has passed this way, and Thurlow, who looked wiser

than any man ever was; Brougham with the dance of Saint Vitus in his ugly nose, and Adolphus, hot and angry from recent wrangle; great rich lawyers and poor hungry ones have trod these stones; lord chancellors that were to be yet never were; and needy ambitious men eating their own hearts out in the cruel waitings and deferred hopes of the most disappointing of all professions. Talk of purgatory! There is no place where men have suffered so much as they have in the purlieu of the Temple, and not even up Holborn-hill (the road to Tyburn) have heavier hearts come than up that street south of the Strand, and westward of Temple Bar.

In the reign of Edward the Second the Bishops of Exeter built a palace in Essex-street. Walter Stapleton, the Lord Treasurer of England and Bishop of Exeter, trying to defend London for King Edward against the Queen Isabella, who had brought an army from France to chase away the Spensers, the evil counsellors of her husband, the enraged Londoners sacked and burnt the bishop's palace. The bishop himself, on his way to take sanctuary at St. Paul's, was torn from his horse by a mob, stripped of his armour, and beheaded at Cheapside.

Lord Paget, Henry the Eighth's ambassador, afterwards had the palace. After him came the Duke of Norfolk, who was beheaded by Elizabeth for his political intrigues with Mary Queen of Scots. Then the Earl of Leicester lived here in splendour. Spenser dedicated one of his poems to his patron, Leicester, whom he eulogises in his *Prothalamion*.

Near to the Temple stands a stately place,
Where I gayned gifts and goodly grace,
Of that great lord who there was wont to dwell,
Whose want too well now feels my friendless case.

Leicester left his Essex-street house to his step-son, the Earl of Essex, who here brooded over the plot that soon brought him to the scaffold. Essex was the grandchild of a favourite cousin of Queen Elizabeth. The mother of Essex, a bad woman, took the Earl of Leicester for her second husband, and for her third, Christopher Blount, her master of the horse, with whom she had long intrigued. The sister of Essex, a still more infamous woman, had been the mistress of Lord Montjoy. Essex's wife, Frances Sidney, the widow of Sir Philip, was a woman, as Mr. Dixon says, of inferior birth, without beauty, youth, or fortune. Honours fell thick on the young noble. At twenty-two he was Master

of the Horse. He became a member of the queen's council, Earl Marshal of England, General of the Forces in Ireland, and the recipient of three hundred thousand pounds in money. He fought in France and Portugal, and at Cadiz covered himself with glory. Yet Essex was not so handsome as Elizabeth's other favourites. He stooped, and was careless in his dress; he walked awkwardly, and danced worse; his morals were more than questionable. Still he won the queen by his fearless frankness, as he won friends by his warm-hearted generosity and candour, his affability and noble courtesy. Spenser Essex especially favoured, and in a sonnet preceding the first three books of the *Faery Queen*, the poet promised at the conclusion of that great poem

To make more famous memory
Of thy heroic parts.

In the *Prothalamion*, Spenser concludes with a compliment to the possessor of Essex House :

Yet therein now doth lodge a worthy peer,
Great England's glory, and the world's wide wonder,
Whose dreadful name late thro' all Spain did thunder,
And Hercules' two pillars standing near
Did make to quake and fear.
Fair branch of honour, flower of chivalry,
That fillest England with the triumph'd of fame,
Joy have thou of thy noble victory,
And endless happiness of thine own name.

Nor was Essex ungrateful for this wreath of laurel. Why Spenser died poor and broken-hearted, on his return from the great misfortunes that fell upon him like thunderbolts in Ireland, will now probably never be known, but certain it is that the earl paid for his funeral and tomb in Westminster Abbey. Shakespeare, too, the friend of Fulke Greville and Southampton, the earl's sworn comrades, celebrates Essex in the Chorus at the commencement of the Fifth Act of Henry the Fifth, and falsely prophesies his victorious return from Ireland :

Were now the general of our gracious empress
(As in good time he may) from Ireland coming,
Bringing rebellion breached upon his sword,
How many would the peaceful city quit
To welcome him ?

After the death of Leicester, Essex became a power at court, in spite of his wilfulness and rash heat of temper. Scarcely twenty-one, he rode at Tilbury, the captain-general of the cavalry. Always crossing the queen's wishes, he joined the unsuccessful expedition to Lisbon in 1581, and commanded at the unsuccessful siege of Rouen. But these discomforts he repaid by his chivalrous gallantry against Spain in 1596, when

fourteen thousand English took Cadiz, destroyed thirteen Spanish men-of-war, and obtained from the citizens one hundred and twenty thousand crowns as ransom. But this money was divided among the adventurers, and Essex, owing to the opposition of Cecil's friends, failed to snap up the Spanish treasure fleet, with its rich cargo of twenty million dollars. Sent to Ireland to check Tyrone, Essex failed in every attempt, and began, it was rumoured, to hold traitorous communication with the rebels—worst of all, after thwarting the queen in every scheme, he suddenly returned to England, contrary to the royal commands. Essex was hastening fast to his ruin. In Ireland he had all but resolved to embark two thousand cavalry, land in Wales, and, marching to London, to drive Raleigh, Cecil, and Cobham from the court. Despising the faithful counsels of Bacon and Greville, Essex hurried on fast to destruction.

At a secret meeting in February, 1601, at Drury House (Drury-lane), this rash and wilful man, estimating his sworn adherents at one hundred and twenty earls, lords, knights, and gentlemen, agreed to give up his plan of seizing the Tower, and decided to surprise the queen at Whitehall, and force her to disgrace Burleigh, Raleigh, and Cobham, and restore her disgraced favourite. He relied much on Sheriff Smith, who had the power of calling to his side one thousand men of the London train-bands. The Puritans were all for him, and many of the Roman Catholics were won by the conspirator's promises of increased toleration. Other men he allured by assurances that Cobham and Cecil were in favour of the Infanta of Spain as the successor of Elizabeth. The Scottish king there can be no doubt secretly favoured his attempt.

The plot was ripe on Saturday, the 7th of February, 1601. Essex, sending his secretary to rouse his citizen friends, arranged his final plans. Sir Christopher Blount undertook to seize Whitehall Gate, Sir John Davis the Hall, and Sir Charles Danvers the guard-room and presence-chamber. Essex was then to come out from the Mews (site of the National Gallery), and having secured an access, to seek the queen, and humbly demand that she should drive from her his chief enemies, whom he would then have brought to trial, or more probably summarily have killed. He then proposed to assemble a parliament and name a successor. But the court had already information of the plot, and Essex,

being sent for by the council, resolved on making his desperate attempt the next day (Sunday), when the citizens would be assembled for the sermon at St. Paul's Cross. That night secret messengers were employed rallying Essex's friends and convening them to the morrow's meeting. The next morning early there came from west and east to Essex House the Earls of Rutland and Southampton, Lords Sandys and Monteagle, and about three hundred other gentlemen. Essex told these partisans that plots were laid against his life, that the City was for him, and that he had resolved to force his way to the queen, and tell her his dangers. But an unexpected incident disturbed his plans. A little before ten o'clock on that quiet Sunday morning the excited crowd of hot-headed noblemen, turbulent soldiers, and musketeers, were startled by the appearance at the Strand Gate of four messengers from the court. Egerton, the Lord Keeper, the Earl of Worcester, Knollys, the Comptroller of the Household, and Lord Chief Justice Popham, demanded admission. At ten, the lord mayor and aldermen met for the Paul's Cross sermon, and after sermon, Essex was to meet them and call on them to follow him to Whitehall. There was no time to lose in parley. Rough scowling men, by the order of Essex, admitted the four dignitaries, but excluded all their attendants except the purse-bearer, and on the Lord Keeper asking, in the name of the queen, the meaning of the turbulent concourse, Essex, speaking loud, replied :

"Wait is laid for my life. There were some hired to murder me in my bed. I am traitorously dealt with, and my letters have been counterfeited both with hand and seal. Wherefore we have met here together to defend ourselves, and preserve our lives, since neither my patience nor misery will appease the malice of my advisers except they drink my blood also."

The Lord Keeper, begging Essex to relate his grievances fully, that they might be inquired into, the crowd began to cry impatiently :

"Let us be gone; come. They abuse your patience; they betray you, my lord. The time hastens. Come."

The Lord Keeper, turning to them, put on his cap, and charged them all, in the queen's name, to lay down their weapons. Essex then entered the house, as if for a conference, followed by the four delegates and his partisans, the excited crowd shouting :

"Kill them! kill them! Keep them for pledges. Throw the great seal out of the window. Shut them up fast enough."

After passing through two rooms guarded by musketeers, Essex led them into a back parlour, and, placing the four courtiers under the guard of Sir John Davis, Sir Gilly Merrick, Francis Tresham, and Lord Salisbury, said to them :

"Be patient but a little, my lords. I must needs go into the City to take order with the lord mayor and the sheriffs."

The doors were then bolted on the prisoners, and returning into the court, Essex, about eighty knights and gentlemen, and two hundred retainers, wrapping their cloaks about their left arms, and drawing their swords, rushed through Temple Bar into the City. In Fleet-street he was joined by the Earl of Bedford and Lord Cromwell; but no citizen listened to his appeal to instantly arm, though they let him pass at Ludgate, when he shouted :

"For the queen! For the queen! There is wait laid for my life. Raleigh and Cobham would take my life. England is bought and sold by the Spaniards!"

At St. Paul's Cross he found no sermon preaching, for, by the lord mayor's orders, the citizens had remained at home. Then he rushed up Cheapside, shouting, "For the queen, my mistress!" till he reached the house of Sheriff Smith, in Fenchurch-street, where he expected to find one thousand of the train-bands. But there was no sheriff to be found, and there were no train-bands. Fretting and chafing, the earl, as Camden tells us, retired, hot and fatigued, to a private room, "to compose his spirits, and change his shirt."

In the mean time the court had not been idle. The guards had been mustered, the palace gates closed and barricaded, the neighbouring streets and passages barred with chains and blocked with carriages. With difficulty had the brave old queen been prevented from riding herself to meet the traitors. About two o'clock, Lord Burleigh, with the Garter King-at-Arms, the Earl of Cumberland, and Sir Thomas Ward, had entered the City and proclaimed Essex and all his accomplices traitors, offering a reward of one thousand pounds for his apprehension, and immediate pardon to all who at once deserted him, and returned to their duty. Essex, hearing of this, instantly rushed into the street, crying that England was to be given to the Infanta of Spain, and exhorting the citizens to take arms; but all in vain—no voice replied, no

sword was drawn, no doors flew open. The friends at his back were thawing away fast; the Lord Admiral, it was reported, was gathering a force quickly together. Reluctantly, with broken spirits, Essex resolved to return to his home, and by means of his prisoners secure some terms from the angry queen. But already musketeers and pikemen held Ludgate, and barred his passage. There were soldiers also at the chained-up road by the west gate of St. Paul's, headed by Sir J. Levison. At this juncture, Sir Ferdinand Gorges, careful of himself, persuaded Essex to let him return to Essex House to release the prisoners, and intercede with them to the queen for the earl's pardon before blood was shed, and before the queen felt sure that the City might not rise. Essex granted liberty to Popham only, but eventually Gorges released the whole four, and took them by boat to Whitehall, to procure his own pardon.

When Essex found his way barred between St. Paul's and Ludgate, his hot blood fired, and, calling for his horse, and shouting, "Charge, charge!" he drew his sword and told Blount to attack. Matches were blown, and swords flashed out. Blount killed a soldier. Henry Tracey, "a young man very dearly loved by the earl," was stretched dead on the ground, and several citizens fell. The earl, with a bullet-hole through his hat, fell back with some fifty followers only left, and, retreating to Queenhithe, took boat and returned to Essex House. Enraged to find the hostages gone, Essex then began to fortify his house on all sides, vainly expecting help from the Londoners. He burnt many papers, and especially one with a few lines of dangerous matter contained in a black purse, which he always carried about him. There was little time for preparation. Almost instantly the house was invested. The Earls of Cumberland and Lincoln moved on the Straud side, with the Lords Thomas Howard, Grey, Burleigh, Compton, and a strong body of horse and foot, while on the Thames and garden side there gathered the Lord Admiral himself, his son Effingham, Lord Cobham, Sir John Stanhope, Sir Robert Sidney, and Mr. Fulke Greville. All being prepared for storming, the drums sounded for a parley, and the Lord Admiral sent Sir Robert Sidney to summon the two earls, who came out upon the leads to hear the terms proposed.

"Dear cousin," said Southampton, "to whom would you have us yield? To our enemies? That were to thrust ourselves

into peril willingly. To the queen? Then we should confess ourselves guilty before we have offended." Sidney replied that the house was not strong; that the Lord Admiral had already sent to the Tower for powder and shot, and if that prevailed not that the house would be blown up. Then the Earl of Essex came and said:

"Judge you, brother, whether it be a grief or no to a man descended as myself, who have lived in account with her majesty as I have done, to be pined up so long without any cause, and to be trodden under foot of every base upstart; far more than that, to have my life so narrowly sought by them. Would it not grieve you? Yes, yes, I am sure it would. Well, it is no matter, death will end all, and death shall be most welcome."

Sidney then offered (not to let the innocent perish with the guilty) to allow the countess, Lady Rich, Essex's sister, and the maid-servants, who were "shrieking and howling and making a terrible noise within doors," to depart. This was about nine o'clock. The earl accepted the offer, on condition that two hours should be allowed him to unbarricade the doors to let out the ladies, and another hour to close the doors up again. By this time powder, shot, and guns had come from the Tower, and a cannon had been dragged upon the tower of St. Clement's Church, and planted there to pour a plunging fire upon Essex House. Affairs were desperate indeed with the discomforted rebels, when old Lord Sandys proposed a desperate sally, either to cut a way through their enemies, or to die, as brave men, he said, ought to die, sword in hand. But Essex having at last won the Lord Admiral's consent to treat them as honourable prisoners, and to secure to them a just trial, threw open the doors, and on his knees surrendered his weapon. It was not safe to start to London Bridge that night, as the water was dark and stormy, so Essex and Southampton were sent to Lambeth Palace, and the next morning removed to the Tower. To the archbishop Essex spoke with scorn and anger of the faint-hearted citizens, saying that they were a base people, that he had trampled up and down the City without resistance, that he would undertake with four hundred choice men to overrun London, as he had passed many of their chained and barricaded lanes on his way from Ludgate to Queenhithe, without one blow offered at him. Two days after Cecil wrote to a friend: "Even when a false alarm was brought to the queen that

the City was revolted with them, she was never more amazed than she would have been to have heard of a fray in Fleet-street." Essex was taken on the 8th of February, on the 19th he was tried at Westminster Hall, found guilty, and executed on Tower Green on the 25th, at seven-thirty A.M., in the presence of about a hundred noblemen and gentlemen, Raleigh, from the armoury, watching the axe drop, and shedding tears when the head of his enemy fell. Essex died repentant, confessing his "great bloody crying infectious sin," but denying any intention to offer violence to the person of the queen. Marshal Biron, who died fifteen months after on the scaffold, raging like a madman, ridiculed the behaviour of Essex, and said he died like a clergyman rather than a soldier. Southampton was reprieved. Cuff, the secretary of Essex, and the main cause of his ruin, and Merrick, his steward, perished, as did Blount, the earl's stepfather, and Davers, the friend of Southampton.

The son of Essex was that parliamentary general, whose divorced wife cruelly poisoned Sir Thomas Overbury in the Tower. The general's son was that unfortunate man who, mixed up in the Rye House Plot, shot himself in the Tower. The Earl of Hertford lived in Essex House for a time, and after him, the Lord Treasurer Southampton, and the Lord Keeper Bridgman. Doctor Barbon bought the place in the reign of George the First, and divided it into separate houses. The Cottonian Library was kept here in the reign of Queen Anne, in a house afterwards occupied by Patterson, the bookseller, a friend of Johnson's. In the same room Charles Dibdin commenced his entertainment, and first sang the song of Poor Jack.

It was long suspected that the Pretender had secretly visited London, at least, on one occasion, after the defeat at Culloden, that finally crushed his party. Scott, with his fine eye for the picturesque, has made him a spectator, in disguise, of the coronation of George the Third, in 1761; but his real visit took place in September, 1750. This was proved by the publication, in 1818, of the interesting and trustworthy anecdotes of Doctor William King, the Principal of St. Mary's Hall, Oxford, and a leading man among the Jacobites. The doctor says: "September, 1750, I received a note from my Lady Primrose, in Essex-street, who desired to see me immediately. As soon as I waited on her she led me into her dressing-room, and presented me to — Prince

Charles. If I was surprised to find him there, I was still more astonished when he acquainted me with the notion which had induced him to hazard a journey to England at this juncture. The impotence of his friends, who were in exile, had formed a scheme which was impracticable. No preparation had been made, nor was anything ready to carry it into execution. He was soon convinced that he had been deceived, and therefore, after a stay in London of five days only, he returned to Italy." Doctor King, who afterwards corresponded for many years with the unfortunate scion of an unfortunate race, describes the prince as tall and well made, but stooping a little. He had a handsome face and good eyes, and exactly resembled the busts which were sold of him in Red Lion-street, so much so that when he came and took tea at Doctor King's lodgings, the doctor's servant, after the prince had gone, remarked how like the new visitor was to the busts of the Pretender. One day, in the park, a man recognised him and went down on his knees to kiss his hand, which served as a warning to the prince to be off to Rome. Doctor King describes Prince Charles as having a quick apprehension, and speaking French, Italian, and English, and with rather a foreign accent. "In a polite company," he says, "the prince would not pass for a genteel man;" and he sums up his character with these fatal words. "I never heard him express any noble or benevolent sentiment, the certain indication of a great soul and a good heart, or to discover any sorrow or compassion for the misfortunes of so many worthy men who had suffered in his cause."

It is now certain that George the Second, through his spies, knew of this visit, but was too generous to seize his then almost powerless enemy.

The following anecdote may be relied on. The king one day asked Lord Holderness, the Secretary of State, where Charles Edward then was.

"Upon my word, sire," was the startled reply, "I—I—don't exactly know. I suppose in Italy; but I'll consult my last despatches."

"Pooh, pooh! man," said the king; "don't trouble your head about the despatches. I'll tell you where he is; he is now at No. —, Essex-street, Strand, and was last night at Lady Primrose's rout. What shall we do with him?"

The astonished secretary proposed calling a council, but the king said, "No, no.

We can manage the business without a council. Let him stay where he is at present, and when the poor man has amused himself with looking about London, he will go home again."

The king, it is supposed, learned all the prince's schemes from his Scotch mistress, Walkenshaw, whose sister was housekeeper to the king's son, at Leicester House. This was the woman whom the Jacobites wanted to be sent to a convent, but the prince, though he did not care for her, refused to part from her. The prince and this woman both drank, and the two often quarrelled, and sometimes fought, to the scandal of their Roman neighbours. This Lady Primrose, of Essex-street, with whom the prince sought shelter when thousands of pounds were set upon his head, was, we believe, that Lady Primrose to whom Edinburgh legends say a Cagliostro of the day showed her absent husband in a mirror. He had attempted her life and fled abroad. She afterwards married Lord Stair. There was a General Primrose mixed up in the early Layer conspiracy. Henceforward, let every Jacobite take off his hat as he passes Essex-street.

The year before he died, Doctor Johnson formed a club in Essex-street, at a tavern kept by Sam, one of Thrale's old servants. The club met three times a week, and the forfeit for non-attendance was twopence. Sir John Hawkins spitefully called it "a low ale-house association," but Windham, Daines Barrington, Boswell, and Doctor Brocklesby, were members. Sir Joshua refused to join, probably because Barry, who had insulted him, was one of the circle. When Boswell was put up Johnson happily designated him as a "clubbable man." Towards the end of his life the great lexicographer grew more than ever afraid of solitude, and was glad of a club so conveniently near Bolt-court. The meetings continued for many years.

One of the celebrated characters of Essex-street in Johnson's time was Doctor George Fordyce, a physician of great learning and vast appetite. For twenty years he dined daily at Dolly's Chop-House, and like a very Polyphemus, washed down his huge solitary meal with a tankard of strong ale, a quarter of a pint of brandy, and a whole bottle of port. After these potations he would quietly walk to his house in Essex-street, and deliver an admirable lecture to his pupils.

The golden days of the street have long since passed; its glorious youth has sunk

into a decorous, respectable, quiet old age; nobles have yielded to lawyers, and legal probably Essex-street will remain. Blue bags have ousted cloth of gold, and the redundant lawyers of the Temple have spread like an inundation over the sloping street.

WESTERN SLANG.

IN a recent number of ALL THE YEAR ROUND* we gave some specimens of American slang phrases, drawing largely for our matter on Doctor Bartlett's Dictionary of Americanisms, but by no means exhausting a very copious subject. Even America is too large to have one wide-spread and universally understood slang. Every section of it has its own peculiar expressions, which the mode of life of the people have raised up in its speech. Most copious of all, perhaps, is that of the Great West, and most expressive is that of the gold miners, who dot the Californian and British Columbia mountain sides. Here the new life, overlaying that of the old Spaniards and fur traders, has called into being new and peculiar expressions, or has corrupted old ones into a new use and signification. Everywhere do we find them unintentionally cropping out in the letters of "our own correspondent," in the language of our friends fresh from that auriferous region, or even in the grave systematic works written on those portions of the world. One of these authors, Mr. Hittel, has even devoted a few paragraphs to the subject, which for our readers' amusement we have enlarged, from the storehouse of our own personal experience.

First, then, in a country where everybody works, it is natural that the idler should be contemptuously spoken of. In California the professed idler is called a "bummer." He is always well-dressed, affable in conversation, ready to "take a drink" with any one. He peculiarly affects a cut velvet waistcoat of gorgeous hue, "California diamonds" in his shirt-front, a polished quartz seal hanging at his fob, possibly a gold buckle, and has an infinite acquaintance, whom he insists on introducing to you, which introduction generally results in their being asked to take a drink. I have noticed that they always have an "interest in a quartz lead," and are "down at the Bay" to get up a company to work it. A "loafer" is not so bad as a bummer, for though a loafer may become a nuisance by calling at unseason-

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. v. p. 270.

able hours at places of business, yet this does not stamp him as endowed with this permanent frailty of character, but only as being seized with a temporary idleness. A bummer, on the contrary, is a low, disreputable, lazy character, much equivalent to our "sponge." A good number of men now filling high places in the land have been, in their Californian days, bummers. For instance, I once asked a Californian if he was acquainted with General Blank, at that time a celebrated commander in the civil war, whom I knew to have been once in the country, and what sort of fellow he was. "Oh, yes," he knew him. "In fact, I've got his note at the present moment for forty-five dollars I loaned him five years ago. The general was nothing better than a darned bummer, mister!" Again, all readers of American election literature must have remembered with what furious venom Western papers described, about two years ago, an afterwards successful candidate for the presidency, as having been in California, after he left the army, a "regular whisky bummer!"

"On it" is a peculiar and expressive Californian phrase. A man who is "on it" is generally looked upon as a "scaly" customer, and I regret, for the honour of the legal profession, that an indignant Californian litigant frequently finds it necessary to apply the phrase to his attorney. A man may be "on the make" when he is keen after acquiring filthy lucre; "on the fight" when he is combatively inclined; "on the shoot" when ready with his revolver; or "on the splurde" when, under the influence, more or less, of alcoholic excitement, he is driving furiously around town in a buggy, halting at every other "saloon," "standing" champagne "to the boys," smashing a mirror or two, and generally "spending his money like a man"—or a donkey. When a woman is talked about as being "on it," it is invariably understood that she has fallen into evil ways.

The occupation of the gold-digger has suggested to him new expressions to signify to his friends his desire for them to partake of vinous hospitality with him. He prays them "to put in a blast," and you in your turn, as you lift up your glass, are civil enough to say to your host, "Here's to you, old man, and hopin' your pay dirt'll pan* out gay;" in other words,

* A "pan" is a metal dish, in which the digger washes out a test quantity of earth or gravel, and then judges his mine by the result. In America, a "claim" is said to be worth so many "cents to the pan," just as in Australia it is talked of as yielding so many "pennyweights to the bucket."

that the earth in which he is working may wash out rich supplies of gold-dust and nuggets. At other times, the same hospitable wish to partake of stimulants with any one is indicated by the rather more generally used expressions of "take a smile," signifying that you are desired to drive dull care away in the flowing bowl, or you are asked "to nominate your pisin;" or, as somebody takes your arm at the corner of the main street of Diggerburg, you are requested, in a cheery tone of voice, to "hist in a drop of pisin," the two latter phrases being intended to express the popular opinion regarding the quality of the whisky; also vulgarly known as "chain-lightning," "mountain howitzer," "tangle leg," and "tarantula juice." In those parts of the world whisky is not judged by Sikes's hydrometer, or any such puerile test, but by the distance a man can walk after partaking of a certain quantity of it. Tradition asserts that a certain Southerner of bibulous propensities used to "keep a nigger" for the express purpose of "trying the whisky on him;" if the Ethiopian survived the dose for a reasonable time, his master ventured to partake, considering the beverage not of mortal intensity! It is really wonderful how many expressions thirsty mankind have coined to denote the act of partaking of stimulants. An antiquarian friend only the other day read over to me a list of no less than sixty-seven distinct expressions used in Scotland alone to signify the drinking of whisky. This list might be materially enlarged on the Pacific Coast, where every interest has its own expressions. For instance, in Honolulu your friend the whaler will ask you "to take a fid," and you in return will reply, as you help yourself out of a case-bottle in his cabin, "Well, old salt, here's two hundred barrels!" The universal reply to all these compliments being "Drink hearty!"

Spanish expressions naturally supply a large quota of Californian slang phrases, which have got perfectly incorporated into every-day language, and can hardly be classed as vulgar. For instance, the fence or corral in which mules and cattle are confined, has supplied a verb in common use. When a man is cornered in giving utterance to some untenable proposition, he is said to be "corraled," when a horse thief is caught, he is "corraled," and a successful "operator" on the stock exchange will be described as having "corraled" all the shares in the Root-Hog-or-Die Quartz

Mining Company. A farm is universally called a "ranch," derived from the Spanish "rancho," and a farmer a "rancher," from the Spanish equivalent "ranchero." Numerous also are the Indian aboriginal words which have got incorporated in the language, especially in the British possessions, where the natives are much more numerous than the whites, and on friendly social terms with the latter. In some parts of the country, beside numerous Indian names, still retained for localities, many words in daily use are derived from some one or other of the native dialects. A man talks of having no "chickamen," or money, on his person, and will indignantly talk of the assumptions of the "tyhees," or great men, and even coins a noun, "tyheem," to denote this arrogance of the tyhees.

We should tire our readers' patience out, did we go over the various expressions used in the gold-digger's every-day life; how he takes a "square meal" when he comes to his inn, or how when he gets into hard circumstances he is "dead broke," or "caves in," or "goes up a flume." To show the application of some of these odd expressions, perhaps we cannot do better than to parody in miner English a portion of a proclamation of his Excellency the Governor of British Columbia, anent some mining regulations, which lies before us. With this we will conclude this brief survey of the wide and fresh field of Western slang.

**PROCLAMATION! HAVING THE FORCE OF LAW,
YOU BET!**

Whereas, a change in the mining laws is expedient. Be it enacted as follows:

1. That all former proclamations are hereby repealed and "played out."

Interpretation clause.—In the construction of this act the word "guv" shall mean the governor of this colony, and "commish" shall mean the commissioner for the time being. The words "fizzled," "played out," "pettered," "caved," and "gone up a flume," shall respectively mean, when applied to a mining claim, that the same is worthless; and when applied to an individual, that he is ruined, helpless, dead, or in debt, and the terms "dead broke" and "busted," shall, for the purposes of this act, be construed to mean the same thing. That the words "pile," "the dust," "the colour," and "bottom dollars," shall be construed to mean the current coin of this realm.

The term "free miner" shall mean every

person entitled to mine. The term "on it" shall imply a willingness to buy, sell, or get drunk; and "on the make" shall mean a determination to make money, honestly, if you can; if you can't—make money; "on the sell" shall mean a willingness to sell, and "on the buy" a willingness to purchase.

The term "you bet" shall be used to remove any doubt which may possibly exist in the mind of the individual addressed; and you "bet your life" shall be applied in the same way, but shall be more conclusive; and the term "you bet your boots" shall be equivalent to "you bet your life;" and the term "you bet your bottom dollar" shall, for the purposes of this act, mean "your life," or "your boots." The word "chain-lightning" shall mean very ardent spirits; and "mountain howitzer" shall mean liquor that kills at over one thousand yards; and "scorpion juice" and "tarantula juice" shall be construed to mean "mountain howitzer," or "chain-lightning," and "drinks for the crowd" shall mean any and all of the foregoing, for the persons present, but not any others.

That "in a horn" shall be equivalent to the old classical term of "over the left;" and, for the purposes of this act, "in a horn" shall be equivalent to "in a hog's eye." These terms shall imply doubt, and be equivalent to "no you don't."

That the term "vamoose the ranch" shall mean that the individual referred to has left for parts unknown; and "slope" shall be equivalent to "vamoose the ranch;" and "make tracks" shall, for the purposes of this act, be equally as expressive as the two foregoing terms.

That the term "got the dead wood on him" shall not refer to any kind of timber whatever, dead or alive, but shall be used when one individual has obtained a fair or unfair advantage over another; and the term "got the bulge on him" shall be as strong as "getting the dead wood on him," and getting either the "bulge" or "dead wood on him," may result from "sloping," "making tracks," or "vamoosing the ranch."

That "spotted," when applied to an individual, shall have no reference to the state of the skin of any white man, or any spot thereon, but shall mean that he is watched; and, when applied to mining, shall mean that the gold is scattered; and the term "biz" shall mean business.

That "sock it to him" shall be equivalent

lent to the old word "punish;" and "give him fits" shall be equivalent to "sock it to him;" provided also, that the word "fits" shall not include apoplexy or epilepsy.

That "jawbone" shall mean credit, provided also that the size, shape, and contour of such "jawbone" shall not, for the purposes of this act, be material.

That "nare a colour" shall be equivalent to "dead broke," and there shall be no difference between "nare a colour" and "nare a red."

That the phrase "there's a heap of trouble on the old man's mind" shall mean that the individual referred to is either "gone up a flume," "pettered," or that he has "struck the bed-rock pitching" the wrong way; and a "young man" shall, for the purposes of this act, be an "old man," and the feminine gender shall be included in the masculine, and both in the neuter.

That "bully for you," or "bully for him," shall mean a term of approval; and "good on your head," or "good on his head," shall mean the same thing.

That the terms "old hoss," "doc," "judge," "col'nel," "cap," and "old boss," are all equivalent, and the term "or any other man," shall have no definite meaning, and may be applied indiscriminately to all things.

And "slum-gullion" shall mean clay; "pay dirt," dirt containing gold; and "good prospects" shall not mean a pleasing landscape, but plenty of "pay dirt;" and "wash-boulders," "wash-gravel," and "bed-rock pitching," shall mean indications of gold somewhere.

That a "jumper" shall not mean a person who indulges in the active exercise of jumping, but shall mean a person who possesses himself of another man's claim because it is paying; and an invalid, or cripple, or woman, may be a "jumper."

2. It shall be lawful for the guv, you bet, to appoint one or two more commishes, as he may think proper, to transact the biz of the mines of this colony.

3. That no jumper shall hereafter be allowed to indulge in that exercise, and if the commish shall find him on it, he shall have power to sock it to him, or fine him drinks for the crowd, you bet your life.

4. That all honest miners, who are on the buy, may purchase more than two claims from those who are on the sell, provided also that both parties may or may not be on the make.

5. That any honest miner who shall, after the passing of this act, allow any

other miner to get the dead wood on him, shall, you bet your boots, upon complaint made to the commish that there's a heap of trouble on the old man's mind, be spotted as a muggins, and be ordered in consequence to pay a fine of two ounces, or, in default of payment, catch fits, and the commish shall approve of the conduct of the one that's on it, by saying "bully for you," and may add at his pleasure, "or any other man."

6. Not finished, and therefore this act is to save time.

Issued under our seal of Cariboo, this ninth day of May, and the tenth year of the mines.

By the Guv's command,
X. Y. Z., Boss of the Colonial Office.

God save the Queen, and good on her head!

THE ROSE AND THE KEY.

CHAPTER LXXXVI. LADY VERNON LEAVES
ROYDON.

"THIS is Mr. Dawe, please, my lady," said Latimer, and withdrew softly.

"How do you do, Mr. Dawe?" said the well-known sweet voice from the darkened part of the room; "I'm suffering from headache; but take a chair, where there is a little light, and I'll come as near as I can bear."

He saw a white figure moving slowly towards him; and soon it emerged in the twilight; and Lady Vernon appeared. She had a loose grey dress on, of a very thick soft silk. She pointed to a chair, which accordingly Dawe took; she herself sat down, and appeared a little out of breath.

He was shocked at the change he observed. She had grown thin, and it seemed to him stooped, and was deadly pale except for a small hectic patch in each cheek, which used to come only with agitation. Her eyes looked larger and fiercer, but had the glassy look that strangely suited her peaked features.

She looked sinister as the woman of Endor. He thought the hand of death was on her.

He relented, though his brown corded face and prominent eyes showed no sign; and he said:

"You look ill, Barbara; you must be ill. Who is attending you?"

"No one; I prescribe for myself; it is not anything serious; and I know what suits me."

"You ought to have the best advice from town," he persisted. "And—and, Barbara, I have known you in your cradle; I have had you on my knee when you were a little child; you'll shake hands with me."

He had approached, with his brown hand extended.

"Another time; not to-day," she said, coldly; "pray take my own account of it; I am *not* seriously ill; and be kind enough not to tell my friends that I am dying; I'm bored to death by calls and notes; I shall be quite well in a week. What about Elwyn? Do say at once; I implore of you, come to the point."

"I find that Elwyn Howard, or Vivian, your son, is the person who has married Miss Ethel Tintern."

"I knew it, I guessed it," she said after a pause. "There is always a shock when evil surmises turn out true; but I was sure it was so."

"I had a letter this morning from Miss Medwyn," says Mr. Dawe. "She says that Damian pronounces Maud perfectly well, and has sent her away in Maximilla's care from Glarewoods."

"Mr. Damian is doting; but that doesn't excuse his writing libels," said Lady Vernon, flushing a bright scarlet, and then growing deadly pale. "I had a letter of insinuation and insult from him this morning, which he shall rue. I'm glad Maud is set at liberty without my sanction; let her kill me, or kill herself; what does it matter, compared with the tragedy she threatened, and which is now impossible!"

Mr. Dawe nodded, and in a few moments said:

"I have seen Mr. Tintern."

"The wretch!" whispered she, looking down steadfastly on the floor, with cheeks still flushed, and baleful eyes; you might have fancied a Canidia looking down on the blood of her enemy. "He was the contriver of all that misery. He thought that you would provide for the young man. He is utterly false."

"I believe he had quite other intentions for the young lady," said Dawe.

"Don't believe it; what better could a country squire do for his daughter? Mr. Tintern never goes straight to anything. You never discover what he intends, except by his bad acting. And to think of their having caught my beautiful boy in their toils! When he came here ill, he looked so like my own noble Elwyn, the sight of him almost broke my heart. You must bring him to see me; I have made up my

mind to tell him everything. He shall know his father, and his poor, broken-hearted mother."

"Well, Barbara, I fear you are exerting yourself too much. One thing I mention for your consideration. Use your power of appointment under the will in favour of Tintern, and you can dictate his settlements for your son, and thus provide for him handsomely."

"It is too late. I executed a deed which excludes him irrevocably; and it is in Mr. Coke's custody."

"You might have consulted me, or some one, with more caution than yourself, Barbara, before taking such a step," said Dawe, after a pause.

"It is taken, and no power on earth can recal it," she said, coldly.

"It is a pity," said Dawe. After a short silence, "I am told there is not a nicer girl in England than Ethel Tintern."

"I hope she mayn't live long," said Lady Vernon, in her cold tones. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.' Let His justice be done, and my poor Elwyn released from the wicked companion who deceived him. Ill as I am," she continued, after a pause, "I have written to Mr. Coke to come down to consult upon the letter of that slanderous old man, Mr. Damian; I have walked with God all my days, why will he not spare me one drop in this dreadful cup? I have lived a life of virtue. I have done my duty. I have nothing to retract; nothing to repent of. I will see Maud's face no more. She has never been a child to me. She has been the source of half my misery. Another parent would leave her with a curse. I turn from her in silence. Good people understand and honour me. The wicked I trample under my feet. 'These speak evil of those things which they know not.'" She made her quotation with a low utterance, and with a slow and bitter emphasis. She was talking, as it were, to herself. "'Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain, and perished in the gain-saying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity. Trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness—for ever.'"

She turned as she said this, and Mr. Dawe thought she was weeping, for he heard one or two little sobs.

Latimer, a minute after, in the adjoining room, heard a hoarse voice calling her in

strange loud accents. At sound of this discordant summons, through Latimer's brain, with a sure omen, flashed a dreadful suspicion.

Now she is in the room, she does not know how, stooping over the chair, calling distractedly, "My lady! my lady!" in an ear that will never hear sound again. She is holding her up in the chair, but the head sinks and rolls, this way or that, as the weight inclines. "'Tis a faint! 'tis a faint! my God! 'Tis only a faint!" Latimer cries wildly in her terror.

Mr. Dawe has thrown open the shutter, the window itself; and the fitful autumn air eddies in, and the elegant little lace coiffure and its long, dark, grey-and-blue silk ribbons flutter about the dead face and open mouth. Mr. Dawe has sprinkled water on her face. It streams over it as rain would over a marble bust.

Latimer despairs; she cries out with terror, "What is it, what is it? Is she gone? Oh! she's gone, she is gone! she's gone!"

Mr. Dawe at the door is calling for help, and soon many feet and voices are in the room. Strange liberties are taken with awful Lady Vernon's sanctuary. The shutters are thrown open, the curtains dragged back, furniture is wheeled out of the way, huddled together. "My lady's" Bible lies flat on its face on the floor with its covers open, beside a gilt candlestick and broken candle; broken, too, lies the pretty malachite paper-cutter which dead and buried Vicar Howard owned long since, which he had given her three-and-twenty years ago, and which ever since his death has always been beside her. On the carpet are strewn letters and two or three books, and the gold mounted ink-bottle lies on its side on the rich table-cover, as it were in a swoon, and bleeding ink profusely, quite neglected.

The great and faultless Lady Vernon is by this time on the sofa, a shawl over her feet, her head propped with the pillow, and something under her chin to close her mouth. There are no disclosures of "making up." The tints on her cheek fade naturally into the proper hue of death.

This solitary lady with one great and untold affection among the living, one passionate affection among the dead, is more alone than ever now. Her pride, her passion, her strong affections, her wickedness, the whole story of her life, signed, sealed, and delivered, and passed out of her keeping now.

A servant is galloping by this time half-way to Shillingsworth to bring the doctor, the Roydon doctor not yet having returned, and Mr. Dawe wishing some skilled inspection, in the case of so great a lady.

All goes on as usual. The little town recovers from its momentary stupor. The scepticism of startled people subsides, and the great conviction is established. Lady Vernon of Roydon is dead.

Mr. Dawe remains at the Vernon Arms; Mr. Coke arrives, letters are flying in all directions. Lady Vernon's will has never been executed. She had not been able quite to make up her mind upon some points, and had no idea that her hour was so near.

The letters that radiate from the Hall to many scores of other homes, chiefly of the great, announce that the physicians agree in referring the sad event to heart-complaint, developed with unusual rapidity.

CONCLUSION.

THE remainder of my story pretty nearly tells itself.

In Lady Vernon's secret marriage with the vicar, Elwyn Howard, there was no taint of guilt. There was extreme rashness. Each honestly believed that the wicked person whom he had married in his romantic nonage, and lived with little more than a week, had been dead for years. Her own family had not only published her death, but sworn to the fact, and actually administered some trifling property of hers. It was not until after his marriage, not his seeking, but urged upon him by the wayward and impassioned girl, that the dreadful uncertainty of the situation was, for the first time, suspected. The story is curious, but true. The spoiled girl had revealed her passion to no one. It was not until circumstances compelled her to choose between confidence or exposure, that she disclosed her situation. Mr. Dawe was the sole confidant of her parents in this dark emergency in secret family history. By his advice the young lady and her father set out as if for a short tour on the Continent. The journey diverged and really ended in a sequestered place near a little Welsh village. Here the child of this ill-fated and invalid marriage was born. Mr. Dawe undertook to direct every particular respecting its early care, its subsequent education, and final position in life.

They were to leave in a day or two, and to return home, in a little time, by a very

wide circuit, having taken every precaution necessary for a complete mystification of the good gossips of Roydon, when who should light upon them, traversing a path through the very grounds of the house they inhabited, but about the most unlikely man in the world to be found in that sequestered corner, Sir Amyrald Vernon, the young lady's rejected suitor. He saw signs of alarm and agitation in both, on recognising him, by no means to be accounted for by an accidental meeting with a rejected lover.

They departed; but he remained, and without disclosing their real names, he made himself master of their secret. He tracked Mr. Dawe, and insisted that he should be taken into confidence, and took such a tone, that with the advice of the young lady's father, Mr. Dawe told him the facts of the case, which, painful as they were, yet supplied an answer to suspicions of a more degrading kind.

It was the possession of this secret that enabled him, after the death of the vicar, to bend the proud young lady to his will.

I now turn to Charles Marston and Maud Vernon, who, in due time, there being no longer any let or hindrance, were united. At present they live very much abroad; and, when in England, they do not stay at Roydon, which the young lady associates with many painful recollections, but at their beautiful house of Darrel Abbey.

Doctor Malkin was one of those persons whom Lady Vernon's death disappointed. He wishes very much he had been a little less active in managing that Glarewoods business. But who could have supposed that Lady Vernon would have died before the appointments she intended for him were filled up? He has no liking for the young lady. But for reasons of his own he never hints at the Glarewoods secret, and the good people of Roydon were led to believe that Maud, during her absence, had been making a little tour for her health.

Antomarchi, finding old Damian resolute against committing to him, after the disclosures of which he took so strong a view, a trust so awful as the autocracy of such an empire as Glarewoods, took steps in the Court of Chancery to restrain Mr. Damian from breaking up that establishment, and selling the house and grounds.

This attempt recoiled upon Antomarchi. The court read him an astounding lecture on the facts. The press took it up; and that able adventurer found that England was no longer a field for his talents.

I have heard various accounts of the after adventures of that brilliant rogue, some of which represent him in sore straits; others, following dark and downward paths, and picking gold and silver, but in danger, all the while, of breaking his neck, and lost sight of by the decent upper world.

Mr. Tintern is not quite ruined after all, but he has had to sell nearly all his estates, except the Grange, and a rental of about seven hundred a year. He lives in France; and refuses to see Ethel; and I heard this morning from old Puntles, whom I happened to meet, that he has just had a slight paralytic attack. His temper continues precisely in the state in which his misfortunes left it.

The Reverend Michael Doody has been presented to one of the comfortable livings in the gift of the Roydon Vernons. He is a good deal sobered, and has lost something of his wild spirits and eccentricities. But his energy and good-nature are unabated. It is said that he has cast eyes of affection on a niece of Mr. Puntles. But of this I have heard only as rumour, and must, therefore, speak with reserve.

Vivian and Ethel are as happy as any two people, except perhaps Charles Marston, now Lord Warhampton, and his good and beautiful young wife, can be. Charles and Maud have, indeed, little on earth to desire, for an heir is born to the title of Warhampton, and that heir is not without merry little companions in the nursery. Maximilla almost lives with her old friend Maud, and over the gateway of Warhampton stands, in well-chiselled relief, the time-honoured device of

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BOOK II.

CHAPTER II. A REVELATION.

In an old-fashioned terrace of high houses, leading off one of the principal thoroughfares of Springside, and approached oddly enough, first by a flight of crooked steps, and then by a narrow winding path, dwelt Mrs. Pickering, of whom Captain Cleethorpe had so much to say, and who has been erst known to the readers of this story as Madge Pierrepont.

In the three years which have elapsed since we last caught sight of her, she has materially improved in appearance. The rest and ease, the freedom from professional annoyances and private worry, the soft, bright, health-giving atmosphere, have had their invariably good effect, and her cheek is plumper, her eyes brighter, her figure more erect, and her footstep more light, than they have been since the days of her childhood. When she rose convalescent from the illness which attacked her on her first arrival at Springside, Madge felt that a vast amount of not merely bodily, but mental disorder, which had long been hanging around her, had passed away. Gone was that fever of expectation, gone that "restless unsatisfied longing." No longer had she to dread the arrival of bad news, no longer to await, with trembling anxiety, the caprices of a man, who, while his affection for her had departed, still possessed the right of disposing of her time and talent to suit his own purpose.

So far at least Philip Vane had kept his word. Whether by design or accident,

telegraph clerk, nor in the governess, leading a peaceful hum-drum life with her little charge, would he ever have dreamt of looking for the popular actress), he had never crossed her path. In the beneficent course of time, the early days of her married life seemed to have almost faded out from her memory, while of the later days she thought no more than as reminiscences of an ugly dream, which, from time to time, would obtrude itself upon her, only to render her, if possible, more grateful for the peaceful quiet which she then enjoyed.

Nor was Madge's tranquil life clouded by a doubt as to the wisdom of her conduct in regard to Gerald Hardinge. Whatever might have been the feelings which had animated her during that brief season, when stung by Philip's scorn, and touched by Gerald's devotion, she had hesitated what course to pursue, they were quite gone ere the doctor pronounced her to be convalescent, and she knew herself to be once more in her right mind. Closely shutting out from mental retrospection any thought of occurrences in which Philip Vane had borne a part, she yet longed occasionally to linger over the memory of her final interview with Gerald, and even over the details of that night of agony, when she had renounced all hope of ever being anything to him, perhaps of ever seeing him again. For by that renunciation she had done her duty, and was she not now reaping her reward? No trace of that passion, which, as she acknowledged to herself, she had entertained for him during those agonising hours of doubt, now remained! She could think of him—she did think of him often—with womanly tenderness and regard, so pure that the whole world might have known of it! She

see his wife—for he ~~would~~ have a wife by this time, Madge thought—she should like him to think well of her, as an old friend; to think well of her, and as a friend, but nothing more.

It is the morning after the arrival of Captain Norman at his old friend's quarters, and Madge is seated at her little table in the window looking down upon the flagged terrace-walk, with the green railings in front. Before her is her little, old-fashioned, brass-bound writing-desk, with the blotting-book lying open upon it, and on that again a little almanack, which she has been consulting. She has somewhat more colour in her cheeks than in the days when we first knew her; but there is the same bright, frank, earnest look in the eyes, and the long brown hair is as luxuriant as ever.

"Just three years ago," she said to herself, referring again to the almanack, "just three years since I fled from Wexeter, and was directed, providentially as it seems now, to this place. By that act I seem to have closed and clasped as it were the first book of my life, shutting in with it certain figures; which so far as I am concerned will, in all human probability, never appear again. There, entombed as I may say, for he is in every sense dead to me, is my husband, Philip Vane! His ghost never haunts my memory, and the only material thing I have to remind me of him is this."

As she spoke she took up a small leather-note-case from the desk and looked at it contemptuously. "This note-case, which he must have left behind him on some occasion, and which contains a few cards, with his club address upon them; a strip of paper containing an odd jumble of alphabetical letters, and some betting memoranda. Why do I keep these any longer, I wonder? Better destroy them and—no!" she said, putting the papers back into the case, and shutting the case itself into the desk, "let them remain where they are; I have kept them so long that I may leave them there now, without any fear of their influencing me in favour of their late owner. To that book, too, belongs Gerald Hardinge, to whose dark blue eyes and chestnut hair this photograph—how well I recollect the day he gave it me!—does nothing like justice! And for the matter of that, to that belongs Margaret Pierpoint, and every troubled incident of her life! What a peaceful career has Mrs. Pickering's been, and how grateful ought she to be for it!"

She was interrupted by the entrance of the servant with a letter.

"From Home," she said to herself, as soon as the girl had gone. "It is only two days ago that I heard from her. What can have induced her, usually so chary of her correspondence, to write again so soon? There can be nothing wrong with her I trust."

She opened the letter, and read as follows:

DEAREST MADGE,—You will be surprised to hear from me again so quickly, and will imagine, either that I have taken seriously to heart the scoldings which you have so frequently given me for being so bad a correspondent, or that something is the matter. I am glad to say that the latter is certainly not the case, and I am afraid I cannot take credit for the former; but I have a piece of news for you which I cannot resist sending to you at once. This morning, on my way to the office, whom should I meet but Mr. Gerald Hardinge, looking very well, and oh, Madge, so wonderfully handsome! He was very well-dressed too, had beautiful boots and gloves, and looked what they call, quite a swell. Don't you recollect, in the old days at Wexeter, you used to say that you thought he belonged to some good family? I am sure you would have thought so if you had seen him to-day; perhaps he has been taken up and properly recognised by them?"

He hardly knew me at first, and would have passed by me without speaking, but I gave such a start. It was very rude, I know, but I could not help it, Madge; and he noticed it and half stopped, and then I spoke to him by his name. He recollected me at once, then declared I had almost grown out of knowledge. He said that I always looked so delicate at Wexeter, that he never thought I should have lived, but that there was no harm in telling me that now, as, from my present appearance, there was no fear of my premature dissolution. He was very kind, and asked me all about myself, what I was doing, and where I lived—in a nice way, don't you know, Madge, without the smallest sign of *arrière pensée* about it? And he laughed when I told him about the telegraph office, and said he remembered what active fingers I used to have in the old days, when he gave me those drawing lessons. He laughed much more when I asked him whether he was at any London theatre; he could not

understand at first what I meant. When I told him that I meant as a scene-painter, he positively shouted with delight, although he was in the open street, and there were people passing all round. So then he said "no," and laughed again as he added that he had come into his property; and when I said that I hoped that had not made him give up painting altogether, he said, "he did a little now and then, but only for amusement." I have heard since, from one of our young ladies, who is very fond of art, that there were two pictures in the Exhibition this last season by Mr. Hardinge, which were very highly thought of.

Wasn't it odd, Madge, that he never once asked after you, never even mentioned your name, until I told him that Mrs. Bland was taking care of me, and then he asked where you were? I did not tell him, Madge, as you had made me promise never to tell any one, but said, in a general sort of way, that you were not living in London, said you had left the theatrical profession, and he then asked me if you were married. I did not know what to say, Madge, for that was a contingency we had never provided for, and Mr. Hardinge looked so hard at me while he spoke, that I grew confused, and stammered and stammered before. I eventually said "yes." I hope I did right, Madge, but I had no time for reflection; and as I am only partially in your confidence, not knowing your reasons for representing yourself as a widow, I could only act to the best of my ability. I thought Mr. Hardinge turned rather white when I told him, and then he slightly shrugged his shoulders, and changed the subject.

He was very kind, Madge, very kind, indeed, and all in such a nice way! He asked me if I were still fond of drawing, and when I told him that I had given it up, almost from want of time, and that my principal amusement was reading, he said that he had plenty of books, which he should be pleased to lend to me. "I will send my servant with them," he said; "I will not come myself, so that neither Mrs. Bland nor Mrs. Grundy shall be scandalised, or, better still," he added, "there is a dear old lady, who is a great friend of mine—she is rather out of health just now, but as soon as she is a little better she shall call upon you and bring them to you. I should like her to know you, Rose, and I am sure she would take a fancy to you." It was so odd to hear him call me Rose, just as he did in the old times when I was a child.

Write to me, Madge, dear, and tell me what you think of all this. I have just read over what I have written, and find it does not at all give you the notion which I wished to convey of Mr. Hardinge's niceness and kindness, of the total freedom of his manner from anything like either patronage or familiarity. Without feeling that, you may think I did wrong in telling where I lived; but I am sure that if—you—there I cannot explain what I mean, but you will understand me.

Your loving
Rose.

P.S. Your letter just arrived about the offer of the old Indian general. I hope you intend to say "yes."

"Poor Rose," murmured Madge, as she laid down the letter; "yes, you did perfectly right, dear; you could not have done better if I had taken you wholly into my confidence, as you seem to think I ought to have done. What she told him," continued Madge, musing, "will be simply a corroboration of what I had stated in my letter to him, written on that eventful night. Turned white did he? Poor Gerald, I cannot understand that. He must surely have expected it. I have thought of him as married often enough; but I was his first love, I fancy, and that I suppose makes all the difference. Strange that I should hear this news of him just now, when I had been so recently thinking of him, and when another change in my life seems imminent."

Glancing through the letter again, she continued: "Oh, yes, I perfectly understand what Rose thinks she has failed to express. Who could understand better than I the gentleness of his manner? Who could so well appreciate the real nobility of his character? I have often thought, were I in trouble or distress, there is no one to whom I would so readily appeal; now, I mean, when the lapse of time would render impossible any misinterpretation of the nature of the application. Not married! He cannot be married, or Rose would have stated so plainly in so many words. But who can this old lady be, who is going to call upon Rose, and take an interest in her?"

"Well-dressed, and happy-looking, and only practising his art for his amusement! My old idea, then, the idea upon which Philip Vane used to harp so much, was the right one; Gerald's appearance in our theatrical circle at Wexeter was purely acci-

dental. He was well-born and well-bred, had had some quarrel with his friends, and actuated by boyish, high-spirited impulse, had run away from them, and was sowing his wild oats in a different fashion to that usually followed by young fellows of his class. Now he has returned home again, has been received by his people, and resumed his proper position. Would they," said Madge, with a sad smile, "would they so gladly have welcomed the return of the prodigal, if he had brought back with him as his wife a stage-player, somewhat older than himself, whose family and whose antecedents were alike unknown? I think not. If I had ever for an instant been doubtful of the wisdom of the decision which I then made, the news thus brought would have settled it! Just and merciful to us both was that decision; merciful more especially to him, though bitterly hard to bear at the time, and Gerald, as it would seem from Rose's innocent account of his behaviour at the news, even now scarcely acquiesces in it. Come in!"

These last words were spoken in answer to a knock at the door.

Enter Captain Cleethorpe, carefully dressed, as befits a man particular about his appearance, who is going to call upon a pretty woman, and with his best manner, which is frank without being careless, and familiar without being impertinent.

"Good morning, Mrs. Pickering. Don't let me disturb you," he adds, waving his cane jauntily, and pointing to the letter, which Madge still holds in her hand.

"You don't disturb me in the least, Captain Cleethorpe," replied Madge; "I have already read this letter twice through."

"The writer ought to be proud to command so much of Mrs. Pickering's time and attention," said Captain Cleethorpe, with old-fashioned gallantry.

"The writer is an acquaintance of yours, my sister."

"What, pretty Miss Rose; and how is she getting on among the dials and discs, and all the wonderful telegraphic apparatus in London?"

"She is very well, and writes in excellent spirits."

"That's right; she was far too clever to waste her life in a dull provincial town."

"That's scarcely complimentary to present company, is it, Captain Cleethorpe?" said Madge, with a smile.

"My dear Mrs. Pickering, your duties lay in a different sphere, one which, in my opinion, is more important and more re-

sponsible than your sister's. How wonderfully it has all turned out! There is no other woman in the world whom Mr. Drage would have intrusted with the charge of his little child; there is no other woman, of my acquaintance, whom I would conscientiously recommend to Sir Geoffrey Heriot to fill the position about which I spoke to you the other day."

"You are very kind, Captain Cleethorpe," said Madge.

"No, I am only very frank," said the captain; "and, by the way, I want your definite reply to my proposal. I ought to write to-night, or to-morrow the latest."

"I am afraid I must ask you to give me till to-morrow; my own feeling is strongly to say yes, but I have not yet seen Mr. Drage since his return, and I am so much indebted to him that I should not think of deciding upon such an important matter without his advice and approval."

"Not yet seen Mr. Drage?" said Cleethorpe; "that's strange, he was at the Bungalow last night, when we talked the matter fully out. To be sure," he said, after a minute's consideration, "I recollect I was the only person who spoke, and Captain Norman, a friend of mine, who is staying with me, joined in the conversation, so that I did not think the padre had any opportunity of definitely expressing his opinion."

"He sent me a line saying that he would call upon me this morning, so that I shall be sure to see him."

"And within the next five minutes," said Cleethorpe, who was standing by the window, "for there he is, crossing the road, and just about to mount the steps; there is no mistaking his figure anywhere. I will not intrude upon you any longer, Mrs. Pickering, but will call upon you to-morrow morning, about this time, for your final decision; now adieu."

And Captain Cleethorpe took Mrs. Pickering's hand, bent over it, and disappeared.

From the window Madge saw the meeting between her late visitor and Mr. Drage. The latter had his back towards her, but Madge noticed him make an affirmative motion with his head as the captain pointed towards her house. Then she moved away, and shortly afterwards she heard the well-known, painfully slow foot-step, and hard hacking cough, echo on the staircase outside.

Then came a knock at the door, followed immediately by Mr. Drage's entrance. A tall, thin man, Mr. Drage, with high shoulders and narrow chest. What little

hair he had was light in colour, and brushed off his high forehead. His features were clear cut and regular, but his grey eyes were deep sunken in his head, his close-shaven cheeks were hollow and wan, and he endeavoured in vain to hide with his long lean hand the nervous twitching of his thin dry lips. He was dressed in severest clerical costume, all in black, and, in lieu of neckcloth or collar, wore a clear-starched muslin band round his throat. A fine head his, of the ascetic intellectual type, wanting but the tonsure and the cowl to complete its outward resemblance to one of those zealot monks, whom Domenichino loved to paint. And assuredly in no monk was ever to be found a greater combination of selflessness, humility, and zeal, than animated the sickly frame of Onesiphorus Drage!

A bright hectic spot rose on either cheek as Madge advanced to greet him. "I am so glad to see you back again, Mr. Drage," she said, giving him her hand; "you have been away a long time, but your health is much improved, I trust?"

"I am better, much better," said Mr. Drage, after a pause; "but those steps outside, and the steep bank, are a little trying to me. I have breath enough left, however, dear Mrs. Pickering, to thank you for the care you have taken of little Bertha during my absence, and the wonderful improvement you have effected in her."

They were seated by this time, she in the chair she had been occupying by the table in the window, he facing her at a little distance.

"Bertha is an apt pupil, and a very good child," said Madge, with some little constraint, as though the subject just introduced would probably lead to discussion which she was desirous of avoiding. "You arrived the night before last, Mr. Drage?"

"Yes, I fully intended calling on you yesterday, but I was a little overcome with fatigue after my journey; and, besides, I found a letter from Captain Cleethorpe awaiting me, a letter which affected you, and demanded a certain amount of deliberation on my part."

Rocks a-head showing themselves again, and now scarcely any chance of steering away from them!

"From Captain Cleethorpe?" repeated Madge; "oh, yes."

"In it Captain Cleethorpe informed me—addressing me, he was pleased to say, and rightly, as one who had a particular interest in your welfare—that he had just

submitted to you a proposition, which he thought it would be greatly for your advantage to accept. You follow me?" asked Mr. Drage, looking at her earnestly, and nervously passing his hand across his brow.

"Oh, yes," said Madge, "it is quite correct. I heard from Captain Cleethorpe some days since."

"Exactly," said Mr. Drage. "I did not quite understand the details of the proposed arrangement from Captain Cleethorpe's letter, and as it was an important matter to me"—the hectic spots flushed out on his cheek again, and he had to pause a moment before he continued—"as it was an important matter to me, I thought it better to see him and talk it out, before I came to you. Accordingly, I called upon him last night."

"Yes," said Madge, "so Captain Cleethorpe told me. He was here just now."

"Exactly. I met him outside. The proposition, as I understand it, Mrs. Pickering, is, that you should go as housekeeper to some friend of Captain Cleethorpe's—a retired officer, who is about to settle in this neighbourhood?"

"That is so."

"And you have promised to let Captain Cleethorpe know your final decision by to-night or to-morrow morning?"

"I have."

There was a pause for a few minutes, and then Mr. Drage said, with hesitating voice and strange manner:

"It was very good of Captain Cleethorpe to ask my opinion on this question. It has given me a little time to think, and—not that I know that the blow would have been less fatal if it had come upon me un-awares. See," he said, rising to his feet, but bending over her as he leaned across the table at which she sat—"see," he said, speaking in a low tone, but very rapidly, "if you go from me, I die!"

Madge started, and looked up at him in affright. "You—you must not speak to me like that," she said.

"And why not," he continued, "when what I say to you is the truth? Ever since I have been away I have been pursued with this one same idea, the hope of making you my wife. I have striven against it, fought with it, but in vain. Each simple letter written by you, telling only of the child's doings and progress, has shown me how completely you were fitted to guide her in her future life, to cheer and comfort what remains to me of

mine. On every side I find, unsought, testimony to your goodness and your sweetness, in the affectionate regard with which all these with whom you are brought into contact openly speak of you. Mary, what I have to offer you is but little, indeed. My life, I know, is ebbing fast. Oh, that does not trouble me," he said, as she looked up, and involuntarily made a motion with her hand. "I have looked forward to my release for so long, that I do not know if, even with you for my companion, I should be glad of a reprieve. But I do know that the touch of your dear hand would nerve me better to bear what must be borne; the sound of your dear voice would soothe me in the anguish which is to be endured; the knowledge that I had left you as the legitimate protector of my child would comfort me when no other human comfort could avail. This is the only power of appeal I have; may I not make it to you now?"

"No, no! again I say no!"

"May I ask why?"

She paused a moment, and then said: "You know nothing of me, nor of my former life. Before I married I was—I was an actress."

He started back, and clutched the table tightly.

"An actress!" he repeated. "But you were good and virtuous, I am sure; you could not have been otherwise. Is there no other reason?"

"Yes," she said, very quietly, "there is. I will tell it you now, for after what you have said to me you deserve to know it, though when I lay on my death-bed, as you and I thought when you first knew me, I would never have suffered it to pass my lips. I am no widow, but a deserted wife. My husband is alive."

NEWS FROM THE CAMPS, 1778.

NINETY-THREE years ago, in the early summer time of 1778, there was a prodigious fuss in the English military world. The conduct of the war in America had given rise, in many quarters, to a vague, uneasy feeling that our army was not what it should be; that it was unsafe to rely, exclusively, upon the prestige of past successes—on the traditional glories of Minden and Quebec, of Belleisle, Louisburg, and the Havannah. Our officers were old-fashioned in their ideas, our soldiers wholly untrained in the duties of light troops, which were performed, as it were, instinc-

tively by their American opponents. Our tactics were slow and complicated compared with those of Prussia, which then, as now, was esteemed the model of military perfection. In the midst of these doubts and perplexities, arose the old wolf-cry of "the French are coming," and the spirit of the nation was thoroughly aroused. Additional regiments were raised; the militia was called out; large bodies of troops were ordered to be put under canvas in the southern and south-eastern districts; reviews and military displays were the order of the day. It has appeared to the writer of this paper that a few scraps of military intelligence—of "news from the camps"—selected from the public journals of this now forgotten time, might prove amusing and suggestive to readers of our own day.

It may be here observed that the practice of placing large bodies of troops in camps during the summer season, was more common in the early part of the seventeenth century than it has been of later years. Blackheath, and other open spaces around London, Barham Downs, near Canterbury, Shirley Common (Southampton), Salisbury Plain, and certain parts of the Isle of Wight, were the sites of large encampments during the reigns of the first and second Georges. Upon Coxheath, near Maidstone, lay twelve thousand men—guards, line, and artillery—of the Hanoverian army, during their brief sojourn in England, in the year 1756. At the same period, nine regiments and a train of artillery—in all nine thousand men—belonging to the army of the Elector of Hesse-Cassel, were under canvas about a mile from Winchester, upon the left of the Basingstoke road. Large encampments of English line troops were also formed at Sherborne, in Dorsetshire, and at Chatham. But as the British arms triumphed abroad, these demonstrations at home became less frequent, and at the peace of 1763, they were discontinued altogether. Hence the summer camps of 1778 were as much objects of public curiosity as are the "autumn manoeuvres" of to-day.

At the period of which we write—May, 1778—small encampments, of two to six regiments each, were formed, for the cavalry, at Bury St. Edmunds, Stowmarket, and Salisbury; and for the infantry—militia as well as regulars—at Chatham, Portsmouth, Winchester, and Plymouth. In addition to these, a corps of about fifteen thousand men, comprising a regiment of dragoons, six regiments of the line, fifteen of militia, and a train of artillery, under

command of a veteran officer, General Keppel, was encamped upon Coxheath, an open tract of country situated close to Maidstone, upon the right of the Faversham road, and commanding the road running through Ashford to the south coast; whilst another body of line and militia troops, numbering about nine thousand men, was posted on Warley Common, near Brentwood, in Essex, under command of a General Pierson. The movements of troops were comparatively slow in those days, and the ordinary channels of press intelligence few and restricted. It was some time before the camps were brought into working order, and longer still before intelligence was received from them with regularity by the London papers. At first, in the columns of the latter, we find only vague accounts of the severities of the duties and discipline in the camps—rumours of irregularities in which the rank and file were not the only culprits, of frequent desertions from the newly-formed militia corps, and of a good deal of corporal punishment. By degrees, affairs appear to have shaken down into better trim, and the accounts from the camps became more regular, and more specific in their details.

The following is a description of the encampment on Coxheath in the month of July, 1778.

The camp is situated to the south of, and nearly fronting, the village of Loose. It forms a straight line, upwards of three miles in length, and nearly half a mile in breadth. At the head of each regiment are two field-pieces, with three ammunition waggons. The head of each militia corps is also marked by a silken flag bearing the county arms. The sergeants' tents are in front of each regiment; the privates' in lines forming streets; and the officers' marquees in the centre. In each tent are two sergeants, or two corporals and two drummers, or five privates. They are supplied with good clean straw to lie on. In rear of each regiment is an earthen building for cooking purposes, and for stabling the artillery and sutlers' horses. In the distance are a number of dirt hovels for the soldiers' wives "to wash and lie in." Several inn and tavern-keepers have mess-huts for the officers close to the camp. Pickets are mounted night and day as in front of the enemy. There are two parades daily—morning and evening—and divine service for all the troops is performed in the open air on Sundays. Camp "shaves" appear to have abounded, the most common being

an approaching visit from the king, and a removal of the camp to the coast. There were frequent councils of war in the general's tent, consequent upon the arrivals of mounted expresses from London, which must have been sorely tantalising to "our correspondents," inasmuch as they are invariably obliged to confess their utter inability to discover what transpired on these occasions. We also learn that officers' working-parties, relieved weekly, were engaged in improving the roads between Coxheath and Chatham, and between Tilbury Fort and Warley, so as to bring the camps within two days' easy march of each other. Good beef and mutton were selling at Coxheath at fourpence per pound; bacon, sixpence; Cheshire cheese, fourpence; fresh butter, eightpence per pound; peas and beans at twopence per peck. There is no fresh water within a mile of the camp, so that all the water required for use is fetched in tin camp-kettles.

Respecting the Essex camp, we are told that the objections often urged against holiday-camps, to wit, that they are scenes of idleness and dissipation, are not applicable to Warley. The men rise at five A.M., and are often under arms until noon. When there is no evening parade, they are employed during the remainder of the day in clearing the common, hitherto a mass of almost impenetrable furze.

A correspondent sends an account of a trip to Warley. He describes the road from London as thronged with holiday-seekers, all of them, like true Londoners, displaying a keenly appreciative enjoyment of the combined delights of an outing and an anticipated military show. All the wayside inns were crowded with travellers, doing ample justice to the liberal supplies of cold provisions prepared for them. The proximity of the camp could be detected at a distance of several miles by the abundance of newly-washed linen lying out to dry, giving to the neighbouring country the appearance of a vast bleaching-field.

The camp, we are told, is situated upon a slope, and the prospect which it affords is delightful beyond description. It is laid out in three divisions, or separate camps, and between these and around the whole are huts for the soldiers' wives. These huts form streets, which are all named—Queen-street, Pye-corner, Gloucester-lane, and the like. The number of public-houses is incredible; there cannot be less than one hundred and fifty of them. The soldiers' tents are ranged in rows, with

the officers' marquees in the centre. Each marquee is surrounded by a small ditch, about a foot deep, a few yards distant from the walls. The spaces between the walls of the marquees and the ditches are turned into little pleasure-gardens, with serpentine gravel-walks. On the borders of the camp are mud huts serving as coffee-houses, where the London papers are taken in. As much as a guinea a day is paid as rent for some of these huts. Hawkers cry beans, peas-pudding, hot pies, and the like, about the streets of the camp. Our correspondent was surprised to find the soldiers so well fed. He saw over three hundred of them in different parts of the camp, cooking good beef in gipsy fashion. But of all the curiosities on the common he considered the monstrous size of the ladies' head-dresses the greatest. He observed one lady who was unable to enter a tent. "How the devil should she?" gallantly quoth a gentleman standing by; "her head is as big as a marquee!"

Upon the whole, our correspondent thought that the camp was a sight "which could not but warm the heart of an Englishman who felt for the honour of his insulted country."

Amongst other items of Warley intelligence we find that the Twenty-fifth Foot is the smartest regiment in camp, but that the Liverpool Blues* are a very complete corps, considering the short time they have been formed.

Visitors to the camp are very numerous on Sundays. Upon one of these occasions there were over one hundred and seventy vehicles of different descriptions upon the ground at one time. Drafts of recruits arrive for the militia; the substitutes amongst them are receiving twelve to twenty guineas apiece. In proof that the militia service is not unpopular, we are told that the greater part of the men who have completed their militia engagements have voluntarily joined the regulars, upon condition of receiving their discharge therefrom at the expiration of three years. Jean Delafosse and his wife, camp sutlers, are committed to jail for seducing two soldiers of the Liverpool Blues to enter the service of the King of France. No fewer than four Jews are apprehended by the soldiers in one day, attempting to introduce counterfeit coin to the camp. As there is no

* The Seventy-ninth Royal Liverpool Regiment of Foot, disbanded in 1784. The present Seventy-ninth—the gallant Cameron Highlanders—was not formed until 1793.

legal punishment for having such money on their persons only, the general orders the coin to be cut and defaced, and the possessors to be marched out of camp under escort, with the drums beating the Rogues' March.

The subaltern officers in the camps petition the king for an increase of their field allowance. His majesty expresses his desire to do all he can for them. "Some think the king can grant it by the exercise of the royal prerogative; others assert, and, indeed, 'tis more likely, that the assent of parliament will be needed."

In the month of September we learn that out of eight thousand four hundred and thirty-four men in camp, only eighty-four were in hospital. Since the formation of the camp, in May, six hundred cases—most of them from the militia—had been treated in hospital. Out of these there had been eighteen deaths.

Beef and mutton are selling at three-halfpence to threepence a pound—very prime bits at threepence a pound. Vegetables are proportionately cheap. This was in September.

From Coxheath we hear of an attempted improvement in old Brown Bess, which appears to have escaped the notice of military chroniclers. On Sunday, August the 25th, a general inspection of arms and accoutrements took place before divine service. The grenadiers and light infantry had just received new accoutrements, of the pattern issued to the newly-formed light companies of the militia. "The duty of the light infantry," we read, "being very heavy and fatiguing, and requiring the greatest alertness and expedition, which long arms often retard, has occasioned this exchange. The new arms are light and short, and peculiarly adapted for the men's ease and the good of the service. They will do execution at a great distance." We also learn that each regiment of regulars in the camp has a target in front of its parade-ground, at which the soldiers practise with ball, morning and evening, small pecuniary rewards being given to the best shots.

On September the 4th there arrived in camp large quantities of hay, straw, and corn for the use of the cavalry, which had previously been reduced to one-eighth of their proper allowance. Our correspondent appears specially desirous to impress upon the public that "this arose from real scarcity, and not from any artifice on the part of the contractor or the commander-in-chief as has been reported."

Then we hear of sundry field-days, at which the troops are under arms from five A.M. until noon, and fire twenty to thirty rounds of blank ammunition per man. Many "new and grand" manœuvres are performed on these occasions, including the storming and defence of a fascine-battery thrown up by the train of artillery. Some foreigners are arrested in camp and committed to Maidstone Jail, on suspicion of being French spies. The Custom House authorities make a seizure of about four hundred pounds' worth of "run" goods, in a sutler's hut in camp. A soldier of the artillery train receives five hundred lashes for "robbing Farmer Johnson's hen-roost." We have also occasional intelligence of men undergoing one hundred or one hundred and fifty lashes for drunkenness on duty; but it is observable that corporal punishment would seem to have been much less frequently inflicted than is consonant with popular ideas respecting this period of our military history, and that complaints against the soldiers by the farmers and country people were rare. About this time a couple of events appear to have given ample employment to the gossips in camp. One of these was a duel between two officers of foot, in which one of them was desperately wounded. The officers, together with their seconds and two officers' servants concerned in the affair, are all to be tried by general court-martial, we are told, and "'tis thought they will be dismissed the king's service." The other event was the trial for desertion of one Bryan Sheridan and three other soldiers—two of them corporals. Sheridan was sentenced to be shot, and the three others to receive "one thousand lashes apiece with the cat-o'-nine-tails on their bare backs." The latter underwent a part of their punishment immediately, and were then removed to hospital until the doctors should certify their fitness to receive another instalment. Sheridan was given a week to prepare himself for death, and the chaplain of his regiment was ordered to attend him three times a day, or oftener should he desire it. September the 21st was the date fixed for carrying into execution the sentence of death. At an early hour on that day, the dragoons and two battalions of infantry, made up of the pickets of all the regiments of foot in camp, paraded in front of a small wood in the vicinity—probably that now bearing the appropriate name of Fright Wood on the county maps. A procession composed as follows: Ten pioneers, a field-officer, a company of grena-

diers, the provost-marshal on horseback, a chaplain on horseback, the prisoner, a firing-party of six men, a cart to carry off the body, with the prisoner's regiment bringing up the rear: quitted the camp, marched down the parade, and halted opposite the centre. The prisoner was placed upon his knees, with his back to the wood, a white cap was drawn over his face, and he continued some short time in prayer with the chaplain.

While the prisoner was thus engaged, General Keppel arrived on the ground, and announced a reprieve in the following words: "Private Bryan Sheridan, of the —th Regiment of Foot, having been convicted by a general court-martial of the crime of desertion, has been sentenced to be shot to death; but his majesty has been graciously pleased to pardon him, upon condition that he transport himself, as soon as possible, to Senegal, there to serve his majesty for the remainder of his life." The prisoner, who had behaved with great fortitude, immediately fell down on his knees, and returned thanks. He was then handed over to the provost-marshal, and the troops marched back to camp. "The whole scene was awful, yet pleasing," our correspondent says, and he hopes that "the procession will have a good effect upon the troops."

In another letter we learn that "the general hospital for the camp (Coxheath) is nearly a mile from Maidstone, and upon the left of the main road. It is replete with every happy convenience for the purpose, good water, a large garden, and a commodious bath for men whose disorders require the practice of bathing. The hospital is attended by two eminent physicians, two house-surgeons, apothecaries, &c. A proper supply of matrons, nurses, and other attendants, is likewise provided. The former, the matrons, are supplied chiefly from the wives of the sergeants; the latter from those of the private men. These women, whose whole lives probably have been spent in camp, and whose husbands are now there, must have a peculiar tenderness for the sick soldier, and are the properest nurses the general could have selected."

The next piece of intelligence shows that the delinquencies of the milkman were not quite unknown ninety years ago. "It having been reported to General Keppel that the milk supplied by the contractor to the hospital was not only bad, but actually detrimental to the recovery of the patients,

the general at once directed that a number of the best milch cows should be purchased, and pasturage taken for them near the hospital garden. He then sent for the contractor, and dissolved the contract." On another occasion the general threatens to make "a publick example" of the contractor if the offence of supplying bad bread to the troops be repeated. Complaints of the badness of the bread would appear to have been common in all the camps, although wheat was selling in London market at thirty-six shillings to forty-two shillings the quarter, all through the summer.

In September the king and queen reviewed the troops—six regiments of militia—in Winchester camp. The scene is quaintly described by a correspondent as "heavenly;" "the militia were all in their new cloaths, and over seventy thousand loyal spectators on the ground." The royal party travelled in chaises and four, accompanied by an extensive retinue of beef-eaters, gentlemen-at-arms (or gentlemen pensioners, as they were then called), and the like, and escorted by a troop of Horse Grenadier Guards. How the beefeaters and pensioners were conveyed, we know not; but it would seem that the royal baggage-train was not cumbersome, for Mrs. Harris assures us, in one of her lively letters, that on the occasion of the Winchester visit the queen had only two maids with her, and that the trio, to wit, her majesty and the two abigails, had but one trunk between them, although the absence of the party from home extended over a week. Earlier in the month a similar progress had been made to Warley, where there was a grand sham fight. The king afterwards held a levee in the open air, at the foot of the royal standard, in the midst of a square of Horse Grenadiers.

The royal visit to Coxheath did not take place until November the 3rd. The royal party arrived in the afternoon, and the review immediately commenced in the presence, our correspondent writes in italics, "of thirty thousand affectionate and loyal subjects." The king, in his royal regimentals, mounted upon a magnificent roan charger, richly ornamented with purple and orange-coloured ribbons, rode bare-headed down the line, followed by the queen, in her royal regimentals—a scarlet pelisse, faced with blue, and a black hat turned up with a plume of feathers, and an immense black cockade—in a chaise and four, escorted by the Horse Grenadiers, and,

as no allusion is made to keeping the ground, accompanied, we presume, by the affectionate and loyal subjects aforesaid. On arriving at the left of the first line, the king put on his hat, and the cortège wheeled to the left, and proceeded along the front of the second line, and afterwards up the front of a third composed of grenadier and light infantry companies only. The royal party then returned to the front, and the troops "exhibited many excellent manoeuvres, which gave great satisfaction to the king." At three-thirty P.M. his majesty signified his intention of quitting the field. The troops accordingly formed up, and fired a feu-de-joie, which concluded the proceedings. The king afterwards held a levee in camp, and the royal party proceeded to Leeds Castle to spend the night, the state of the season rendering it undesirable for them to sleep in camp.

Shortly afterwards all the camps were broken up, and the troops went into winter quarters.

At Coxheath, with a force varying at different periods, from twelve thousand to fifteen thousand men, there had been, we are told, from the middle of May to the 1st of November, eighteen hundred and three admissions to hospital. Of these, fourteen hundred and ninety-six had been discharged cured, thirty-eight had died, and twenty-nine deserted. There remained two hundred and forty patients; all of whom, it was expected, would soon be fit for duty.

LOVE-MAKING IN THE TROPICS.

I AM in love. The object of my affection is a creole beauty, who lives in the heart of sunny Cuba. She has the blackest of bright eyes, a profusion of dark, frizzled hair, with eyebrows and lashes to match. It is universally admitted that the complexion of my innamorata is fair for a daughter of the tropics, but truth compels me to state that in one sense Cachita is not so white as she is painted. During the day she plasters her delicate skin with cascarilla: a chalky composition of powdered egg-shell and rum. This she applies without the least regard for effect, after the manner of other Cuban ladies, who have a theory that whitewash is a protection against the sun, and a check to unbecoming perspiration. Towards the cool of the evening, however, my Cachita divests herself of her calcareous mask, and appears in all her native bloom.

We meet, according to custom, at a window of Cachita's parental residence, which is admirably adapted for purposes of wooing, being wide, lofty, and within easy reach from the street. Cuban windows are guiltless of glass, but anything like elopement from within, or burglary from without, is effectually provided against by means of strong iron bars, placed wide enough apart, however, to admit the arm and shoulder of a Pyramus on the pavement, or the yielding face of a Thisbe on the other side. An open engagement in Cuba has many disadvantages which an open-air engagement has not. Seated in an uncongenial arm-chair, the conventional lover may enjoy the society of his betrothed any hour of the day or evening, but he may not meet her by gaslight alone, nor may he exhibit his passion in a demonstrative manner, save in the presence of others. Warned by these objections, Cachita and I have agreed to keep our own counsel, and court in this *al fresco* way. Besides, it is the Cuban custom for a lady to sit before her window, in the cool of the evening, and converse with a passing acquaintance, without infringing the rules of propriety.

Cachita's parents are in the *comedor* taking their early supper of thick chocolate and new milk rolls. Doña Belen is a corpulent lady, with a couple of last century side-curls, and a round, good-natured face. Don Severiano is a wealthy sugar planter, and a short, shrivelled old gentleman, with a sallow countenance, closely shaved like a priest's, and a collar and cravat of the latest fashion. These worthy people are at present ignorant of their daughter's attachment, and we have agreed not to enlighten them, because their opinions respecting matrimony differ. Doña Belen is easily won if a suitor to her daughter's hand can prove his genuine white origin, while Don Severiano has an extreme partiality for gentlemen with coffee plantations, sugar estates, or tobacco farms.

The Spanish language is an agreeable medium for expressing the tender passion; creole Spanish is even more suited to such a purpose, being full of endearing epithets and affectionate diminutives. I am not obliged to address my lover by her simple name of Caridad; I may call her Caridacita, Cachita, Cachona, Concha, or Conchita, and be perfectly grammatical, and at the same time fond. The same romantic language enables me to use such pretty epithets as "Mi mulatica" (my little mulatto girl), "Mi Chinita" (my little

Chinawoman), "Mi negrita" (my pretty negress), "Hija de mi alma!" (child of my soul). Our conversation is carried on in epigrammatic phrases. I need not waste words by making the long-winded inquiry, "Do you love me?" It is sufficient to ask simply, "Me quieres?" And when Cachita tells me, in reply, that her love for me may be compared to her fondness for her mother's precious bones (*Te quiero mas que á los huesitos de mi mamá*), I appreciate the statement, though I know it is only a figure of speech peculiar to her countrywomen.

"Mi corazoncito," says Cachita, fondly, "I fear that your visits here must be suspended for the present."

"Why so, mi vida?"

"Papacito (Don Severiano) suspects something. His friend, Señor Catusus, who passes here every evening, has seen us converse at the window more frequently than custom allows, and he has mentioned it to papacito."

Old Catusus has a son whom Don Severiano employs, and I fancy that his interest in Cachita's welfare is not purely disinterested.

"Young Amador is a frequent visitor at your father's house?"

"He comes with others in the evening sometimes."

"He danced three times with you at the Piñata ball, and he walks with you on Sunday evenings in the Plaza de Armas, where the military band plays."

"You are not jealous?"

"N—no; I am only afraid lest young Amador admires you too much."

"What of that?"

"Don Catusus has a large coffee plantation, and you know what a partiality your father has for sons of wealthy planters."

"Are you angry?"

"No, I am not angry, mi tojosita."

"Me quieres mucho?"

"Muchísimo, pichona mia. Deme un beso."

"Before giving you one, you must promise two things."

"What are they?"

"That you will not be jealous, and that you will go no more to the Pica-pica balls."

"I have been only once this season, mi vidita."

"My black maid Gumersinda was there, and she says that you danced all night with the mulattoes."

"I was practising the difficult step of La Danza Criolla."

"It is danced very improperly by the coloured people at the Pica-pica."

"Many of my white acquaintances go to these balls, and I am only following their custom and that of the country."

"Promise not to go again this season."

"I promise; so deme un beso."

Cachita inserts her soft face between the obliging bars of the huge window, and as nobody is passing at that moment, I take an affectionate leave of my "Piedra."

My interviews with Cachita at her window become rare on account of Don Severiano's suspicions, and as Cuban ladies of all ages never leave their homes to visit their next-door neighbour without a trusty escort, I have no other opportunity for an uninterrupted tête-à-tête. Occasionally I meet my lover at early mass in one of the churches, or at the musical promenade in the public square, but on these occasions she is always accompanied by a friend or a relative, and a couple of black attendants.

On the approach of Cachita's saint's day, Santa Caridad, I favour my divinity with a little midnight music. Those of my friends whose lovers are called Caridad, join me in hiring a few musicians and a couple of vocalists. When our minstrels have performed their first melody, the sereno, or night-watchman, appears, and demands to see our serenade license, because, out of the carnival season, no serenading is allowed without a special permit from the authorities. After duly exhibiting our license the music proceeds, and when a song, composed expressly for the lady we are serenading, has been sung, and a few more danzas have been played, a shutter of the grated window is seen to open, a white hand with a white handkerchief flutters approvingly between the iron bars, and a significant flower is offered for the acceptance of him whom it may most concern.

In the carnival season, and on certain fiestas, I visit my Caridad, in company with a dozen Pollo-friends (as the youth of Cuba are called), and we bring with us a full band of black musicians, bearing ordinary stringed instruments. Our visit is paid in broad daylight, but we are masked, and so disguised that paterfamilias cannot recognise his guests; he is, however, satisfied as regards our respectability, when one of our party privately reveals his name. At the inspiring tones of La Danza some lady neighbours flock to the scene, and follow us and our swarthy instrumentalists into our host's reception-room, which is entered direct from the

street by a huge door. Then a dance is extemporised. The fascinating step of La Danza Criolla lends itself to a little secret love-making, and with a partner like the graceful Cachita (to whom alone I disclose myself when my turn comes to visit her house), I feel in the seventh heaven! But dancing at twelve o'clock in the day, with a tropical sun blazing in at the windows and open doors, and a room full of excited dancers, merits some more substantial reward, and in the pauses of the danza our hospitable host invites us into his spacious comedor, where refreshments in the shape of champagne, English bottled ale, café noir, and dulces, are lavishly dispensed.

Report, which in Cuba travels like a tornado, and distorts like a convex mirror, poisons the mind of Cachita's parent, Don Severiano, and one sultry afternoon Cachita's black maid, Gumersinda, brings me a billet-doux from her young mistress, which fills me with alarm. Don Severiano knows all—more than all—and has resolved to separate us by removing Cachita to one of his sugar estates, eight leagues from town. For some weeks I hear nothing of my lover's whereabouts, but at last one of Don Severiano's black mule-drivers halts before my door. He tells me that Cachita and her family are staying at La Intimidad, a sugar estate; and after searching among his mule's complicated trappings, he produces a missive from his young mistress. Absence has affected Cachita, as it affects other ladies in love, and my fair creole expresses a desire to see me. Don Severiano will be leaving the estate for town on a certain day, and, if I am willing, a meeting may easily be effected. Saturnino, the mule-driver, who is in the secret, undertakes to guide me to the trysting-place. I accordingly obtain a fast-trotting steed, and follow him through the intricate country, which, after many hours' riding, brings us to the neighbourhood of La Intimidad. There my guide conducts me to a tumble-down negro hut, kept by a decrepit negress, and situated in the midst of a very paradise of banana-trees, plantains, palms, and gigantic ferns. The fare which my hostess provides consists of native fruits and vegetables, cooked in a variety of ways, together with bacalao (dried codfish), and tasajito, or salted meat, dried in the sun. After my fatiguing pilgrimage I refresh myself with a cigarette and a cup of well-made café negro; I bathe in spring water diluted with aguardiente rum, and exchange my soiled clothes of white drill for a fresh suit of the same

material. Towards the cool of the evening, as I sit smoking a long damp cigar before the door of my rustic habitation, the flapping of huge plantain-leaves, and the clatter of horses' hoofs, announce the approach of my charmer, who, escorted by the faithful Gumersinda, has come to visit me in my homely retreat. I assist Cachita in alighting from her steed, and in due course we are seated beneath the shade of an overhanging mango-tree, whose symmetrical leaves reach to the ground, and completely conceal us. We are disturbed by no other sounds than the singing of birds, the creaking of hollow bamboos, and the rippling of water. Under these pleasant circumstances we converse and make love to our hearts' content. The cautious Gumersinda warns us when the hour of separation arrives, and then we reluctantly part. Our agreeable tête-à-tête is repeated on the following day, but as Don Severiano is expected to return the day after, this is our last interview.

On my road back to town, whom should I meet, at a wayside tienda, but Cachita's formidable parent, together with his friend Señor Catusus, and my rival, the young Amador! Don Severiano is furious. High words pass between us, there is a scene, and I leave the cane-field proprietor swearing to punish everybody concerned in his daughter's secret engagement.

Some days after my return to town I learn that the black maid Gumersinda, and the mule-driver Saturnino, have suffered the penalty of slave law at the hands of their owner, who has sentenced them both to a severe flogging. Through the medium of a friend I receive a note from Cachita, to inform me that her father is determined to break off my engagement with his daughter by a more effectual separation than that which has been already attempted. "If you love me," the note concludes, "have me deposited without delay."

To deposit a young lady in Cuba is to have her legally transferred to the house of a trustworthy relative, or a respectable family. A legal document for her arrest is presented at the parental house, and if the young lady be of age, and willing to sign her assent, no opposition on the part of her parents will avail. If, at the expiration of the prescribed period, no reason is shown why the deposited damsel should not follow her own inclinations, the lover may release his precious pledge by marrying her at once.

In accordance with Cachita's desire I consult the nearest lawyer, from whom I

obtain a formal document, empowering me to deposit Cachita as soon as she shall have arrived at her town residence. I await the latter event with impatience, but days elapse, and the shutters of Don Severiano's habitation remain closed. I am soon relieved from my anxiety, but horrified to learn that Cachita has been removed from the sugar estate, and consigned to the tender care of nuns in the town convent. As my legal powers cannot penetrate that sanctum, I am compelled to await the natural course of events. Cachita is destined to pass six long months within the convent walls, during which time Don Severiano confidently hopes that solitary confinement and holy teaching will have a beneficial effect upon Cachita's mind. Should this prove otherwise, the period for her incarceration will be prolonged, until the fire of her young affections shall have been completely quenched.

IN A STRANGE COUNTRY.

At gloaming hour to a tower I rode
In a strange country;
A maiden fair from a proud abode
Looked out on me.

I stood and look'd in her dreamy eyes,
Her eyes sank down:
Dark and blue grew the silent skies
Over the town.

She shone at the window of her bower
In her golden hair,
I loved her then, it was love's own hour,
And she looked so fair!

To my cithern sweet, under the moon,
Full low sang I,
And the maid leant out to drink the dew
With a gentle sigh.

Dark and damp was the sky that night
As I sang my love;
She reached me out her hand so white
From her bower above.

In her lily hand I set a rose
With a kiss so wild.
I saw the casement slowly close
While she stood and smiled.

Three days and nights to the self-same place
In the strange country,
I wander'd and look'd for the maiden's face,
But no more came she.

The third day when I thither came
In the sunset light,
The sun through the casement cast its flame
Upon something white.

Then my heart leap'd up, and my cithern play'd
For happiness,
But ah! 'twas not my lily-white maid,
But a long cold dress.

Three days and nights to the self-same place
In the strange country,
I wander'd and look'd for the maiden's face,
But no more came she.

The third night when I thither came,
On the same sad track,
The lamp in the doorway cast its flame
Upon something black.

I drew my cloak across my face,
And my soul sank down,
They bore a coffin from the place
With a maiden crown.

I followed behind, with brain half mad,
The men that bare;
To a church they carried the coffin sad,
And left it there.

I stood in the shadow of a tomb
With hooded head,
And I saw through the painted window's gloom
The moon blood red.

Then towards the coffin I stole, with face
All pale and white,
When something turned in the chilly place,
In the dead still night.

And I saw a youth by the coffin stand,
As white as snow,
He held the virgin wreath in his hand,
And a dagger also.

"I have slain thee, faithless maid and fair!"
I heard him cry;
"To-morrow thy lover strange, I swear,
Shall also die."

Then at his throat did I wildly leap,
Like one possessed,
And I plunged his own red poniard deep
Into his breast.

And I dragged him forth from the holy fane
All cold and dead,
But I placed the white, white wreath again
At the coffin head.

Black, deep black was the bitter night
As night could be,
But the cock crew shrill as I took my flight
From that strange countis.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THE SACHEVERELL RIOTS.

On the 5th of November, 1709 (eighth year of Queen Anne), Doctor Henry Sacheverell, a rash and hot-headed High Church clergyman, preached a sermon at St. Paul's, before the lord mayor and aldermen, inflammatory enough to have set their scarlet gowns in a blaze, as it very soon did all the Whigs of London. The doctor's subject was the "Perils of false brethren both in Church and State," and the doctrine he upheld was Non-Resistance, a dogma which at once threw the late King William and all his adherents into the category of common rebels.

This mischievous firebrand was the son of a quiet rector of Marlborough, in Wiltshire, who on his death had left a large family in very humble circumstances. Henry had been adopted by his godfather, a Wiltshire apothecary, who had sent him to Magdalen College, Oxford, where he was a chamber-fellow of Addison, and where in 1687, at the age of fifteen, Henry became a demy. As fellow and public tutor at Oxford, Sacheverell seems to have been in his proper element, and he wrote Latin verses, "coached," and tuft-hunted with diligence

and self-complacency. In due time he became rector of Cannock, in Staffordshire, and in 1705 he launched into a larger world by being appointed preacher at St. Saviour's, Southwark. His rash zeal soon led him to gird at Godolphin, and to denounce the Dissenters. He was instantly pounced upon as a typical exponent of the opinions of the extreme High Church party, and was impeached before the House of Lords for high crimes and misdemeanours, on February the 27th, 1710. The most treasonable portions of his worthless, ungrammatical sermon were the following. As to Non-Resistance, the noisy doctor said:

"The grand security of our government, and the very pillar upon which it stands, is founded upon the steady belief of the subject's obligation to an absolute and unconditional obedience to the supreme power in all things lawful, and the utter illegality of resistance upon any pretence whatsoever. But this fundamental doctrine, notwithstanding its divine sanction in the express command of God in Scripture, and without which it is impossible any government of any kind or denomination in the world should subsist with safety, and which has been so long the honourable and distinguishing characteristic of our Church, is now, it seems, quite exploded and ridiculed out of countenance as an unfashionable, superannuated, nay (which is more wonderful), as a dangerous tenet, utterly inconsistent with the right, liberty, and property of the people, who as our new preachers and new politicians teach us (I suppose by a new and unheard-of gospel as well as laws), have, in contradiction to both, the power invested in them to cancel their allegiance at pleasure, and call their sovereign to account for high treason against his supreme subjects; forsooth—nay, to dethrone and murder him as a criminal, as they did the royal martyr, by a justiciary sentence; and, what is most incredible, some presume to make their court to their prince by maintaining such anti-monarchical principles. But, God be thanked, neither the constitution of our Church or State is so far altered but that by the laws of both (still in force, and which I hope for ever will be), these damnable positions, let them come either from Rome or Geneva, from the pulpit or the press, are condemned for rebellion and high treason. Our adversaries think they effectually stop our mouths, and have us sure and unanswerable on this point, when they urge the revolution of this day in their defence. But certainly they are the greatest enemies of

that and his late majesty, and the most ungrateful for their deliverance, who endeavour to cast such black and odious colours upon us both. How often must they be told that the king himself solemnly disclaimed the least imputation of resistance in his declaration, and that the parliament ordained that they set the crown upon his head upon no other title but that of the vacancy of the throne. And did they not unanimously condemn to the flames, as it justly deserved, that infamous libel that would have pleaded the right of conquest by which resistance was suppressed? so tender were they of the legal right, and so averse to infringe the least tittle of our constitution. We see how ready these incendiaries are to take the least umbrage, to charge their own cursed tenets on the Church of England, to divert their guilt upon it, and quit scores with it for their iniquity. Thus do they endeavour to draw comparisons and to justify the horrid actions and principles of 'forty-one, which have been of late years, to the scandal of our Church and nation, publicly defended." In a subsequent portion of his sermon, Sacheverell lashed out fiercely at the Dissenters; denouncing them as those "clamorous, insatiable, and Church-scorning malignants" whom no grants nor indulgences but complete surrender could win over. "Miscreants begot in rebellion, born in sedition, and nursed up in faction." "Why," shouted the doctor, "do they pelt the Church with more blasphemous libels and scurrilous lampoons than were ever published in Oliver's usurpation? Have they not lately villanously divided us with knavish distinctions of High and Low Churchmen? Are not the best characters they can give us those of Papists, Jacobites, and conspirators? And what do they mean by all this insidious cant, but by false insinuations, and raising groundless jealousies and fears; to embroil the public and to bring it into that confusion they are suggesting upon us? Whether these men are not contriving and plotting our utter ruin, and whether all those false brethren that fall in with those measures and designs do not contribute basely to it, I leave every impartial man that wishes the welfare of our constitution to determine."

The debates during this man's trial were very hot. The question was simply whether all the Whig lords were rebels or not, whether King William, of "glorious memory," was not a usurper, and the subsequent Protestant succession illegal and invalid. Jekyll and Walpole spoke strongly,

as did Major-General Stanhope. Lord Coningsby denounced the sermon and the counsel defending Sacheverell. Bishop Burnet, a strenuous and able Whig partisan, spoke learnedly on this occasion against absolute power and the so-called divine right of kings. He quoted Trajan's motto on the sword he delivered to the governor of a province. "Pro me, si merear, in me" (for me, but if I deserve it against me). He spoke angrily of those who asserted that Queen Anne secretly favoured the enemies of the Protestant succession (which she undoubtedly did); he talked of the times when the High Church clergy used to meet at coffee-houses on a Saturday to read the Rehearsal, a paper that denied the queen's right to the crown; he concluded by saying that "condemning resistance in such crude and general terms is certainly condemning the revolution;" and he reminded the Lords of the Act by which, in case our princes turn Papists, or marry Papists, the subjects are in express words discharged from their allegiance to them. Both Houses were at fever heat during the whole trial, which lasted nearly a month. There was on one occasion almost a fracas. When the Speaker and Sir Richard Onslow went up with the Commons to demand judgment against Doctor Henry Sacheverell, as the Mace was entering the House of Lords before the Speaker, Black Rod endeavoured to stop him by putting the sable wand across the door, on which the Speaker said, "If you do not immediately take away the black rod I will return to the House of Commons." The same thing happened in going to the bar, and again when the turbulent Black Rod wanted to place the prisoner on the right hand of the Speaker. Eventually the mischievous partisan was suspended from preaching for three years, and his two sermons (at St. Paul's and at Derby) were ordered to be burnt by the hands of the common hangman before the Royal Exchange, in the presence of the lord mayor and sheriffs.

It was during this memorable trial that the famous Sacheverell riots were organised by the more violent of the Tories. The object was to glorify the doctor, and vex and injure the unoffending Dissenters.

On the second day of the Sacheverell trial the High Churchmen, Tories, and Jacobites, were already in a fermentation. Their great doctrine of non-resistance to royalty, however tyrannical, was in danger. Secret money was scattered among the mob-leaders, and a riot against the Dis-

senters at once organised. The crowd that brought Doctor Sacheverell from Westminster Hall to the Temple, on the 28th of February, openly discussed who should be their leaders, and swore loud Tory oaths that the next night they would pull down Doctor Burgess's meeting-house in Carey-street. Some of the thousands of angry partisans assembled were for falling to the work at once, but others were for waiting till the trial of the doctor was finished. Eventually, with many threats, they dispersed, after breaking the windows of Doctor Burgess's meeting-house and private dwelling. The thunder-cloud had melted into a little harmless shower. There was great talk about the affair in the dissenting coffee-houses, and complaints made to the Secretary of State, but nothing more happened that night. The next evening the storm broke. About ten o'clock the mob began to cluster round Mr. Bradbury's meeting-house in Fetter-lane, and very soon that narrow gorge between gable-ended houses was brimful from Fleet-street to Holborn. The mob was outrageous, the constables were jostled and insulted. One drive at the door of the meeting-house up the passage on the west side, it gave way, and the sack began. Down went the pews, rip went the blinds, clash went the windows, the pulpit was beaten in, the gallery stove, the hymn-books were torn to scraps; while a footman, conspicuous in blue livery, hoisted a dusty window-curtain on a long pole, and shouted, "A High Church standard." About one hundred and fifty men were engaged in this work of destruction, and the rioters carried out the boards, the broken wood, and the clock, and lit up a flaming bonfire in Holborn. Almost at the same time another meeting-house was torn down in Leather-lane, and a third (Mr. Taylor's) in Hatton-garden. The mob then made several bonfires in Hatton-garden, and one in Holborn, opposite Leather-lane, and by the time those flames reddened the sky, fresh fires westward replied to the glare.

Captain Orrell, a quiet Whig gentleman present, said to one of the frightened constables near Fetter-lane, who was watching the rioters bringing wood to the bonfire:

"This is a great riot. I am sorry that you cannot put a stop to it."

The man, pale with fright, replied:

"There is such a mob we cannot suppress it; but there is a footman I see there I know very well. I know whose man he is."

The footman aforementioned turned out after-

wards to be the servant of a *Messrs Miles*, who lived in Greville-street, Brooke's Market, and who going to bed about half-past ten, and observing a great glare of fire, had sent out her man to see what was the matter. This footman, carrying the High Church standard, and heading the mob, stopped several coaches in Holborn, collected money for the cause, and made those inside the vehicles, though almost frightened out of their lives, shout "High Church!" By this time part of the mob had swept down Chancery-lane, and, joined by crowds from Broad-court and the alleys round Clement's Inn and Clare Market, filled Carey-street. The rioters soon broke into Mr. Burgess's meeting-house, and began to sack it. Twenty or thirty well-dressed men, who seemed ringleaders, broke up the pews, while others tore up the flooring, cursing all bystanders who did not help; one zealous man devoting himself solely to the destruction of the pulpit. Conspicuous among the crowd appeared a waterman in a short scarlet coat and shining badge, a little fellow with clipped black hair, who carried the brass sconce from the meeting-house three times round a bonfire in Lincoln's-inn-fields, and shouting, "Huzza, Sacheverell!" threw it into the flames. Other fragments of the wreck of the meeting-house, such as a bedstead and the street-door, were also carried in procession round the burning heap. To every one who passed the fire, whether mere spectators, sympathisers, or tradesmen from Holborn or Turnstile come to look for their truant apprentices, the mob shouted, "Who are you for? What are you for?" "Huzza for Sacheverell and High Church!" If the man was a surly Whig, a concealed Papist, or a hater of rioters in general, they rapped him over the back with their cudgels till he learned to pull off his cocked-hat and shout the Tory war-cry with them. Just as a footman had been the chief man at the Holborn fires, so was the little waterman in Lincoln's-inn-fields. There was also a second waterman in the crowd with the queen's badge on his arm. He was drunk, and the mob seized him in Duke-street. They closed him in with a ring, "as for cudgel-players," pushed him to and fro, said he should be their captain, and hallooed and saluted him as their leader, while some of them cried:

"You are a queen's waterman, you shall go with us, or we'll tear you in pieces."

The stammering, frightened fellow, who had been out all day drinking with the beadies of Blue Coat Hospital, whom he

had visited about an apprentice he wanted, replied humbly :

"God bless the queen, gentlemen! I will do anything you would have me, only do not knock me on the head."

Captain Orrell, the quiet man, who had now come up, ventured to say to some of the shouting rascals, carrying wood from the ruins in Carey-street to the Lincoln's-inn-fields bonfire :

"Gentlemen, what are you doing? The Guards are coming."

But the rioters, tossing their wigs wildly into the air, replied :

"D—n the Guards and the parliament too! we are ready to face them all."

The mob presently beginning to inquire, "Where is the fellow that said the Guards were coming?" the peaceable Orrell, who had come over from Southwark in his night-gown and great-coat hastily thrown over, thought it high time to slip away. The mob, weary of burning pews, benches, and pulpits, were by this time eager for fresh spoil, if not for blood. Furious wretches, heated with the riot, waved their clubs, tossed up their wigs, and began to shout, "Which is Lord Wharton's house?" "To St. James's!" Others, "No, no! to the City! the City! the Bank!" (this last sort of proposal is sure to crop up pretty soon in any city riot); while the mob roared like madmen as they were, "D—n them we'll have 'em all down, all the meeting-houses down." A party of the mob breaking away from the rest, ran in a straggling line across the fields (there were no gardens then), led by a tall man. In the middle of the fields they grew to a larger mass, then split again into two parties. Some spread toward the arch in Duke-street, but more rushed toward Powis House, at the north-west corner. There the queen's waterman, conspicuous with his badge, held a council of the cudgel-men.

"We will have them all down," he cried.

"Where shall we go to now," some cried; "Drury-lane, or Wild-street?"

The waterman said, "Curse it, the Wild-street one is a hen-roost, the other is worth ten of it. I'll lead you on, boys. Huzza! To Drury-lane! High Church and Sacheverell."

The waterman and his troop then rushed shouting down under the piazzas of Powis House into Queen-street. The waterman halted every now and then, crying to his followers, "Huzza! High Church and Sacheverell! We'll have all the meeting-houses down to-night; follow me; why don't you come along!" Fast the deluge of yell-

ing madmen rolled on towards the narrow and foul streets of Drury-lane, which vomited forth their minor streams to swell the great torrent of cudgel-men eager to burn the Dissenters' pulpits and pews. They could not at first hit upon the chapel-door, and ran here and there like bloodhounds off the scent, beating first at these shutters, then at those. At last they found out the quiet, silent, demure-looking house, upon which a little nimble fellow from the mob ran up with a pickaxe to break open the entrance. A woman that belonged to the place, on seeing that, ran out with her arms thrown up and cried, "My sister's in the house, she'll be killed!" Orrell, who had again turned up, said, "Do not be afraid, mistress, I will endeavour to pacify them if I can." Then a second man came up with a hatchet and struck twice through the planks of the door, shouting, "You don't know how to break down a meeting-house door." The quiet Orrell was soon assaulted by a soldier in a looped waistcoat and white stockings, because he begged him not to destroy the poor woman's room, which had only an old bedstead in it. "Curse you," cried the soldier, "are you against Sacheverell? The Church! the Church for ever—we will go up!" The mob then went up. The room proved to be the minister's room, and the mob destroyed all his notes and papers, threw the clock and the pulpit-cushions into the kennel, and beat in the galleries. The quiet man asking where the waterman was who had been so active, some one said he had gone to St. James's. Another swore he was off to Lord Wharton's, a third, that he was breaking open the back-door of the chapel. Orrell presently went over to the Griffin and Parrot, at the end of Queen-street, and expressed his sorrow at what the mob had done. He and a friend then went to Wild-street to see the ruins of the chapel, and at the arch met a detachment of the Guards clinking along at full speed. Orrell held out his hand to the captain, and cried, "This is the best way, through Wild-street." Another troop of Guards went round another way.

The Horse Grenadier Guards were soon at the scene of riot. It was about half-past eleven. When in Drury-lane, the Horse Grenadiers were ordered to return their bayonets and draw their swords, and, as they drew up in a line by the bonfire, a bailiff's man, named Purchase, drew his sword and fronted the soldiers, screaming "Sacheverell! Sacheverell!" Some of the soldiers in the third troop of Guards at

once recognised the man as having served with them in Flanders. Orrell, seeing the rash fool's danger, for the bailiff had been all the morning drinking from brandy-shop to brandy-shop, went up to him as he stood screaming out oaths and threats, near the central kennel, at the end of Long-acre, in Drury-lane, fronting the half-laughing, half-angry soldiers. Laying hands on his chest, thinking he was some foolish Tory country gentleman, half drunk from some Covent Garden club, Orrell pushed Purchase back.

"Do you know what you do, man?" said Orrell; "do you know what you do in opposing the Guards? You oppose the queen's person."

The tipsy bailiff, rapping out a big oath, cried, "Are you against Sacheverell? I'm for High Church and Sacheverell! I will lose my life in the cause—I will fight the best of them."

Then Purchase stepped forward to the mob, huzzaed and shouted, "Boys, I will lead you on for High Church and Sacheverell!"

Orrell again pushed him, but two foot-soldiers came up and said, "What do you do? He is drunk, but he is an honest gentleman."

Orrell said to the soldiers, "Take him away then, if he is your friend."

But the bailiff, maddened with bad brandy, and worse fanaticism, was not so easily pacified. He went up to the officer commanding the party of foot, and when the officer raised his hand, Purchase drew back and offered the point of his sword, but did not thrust.

"You are mad—go to your lodgings," cried the officer.

"I've been one of the Life Guards," stammered Purchase.

"The more shame for you to be here," retorted the officer, striking at him with his sword. Purchase then ran back toward the Horse Guards and pushed between the horses. The mob hung back, but he cried, "D—n me, I will go." In the mean time the officer first threatened had ridden off to his captain and complained of Purchase. "Make up to him and cut him to pieces," was the captain's prompt answer; the officer returned to give Purchase the coup-de-grace, but in the mean time he had escaped. A narrow escape it was. He had gone up to another officer named Rensborough, and made a thrust at him. A Life Guard who remembered Purchase in Flanders, seeing this, beat down his point.

"You rascal," cried the angry soldier, "have you a mind to kill my officer?" and

slashed at the drunken bailiff's head; but Purchase, cunning even in drink, threw himself back against a wall; the soldier's sword striking the pent-house, broke, and Purchase slipped among the crowd.

Orrell, the quiet man, saw all this, and fearing a general engagement between the mob and the Guards, effected an honourable retreat down Drury-lane, halting at a tavern door to talk with a clergyman, till the Foot Guards came by. As they passed, Orrell called out to the captain:

"Captain, the mob is very strong—I wish you good success." The crowd was then slowly dispersed by the foot and horse-men.

Of the three scapegoats brought to trial, Dammarel, the waterman, was sentenced to death, but was pardoned; Willis, the footman, and Purchase, the drunken bailiff, were acquitted.

Sacheverell's sentence was really a victory. Five meeting-houses had been burnt, the prosecution overthrew the Whig ministry, and made the hot-headed doctor's fortune. Crowds followed him to kiss his hand. He presented his counsel, Sir Simon Harcourt, with a silver-gilt basin, having a pompous Latin inscription upon it, supposed to be written by Atterbury. He was lodged in the Temple like a king, and afterwards made a triumphal progress through England, sowing sedition as he rode. The long dull sermon he preached at St. Saviour's, Southwark, upon the expiration of his sentence, he sold for one hundred pounds, and the eager bookseller printed forty thousand copies. A month after the expiration of the first sentence, foolish Queen Anne gave the clerical demagogue the fat rectory of St. Andrew's, Holborn. He wheedled in among the ministry, and provided for a needy brother, and soon after a rich kinsman in Derbyshire left the popular Tory here a considerable estate. In 1718, Sacheverell preached before the House of Commons, and the sermon was formally printed. Sacheverell seems to have been what Sarah, that violent Duchess of Marlborough, called him, "an ignorant, impudent incendiary; a man who was the scorn even of those who made use of him as a tool." Swift, indeed, confessed that the Tories hated and despised this idol of a day. Bishop Burnet says, "He was a bold, insolent man, with a very small measure of religion, virtue, learning, or good sense; but he resolved to force himself into popularity and preferment by the most petulant railings at Dissenters and Low Churchmen in several

sermons and libels, written without either chasteness of style or liveliness of expression." Sacheverell was, in a word, a narrow-minded, strong-willed charlatan, trading on the discord of Queen Anne's days. He was very ignorant, and a satirical writer of the day, supposed to be De Foe, mentions the following delicious blunder of his:

"They concur like parallel lines meeting in one common centre." Upon which a bitter epigrammatist of the day wrote:

As Brother Creech hung in the sacred twine,
So may it please this reverend wise divine
To hang himself; 'twould make a parallel line.

O how it would please our common phanatic,
To see High Church hanging in such mathematics.

Swift, who stuck at nothing for his party, interceded for Sacheverell, whom he secretly despised. In a letter of Sacheverell to Swift, the former begs for an opportunity of expressing his gratitude to that "eminent patriot," Mr. Secretary St. John, for whom no one that wishes for the welfare of his Church or country can have too great a veneration. This "eminent patriot" was Bolingbroke, Pope's idol and friend.

The burnt-out firework eventually died in 1724, and by his will bequeathed to Bishop Atterbury, then in exile, and the supposed writer of the defence he made before the House of Lords, the sum of five hundred pounds. According to Swift, the unwise prosecution of Sacheverell was owing to the personal rage of Godolphin, whom Sacheverell, in his sermon, had indirectly sneered at as a Volpone, and was strongly against the advice of Lord Somers.

THE CASE OF JOSIAH MORSE.

CHAPTER I.

JOSIAH MORSE was highly esteemed by his friends and acquaintances; but he was not, it must be conceded, a person of any great refinement or cultivation. He dropped his h's lavishly; not so much dropping them, indeed, as flinging them down: as though they were trump cards certain to win tricks, and he a vulgar and impetuous whist-player.

He was of humble origin. His father, Jonathan Morse, occupied, during a long term of years, the position of butler in the household of old Mr. Anthony Piper (the head of the well-known firm of Piper, Peters, Peck, and Co., of Austin Friars, merchants), and had been much trusted and respected by that gentleman. Jonathan had died in harness, in a butler's sober suit

of broadcloth and white cravat may be so designated, his demise being hastened, it was generally understood, by over zeal and exertion on the occasion of bottling and laying down a pipe of very superior port, the property of his employer. Old Anthony lived to drink perhaps more of the wine—it was very fruity and full-bodied—than was quite good for him, and to do something for the orphan child of his deceased servitor. Josiah, at a tender age, entered the office in Austin Friars, a small stipend being paid to him on the condition "that he ran about, and made himself useful." His position was described as that of "odd boy," an unflattering appellation, but, under the circumstances, sufficiently appropriate. Very humble, indeed menial, duties were required of the youth. He was sometimes called upon to brush the clothes and polish the boots of members of the firm and the superior clerks; he summoned cabs, carried carpet-bags, ran errands, posted letters; he bore to the office luncheon trays from neighbouring restaurants; and if any gentleman in the service of the house, for the better carrying on of his labours, needed the refreshment of a half-pint of ale, Josiah was despatched to procure that measure of liquor from the nearest tavern.

Necessarily the education of an "odd boy" can be but of a fitful kind. Still, Josiah was industrious, attentive, and very humble. He was grateful for instruction from any quarter. In addition to business habits, and a knowledge of the City, he soon acquired a fair measure of useful learning. He could write a neat hand, and spell correctly. He devoted much of his spare time to the study of arithmetic. He was gradually growing from an "odd boy" to a junior clerk.

This was quite as well for him. For during one of those tornadoes which at intervals sweep through the City, and appal the money market, terrifying every one, toppling down very deep-founded edifices, carrying devastation and desolation hither and thither, the famous house of Piper, Peters, Peck, and Co. fell to pieces. It had not been quite safe for some time, people then discovered. Important beams, and joists, and supports had disappeared, no one knew exactly how or when. But there had been "a sinking" of the building, certainly. The old members of the firm had died off. There had been considerable withdrawal of capital. It had been supposed that the house had "settled," and remained secure, notwithstanding these disturbing influences. Nevertheless, it

went down upon very slight provocation. The young men who were now the representatives of the firm were very smart and clever; but it was affirmed they had sought to make money too rapidly, had speculated indiscreetly, had gone at a high pressure speed with an unsafe boiler. The result should not have surprised any one.

However, it greatly astonished Josiah Morse. He had believed implicitly in the firm. Its bankruptcy was inconceivable to him. The rising in the air and the soaring away like a balloon of the Bank of England, had seemed to him as reasonable a thing to expect as the collapse of Piper and Co. For some time amazement and mortification left him speechless, motionless. Then he bethought him that he must stir himself. His pockets were empty, and he had his own mouth, and other mouths besides, to fill. For he had married, and his wife was in the habit of presenting him with children in a way that, for liberality and frequency, was highly admirable, but considered otherwise, decidedly inconvenient.

He was for some time out of employment. He found his accomplishments as a clerk quite a drug in the market. Care was on 'Change; deep gloom oppressed the City. Speculation was paralysed; enterprise was torpid, hiccussed by despair. That things never had been so flat was the unanimous opinion. But gradually the fog lifted. The voices of investors began to be heard like the notes of birds after a storm—timidly yet most musically. In time the City was itself again. Finance rose from its slumbers like a giant refreshed. Josiah Morse found himself engaged at a fair salary as clerk to a new company recently launched under most propitious auspices. He had met, quite by chance, in Change-alley, one of his old employers—young Mr. Adolphus Peck—looking as though bettered and brightened by the friction of misfortune undergone by his departed firm. He was glossy from top to toe; wore a flower in his button-hole, and carried the newest and slimmest of green silk umbrellas. He was the pink of City dandyism. He greeted the old servant of his house with the cheery affability which had always characterised him. He listened to the story of Josiah's needs, and interspersed comments which, if flippant, were not unfriendly. He gave Josiah a cigar—a very good one—from one of the most costly and ornate of cases. Further, he promised Josiah a situation in a new company of which he (Mr. Adolphus Peck) was secretary. And he was as good as his word.

CHAPTER II.

THE Stock Exchange "hath bubbles as the water has," but that the Great Patagonian Railway Company was not of these, public opinion had quite decided. It was not to be regarded as a "speculative concern," but as "a moral certainty," and in such wise well worthy of the attention of capitalists interested in permanent investments. It was an undertaking, all agreed, in which it behoved people to become enduring proprietors. "Don't buy to-day and sell to-morrow merely to profit by a chance rise in the market; but lodge all the money you can spare in the thing, rest quiet, receive your dividends, and be comfortable for ever." So ran the tenour of general advice on the subject. Interest at the rate of seven per cent per annum was guaranteed by the Imperial Government of Patagonia upon the paid-up capital of the company. Moreover, the shareholders were to participate largely in the profits that would indubitably accrue from the working of the railway. A certain proportion of the shares was reserved for allotment among the native investors. The railway was to be constructed on the broad-gauge principle, and the carriages were to be of unusual size, to accommodate the notoriously colossal physical proportions of the inhabitants of Patagonia.

Josiah Morse's joy was very great when he was enabled to go home to his wife and announce the fact of his engagement as clerk in the London office of the Great Patagonian Railway Company. He had been so long unemployed, and his new appointment promised so much. He bought a cheap map, though he could ill afford the disbursement, in order that he might thoroughly acquaint himself with the situation of Patagonia relatively to the better known portions of the universe. He lived "over the water," as he would sometimes vaguely indicate. In truth it was a long way over the water. You crossed London Bridge, and then branching off to the left, proceeded some miles until you came to rather a wild and unprepossessing-looking district, through which a slimy canal sluggishly serpented.

Here were rugged and barren market-gardens; there gaunt carcasses of small houses, of most cheap construction, which yet the builder, owing to pecuniary deficiencies, had not been able to complete; muddy roads that led nowhere, and ended suddenly in a morass of mortar; patches of waste land, half hemmed in by broken hoardings, devoted to the accumulation

of broken crockery, and the corpses of domestic animals, oyster-shells, cast-off shoes, and refuse of all kinds. These were the characteristics of the neighbourhood in which Mr. Morse resided. His house was of diminutive size: more like a nest of cupboards than a collection of rooms. "But it's cheap and airy, and near the Rye," he would sometimes urge in its favour. The back windows looked on to the canal, and on that account it was generally necessary to keep them closed and covered by blinds. For the canal emitted at times most unsavoury odours; moreover, the bargemen who toiled upon its waves were prone to use the noisiest and naughtiest of language; while the dirty little boys, who resorted thither at all hours for bathing purposes, afforded a spectacle of unadorned nature upon which civilised eyes could not be expected to gaze otherwise than with reprobation and discomfort. Still Josiah was proud of his dwelling-place. "It's 'ealthy for the children; it's more comfortable than lodgings, and ever so much cheaper; besides which, it's our own. So long as we pays our rent we're independent of any and everybody; and we've really a splendid garden for Mrs. Hem" (for so he alluded to his wife), "to get through with her washing."

Mrs. Morse was one of those small, pale, flaccid-looking women, whose mission in the world would seem to be naught if not maternal. She had always, as it were, a large family in possession, and much wealth of the same kind in expectancy. So far as credit is due to such as increase its population, Mrs. Morse deserved well of her country. Other faculties she might lack, but in this respect the revolving years found her unailing. She was ever to be seen with a child in her arms, pressing its tiny hands against her lips as though it was some curious kind of pipe she was smoking, the infant's arm the stem, and the body the bowl.

And Josiah was proud of his children, especially of their number. Upon their quality he was perhaps less entitled to plume himself. Robuster infants might any day be seen anywhere. But so large a family, so phenomenally near to each other in point of age, so liberally sprinkled with twins, could not ordinarily be encountered. As other and richer men vaunt concerning their collections of plate or pictures, so poor Josiah gloried in his congregation of children. If the announcement that so frequently greeted his ears of an addition to his household circle brought with it a mo-

ment's anxiety and foreboding, there soon followed a feeling of content and gratification of a most genuine kind. "You can hardly set your foot down without treading on a child," he would sometimes say of his home, with the air of one describing a delightful and enviable state of things. Of course it was hard work for him to find food and raiment for so many. But he liked hard work. He had known nothing but hard work all his life. It suited him, was comfortable to him. His great grievance had been when he could not get work to do, when the panic in the City, and the collapse of Piper and Co., had deprived him of employment. That had been, indeed, a trying time for him. His expenses went on, but his income had stopped. What are known as "the two ends" could not any how be made to meet. To be sure, he had put by a little for a "rainy day," but he had never counted upon the day being quite so rainy, or lasting quite so long. At one time it seemed to him that the clouds would never disperse, or the sun shine again upon him. He would return from the City, after futile efforts to obtain occupation, and glare at the murky waters of the canal at the back of his house with misanthropic, almost suicidal sentiments. His children were a little too hungry to be a solace to him. His wife was ill up-stairs, with yet another infant. His rent was unpaid. The baker had threatened; the butcher had bullied; the parish rates had been very unpleasant. There had been a menace of cutting off the water supply. Happily, just at this juncture young Mr. Peck had been met with. The tide turned. Josiah was as prosperous as he had ever been in his life. Indeed, he had never before been in receipt of so large a salary. There seemed every prospect of things going on now very smoothly and happily in Pleasant-terrace, for so was entitled, not too appropriately, the row of houses in which Josiah Morse and his family resided.

CHAPTER III.

THERE was a great deal to be done at the office of the Great Patagonian Railway Company. Much issuing of circulars, advertising, and distributing of prospectuses, with lists of the board of directors, estimates of probable profits, and particulars of the enterprise. Then came the receipt of numberless applications for shares, and an allotment of scrip certificates. For months Josiah Morse had his hands very full indeed. He was at work day and

night. He did not so much object to this, for he was paid for "over-time," and was in such wise enabled to discharge the liabilities he had incurred during his period of forced abstinence from toil. Still he found his new duties very arduous. The secretary did not spare the old servant of his disbanded firm. "I know I can rely upon you, Morse," Mr. Peck would say; "so I will leave you to attend to these matters. The other fellows are strangers to me; but you I know, and can trust. Be sure not to quit the office until this job's disposed of." Thereupon Josiah would find a severe burden of labour imposed upon him, while Mr. Peck, in the glossiest of clothes, and a flower in his button-hole, would turn his back upon the City, and disport himself at the West End. He was of genial disposition, and fond of society. His affable presence and cheery conversational powers obtained for him acceptance in all sorts of quarters. The City dandy was a highly popular man. Impertinent he might be, but still only in a good-natured way. Flippant perhaps, but not disagreeably so. He dressed well, and lived well. His "little dinners" at his club were really most admirable entertainments. And then he was a person worth knowing, people said. He could possibly distribute slices of the good fortune which pertained to the Great Patagonian Railway Company. The shares were at a premium; an allotment at par was well worth having; was a certain bonus to the allottee. The reserve of shares for the native investors of Patagonia might bear a little diminution in this way. For, after all, it was not so very certain that any native investors really existed. The misadventures of the firm of Piper and Co. were now forgotten, or were attributed to the misconduct of the departed members of the house. At any rate, Mr. Adolphus Peck was acquitted of blame in the matter. A junior partner, how could he possibly prevent the seniors doing what they had done? That was the way in which the world now regarded the affair. And of course it was nobody's business at the West End to marvel or to chide because the secretary of the great company chose to leave so large a share of his duties to be discharged by his subordinate, Josiah Morse. What did the West End know of Josiah Morse, indeed? Nothing whatever, it need scarcely be said.

Still it was hard upon Josiah. He rejoiced at the compliments paid him by one of his old and much-revered employers, at

the value set upon his services, at the confidence placed in his integrity; but he felt that his responsibilities were onerous indeed. His labour was incessant. He had no respite. There was more and more work to be done. A numerous staff of clerks assisted him, but still the duties of supervision and instruction rested with him. The correspondence of the company was undertaken by Mr. Peck, and accomplished expeditiously, for the secretary was a neat and skilful writer of letters: but he required much preliminary cramming from Josiah, who had not himself much epistolary faculty, who knew what should be said, but scarcely the most fitting way of saying it. Then came extraordinary meetings of shareholders; calls upon the shares; extension of the capital of the company; the issue of dividend warrants to the proprietors; the raising of funds by means of debentures, convertible and non-convertible into capital stock. It was enough to turn any man's brain. At times Josiah hardly knew what he was saying or what he was doing. He was so overwhelmed with business. Then came contracts with manufacturers of rolling stock, with coal and iron merchants, and various other traders; the publishing of specifications, the receipt and opening of sealed tenders, and multitudinous transactions thence arising. Meantime the register of shareholders was swelling to the proportions of a Post Office Directory. The board was meeting incessantly, and for the better transaction of business was subdividing itself into special committees. Now and again auditors were overhauling and inspecting the books and accounts of the company. But the whole prodigious turmoil resulting from the originating and launching of the Great Patagonian Railway Company is not to be described, or even a notion of it conveyed, by any ordinary measure of narrative. Josiah Morse had prayed for work. It had come upon him with a vengeance.

"That 'orrid City!" Mrs. Morse was now frequently found to exclaim. A little unreasonably, perhaps, for, but for the City, how would she and her many little ones have fared? But wives are apt thus thoughtlessly to condemn their husbands' pursuits, forgetful that these have pecuniary results of an important kind. To despise the City is in many cases to despise income, well-being, life itself. Few can afford the luxury of such contempt. But poor Mrs. Morse simply meant to convey her regret that her husband should be ever so pressingly

occupied and so long absent from her side. She saw very little of him now. He left home early and he returned late. He rarely beheld his children. He was so wearied when he came back from the City, that he wanted nothing so much as quiet, rest, and sleep; to be let alone in fact. And at that time his offspring had been all put to bed. His faithful partner had always ready for him something nice in the way of supper—something hot at any rate. She perceived with pain that his appetite was failing him. Even his once dearly loved dish of tripe had no charms for him now. His digestive powers were disorganised. And his temper was no longer what it had been. He was growing morose, surly, and sulky. He was disinclined for converse of any kind upon any subject. Directly he came in he would kick off his boots, light his favourite clay pipe, mix himself a strong tumbler of gin-and-water—the spirit being curiously odorous of turpentine—fling himself upon the sofa, and then—he hadn't a word for any one. He objected to being addressed even by his wife, the mother of his children. Many hours of his Sunday even—once how fondly looked forward to as a day of rest and relaxation!—he was now compelled to devote to arrears of work brought home from the office of the great company. He abandoned his chapel. He was actually rude to his once favourite minister when he happened to look in quite by chance for a friendly cup of tea and a muffin in the evening—he had been made welcome on previous occasions, after the achievement of his labours of the seventh day—and then—it was very painful to Mrs. Morse—Josiah had spoken with undue severity to the children. It was even alleged of him—but one is loth to credit it—that in a moment of angry forgetfulness, he had positively slapped, and passionately, certain of the twins. It was clear that things were now hardly as they should be in Pleasant-terrace.

All debts had been paid, and there was money to spare. A new carpet had been purchased for the front sitting-room, and the elder children of the female sex were receiving lessons in French and music at a day school in the neighbourhood. Mrs. Morse had been treated with a silk dress of the substantial texture almost of the crackling of pork, and a bonnet that was quite a flower-show in itself. Still her heart was heavy within her silken bodice, and her head was uneasy for all its floral glories. Her Josiah was a changed

man. If she ventured a complaint, however timidly and mildly expressed, he answered her harshly, or thrust money into her hands abruptly. He had not been wont to treat her so. She prized money, of course. She was a sensible woman, and a mother; she knew the cost of things, and the needs of a large family; but still she loved her husband, and set store upon his affection. What had come to him?

He was a man of small stature, rather feeble frame, and colourless complexion. He dressed simply, in dark-coloured clothes, wearing a black satin stock, with a visible buckle on the nape of his neck, and a hat tilted backward, as though not sufficiently capacious to contain his forehead. He was bald, with just a fringe of dry, tawny, untidy hair decking his occiput, and a crescent of pallid, fluffy whisker on either cheek-bone. He was myopic, and always wore spectacles. It may be gathered that there was nothing very impressive or picturesque about his presence.

He had returned home one night later, and apparently more jaded and exhausted, than usual. His facial expression betrayed loss of temper, and his actions were remarkable for their abruptness and impetuosity. Mrs. Morse observed with pain that his hands were very tremulous, and that the bottle and the tumbler clattered strangely together, as he prepared for himself his nightly drink. The turpentine odour was very strong in the room. He had some difficulty in lighting his pipe, but with a needless explosion of anger, he declined assistance in that operation. His voice was husky, and flat in tone. What had come to him? Mrs. Morse again asked herself. Was he sober? She winced at the thought of the inquiry.

She ventured tenderly to place her cool, thin hand upon his forehead as he reclined on the sofa, apparently in a state of savage torpor. How his forehead burned!

"I don't think I'd drink any more to-night, Josh, dear," she said, and very timidly she tried to remove his tumbler. He was very angry.

"Let me be, can't you?" he cried. "Can't I even have a moment's peace in my own house? There, that's what you want, I suppose." He flung upon the table a handful of sovereigns; some of them fell, his action was so vehement, and rolled about the floor. "There's plenty more where they come from," he said, with a wild and acrid laugh, as his wife stooped to search for the fallen coins; "and now

go to bed." Presently she left him. She had rarely before been so frightened or so distressed.

She could not sleep. Was it safe to leave him? she asked. Was there no danger that he might set the house on fire? Not that he was intoxicated; she could not, would not, think that. "He had his senses about him," as she expressed it. And yet his aspect and manner were certainly very strange. Long hours she waited in great perturbation of mind for him to come up-stairs. Her only solace meanwhile had been to stoop now and then, and gently kiss the soft cheek of her last baby, asleep in its cradle close to the bedside. At length she heard his approach. His footsteps were uneven and very heavy. The banisters creaked noisily, as he clutched them, and pulled himself up with their aid.

The light was very dim in the bedroom. Still she could see that Josiah's face was of a ghastly pallor. She half-closed her eyes, simulating sleep. But her ears were alert to the sound of his every movement.

"Hemmer!" he said—for so he always called her, but she had been christened Emma—"are you awake?" His voice was not wrathful now, but weak and faint as from alarm.

"What is it, Josh dear?" she asked.

"Send for a policeman."

"A policeman, Josh?"

"Send for a policeman, I say."

"Is it thieves?" and at the thought she took her child from its cradle, and pressed it to her bosom. It was to her the most precious thing in the house, and impulsively she thought that the thieves, if thieves were indeed at work in Pleasant-terrace, would be of a like opinion. She did not, of course, know much about the sentiments of burglars on such subjects.

"Yes, it's thieves," said Josh, with a feeble, husky laugh. "But not as you mean. I'm a thief. Fetch a policeman. Let me give myself up. I'm a thief, I say. I want to get it off my mind. I want all the world to know it. Do you hear? I say I'm a thief."

"You, Josh dear?"

"Me! I've robbed the company. I've been robbing 'em these months past. Those sovereigns I gave you down-stairs—well—I stole 'em. I can't go on like this. Let

justice have me. Let me be handcuffed—locked up—sent to the hulks. I deserve it all. I make no defence. I plead guilty to the charge. I haven't a word to say for myself. I'm a scoundrel out and out. I can't make out why I done it. Still I done it, and the law must take me. I must stand in the dock and hear my sentence. It's ruin of course, but that can't be helped now. I ought to have thought of it before. Yes, it's ruin. There isn't a doubt about that." He was strangely excited.

"But the children, Josh!" she pleaded in agonised tones. True woman and mother, they stood first in her thoughts. "The children, Josh!" Her voice was indescribably touching. He burst into tears.

"Poor things!" he cried. "I've ruined the lot of 'em. They're a thief's children all, even to the baby in your arms, Hemmer! They'll be pointed at in the streets, and called after as they go to school. They mustn't go any more. Poor things! getting on so nice too, and me so proud of them. But it's all over now. It's ruin, beggary; and it's me that's done it."

"Oh, Josh!"

"Fetch a policeman!" he cried again. And then he fell down heavily. He had fainted.

She replaced the baby in its cradle—it was very good—it did not cry, did not even wake—and was at his side in a moment plying restoratives. In a few minutes he was conscious, or semi-conscious, again. He stared vacantly about, muttered unintelligibly, and then closing his eyes, sank into a troubled, painful sleep. He was lying on the floor just as he had fallen, with his weary, burning head supported by her arm. She feared to move lest she should disturb him. So, cold and numbed, and feeling miserably, she retained for some hours the same cramped attitude. Her tearful eyes turning now to the helpless baby in the cradle, now to her suffering husband. Poor woman!

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THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS, JUN.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

CASTAWAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN PORT," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER III. THE GENERAL MANAGER.

TEN o'clock in the morning, and the sun shining with all his might. He has been "at this game," as one of the conductors of the innumerable omnibuses slowly travelling across Westminster Bridge remarks, looking upwards and shaking his head in a deprecating manner, for the last three months. During that time scarcely a drop of rain has fallen, the days have been blazing and the nights stifling, and the drought tremendous. From the country come dire rumours of burnt-up crops and dying cattle, while, in the poorer neighbourhoods of town, the water, always dealt out, owing to the admirable municipal arrangements, with a niggard hand, is now so scarce that parochial doctors are beginning to shake their heads in alarm, and letters, advocating inquiry and sanitary reform, are cropping up in the various newspapers.

There is no mistake at all about the intensity of the heat. You can tell it from the smell of the river, now by the various passing steam-boats churned into a tide of feculent mud, now lazily ebbing, now as lazily flowing, but always filthy, loathsome, and pestiferous. You would have seen signs of its power had you been present, eight hours ago, amongst the senators, in the feeble tones and languid manner of the jaded statesman, weary of his speeches and of himself, and in the dull, despairing apathy of the few members left to listen to him. You can trace its effects in the extra sodden and pallid faces of the clerks lining the knife-boards of the City-bound omni-

buses, men whose ordinarily dull and dreary lives, spent in low-ceilinged, gas-lit offices, have this year been rendered more than ordinarily horrible by the intense heat within, and the knowledge of the perpetual sunshine without, and who are almost goaded to desperation at the thought that the fine weather might break up suddenly, before their annual fortnight's holiday was obtainable.

Heat, tremendous heat, everywhere! The narrow-chested, long-ribbed horses in the cabs and omnibuses, carry even less flesh than usual, and under the heavy loads which they have to drag, suffer so much as even to excite the pity of their drivers, who, in their turn, have relinquished their normal clothing, and even in straw hats and shirt-sleeves are too much influenced by the weather to beat their cattle or swear at their comrades. Heedless of the minatory glances of the policemen on duty, heedless even of the crisp mandates by which these glances are occasionally followed, the itinerant vendors of fruit and cheap effervescent drinks stop their barrows by the side of the footway, and speedily are surrounded by clamorous customers. One of these, pushing his long tray before him, and with his head turned over his shoulder, not looking where he went, strolled quietly across the road, taking no notice of the approach of an aristocratic brougham which was bearing down upon him. The fruit in the tray was West Indian pine-apple, cut into luscious, sticky slices, and over them hung a painted canvas banner, representing several West Indians, very black and very shiny, gathering and eating the fruit in great enjoyment. The whole thing was common and vulgar, and cheap and low, and as the horse in the brougham was an aristocratic horse, he shied at it;

and as the coachman was a fat, well-paid varlet, aping the manners of his superiors, he swore at it, and there was a general row, ending as usual in mob and policeman.

The latter had already assumed an appearance of portentous judicial wisdom, a condition to which his wooden cast of countenance helped him not a little, and had produced his note-book, when a voice from within the brougham told him to go to the devil, and bade the coachman drive on. At this unexpected interference with his dignity, the policeman, highly incensed, pocketed his note-book, and leaving the horse's head, walked round to the brougham door with the intention of remonstrating; but after glancing through the window, he merely smiled a stolid smile, touched his helmet with his stiff forefinger, and motioning to the coachman, stood watching the carriage as it rolled easily away.

What the policeman saw when he looked in at the carriage window was the figure of a tall, handsome man, with bright black eyes and sound pearly teeth, which gleamed as he smiled in recognition of the official's salute, an aquiline nose, and a close-cut black beard. His appearance generally was magnificent; his dark hair, the ends of which were just beginning to be touched with grey, was surmounted by a very glossy curly-brimmed hat. He wore a white waist-coat, with a massive gold chain across it, at one end of which swung various golden charms; an open shirt-front, with plain gold studs, and a flaming red necktie, a blue frock-coat, with a velvet collar, and light trousers. He had varnished boots on his feet, and lavender kid gloves on his hands, and was smoking a cigar, a trifle under half a foot in length. He was altogether gorgeous, and his name was Philip Vane.

When this transfiguration? In former days Philip Vane, even doing the best for himself, as he was always in the habit of doing, without caring who might suffer, was lean and hungry-looking. Strive as he might to disguise it, there had always been a certain look of eagerness and anxiety about his eyes; now he was stout, radiant, joyous. Gone, too, was every trace of the turf and its associations; gone were the sporting cut of the coat, the tight trousers, the spotted necktie, the horse-shoe pin. The air of nonchalant languor was replaced by a brisk, sharp manner, sometimes genial, sometimes determined, but always business-like. Things of the past were the attendance at Tattersall's, the consultation of

sporting oracles, the league with jockeys, touts, and tipsters; scarcely more than a reminiscence now was the apartment for "club gentlemen;" and the major—no longer major—in discarding his military prefix, had dropped with it nearly all the associations of his former life. How had this come about? Philip Vane had "gone into the City."

Just about that time many men went into the City, who had never previously crossed the boundary of Temple Bar. Scores of them, legions of them; princes of the blood, and peers of the realm; dignitaries of the church, and mighty men of valour, holding high positions in the army and navy; young men just beginning life, and old men from whom life had almost retired; struggling government clerks, and opulent tradesmen; artists with the pencil, and artists with the pen, seeking for a short cut to fortune, if not to fame; clergymen, who inveighed against the sin of greed from their pulpits on the Sunday, and haggled with shares during the week; and petty shop-keepers: all these went into the City, most of them in person, swarming down upon the stronghold of the brokers, and the jobbers, and the agents on 'Change; questioning, criticising, pleading, begging, buying, bargaining, chaffering; some keeping aloof themselves, and only lending their noble names as directors of boards of management, but all with one and the same idea, the allotment of shares in the companies which were springing up by dozens daily, the immediate sale of these shares at high premium, and hence the speedy fabrication of fortune.

Daily and nightly, for the nights were far too precious to be wasted, did those on whom the concoction of these various schemes devolved, grind, and slave, and labour, in giving to their aerial fabrics a semblance of stability, and an appearance of reality. These gentry were a new brood, a species never before seen, even on the chequered surface of City life. Formerly, even in the wildest days of speculative madness, scarcely a scheme had been broached, with any reasonable hope of support, which had not something, however small, of a basis and a foundation. In those days, no matter what the nature of the transaction, men going in for City speculation took shares in a company, and held or sold them, and were rich or ruined, as the case might be. But in these latter days there sprang into existence men, who made their money by simply working the

lever by which the various companies were started, or "floated" them, to use the more correct term, and who, of necessity, had no other connexion with the concern (save, indeed, when they knew its value, and chose to hold by it) than the certain number of shares paid to them as part of their hire money, which they disposed of at the first convenient opportunity. "Promoters" they were called, and the profession being a lucrative one, and requiring neither capital nor certificates of character, soon found many followers. Men who had been, as they themselves described it, "knocking about doing nothing;" men who had been doing worse than nothing; the morally halt, maimed, and blind; men who, having been long since given over by their friends, had been morally dead for years—all these suddenly reappeared, holding commissions in the great promoting army. Some fell out of the ranks at once, and died by the wayside—the pace was too good for them; others as immediately struggled into brevet rank, and held their own, and more than their own—other people's. Of this last number was Philip Vane.

Sharp, shrewd, and unscrupulous, ready-witted and prompt to act, with a good address, a pleasing presence, and fascinating manners, Philip Vane was just the man for a "promoter," and in that capacity his services were in requisition by half a dozen different persons who knew his value, at the outbreak of the mania. Experience, however, soon taught him that in such matters genius diffused is wasted, and he speedily determined to concentrate his energies on such schemes only as were submitted to him by the one man alone in whose worldly sagacity he had implicit belief. That man was Mr. Delabole.

In long-headedness and foresight, in what is now called "financing," Mr. Delabole had few equals, and no superior. Philip Vane was brighter and smarter, better educated, and more calculated to inspire confidence among the young, who now-a-days are by no means the most ready to confide, and possessing those very qualifications, the absence of which had always militated against Mr. Delabole's social success, a decent appearance, and the manner of a man of the world.

Mr. Delabole had, however, that which Philip Vane had never possessed, the command of money, and a reputation, not merely for wealth, but for luck in speculating, which served his purpose wonderfully at that particular crisis. Moreover, he was

sufficiently acquainted with commercial matters, and sufficiently mixed up with the City world, to be able to float any affair which he might undertake, with the aid of a few chosen friends, and without having to invoke the assistance of any of the outside world, who would afterwards have a claim to participate in the plunder. There was Parkinson, of Thavies Inn, whose door-jamb bore the inscription, "Walters and Parkinson, solicitors," but who was the only member of the firm, and whose real business was bill-discounting for clerks of good position in government offices, for men at the bar, to whom success had come late in life, and who were yet financially hampered by the indiscretions or the necessities of their youth, and for other men, who were undeniably responsible. No one ever saw Parkinson's name in a legal case, but he made believe to be an attorney very hard indeed, and denied the discountership as much as possible. The desk, in the drawers and pigeon-holes of which were locked away the acceptances and promissory notes, had a few dummy rolls of paper, duly docketed and red-taped, scattered over its top, and when an intending borrower called on Mr. Parkinson, he would find that worthy inspecting one of his dummies through his double eye-glass, and apparently quite astonished at the proposition made to him. "He had thought," he would remark in all simplicity, "that his visitor had looked in to consult him on some point of law, was about to intrust him with some little conveyancing matter, such as that," lightly touching the dummy with his glasses, "which he just had in hand. Money? he was not a money-lender. That must be clearly understood." And when the visitor, frightened at his virtuous aspect, was about to withdraw, Mr. Parkinson had to soften a little, and admit that he had been occasionally in the habit of obliging his friends—his friends only, mind—and that he had a few hundreds lying at his bank, and that, in point of fact, his friend could be obliged at the rate of about forty per cent. A tall, thin, fair-haired man Parkinson, with blonde whiskers and light blue eyes, of a benevolent expression, like a weak-minded fox; held in thralldom by a stout, over-dressed wife; churchwarden of his parish, and firmly believed by his vicar to be one of the most conscientious and kindest-hearted of men.

Of this clique, too, was Mr. Naseby, a dried-up, withered old gentleman, always wearing a tall hat, a tall, cross-barrad, clear-

starched muslin cravat, with sharp-pointed collars emerging therefrom, a tightly-buttoned frock-coat, shepherd's plaid trousers, and patent boots; a little man, with a worn-out air, who looked like an old peer of the realm, but was a tradesman in Bond-street. There was nothing of the comic author's or artist's notion of the tradesman about Mr. Naseby; his conversation never showed the slightest solecism, his manner never betrayed the faintest trace of bad breeding; he lived in charming chambers, and had a perfect country house, belonged to a tradesmen's club, where the cooking was better and the play higher, than at any other similar establishment in London, and was a softer Sybarite and a keener man of business than any of the customers whose aristocratic names were entered on his ledger. Mr. Bolckoff, a Polish Jew, and an old companion of Mr. Delabole's, who had been bankrupt twice and transported once, and had subsequently made an enormous fortune as a contractor during the American war, Mr. Poss, a tobacco manufacturer in Whitechapel, and little Mr. van Moysey, the diamond merchant of Amsterdam, assisted in forming the set.

Moneyed men these, ready with their thousands when necessary, with implicit confidence in Delabole's generalship, and begetting a vast amount of confidence in any scheme with which their names were associated, amongst a certain class of wealthy speculative people. For the general public, however, a certain aristocratic flavouring was necessary, and Mr. Delabole took care that it should be forthcoming.

So at his beck and call, to be used as chairman or vice-chairman, or to take up humbler positions among the directors, according to the amount of strength and apparent stability with which it was necessary to endow the scheme about to be launched, were members of both Houses of the legislature, baronets and brothers of peers with handles to their names, retired generals and admirals who had seen service, and made money in every quarter of the globe, and a host of minor dignitaries, each one of whom had some speciality rendering him worthy of his hire. For hire they all received, whether it were in the shape of salaries and emoluments, of gratuitous shares allotted early, and readily converted into gold, of attendance fees and per diem allowances, or of hard cash unblushingly paid down, and as unblushingly received. In that year the Earl of Balla-

brophy received more from Mr. Delabole and similar agencies, for the use of his right honourable name, than had been paid to him by his long-suffering land-steward for the previous decade; Sir Cannock Chase, a Staffordshire baronet, who had mortgaged his ancestral hall to the proprietors of the collieries subsequently found on his estate, and who, as a great favour, was allowed by his creditors to have the right of shooting over his own manor, made in salaries, premiums, &c., a sufficient sum to help him to Baden, where he had a wonderful run of luck; while the Honourable Pounce Dossetor, for whom Lord Glenthresher had obtained a clerkship in the Audit Office during the short spurt while his party were in power, invested the funds which he obtained for the loan of his "honourableship" in a cab and tiger, smart clothes and an opera-stall, and by these means won the hand and fortune of Miss Swank, the West India heiress.

By the aid of this mélange of Jews and Gentiles, patricians and proletarians, plutocrats and penniless peers, with always the clear intellect of Mr. Delabole as its guide, and the shrewdness and tact and worldly knowledge of Philip Vane, acting as the clamping iron which held it together, some of the most extraordinary, even of the schemes which at that time were submitted to the public, made their successful appearance. City men will remember the Trust and Loan Company of Futtighur, empowered to act under a special concession from the Nawab Nizam of the district; the Hammersmith Havannah and Turnham Green Trabucos Association, for the cultivation of the choicest growths of tobacco in the immediate vicinity of London; the Primrose Hill People's Palace and Park, or Miniature Mont Blanc Company, which proposed to cover the Camden Town mountain with perpetual snow by aid of a freezing apparatus, to fit it up with miniature chalets, Grands Mulets, rifts and crevasses, and for the payment of a shilling to give a visitor an opportunity of going through the whole of the Swiss excitement within the space of half an hour, with the option of being killed at the end.

These were some of the lighter achievements of the Delabole set, but there were others of far greater weight and importance; banking companies and insurance offices, projects in which philanthropy and the realisation of large percentages were to run hand in hand by the formation of docks and harbours of refuge in outlying

portions of the coast; propositions for the development of new mines, or for the working of others, which, while still undeniably fertile, had been abandoned for the want of the necessary capital; a service of submarine tramways, and of mid-air balloons; improvements in gas, and the substitution of a new illuminating power. All these were taken in hand and bore fruit in their season. At the time, however, that we again take up our acquaintance with Mr. Philip Vane, though several of these schemes were on hand, there was one which engrossed the greater part of his attention, and to which all others were subordinate, the Terra del Fuegos Silver Mining Company.

To the Terra del Fuegos undertaking Mr. Delabole had brought his best names, and his most wealthy colleagues. It was not a new affair just "prospected," and thrust upon the market, with the view of getting rid of the shares; some years previously it had been an undertaking in high repute amongst the mining brokers and such of their clients as did not mind a somewhat hazardous speculation, provided they obtained a high premium. The opinion of the mining engineers was that, as a speculation, the Terra del Fuegos were decidedly hazardous; the soil in which they were situated being, on the whole, of a loose and shifty nature, bad to work, and liable to fall in, and there being undoubted evidence of the presence of water springs in the immediate neighbourhood. What had been prophesied at last occurred; there was a sad accident, the earth fell in upon the men, the works were suspended, and finally stopped. An attempt was made to re-open them, but the experimentalists were people without either knowledge or capital, and it failed. Since then, and until within the previous twelve months, the mines had been closed. Then the scheme was submitted to Mr. Delabole, who went through it cautiously, and finally gave his opinion as to its practicability. One of the cleverest mining engineers in England was sent out, reported favourably, and superintended the sinking of another shaft, where two or three very productive lodes were discovered. The success thus begun continued; lodes after lodes running parallel, and easily to be got at, were discovered, and the shares were at a high premium. When appealed to about them, Mr. Delabole always recommended them as the best and safest of all the investments with which he had to do; but the mining engineer, after his return from his second visit, twelve

months after the re-opening of the mine, quietly went into the market and sold his shares.

To the offices of the Terra del Fuegos, situate in the City, Philip Vane is now hastening, after his elaborate little breakfast in his West End home. He has gotten over the annoyance caused by the row with the itinerant fruiterer, and is leaning back in his brougham, placidly smoking his cigar. The chiming of the quarter past ten by Big Ben suggests to Philip Vane the consultation of his watch; finding it correct, he is sliding it back into his pocket, when, conspicuous by its new gold amongst the many dainty trifles pendent from his chain, he notices a locket which has been attached there recently. Philip Vane smiles in a pleasantly conscious manner as this trophy meets his eye, and shakes his head, and would blush if he had recollected how. Finally he opens the locket, which has two crossed horse-shoes, one in diamonds the other in turquoise, on one side of it, and an illegible monogram on the other, and smiles again as he looks at its contents. It is the portrait of a woman past the first bloom of her youth, but eminently handsome, with large black eyes and aquiline profile, full sensuous lips, and masses of black hair, heaped up into an eccentric coil on her head.

Philip Vane contemplated this portrait for some little time, and when he snapped the locket to, he took from his breast-pocket a Russia leather note-case, containing a few letters, and selecting one from amongst them, replaced the others, and opened this carefully. It had been opened before, apparently with a certain amount of care; the paper round the seal had been cut away, and the seal itself was intact. It bore a crest on a widow's lozenge, with the motto, *Quo Fata ducunt*. Philip Vane looked at this seal before he took out the contents of the envelope, held it up, so that the light might fall upon it, and examined it critically. "I never noticed her seal before," he said to himself. "*Quo Fata ducunt*—whither the Fates lead. I suppose that's her motto; at all events, it's by no means a bad one, and quite suitable to me. I may as well adopt it with the rest of her belongings."

Then he took out the letter, and read it carefully through. It was a long letter, covering several sheets of thick paper, and written in a woman's hand.

Its perusal seemed quite satisfactory to Philip Vane.

"I don't think I could do better," he muttered to himself; "I have been tempted often before, but have deferred and deferred, waiting for the ten-stroke to come off, the one big thing to turn up! I don't think I need wait any longer! I may go on dipping and dipping, and never have the chance of finding such another prize in the lucky-bag. Sixty thousand pounds, and a very handsome woman, who adores me! I don't think I could improve upon that—*Quo Fata ducunt*, eh? and they have led me into rather a neat thing just now, I fancy."

He was roused from his train of thought by his brougham stopping in front of the *Terra del Fuegos* offices. The porter bustled out to open the carriage door, and said to Philip Vane, in a tone which a combination of asthma and respect rendered eminently husky:

"Mr. Delabole, sir, has been asking for the general manager."

CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

THE SIX HEADS ON TEMPLE BAR.

THE gateway now black in the face with age, and as sooty as a venerable chimney-sweep, was built by Wren in 1672, after the Great Fire, to replace a humble toll-gate of ruder times.

Temple Bar soon became a Golgotha, for justice in those troubled times was stern, prompt, and red-handed against traitors, and fresh crops of rebels were always sprouting up ready for the sweeping sword. Many a head that had been proudly tossed in defiance of Stuarts or Guelphs, has found itself one dismal day spiked high upon that Bar, a horrible warning to plotting citizens and Jacobite Templars.

The first cruel trophy placed on the new gateway was not a head at all, but a quarter of the body of a restless old Cavalier officer, Sir Thomas Armstrong, who had been a lieutenant in the Guards, and gentleman of the horse to Charles the Second, who hated him bitterly as an evil adviser of his (Charles's) illegitimate son, the Duke of Monmouth. The plot consisted in a plan for killing the king as he was on his way from Newmarket to London. The place chosen was the Rye-House Farm, occupied by Rumbold, one of the conspirators. The royal coach was to be stopped in a narrow lane that passed the high garden-wall of the Hertfordshire farm, and a hay-cart was to be upset in the very nick of time for this purpose. The plot was planned by old

soldiers. About forty men were to be concealed behind the garden-wall, or in a courtyard near the stables. One party of these desperadoes was to fire from loops in the wall on the postillions, others were to kill the horses; a third gang was to attack the coach, and a fourth the Guards.

One of the conspirators, a barrister of the Middle Temple, had ordered for this scheme, of a gunsmith in Shire-lane, close to Temple Bar, thirty cases of pistols, thirty carbines, and ten blunderbusses, with suitable bullets and flints. The Tower was to be taken by bombardment from the river. There were to be simultaneous risings at Bristol and Taunton, and also in Scotland. These sanguine men had also discussed various plans for killing the king, either between Windsor and Hampton Court, from a mound in the Earl of Bedford's (Covent) garden, or at a bull-bait in Lyon Fields; the Duke of Argyll was to receive eight thousand pounds from Lord Shaftesbury to purchase arms in Holland for the Scotch rising. Colonel Romsey, one witness, afterwards swore that he had met Lord William Russell and the Duke of Monmouth, by Lord Shaftesbury's wish, to discuss this affair at the house of Mr. Shephard, a merchant near Lombard-street.

Unfortunate Sir Thomas, seized at Leyden by a scout who had been offered a reward of five thousand gilders, was delivered over to Chudleigh, the English envoy, by virtue of a warrant obtained from the States for apprehending any of the Rye House conspirators who had sought refuge in Holland. In his confusion, Armstrong forgot to plead Dutch protection, though he had been born at Leyden, and was, therefore, a natural born Dutch subject. The king pressed the law against him with relentless hate. Charles, indeed, openly accused him of having been a spy of Cromwell's, sent over to Belgium during the troubles to assassinate him. This charge Sir Thomas strongly resented. He had, he said, been really sent by the Earl of Oxford, and other Cavaliers, with bills of exchange and important despatches to Charles at Brussels, and had brought back letters of thanks from the king. Before this he had laid a prisoner half starved in Lambeth House and the Tower; and for that very journey to Brussels he was sent to the Gatehouse, and lay there in extreme danger of his life until the Protector died.

Armstrong was brought to the bar of the King's Bench (by *habeas corpus*),

June the 14th, 1684. Sir Robert Sawyer, the Attorney-General, moved for the outlaw's instant execution. Sir Thomas pleaded the statute (sixth Edward the Sixth) which provides that any outlaw surrendering himself within one year from the pronouncing of the outlawry, can claim trial by jury. The Attorney-General sternly refused to admit this plea, as Armstrong had not surrendered, but had been seized by force. To this Sir Thomas responded that several months of the year were still remaining, and he could at any time have surrendered himself. But when Lord Jeffreys (the Lord Chief Justice) summed up (refusing a trial), he held against the prisoner.

"Then followed," says Macaulay, in his vigorous, impassioned way, "one of many terrible scenes which in those times disgraced our courts." Mrs. Matthews, the daughter of the unhappy man, stood by her father's side.

"My lord!" she cried, "I hope you will not murder my father: this is murdering a man."

"Who is this woman?" bellowed Jeffreys, in one of his drunken outbursts. "Marshal, take her into custody. Why, how now? Because your relation is attainted for high treason, must you take upon you to tax the court of justice for murder, when we grant the execution according to law? Take her away!"

Mrs. Matthews.—"God Almighty's judgment light upon you!"

Jeffreys.—"God Almighty's judgment will light upon those that are guilty of high treason."

Mrs. Matthews.—"Amen, I pray God."

Jeffreys.—"So say I. But clamours never prevail upon me at all. I thank God I am clamour proof, and will never fear to do my duty."

So the poor lady was carried away.

Sir Thomas then asked for the money taken from him when he was arrested, and which he needed to fee his lawyers, but Jeffreys refused this request also.

"You may be as angry as you like, Sir Thomas," he said, "we are not concerned at your anger; we will undoubtedly do our duty."

Sir Thomas.—"I ought to have the benefit of the law. I demand no more."

Jeffreys.—"That you shall have, by the grace of God. See that execution be done on Friday next according to law. Yes, you shall have the full benefit of the law."

Within six days Sir Thomas was hung. Bishop Burnet, writing years after about

these strainings of the prerogative, complains that Sir Thomas was loaded with irons when in Newgate, "though that was not ordinary for a man who had served in such posts to the king." But Armstrong had led a vicious life; and the court thought that the suddenness of death would drive him to wholesale confessions. He, however, denied his guilt, died serene and penitent, and confessed nothing. He was drawn to Tyburn on a sledge, attended by a numerous guard. All up Holborn and Oxford-road he read the Whole Duty of Man. At the gallows Doctor Tennison knelt and prayed with him. He then took off his periwig, and put on the ghastly white cap, praying with uplifted hands till the cart drew away. "Soon after this trial," says Narcissus Luttrell, "when Jeffreys went down to Windsor to see the king, Charles took a diamond ring off his finger, and presented it to the worthy judge as a reward for his loyal services." The Whigs always called this ring "the blood-stone." The king also gave Jeffreys this remarkable advice—extraordinary, but "not the less necessary to him," says Burnet—"that as it was a hot summer, and he was going the circuit, not to drink too much."

Sir John Friend, an Aldgate brewer, and Sir William Parkyns, a Warwickshire baronet, were the first traitors whose heads frowned grimly from the Bar.

The absence, in 1695, of King William in that campaign in the Netherlands during which he took Namur, gave great opportunities to the Jacobite plotters, who, at meetings at the Old King's Head in Leadenhall-street, resolved on an immediate insurrection, if they could only get a promise of ten thousand men from France. A party of these rash men, on the 10th of June—the birthday of the exiled Prince of Wales—were insane enough, when heated with wine, to sally forth from a Drury-lane tavern, and, beating kettle-drums and waving flags, to light defiant bonfires. But the watch and mob sacked the tavern, trod out the bonfires, and apprehended Coke and Goodman, the ringleaders, who were fined and imprisoned. William returned to England in October, crowned with laurels. In January, 1696, James sent over two secret emissaries—the Duke of Berwick, to encourage the rising, and Sir George Barclay, a Scotch officer, who had served under Dundee, to help in an insane plot which involved the assassination of William. Forty or fifty mounted men required for his purpose, and about

twenty troopers of James's guard, had followed Barclay to England. One of these troopers was Brigadier Rookwood; another Major Bernardi, a Genoese, who for this crime afterwards lingered in prison more than thirty years. Barclay always called these men boastfully his "Janizaries," and swore they would one day win him the George and Garter. A servant named Keyes, who had been trumpeter in the Blues, tried to win over the Roman Catholics of that regiment. Sir John Friend opposed the rash design, but kept the secret; Parkyns, an old gouty country gentleman, approved of an attempt in which his infirmities, however, rendered him unable to share; a gambler and bully named De la Rue, Porter, Charnock, and other Catholic gentlemen of sanguine temperament, also joined in the scheme, which was thus finally planned:

Every Saturday William drove from Kensington to hunt in Richmond Park. At Turnham Green he always took boat to cross the river, and on the Surrey side was met by a second coach and a fresh body of Guards. The Jacobites decided to attack him on his return in a narrow, winding lane leading from the river to Turnham Green. The forty men were to assemble, in small parties, at various public-houses near the Green, and were to meet when the signal was given that the royal coach was approaching. As the royal retinue struggled on with the lumbering vehicle, Charnock was to attack the guard in the rear, Rookwood on one flank, and Porter on the other. Meanwhile Barclay, with eight trusty men, would take care of the king in the coach. In the interval two orderlies, one a Fleming and the other an Irishman, were appointed to watch the palace at Kensington, and report progress to Charnock and Barclay. At Calais James was to wait for a bonfire on the Kentish cliffs, that was to announce the violent death of his detested nephew. King William was saved by the remorse of Prendergrast, a friend of Porter's, and two other conspirators. The day fixed for the hunting proved cold and stormy. The king postponed his ride. The conspirators arranged for the next Saturday, and suspected nothing. On the night before the appointed day, they met and drank together at a Jacobite tavern in Maiden-lane. "Tomorrow or never!" cried one. "Tomorrow, boys," swore another, "we shall have the plunder of the field!" The next day—pistols loaded and swords sharpened—the chief men met at Porter's lodgings.

"Prendergrast," said Porter, "you are one of the eight named to do this business. I have a musketoon for you that will carry eight balls." "Don't be afraid of smashing the glass windows, Mr. Prendergrast," cried another. From Porter's lodgings the party adjourned for refreshment, before starting, to the Blue Posts in Spring Gardens. Suddenly a conspirator arrived with ominous news. The king would not hunt that day. The Guards had returned from Richmond at full gallop—the horses all in a lather. Some then proposed falling on the king on the morrow, on his way to chapel. Porter crushed an orange, and they all drank the gross Jacobite toast—"To the squeezing of the rotten orange." That same night, however, files of musketeers with torches arrested twenty-one of the gang.

Rookwood and Bernard were seized in bed in a Jacobite alehouse on Tower-hill. In a few days Parkyns was tracked to a garret in the Temple. Porter and Keyes were hunted down by the hue and cry near Leatherhead. Friend was found hidden in a Quaker's house. Another of them was caught painted and patched in the dress of a fine lady. Ferguson, a Scotchman, was drawn from under a bed in Gray's-in-lane. The trials once begun, Charnock, an expelled fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, was found guilty and hanged; and so were King, and Keyes, the ex-trumpeter of the Blues. Rookwood and two of his companions, named Lowick and Cranbourne, were the last to perish. Sir John Friend was tried for high treason at the Old Bailey Sessions House, March the 23rd, 1696 (eighth William the Third), before Lord Chief Justice Holt.

A witness deposed to a meeting at the King's Head, in Leadenhall-street, in 1695, which Lord Ailesbury, Lord Montgomery, Sir John Friend, Sir William Parkyns, and other zealous Jacobite gentlemen, attended? After dinner it was agreed to send Captain Charnock, who was present, into France to King James, to ask the French king for ten thousand men, that is, eight thousand foot, one thousand horse, and one thousand dragoons, and they promised to meet these allies on landing with two thousand horse. A Captain Blair next deposed to Friend having shown him at his lodgings in Surrey-street, Strand, a colonel's commission from King James. Friend did not make much head against these witnesses, though he denied all knowledge of any attempt to kill the king. He was found guilty of high treason and sentenced to death.

The next day, in the same place, Sir William Parkyns, of St. Paul's parish, Covent Garden, was tried for the same offence. It was proved that Parkyns had attended various Jacobite meetings at a tavern in St. James's-street; at his own lodgings, in Norfolk-street, Strand; at the Globe Tavern, in Hatton Garden; at the Nag's Head, in Covent Garden; and at the Sun, in the Strand. At these meetings the king's assassination in a lane between Brentford and Turnham Green had been discussed with Sir George Barclay, the agent of King James, who had brought over eight hundred pounds to supply horses and men for the intended rising. Parkyns provided four horses, three to be mounted with his own men. The prisoner's servant deposed to bringing up three horses from the country to the George Inn, Holborn. It was also shown that chests containing four dozen swords with loose hilts, thirty-two carbines, and thirty-five cases of pistols, were sent for by Parkyns from a servant's house, and buried in the prisoner's garden in Warwickshire, when the plot exploded and the hue and cry came.

Parkyns and Friend were executed at Tyburn, on Friday, April the 3rd, 1696. They both died like gallant and fearless Jacobite gentlemen, true to the last to the undeserving Stuart. In the farewell paper he wrote, Friend said:

"God comfort our distressed king; restore him to his right, and his misled subjects to their allegiance. Bless also his royal consort, our gracious Queen Mary (of Modena); his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales—that he may grow in stature, and in favour with God and man. Support and strengthen all those that suffer in any kind for a good cause; give them patience under all their afflictions, and a happy deliverance out of them. Forgive all mine enemies."

Parkyns was even bolder. He said:

"It is true I was privy to the design upon the prince, but I was not to act in it; and I freely acknowledge, and think it for my honour to say, that I was acting in the interests of the king (James), being always firmly persuaded of the justice of his cause, and I looked upon it as my duty, both as a subject and an Englishman, to assist him in the recovery of his throne, which I believe him to be deprived of contrary to all right and justice."

At Tyburn, three non-juring clergymen, the celebrated Jeremy Collier (who escaped), Mr. Cook, and Mr. Smart (who

were afterwards taken up for it, and censured in the King's Bench), were bold enough to go up into the cart that stood ready under the gallows, and there to lay their hands on the two prisoners' heads and fully absolve them. Sir John Friend then said to the sheriff:

"Mr. Sheriff, I desire the cart may not be too fast to go away till we give the sign."

When the white cap was put on, but not yet drawn over his eyes, Friend said:

"My Saviour wore a crown of thorns for me. The Lord receive my soul! The Lord have mercy on me!"

When the cap was drawn down, Parkyns said:

"Executioner, had I best hold up my legs, or stand in the cart when it goes away?"

Executioner.—"It is best to stand, sir, I think."

Parkyns.—"But then my feet will hang in the cart."

Executioner.—"If you please give me notice when you will have the cart go away."

Friend.—"Stretch forth thy arms, O Lord, and receive my soul, and carry it to heaven, I beseech thee. Executioner, when we knock, go away."

After a few ejaculations, they gave the signal. They had both of them given money to the executioner.

How can we help admiring men so brave and so true, had though their cause was?

In 1716, Colonel John Oxburgh's head mounted to the same bad eminence. This Oxburgh was a Lancashire gentleman, who had served in the French army. A rebel general (who escaped from Newgate just in time to miss the gallows, April the 10th, 1716), had made him colonel directly on joining the chevalier's army. To Oxburgh had been intrusted the painful duty of surrendering the Jacobite forces, when the king's dragoons had surrounded the northern revolters at Preston. It was with difficulty the wild Highlanders, frenzied with despair, could be prevented sallying out and cutting their way through the enemy's dragoons. Oxburgh met death with a serene courage. A fellow-prisoner described his words as coming like as "a gleam from God." Those who came to see him said they received comfort from the man they came to comfort. Oxburgh was executed at Tyburn, May the 14th, 1716; his body was buried at St. Giles's, and his head placed, two days after, upon Temple Bar.

In 1722, the head of Loyer, the Jacobite

plotter of Southampton-buildings, whose career we have sketched in a previous number,* was added to the ghastly series. The fifth and sixth were added in 1746, after the Scotch rebellion. On July the 15th, 1746 (twentieth George the Second), Colonel Francis Townley was tried for high treason, in the court-house of St. Margaret's-hill, Southwark. Among the judges and justices present on this occasion were Lord Chief Justice Willes and Sir Thomas de Veale, whom Hogarth has celebrated. Townley, of an old Lancashire family, had fought for the French king, and had been the first to join the Pretender. It was proved only too clearly that he had been seen, on the retreat from Derby, riding at the head of the Manchester regiment, brave and gallant, in plaid sash and white cockade. The companion head was that of George Fletcher, a rash young Salford shopkeeper. He had been seen mounting guard at Carlisle, and beating up for volunteers on the Manchester Exchange. Both men died bravely on Kennington Common, first throwing their prayer-books and gold-laced hats to the crowd. Their hearts were cast into a fire, and a fighting man of the day eat a piece of Townley's flesh to show his zeal for the House of Hanover and the winning side. Horace Walpole tells us that men made a trade of letting out telescopes to see these heads on the Bar more clearly.

The last head blew down in 1771, and the hateful spikes were removed early in the present century.

CHANTREY'S WOODCOCKS.

THIS name suggests a subject in which sporting, sculpture, and poetry were combined in a more than usually pleasant way, each giving a zest to the other two, and the whole forming a halo around a genial and distinguished man.

Somewhat more than forty years ago, Sir Francis Chantrey, the eminent sculptor, formed one among a number of guests at Holkham Hall, Norfolk, the seat of Mr. Coke, afterwards Earl of Leicester, the most celebrated commoner in his day for all that befits the life of an English country gentleman. It was in the shooting season, towards the close of November; and the sculptor was glad enough to join in a sport of which he was a keen admirer. The party

were ranged by the host, according to the rules which sportsmen approve; and at the very beginning of the day's proceedings Sir Francis Chantrey had a bit of luck which made him quite the hero. One of the guests present, Mr. Spencer Stanhope, in a letter written soon afterwards to a Norfolk clergyman, told simply what the achievement was, although he did not know all the attendant circumstances. "Chantrey was placed in the gravel-pit that, you will remember, is just under the Hall. I was standing next to him, but hidden from him by the bank formed by the pit. Knowing how keen a sportsman he was, I was amazed at seeing him running up to me, without his gun, just at the moment when the hares were passing us in all directions; but when I saw him waving his Peruvian hat" (Chantrey loved to "get himself up" in a picturesque way when with a shooting party) "over his head, and distinguished his joyous countenance, I knew that all was right. 'Two woodcocks at one shot!' burst from him, and announced to me the feat that he had performed."

How far such a double shot is a rarity, we shall see presently; but the company present resolved to make much of the incident. Mr. Coke marshalled all—sportsmen, keepers, and beaters—in a line, made Chantrey pass along the rank, and every one doffed his hat and made a bow to him. On that same evening a resolution, a kind of pleasant manifesto, was drawn up at Holkham Hall, to the effect that, "Amidst the events of this day, it is especially worthy of being recorded that Mr. Chantrey" (he had not been knighted at that time) "killed at one shot two woodcocks. Considering this exploit as among the many illustrious achievements, if not the most extraordinary, of that great and extraordinary man, it was unanimously proposed to Mr. Coke that the spot should thenceforth be handed down to posterity, and the honour of the individual perpetuated, by the name of Chantrey's Hill being given to it—assured that no sculptor in Europe had ever done before so much in the art of shooting: Mr. Chantrey having but the day before killed at one shot a hare and a rabbit." This document was witnessed by Mr. Coke, Archdeacon Glover, and Mr. Spencer Stanhope; a copy of it was presented to the sculptor, and is preserved among the Chantrey manuscripts.

Chantrey had the use of only one eye. This fact was not much known except to his personal friends, for the blind eye pre-

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. iv., p. 402.

sented nearly the same outward appearance as the other. It might have affected his shooting with an ordinary gun, but he had one adapted and sighted to suit his own special need. Many years afterwards, when the sculptor was no more, the author of Memorials of Chantrey said that Sir Francis's proficiency with rod and gun had been overrated. This was denied by the Holkham friends, who ranked Chantrey high among their number as a marksman. It seems pretty clear, however, that the double shot was the result of accident; for he stated that he saw, and aimed at, only one woodcock; the other rose from the ground, came into the line of sight just at the critical moment, and shared the fate of its feathered companion.

Mr. Muirhead, whose volume we shall notice presently, quotes from a private letter a somewhat similar instance of a sportsman bringing down more than he had aimed at. "As you are fond of a sporting anecdote, I may tell you what occurred to me yesterday, in making my first beat of the season after woodcocks at Haywood. I was walking towards a large clump of hollies, with the keeper about thirty yards on my right, when two woodcocks got up together, one flying to the left of the clump, and the other to the right. I fired at the left bird, and brought him down, calling out to the keeper to mark the other; when he replied, 'I saw only one bird, which you killed.' This surprised me, as I had picked up my bird considerably to the left of the clump, and quite out of sight of the keeper. But whilst we were discussing the matter, and trying to account for the extraordinary disappearance of the second bird, my old Belle was observed at a dead point, about forty yards beyond the clump of hollies; and there we found the missing bird under her nose. The only way in which I can account for the circumstance is, that the right-hand bird must have crossed the line of sight just as I fired at the bird on the left—which, by the way, fell within twenty yards of the gun."

In after years, this achievement of the sculptor-sportsman gave rise to a considerable rummaging of sporting records for instances of double, triple, or multiple success with one shot. It soon became evident that Chantrey's shot was far from being the most remarkable known; it was remembered rather for the celebrity of the man than for the marvel of the aim. Colonel Hawker, in his Book of Instructions to Young Sportsmen, gives many instances

of wonderful "bags;" and a multitude of instances have presented themselves since his book was written. On one occasion eight hooper swans, averaging nineteen pounds each, were knocked down at one shot. On another, thirty-five wild geese were killed by one discharge of a single-barrelled punt gun. But instances in point are more fairly those connected with shooting game than shooting wild-fowl. Lieutenant Kirkes once brought down six snipes with one shot out of a wisp of seven; and his son, Captain Kirkes, killed a grouse and two hares at once, the hares sitting on a rising ground, and the grouse flying towards it. A gamekeeper named Alexander Strachan, in the service of the Earl of Kintore, on one occasion shot six snipes on the wing at one time. In 1856, on the Scottish moors, a sportsman stalked up to four black-cocks, caught them in a line as they rose, and killed them all; three fell at once, and the fourth a hundred yards distant from them. Mr. Muirhead once fired at two partridges as they rose together from some long wheat stubble, brought them down at one shot just as they got on the wing, and mortally wounded three others which had not risen. A wild shot at a covey, as they turned over a low part of a hedge, was rewarded by bringing down nine birds at once. Doctor Sandwith, who bore so honourable a part in the defence of Kars by Colonel Sir Fenwick Williams, during the Crimean war, was shooting on a branch of the Euphrates near Erzeroum, and bagged four spoonbills at one shot. A man named Croft, in the year 1856, while shooting on the river Wye, killed eighteen grey plovers at one shot, and on another occasion sixteen ducks; but this was achieved by means of a large swivel gun, fixed in a boat, and loaded with a quarter of a pound of powder and a pound of shot—rather hard lines for the birds. This of course belonged to the wild-fowl series. And so did one recorded by Colonel Hawker, in which twenty widgeons, ducks, pintails, and plovers were brought down at once with a common shoulder gun that carried only five ounces of shot. He speaks also of forty-three knots and godwits being killed at one discharge by three ounces of number four shot. A keeper on a Norfolk estate, early in the century, killed seven bustards at one shot; but his manner of doing it would hardly have been regarded by the bustards as fair play. He looked out for their tracks on the snow, and put cabbages there to attract them; he planted

a battery of three large duck guns at a distance of a hundred and fifty yards, all pointing to that spot; and he arranged three strings from the three triggers to a pit or hole a short distance behind. Taking his seat in the hiding-place at daybreak, he watched his opportunity, and brought down seven bustards with a simultaneous discharge of the three guns. Lest there should be some numerical mistake in the statement that five hundred starlings were once brought down with one discharge of a single-barrelled punt gun, we will pass it by.

But to return to our Chantrey. The day was so pleasant to him, the compliments so merry, that he resolved to perpetuate the memory of the event in his own way. He sculptured the two woodcocks, as a monument to their memory. Arranging them as dead game, in such a way as best to show the markings of the plumage, he modelled them in clay, and chiselled them in white marble. They formed a kind of alto-relievo in front of a vertical slab, and have ever since been admired for their delicate and graceful execution. Over the alto-relievo is the inscription :

TWO WOODCOCKS
KILLED AT HOLKHAM,
NOV., 1830,
BY FRANCIS CHANTREY, SCULPTOR,
AT ONE SHOT.
PRESENTED TO
THOS. WM. COKE, ESQ., 1834.

This 1830 is said to be a mistake; the year was 1829. The sculpture is at Holkham Hall; the model, or a plaster cast of it, is in the Chantrey Gallery at Oxford; while Sir Edwin Landseer introduced the two woodcocks in a picture which afterwards became the property of Lady Chantrey.

The titled, the learned, the artistic, the poetic, all who partook of the hospitality of Holkham, admired this beautiful handiwork of Chantrey; and as all of them had heard of the celebrated shooting, they began to associate the two events as cause and effect—the achievement of the gun and the achievement of the chisel. It was very tempting to men who could write elegant epigrams. Chantrey killed two birds, and then made them almost live again in marble: here was a subject ready at once; and divines, statesmen, judges, poets, artists, wrote their pleasant bits of versification. More than a quarter of a century later, Mr. Muirhead, one of the Holkham circle, resolved to collect all these epigrams, so far as he could, and to print them so far as he was permitted. Lady Chantrey

placed at his disposal all the manuscript material in her possession. Holkham library brought forth twenty-seven of the jeux d'esprit; Lord Brougham procured some that had been written by Bishop Maltby, Lord Tenterden, and Sir John Williams; and other friends brought treasures to the storehouse from other quarters. The result was the publication of an elegant volume, called *Winged Words on Chantrey's Woodcocks*: edited by James Patrick Muirhead. The poets were forty-two in number; but the separate epigrams themselves, including translations of those in Greek and Latin, rose to a hundred and seventy-nine. Of course those in Greek can only be understood by learned folk. One by Archdeacon Glover was translated by the archdeacon himself, thus:

Tho' fall'n by Chantrey's hand, we yet survive;
His gun may kill, his chisel makes alive.

Another, in four lines, by Bishop Selwyn, was given by him in Greek and in Latin; but we will merely present Canon Bowles's English translation:

Both had one fate; their lives together end;
And both to gloomy Acheron descend.
Mourn not their end, nor deem their fate severe,
Fix'd by transcendent art immortal here.

Bishop Maltby, Sir John Williams, Doctor Jelf, the Master of Balliol, and other classical scholars, in like manner brought their knowledge of Greek to bear on the subject; while the Marquis Wellesley, Archdeacon Wrangham, the Reverend W. G. Cookeley, Lord Tenterden, the Head Master of Winchester, and others, chose rather to put their Latin to the test.

One lady, the Honourable Frederica Anson, appears among the bards:

Long may this spotless marble tall,
When Chantrey fired two woodcocks fall:
They met their doom together.
But now, by his transcendent art,
Into new life he bids them start,
And makes them live for ever.

Bishop Wilberforce contributed this:

Life in death, a mystic lot,
Dealt thou to the winged band.
Death, from thine unerring shot;
Life, from thine undying hand!

Lord Jeffrey, the celebrated editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, wrote:

The life the sportsman-artist took,
The artist-sportsman could restore;
As true and warm in ev'ry look,
And far more lasting than before.

Mr. Jekyll found two lines sufficient for the following:

"Two birds with one stone;" but the point has hit,
If one stone revives both the birds it has hit.

Three couplets of Lord Jeffrey, each complete in itself, are similar examples of a kind of epigram by no means easy to produce :

Their good and ill from the same source they drew,
Here shrin'd in marble by the hand that slew.

For their gift lives the slaughter to atone,
Here gives an immortality in stone.

The same skill'd hand that took their lives on high,
Here, on this marble, bids them never die.

The late Allan Cunningham gave a dozen lines to the subject :

The snowy hills of Norway bred us,
The silver springs of Holkham fed us;
A sculptor, as we wing'd our way,
Held out his gun and made us clay;
But, sorrowing for us as we fell,
To marble turn'd us by a spell.
Princes and peers flock'd in a bevy,
And said, "How glorious! done in gravity!"
Geologists look'd marvelling on,
But feeling, cried, "By Heav'n, a stone!"
While Buckland, that superb dissector
Of things in flint, said, "Lads, a lecture!"

The opportunity tempted many others to throw bits of humour into the matter. In those days, between the period of the shooting of the birds and that of the sculpturing of the marble, the Reform Bill was a specially exciting topic; and Baron Alderson brought it into requisition in the following way :

Here lie the fruits of Chantrey's gun :
Two woodcocks, yet the shot but one!
Oh had he been content to kill
"The Bill and nothing but the Bill!"

And Mr. Muirhead :

A rare success was Chantrey's lot,
He bagg'd us at a single shot;
And to commemorate his skill,
In marble made the Re-form'd Bill!

The same epigrammatist gave a sly poke at Chantrey in the following; but the sculptor would have accepted it as being quite fair, seeing that, although he certainly did hit two birds with one shot, he, as certainly (to use a homely phrase) "didn't go to do it."

Sir Francis must sure have been much in the habit
Of missing each partridge, hare, pheasant, and rabbit;
For once when he kill'd, by a shot transcendental,
Two woodcocks, the verdict was "Death accidental."

Here is another, from the same pen :

Chantrey invented the best of gun-locks,
Which cocks one hammer, and hammers two cocks!

Mr. Hudson Gurney's muse produced the following triplet :

Down from the north that would have starv'd them,
This was the way that Chantrey sarv'd them,
He shot them first, and then he carv'd them!

One more, by Lord Jeffrey :

The sculptor killed them at a shot,
And when the deed was done,
He carv'd them—first, upon one toast,
And then, upon one stone!

These are only a sample of the gems in Mr. Muirhead's elegant volume, which, although it has been published many years, is known only within a limited circle.

A SKETCH.

OUR cottage crests the summit of a hill,
That rises o'er an old cathedral town.
There float through summer noontides, warm and still,
Rare scents of heather from the purple down;
There the sweet April shadows glance and play,
There autumn's glory glows from golden leas,
And the wild north winds of the winter's day,
Bring keen fresh waftings from the far-off seas.
Through the calm July evenings' sunset blush,
Where the dark woods sweep round the glittering
river,
Through the rich silence of the country hush,
We hear the soft rain mid the grasses shiver.
Our little garden like a jewel gleams,
Full, like a cup, of bright old homely flowers,
And through the breath of breeze-wood roses streams
The bells' faint clashing from the minster towers.
Lingering at nightfall by the lonely house,
Mid jasmine stars in dark-green foliage set,
And tall white lilies in majestic rows,
And fragrant musk, and dewy mignonette,
In the deep valley, one by one, we see
The humble town put out its lingering lights,
While the great towers that face us solemnly,
Take up their brooding vigil with the night's.
We muse how every separate homestead bears
Its separate crown of joy, or cross of sorrow,
Ere taking our own weight of hopes or cares,
To court their brief oblivion till the morrow.
The morrow, which to cottage, grange, or hall,
Brings twelve long hours, each fraught with weal
or woe.
Ah! gather present peace, thank God for all :
Most, that no future we are given to know.

MY FIRST MYSTERY.

I AM going to relate an occurrence which some people will think very insignificant. In the even tenour of my homely life, however, it was what is termed an "event." It turned out for the best, as many bitter things do in this life of struggle. Many, I am told, are scourged by the affliction under which I unconsciously suffered. I relate my experiences, therefore, by the earnest advice of my friend the vicar, for the benefit of all whom they may concern.

I lived on the borders of Epping Forest, in a small house, which looked like a tall square tower of brick; it was old, and covered over at one side, and part of another, with ivy. There was a pretty little flower-garden, with the finest stock-gilliflowers in that part of the world in front, and hollyhocks of various colours, and roses nodded over the wooden paling. A very good fruit garden, though the trees were a little old, containing apples and pears, together with gooseberries and raspberries, and other "small fruit," was in the rear.

I was always a staid, quiet fellow, who liked home and a punctual, comfortable life, but being a bachelor, I began, at the age of nine-and-thirty, to feel a little lonely, and my income being nearly five hundred a year, and my house and appurtenances being quite enough for a modest family, I very secretly, and with much precaution, began to look out for a wife.

I don't think any one suspected me of matrimonial tendencies, with so much circumspection did I conduct matters.

I believe people supposed me to be rather older than I actually was. My hair was a little thin at top; some people said I was bald; perhaps I was so. My face is not short and dumpy. I don't think there is anything vulgar about it. It is long and thin, nota smirking, impudent countenance, but very grave, and perhaps a little shy. I was thin, and held myself strictly upright, and never practised that loose way of throwing my limbs about that some men affect. I called young ladies "miss," and their mammas "madam," and treated both equally with the ceremonious respect that flatters their self-esteem, without for a moment violating that profound sense of decorum which is ever uppermost in the mind of a young lady of delicate feelings and refined education.

I had no doubt that I should be fortunate enough, in consequence of the marked superiority, in the points I have indicated, of my manners (and with ladies manner is everything, appearance very little) over those of the young men who were then to be met with—I say I had no doubt that I should be fortunate enough to please whatever young lady out of the eleven with whom I had the honour to be acquainted I should ultimately select for the partner of my life and the regulator of my household. I chose Miss Martha Pendles. She was tall and silent, had commanding black eyes, and was full of prudence. I knew I had only to speak. I did. She looked surprised. Her magnificent black eyes were fixed steadily upon me for nearly half a minute, while she meditated, and then she accepted me.

She was, I may say, much admired. She was majestically handsome. I felt that I was fortunate. I had secured the most devoted and economical of women.

She came home. I assured her of my undying affection, and talked of culinary and household affairs. I asked her, among other things, how much wine—it was a subject I was sensitive upon—she thought

would quite suffice her every week. She told me she never drank wine, beer, or any other exciting fluid; and at dinner, luncheon, and supper, her glass always stood empty, except when there was water in it. I loved her more and more every day.

I found her advice most valuable. She recommended me strongly, for instance, to cultivate her cousin, Captain Thunder. He was tall, loud, and had black whiskers. His name was Thomas Frisk Thunder, and his air was festive and military.

He was in delicate health, though he looked robust. He was threatened with consumption: but his colour was florid, and his appetite excellent. But consumption is a treacherous complaint, and its advances, I am told, insidious and disguised.

He had twenty thousand pounds in three per cent government stock, and had quarrelled with all his relations except ourselves.

I quite agreed with my wife. Here kindness and prudence pointed in the same direction. We were very attentive to him. He almost lived at Poplar Hollow, that was the name of our house. We bore a great deal from him. He had that loose way of flinging his limbs about, which I spoke of, and which Martha detested as much as I; and he was totally destitute of the respectful deference and reserve which are found always so winning with the fair sex. I have seen him, when he thought I was not looking, chuck Martha under the chin. And, for both our sakes, she bore it like an angel. But when I talked of it to her, she requested me to tell him how it disgusted her; which I did, and begged of him to consider a lady's feelings; which he promised me he would.

Everything was going on thus happily, and he was growing to like us more and more, when his regiment was ordered to the West Indies, and in little more than a year and a half, poor fellow, he died of yellow fever.

The consols did not turn up. I suppose he was extravagant. He must have sold his stock.

We had acted for the best, however, and did not regret it much, although he had been a very heavy item in the expenses of our little household for upwards of a year. He liked ducks and peas, and asparagus and oysters, and drank a ridiculous quantity of port. However, let us bear lightly on his weaknesses, and if he took no care of his money, let us hope that he did at least of his spiritual interests.

I expressed to dear Martha's mother, when next I saw her in town, my surprise at the total disappearance of poor Thunder's twenty thousand pounds stock; and she looked at me for some seconds, as if I had two heads, and then, being one of those fat women who see something ludicrous in everything, she shook and wheezed with laughter, until a good stiff fit of coughing pulled her up.

Then drying her eyes, she croaked with a most unfeminine grin, still panting :

"Who on earth, my dear Jerry" (I forgot to tell you that my name is Jeremiah Barnacle) "told you that poor Frisk had twenty thousand pounds? He never had twenty thousand pence! And this was the secret of your hams and oysters, and port wine, and boarding and lodging poor penniless Frisk whenever he had a month's leave," and the cynical old creature laughed again, till the chair creaked and the floor trembled. I was disgusted, and could not help saying :

"Madam, it was from your daughter, who conceals nothing from me, that I learned that fact; who she may have learned it from I neither know nor care. But she it was who advised our little hospitalities to poor Frisk. I call him Frisk, my wife never called him anything but Captain Thunder. It was her advice, and I followed it; and I mention the fact, because, however ridiculous you may be disposed to think me, you can hardly laugh at your own daughter. You may treat the disappointment, if you please, as mine only, but you must feel that the ducks, and oysters, and hams, and other things you are so good as to remember with so much particularity, though proceeding from me, in the first instance, were nevertheless some little loss also to Martha, a loss which I might not unnaturally have expected him, in some trifling way, to have made good to her."

This rebuke, which I delivered sternly, had some little effect on her for a moment, for she "hemmed," and bridled up, and looked a little queerly along the carpet; but the old wretch, I regret to have to apply such a term to my Martha's mother (but such a want of common sympathy in so near a relative is positively odious) burst out again into another peal of the same heartless and stupid laughter, though she was palpably a little ashamed of it; and in that unlady-like condition I left her.

Martha was accuracy itself, and could not have been misinformed. Still it seemed to vex her, as it certainly did me, that her

mother should think her such an egregious fool.

I must now relate a painful occurrence; a mysterious state of things; a discovery; and an affliction, which I remember still with consternation.

My wife was attacked with an extraordinary sort of fit. How long she had been suffering from that kind of seizure, I could not tell—she could not tell. I will relate how I first discovered her alarming infirmity.

Dear Martha had retired to rest, perfectly well, at ten o'clock. I had some letters to write, which detained me, for some hours later, in the drawing-room. While writing them, I had occasion twice to consult accounts, which were filed in a little press in our bedroom.

My first visit was at about a quarter to eleven. I found her in bed, but wide awake, and, apparently, perfectly well, except that her face was unusually flushed, and her eyes unnaturally brilliant. She said she felt very nervous, and complained of my stealing about the house, disturbing her.

I entreated her to compose herself to sleep. She answered that if I were good enough either to stay in the room, or to stay out of it, it would compose her more than anything she could do.

She had such a pointed way of putting things!

I was obliged to go up a second time on a similar errand, about an hour later. I put off my shoes lest I should disturb her, and I listened at the door. She was breathing stertorously; or, in less technical language, snoring.

Dear Martha never admitted that she snored. It made her very angry that I should insinuate or believe any such thing. And yet undoubtedly she did, and so loud and long, as not unfrequently to keep me awake for hours.

On this occasion the sounds were welcome to me, because I could enter the room without fear of disturbing her, and on doing so, I found her still very much flushed, but in a profound sleep.

When I finally returned she was still snoring; but, to my horror, I found her lying on the floor. My terror increased, for, on endeavouring to get her up, I could not waken her. With the assistance of the housemaid I got her into bed. But she continued insensible till five o'clock in the morning, when I found that on raising her head, by an additional pillow, she mumbled a little, and showed some signs of returning

consciousness, and shortly after, to my great relief, I did succeed in waking her. After talking for a few minutes quite like herself, she fell into a natural and healthy sleep, and next morning was just as usual.

I became, in consequence of what I had witnessed, extremely uneasy about dear Martha's state of health.

I began to watch her more closely, and I found, to my consternation, that these alarming seizures were of frequent occurrence, and always at the same time. She would go to bed perfectly well; we would both fall asleep; I would then, perhaps an hour or two later, be wakened by her persistent snoring, and find her in the state I have described.

It was horrifying; for I could not tell how it might end. I represented to dear Martha that she ought to consult a physician. She would not hear of it. I then advised her to live a little less abstemiously. I implored of her to take, if it were only a glass of sherry at dinner and luncheon. But on this point she was inexorable also; and when I pressed it she became quite impatient.

I write with my diary beside me, and in it I find the following entry: "Dear Martha makes me ashamed of myself. How Quixotically abstinent she is! While I sip my tumbler of brandy-and-water, and drink my pint of half-and-half daily. My apothecary, to whom I have described her formidable seizures, persists in his opinion that the nervous system is prostrate, and cannot recover its tone without the use of a moderate stimulant. How is it that women are so prone to enthusiasm, and so ready in a good cause to rush into a fanatical extreme? She has laid down a rule of life for herself, and the menace of death itself is powerless to induce her to relax its self-imposed austerity."

I fell into a habit of waking at about one o'clock every morning, and I found that this state of coma had actually become of nightly recurrence.

I became too anxious to allow an affection of so formidable a kind to become incurably established without taking active measures for the restoration of my excellent wife.

Without a hint of my intention to her I made up my mind to consult Doctor Pelham, in whom I had implicit confidence, upon her case.

I was lucky. A chance would bring him by my house, on his way back to town, at about one o'clock the very next morning.

He would then make me a quiet visit, and he would see the patient, and consider the case carefully.

We were early people, and usually retired to bed at precisely ten o'clock. This night, however, I was obliged to take my place at the annual dinner of the Mutual Sustentation and Benefit Brotherhood, a sort of mutual insurance union of which I was a member, and sat on the committee.

I did not reach home till twelve o'clock. My wife, the servant told me, had gone to bed at her usual hour, and was quietly asleep. She knew nothing of my arrangement with Doctor Pelham.

I had been able to think of nothing else during our annual dinner. I could not say what mortal derangement of brain or heart the diagnosis of the doctor might disclose. I was now looking from the front sitting-room window across our little garden, now lighted brightly by the moon, to the road, eagerly watching for the arrival of the physician's carriage.

I grew more nervous as the moment approached. The clock struck one, and not very long after Doctor Pelham's brougham glided up to the little garden gate, and, leaving the hall-door open, I ran out to meet him at his carriage door, and to conduct him into the house.

Quietly we came in, he asking me a few questions as we did so. The hall-door was softly shut, and, at his request, I led him at once up to the patient's room.

There she lay, just as usual, in the same profound coma.

He felt her pulse. He stood by the side of the bed, candle in hand, and examined her face. He made me turn her in the bed, first on one side, and then on the other; then he made me shake her gently, then more briskly. Then he made me call her gently, then loudly, and finally I satisfied him that she was in a state of coma. He raised her eyelid, and looked at her eye, and stooped, as he did so, very close to her face. Then he stood again at the side of the bed, looking down on her, with his lips compressed and drawn down at the corners, and a hard frown, and he nodded once or twice as he was thinking.

"That will do," said he. "Let us go down."

I was very much alarmed; his face frightened me. I led him again to the front room.

"Is it anything very serious, doctor?" I asked, very much afraid of the answer that was coming.

"Serious enough," said he.

"But can't you do something for it?" I said.

"Nothing," he answered.

"Good Heaven! sir, what is it?" I exclaimed.

"You and your vicar may do her more good than I could," said Doctor Pelham.

"But what is it?" I exclaimed, in something bordering on distraction.

It had occurred to me that he thought it attributable to some malign spiritual agency, and he looked quite mysterious enough to mean anything.

He smiled faintly, and nodded, and looked out through the window for a moment, and then, turning to me with a little shrug, he said:

"I see there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in your philosophy. Have you read your Arabian Nights?"

"Genii?" I asked, thinking he meant thereby to indicate supernatural agency.

"You remember, then," he continued, "a story of a lady who had certain unaccountable peculiarities which puzzled her husband. He lay awake one night, pretending to be asleep, as usual; he watched her, saw her rise, and leave the room. He followed, keeping her in view, and tracked her to the tombs, where he saw her at her infernal repast, and discovered her to be a ghoul?"

"A ghoul!" I exclaimed.

"Now, in this case," he continued, "you must practise a similar stratagem. You must have nerve to follow it up."

"And what shall I see?" I said.

"Wonders," he replied.

"But what?" I insisted.

"Say nothing to put her on her guard, and your eyes will tell you that. I shan't say a word more on the subject. Good-night," he said, and went quickly to the hall-door.

I followed him, and tried to slip his fee into his hand as he passed me. But he preemptorily declined it; and repeating "Good-night," ran down the steps, through the garden, jumped into his carriage, and had driven away before I half recovered the stun of what he had said.

I took a long walk next day. I kept as much as possible out of my wife's way. The doctor's mysterious conduct had given me vague and secret misgivings about her; and a sense of the espionage I meditated, a duplicity imposed upon me as a matter of conscience, and such as I had never

practised before in all my life, combined to embarrass me in her presence.

I don't know whether it was fancy, but I thought her fine black eyes followed me about, with a steady but stealthy suspicion, all that evening, as if she were intuitively informed of the altered state of my thoughts, and knew, with a fearful anticipation, that light was about to break in upon me.

I did my best to appear unconcerned and easy. We played our short game of écarté as usual after tea. I read aloud a chapter of Miss Burney's charming novel of Cecilia, and then our portion of the Pilgrim's Progress, and, lastly, our accustomed chapter of the Bible.

I saw her look at me, as I did so, in a marked and suspicious way, and before we went up-stairs she asked a little abruptly:

"Are you quite well this evening, Jerry?"

I laughed (what a hypocrite I was becoming) as well as I was able, and assured her that nothing was amiss with me, that I never felt better, and only wished that she were half as well.

She seemed satisfied, and we went to rest.

It was my habit, ever since I had discovered her liability to the seizures which I have described, and which appeared to me since my secret interview with Doctor Pelham, the night before, unspeakably more awful than ever, to keep a light burning in the room all night. I was therefore furnished, without any departure from ordinary habits, with means and opportunity of observing all that should pass.

I affected to fall into a sound sleep; my wife appeared to me really to do so.

I continued to lie perfectly still, and to breathe the long and deep as before. I began to feel unaccountably nervous.

At about a quarter to twelve my wife sat up in the bed, and looked at me. I had closed my eyes, except the least bit in life. She sat as still as a wax image, looking at me. Then she leaned over me and listened. Then softly and lightly she slid out of bed at the far side, without a sound, unlocked a press in the wall, and applied a black bottle to her lips.

I had risen, followed her round the bed with a noiseless tread on the thick carpet, and before she had made three great gulps from its contents, stretched my hand over her shoulder, and seized the bottle by the neck.

I wish she had screamed; I almost wish she had fainted; I don't know why, but

her silence and stillness shocked me. There she stood, looking up in my face, for she had cowered down a little, with a horrid deprecatory smile, and her face and lips as white as death.

I think I was as much horrified as she was. I felt positively freezing with horror.

"Give me that," I said, gently but firmly withdrawing the bottle from her hand. The smell told me what it was before I raised it, and read "best cognac brandy" on its scarlet and green label.

I peeped into the press, or rather closet, round which broad shelves ran. Whole regiments of empty bottles, similarly labelled, stood there beside some half-dozen next the door, with their seals unbroken. This I saw at a glance. My wife attempted a little swagger, and affected indignation, but it broke down. The case was too strong for her. She sat down on the side of the bed and cried: I cried also.

She said at last:

"I'll be a better wife in future to you, Jerry."

I kissed her, and we cried together a great deal.

Poor thing! She made a noble effort. She was very much changed after that. I used to see her looking at me when she thought I was not minding, and her fine eyes fill up with tears. I never alluded to the occurrence. There was good in her; and I think my forbearance touched her. Our good old vicar was often with her. She resisted bravely; and, thank Heaven, quite mastered her fault.

She was very affectionate, and seemed to wish to make amends, as if she owed me a great reparation. I told her never to think of it more. I reminded her that it was only to herself she had been unkind, and did my best to cheer and make her happy.

But I saw her looking at me as I have described; and sometimes she would turn away from me suddenly, and I knew she was in tears. She had quite lost her gaiety, and seemed to have some great care always upon her mind.

I took her away for change of scene to Rhyll. But she began to grow more melancholy, and talked as if she had no hope of heaven. The dejection of her mind afflicted me.

About six months after she was attacked with inflammation of the lungs. It was an unspeakable comfort to me that our good old vicar happened to be a visitor at Rhyll at that time. Before she died, for it was

her last illness, she became comparatively serene and hopeful.

My married life was of less than three years' duration, and I have never thought of marrying again. Thirty years have passed since the occurrence of the scene I have described, and there cannot remain to me many years more of my solitary sojourn on earth.

THE CASE OF JOSIAH MORSE.

CHAPTER IV.

It was a cruelly trying night for Mrs. Morse. It seemed endless. She thought the sun had forgotten to rise; that the day would never dawn. What a comfort it was to her to find the darkness yielding at last, ever so little; to see the outlines of the familiar objects about her grow gradually sharper and more defined; the shadows less obscure; the murky corners of the room, by slow degrees, relieved of the mysterious gloom, that had huddled and nestled there so many dreary, weary hours. The cold grey light of morning stole almost imperceptibly into the house. It was still dim and faint and cheerless enough, yet welcome to her, just as a few drops of the muddiest of ditch water are as a cordial to the parched lips of one left wounded on a battle-field.

Josiah was awake, yet wretchedly weak and unnerved. He permitted himself to be undressed and put to bed helplessly as a child. His wife lighted a fire, boiled a little kettle, and made him some tea. She could with difficulty persuade him to drink any of it. Then he turned on his side and slept again, groaning at intervals, and wrestling with his dreams.

She had been so busy watching and tending him, hastening to meet his every possible need, that she had hardly thought of what he had said, or the meaning of it, before he fainted. Perhaps she had forced herself not to think of it; or she was cherishing a hope that he had been talking wildly, at random, not knowing the significance of what he had said. That he had been—no, not drunk—she would not permit herself even now to conceive that possible of him—but so shaken and upset that he was not to be held accountable for his speech. He had been ill, very ill, that was all. Presently he would awake refreshed and calmer, and more himself, and would put away from him his idle utterances of overnight, perhaps forget them absolutely.

Soon he was stirring again, his hands

clutching the bed-clothes, his eyes sunken, dull, and wandering. His skin was sallow, dry, and wrinkled; his expression one of rather mindless alarm.

"Has the policeman come?" he inquired.

It was all true, then, Mrs. Morse said to herself. The tears rose to her eyes, and her heart sank within her grievously.

He was cooler and calmer, perhaps, although still very feeble. But he firmly adhered to the story he had told on his return from the City. He could tell it now more coherently, dwelling upon its details.

"There's no making the books right," he said; "the figures won't add up."

"Sums are so difficult sometimes," observed poor Mrs. Morse, simply, her mind recurring to girlish difficulties of her own with a slate and a long sum in compound addition.

"Thousands and thousands out, and I've taken them," he went on.

"You, Josh? But, my dear, we've never had the money."

He waved his hand impatiently.

"What was the name of that horse that came in third for the Derby?" he asked presently.

"I'm sure I don't know, dear," said his wife, with a bewildered air. "What does it matter what horses came in?"

"I can't think of it now. But that's how the mischief was done; that's where the money's gone. Sporting, betting, laying odds, and taking them. I don't know how I came to be going in for such games. But I did go in for 'em. I had a horror of them once. I never ventured but a shilling or so in a sweep before, and that wasn't because I cared for it, but just to oblige others, and for the fun of the thing. Fun? It's pretty fun I've come to now. Ruin, disgrace, beggary, penal servitude. That's what betting's brought me to."

"Try and go to sleep again, dear."

"Sleep? There's no more sleep for me, nor peace, nor comfort of any kind. I'm a regular bad one, that's what I am. I've robbed my employers. I've betrayed the trust reposed in me. I'm an out-and-out villain. It's all known and discovered. Morse, the forger, the embezzler, the thief. It will be all in the Newgate Calendar. Birth, parentage, education, crimes, and full confession of Josiah Morse, convict. They'll bring the shareholders' ledger into court. The judge and jury will look it all over. They'll see how the sham accounts were opened in fictitious names. The forged transfer deeds will be handed about. All

the frauds will be exposed. The duplicate share certificates will be discovered, and the forged dividend warrants and debentures. To think that I should be mixed up in such things! What would my poor old master, Mr. Piper—my first patron, that gave me my start in life—what would he say, I wonder, if he could only hear of it? It's enough to make him turn in his grave, poor, dear old gentleman. But I'll have done with it now. I'll go with the policeman to the station-house directly he's ready. Send for a pint of porter for him, my dear, and let him wait in the kitchen while I dress. I shall feel easier in my mind after I've told all to the sergeant, and he's entered the charge on the sheet in the regular way, and locked me up. He can handcuff me if he likes; not that I mean to give trouble."

He grew drowsy after this. Mrs. Morse slipped out of the house, and brought in, not a constable, but her doctor. He was her great ally, her most trusted friend and counsellor. It has been said that she was the mother of a large family. The doctor highly esteemed her, both as a patient and a woman.

But how much, how little should she tell him? Not surely all Josiah's wild and incredible revelations? No, that could not be. She hardly dared to think of them, much less to repeat them. To inform the doctor of all, to confide to him that her husband was, by his own confession, a felon, would be betrayal, might be dangerous. For the doctor might feel himself bound to communicate with the police, or might refuse to apply his healing art to a criminal so consummate. Mrs. Morse could form no estimate as to the conduct likely to be adopted by a respectable medical practitioner under such peculiar circumstances. So she simply said that her husband was very ailing, light-headed, she thought, and rambling in his speech; that she felt anxious about him, and would Doctor Block—she always called him "doctor," but, in truth, he was only a surgeon and apothecary, and boasted no physician's diploma—kindly come and see Josiah as soon as possible?

"Josiah ill?" said the doctor. "I thought it might be the baby. No return of croup, then? That's well. I'll come round directly. Light-headed is he? We can't allow that, you know, Mrs. Morsec."

The doctor had a pleasant cheery manner, from which Mrs. Morse had derived the comfort as of a tonic in many trying moments of her life.

"Keep him in bed," said the doctor, after an interview with Josiah. "He's weak and feverish, and is evidently suffering under cerebral excitement." Mrs. Morse did not know exactly what that was, but she felt it was rather a grave malady. "Keep him warm and quiet, as quiet as possible. I'll send him round a cooling draught presently, and some pills to be taken at night. He may have anything he fancies, a mutton-chop if he can eat it, well done, without fat, and no potatoes. You'll be particular about that, Mrs. Morse? No malt liquor on any account. If he's thirsty, or seems faint, let him have a table-spoonful of brandy in a tumbler of water, hot or cold, as he prefers it, but without sugar. I'll look in again in the evening. And don't you give way, you know, Mrs. Morse. You must keep up, or how can we expect baby to thrive?"

Mrs. Morse promised, thus urged, that she would certainly do her best to keep up.

"He's light-headed, as you say," the doctor remarked presently, drawing on his gloves, and preparing to depart. "Do you think he's anything on his mind?" Her eyes lowered, and there was a twitch of pain in her face. "Ah, you don't know," he went on. "How should you? It's excessive fatigue; he's been over-working himself, as City men will do, saying nothing to their wives. Nothing more than that, I dare say. I'll be sure to look in again in the evening."

"I'd better, perhaps, send to his office to say he's ill, and they're not to expect him?" suggested Mrs. Morse.

"Well, yes, I suppose so." But the doctor seemed rather doubtful about the expediency of this course. "It's quite clear that he can't stir from his room to-day, nor for some days to come, I fear."

There was a curious expression upon Doctor Block's countenance as he turned from Pleasant-terrace.

"Foolish fellow," he muttered. "With a wife and all those young children! I should never have suspected him of such a thing. I knew he'd been hard up, but I thought he was doing very fairly again. It's ruin, of course. And I suppose they'll feel bound to prosecute."

It may be inferred that the doctor thought badly of the case of Josiah Morse.

"How do you feel now, dear?" Mrs. Morse inquired of her husband.

"My head's uncommon queer, but my mind's easier," he answered. "I told the doctor all. It was only right that he should

know. And I feel the better for it; the more people I tell of what's happened, the better I shall feel."

"It's all true, then!" said the poor wife, in a voice of anguish, her eyes filling with tears.

"Of course it's true. I'm all I said I was last night, and worse."

"Couldn't we—couldn't we run away, Josh?" she cried desperately.

"And leave the children?"

"We might take the baby."

"And be took by the detectives before we'd gone a mile. No, I plead guilty. They must do with me as they will—as the law directs. I deserve all I shall get, and more."

"I was going to send down to the office."

"Do, and tell them all. Tell them I admit everything, and am ready to be given in charge. I'd give myself in charge if I could only dress and get out for half an hour. I don't want to give trouble. Tell them so. It's all bad enough and wicked enough as it is. I'll do nothing to make it worse. Mind and say that."

Mrs. Morse contented herself, however, with despatching a brief note to the secretary of the railway company, stating the sudden illness of her husband, and his inability to appear at his office.

This composition cost her some pains. She was little experienced in efforts of the kind, and held the Great Company and its superior officers in extreme awe. Moreover, as she wrote, her hand was very tremulous, and her heart ached terribly.

CHAPTER V.

"To think it should come to this," she moaned, "after all we've gone through! I could not have believed it of Josh. I can't hardly believe it now. It was bad enough when there was no money coming in, when Josh was out of work, and it was all I could do to find even bread and dripping for the children. But now, when I thought we were getting on so well, when we were paying our way regularly, with something to spare, and Josh had a permanent situation and a good salary, better than he ever had before, to think that now this trouble should come upon us! But that's the way with trouble. It always comes when it's least expected. Why should he have taken the money? He had no need to. We owed nothing, and there was no extravagance. That can't be charged to me. I'm sure he was put to no expense he could not

afford easy with his means. And what's he done with the money? Flung it away in betting and such like? But that's not like Josh. He never was one to care for sporting and that. He despised it too much. I've heard him say so times and times. Still we never know how weak we are till we're tempted. My poor husband! He wasn't himself—he could not have been—when he took the money. They'd worked him to that extent, that he didn't know what he was doing. He couldn't have known. They'll never have the heart to deal hardly with him. And him a family man, with so many dependent on him! There isn't a soul in the neighbourhood that wouldn't come forward, and gladly, to speak of his respectability, and say a good word for him. Poor Josh! And what's to become of us all when he's took from us! Heaven only knows!"

She had no word of blame for her unfortunate husband: only deep love and the tenderest pity. He had cruel need of these now; for he was suffering acutely, it was clear, both in mind and body. It was not a time, and it was not for her at any time, to add to his tribulations. Rather let her, as best she might, help him to endure them.

Late at night a cab stopped in Pleasant-terrace. Could it be Doctor Block? Mrs. Morse asked herself. No, it was a spruce, nimble gentleman, who, tripping lightly from his vehicle, and flinging away a half-smoked cigar, knocked rather clamorously at the door. It was Mr. Adolphus Peck. It could be no one else. Mrs. Morse knew him at once, though she had never before seen him; but he had been described to her by Josiah over and over again. Mrs. Morse's anxiety and trepidation became extreme.

"Why, what's all this about Morse?" he asked, as he bowed politely, and, upon Mrs. Morse's invitation, stepped into the front parlour. So brightly attired a gentleman had probably never before entered that apartment. Mrs. Morse thought her furniture and decorations had never looked so shabby or so faded as they looked then. But he sat himself briskly down on the hard horse-hair coated sofa, deposited his shiny hat on the soiled table-cover, and drew from his white hands his tight, spotless, lavender-hued gloves, with a very cheerful and contented air, was "quite at home in a moment," as Mrs. Morse afterwards said. With a feeling of intense relief she perceived there was nothing minatory about his manner. He had not come, it

seemed plain at any rate, to drag Josiah incontinently to a jail.

"Mr. Peck, I think?" she said, timidly, rather to gain time, perhaps, for the collecting of her thoughts, the controlling of her feelings, than because she had any real doubts on the subject.

"Yes, certainly, that's my name," he replied. "Sorry to hear Morse is so poorly. Thought I'd just look round to inquire after him. He's better?"

"He's still very unwell, sir."

"Cold, I dare say. Or knocked up perhaps with overwork. He's had rather a bout of it lately, and he hasn't been looking very well I've noticed."

"No, sir, he hasn't, indeed; hasn't been what I may call himself, sir, for some time."

"Well, you must do the best you can, you know, Mrs. Morse; nurse him and tuck him up, and take care of him—that kind of thing. But you'll do all that, without my telling you, I'm quite sure."

Mrs. Morse said humbly that she hoped so.

"We shall be glad to have him back again I need not say. He's an excellent clerk, thoroughly trustworthy and industrious, and I hardly know—so put about as we are just now—how we shall be able to get on without him. But we must manage somehow. It's no use hurrying him, of course. Still, it's unfortunate, and just now we shall miss him dreadfully."

It was delightful to Mrs. Morse to learn that so much importance was attached to her Josiah's services, to hear him so praised and commended. Yet, did he deserve it all? she asked herself, with a cruel fluttering in her bosom. If Mr. Peck had only heard Josiah's confessions of overnight and that morning, would he not speak and think very differently of her unfortunate husband?

"My directors," said Mr. Peck "my directors, I need hardly say, will be disposed to show every consideration in the matter. Ample time will be allowed to Morse to recover from this illness. His salary will be paid just as usual. And he'll have his usual holiday. A rich company like ours can afford to deal generously with its officials. You've no need to be anxious on that score. And, talking of scores, how are the children, Mrs. Morse? You've a good many of them, I know."

Mrs. Morse quite blushed with gratification. What a nice, pleasant, affable gentleman he was! To think of his asking after the

children, just for all the world as any near neighbour or intimate friend might have done. Was this Josiah's master—a late member of the famous though now defunct firm of Piper and Co.—the dignitary whom she had held in such awe and reverence, the secretary of the company in whose service Josiah was a hard-working clerk? Why, he was now sitting in the parlour, talking to Mrs. Morse in that friendly way you'd have thought he'd been in the habit of sitting there night after night, and known Mrs. Morse the best part of his life! Why, he inquired the names and ages of all the children, and seemed to get these facts by heart and print them on his memory all in a minute, and asked particularly concerning the maladies incidental to infancy which they had or had not passed through! Yet he admitted that he was not himself a family man, and was not from personal experience acquainted with the comforts, to say nothing of the trials, of a home densely populated with offspring. And then how humorous he was!

"We must find room for all those young shavers—the boys I mean, Mrs. Morse—in the offices of the company, some of these fine days, as soon as ever they're tall and strong enough to sit safely on a high stool," he had laughingly said. "As for the girls—well, they're not so much in our way, perhaps; but—who knows? We may be able to set them working the telegraph. We shall have thousands of miles of telegraph, and there's some talk of a special cable under the Atlantic for our own use. We'll find room and work for them all, Mrs. Morse. Yes, and for as many more as you think proper to present to Mr. Morse and the company. Let there be no mistake about that."

And all the time he had kept his cab at the door, reckless of the extra fare he was incurring! This fact struck Mrs. Morse very much. Small extravagances, indeed, generally appeal strongly to the feminine mind.

"Can I see Morse?" he asked presently.

Mrs. Morse was at once, as it were, fetched down from heaven to earth. For the time she had forgotten all about Josiah's guilt. Recollection of it now came upon her like a sudden blow. If Josiah were to see the secretary and talk—and he was certain so to do—as he had talked last night! The thought was horrible. She turned very pale and trembled all over.

"Well, sir, you see he's very ill, and the doctor said he wasn't to be disturbed."

"Oh, I wouldn't stay a minute with him. I'll take care not to disturb him."

What was she to do? She was speechless, motionless. Yet she felt that at all costs she must prevent the meeting of Josiah and Mr. Peck.

At that moment Doctor Block entered. Mr. Peck was introduced to him, and introduced himself. Mrs. Morse was compelled to leave the two gentlemen together, and she prepared the patient up-stairs for visit of his medical attendant.

"So the poor fellow's really ill it seems said Mr. Peck.

The doctor replied with some hesitation and an air of uneasiness, "Yes. He's of health. In a weak state. Suffering over fatigue, I take it, with some symptoms of cerebral excitement.

"Brain fever?"

"Something of that kind. His mind is unsettled. At least, that is my opinion. I've only seen him once. But I understand that last night he was quite delirious.

"Indeed! Well, I remember he spoke rather strangely when I looked in yesterday afternoon at four o'clock, though little of it at the time, but recurs to me."

"He spoke strangely did he?" said the doctor, with some eagerness.

"Most certainly he did."

"May I ask—I do so, of course, with a view to the better understanding of his case from a medical point—here the doctor rose and carefully closed the door—"may I ask the nature of the observations he addressed to you?"

"I was much occupied at the time, and did not pay very much attention. Now, putting this and that together, it is pretty clear to my mind that he is labouring under a delusion."

"A delusion in reference to—" the doctor paused, and eyed his visitor curiously.

"In reference to the affairs of the company in whose service he is," in a calm, cool manner offered a contrast to a certain perturbed, which distinguished the medical man.

"And you feel satisfied that the delusion is quite beside the mark, and groundless and inane, in point of fact?"

"I haven't a doubt of it."

"Would you mind stating to me so far as you bear them in reference to the subjects he referred to?"

"I can only speak generally. He made mention of some of the

had discovered, or that he believed he had discovered, in the accounts of the company."

"And none such exist?"

"Most certainly not. The notion is quite preposterous. As to that I am fully qualified to speak. Such a state of things could not possibly exist, I take it, without my being fully informed of it."

"And he made no distinct charge against any one in reference to these discrepancies?"

"No, not that I remember. But, as I said, I did not pay much attention. It was so clear that he was talking at random. Has he made any such charge since? For I may assume, I suppose, that he has been running on in much the same kind of way since he came home."

The doctor did not reply very directly. "He harps very much upon the affairs of the company he serves. His mind is strangely occupied with the subject. His conversation is rambling to incoherence. It seems to me that just now he is hardly to be held accountable for what he says or does. His brain is much disturbed."

"To speak quite plainly, you think the man mad?"

"I have not yet had an opportunity of forming a decided opinion as to the nature of his case. I would guard myself, therefore, from expressing much more than suspicion on the subject. But from what I have noticed, and, I may add, from what I have gathered from you, I am strongly inclined to think that the patient is suffering from derangement of the intellectual powers, or what we term dementia, of an acute rather than a chronic kind."

"Of course I'm not posted up in information of that sort; but you think him curable?"

"I've little doubt of it. In these cases careful diet, regular but not immoderate exercise, sea bathing when obtainable, tonics, anti-spasmodics, will do very much. But the main thing is the discovery and the removal of the exciting cause."

"Sometimes, I suppose, things go badly with the patient?"

"Sometimes, no doubt, the mania takes a violent form, and the case becomes critical."

"Thanks; much obliged, I'm sure. Most interesting. But I'll take my leave. Mrs. Morse is coming down-stairs. I won't detain her or you any longer. Glad to find that Morse—poor fellow!—is in such good hands. I shall look in again

shortly, and if we should find we want another opinion, we may as well have the consulting physician of the company down. He's bound to report upon the health of all our people, you know, so if you think it necessary, he can see poor Morse; not but what I'm sure you'll do all that needs to be done. Good-bye. Happy to have met you. Good-bye, Mrs. Morse. Hope the patient will soon be better."

And Mr. Peck, closing the street-door rather noisily behind him, and lighting a cigar as he stood on the steps, leaped into his cab, and was whirled away to western London.

"What a beastly neighbourhood," he observed, as he quitted Pleasant-terrace.

The doctor mounted the staircase that led to his patient's room.

"I hope I didn't say too much," muttered the doctor, stroking his chin thoughtfully. "And that the facts will bear me out. Anyhow, I did it for the best; not but what that's rarely a very good excuse."

CHAPTER VI.

"You think him better?" asked Mrs. Morse, her sad eyes up-turned piteously, trying hard to read some hint of hope, however faint and vague, in the doctor's hard, weather-battered face.

"He's no worse, I think. My good soul, don't give way so."

She had burst into tears, reeled a little, and but for Doctor Block's strong arm would probably have fallen.

"Thank Heaven, he's no worse!" she sobbed hysterically.

"But he wanders still a good deal, I find," said the doctor, presently.

"Yes, and he won't leave off. He's for ever adding up long columns of figures, calling over long lists of names, ticking off accounts with his finger-nails on the pillow-case. All over and over again. It's weary, weary work to listen to him. And then he seems to lose himself in his sums, and cries with vexation, and blames himself, and talks as you've heard him talk, doctor, and moans; it breaks my heart to hear him. But it can't be true, doctor, what he says. It can't be."

"No, no. At any rate we'll hope not, Mrs. Morse. Does he sleep?"

"But very little."

"The opiate had no effect, then? And his pulse is very rapid. Does he know you, or does he mistake you for any one else?"

"No. Thank God, it hasn't come to

that yet. He knows me for his poor, fond, suffering wife."

"He's not harsh in his manner, or suspicious, or fierce at all, is he? He blames you in no way?"

"No, bless him. He's the same to me he's always been. He's never said a cruel word to me, not really to mean it, all the long years we've been together. And he won't begin now. He's still my own dear husband, Josh."

"And he knows me. He's quite clear on that point. That looks well." And the doctor went on musingly. "Strange. No change in the moral character—no inversion of feeling. Recognises those about him. Regards them as he's always been in the habit of doing. What's the explanation of the case, then?"

The doctor was puzzled. Of course he did not admit as much. He was true to his profession. He determined that he would at any rate seem wise. Why should he invite distrust? That would not better the condition of things. So he continued to apply such remedies as occurred to him with a view to the improvement of his patient's general state of health.

"We must go on as we've been going," he said. "Rest, quiet, and as much comfort as we can manage. He's a good constitution, and nature will no doubt do a good deal for him. We must trust to nature, then." Only when a doctor talks about trusting to nature it is plain that he has lost faith somewhat in his own powers of healing.

The neighbours were very kind and considerate. They took charge, with a view to the completer pacification of the Morse household, of various of the Morse children. Detachments of these infant forces may be said to have been quartered at various posts in the district.

And Josiah improved in health; if slowly, still surely. He was able to sit up for an hour or two in the day, but he was very weak and helpless, and not sorry to be put back to bed again. He seemed shocked and surprised at his own feebleness—at the sudden prostration of his energies. He wanted to shave himself; but this his wife promptly forbade. Perhaps she feared to trust him with a razor, although in truth the poor fellow was so

reduced in strength that he could probably have wrought little harm with that implement either to himself or to others. A barber was called in, therefore, to shave Josiah and clip the fringe of hair he wore at the back of his head. His appearance was benefited by these proceedings, and, reclining in his easy-chair, wrapped in his wife's warmest tartan shawl, he now presented rather a striking figure.

He spoke but little. His facial expression was very vacant; his eyes lacked lustre more than ever; and there was a curious dragged look about the muscles of his mouth. He was like a man in a dream. But his dream was of a less distressing kind than before. Depressing it might be, but no longer acutely painful. He still counted on his fingers, called over names and addresses, mentally checked calculations, and added up long sums, always with the same result, grievously affecting the correctness of his employers' monetary affairs. But he no longer, Mrs. Morse reported, spoke of calling in a constable and giving himself into custody. Mrs. Morse inquired of the doctor whether her husband's forbearance in this respect was not a good sign? The doctor said it was undoubtedly. But he did not seem to give his opinion with very great confidence.

"I wish we could rouse him somehow," he said, rather vaguely. He perhaps perceived some difficulty in the way of rousing a man whom he also recommended should be kept perfectly quiet.

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BOOK II.

CHAPTER IV. THE BUSINESS OF THE BOARD.

THE offices of the Terra del Fuegos Mining Company were situated at the corner of a court, wherein were located the business premises of many of those wealthy old City firms, described with such unctious by the newspaper reporter as "our merchant princes." It was probably in deference to the taste of the younger scions of these eminent firms, that the court had always a fringe, or selvage, of a sporting character; greasy varlets hung about its portals, rubbing their shoulders against the walls, and holding in their grubby hands strings or chains, at the other extremities of which were various kinds of dogs, from the surly English bull, with his flattened nose and his curling under-hung lip, to the polite French poodle, all pink, and shorn, and curled, and apparently quite ready for the dance. The taste of the elder denizens of the court was probably consulted by the venders of the loquacious grey parrots and closely conferring love-birds, who also hung about the neighbourhood; while the gorgeous pictures of sunsets and moonlights, and Swiss mountain and British sea, in all of which the quantity and quality of the colour were so very much out of proportion to the size of the canvas, were publicly displayed for the entrapment of old ladies and gentlemen who had been drawing their dividends at the Bank, or country cousins brought to stare at the Royal Exchange.

It was part of Mr. Delabole's plan that the offices of the Terra del Fuegos Com-

pany should be in this particular position, situated in the very midst of the wealth and power of the City, but it was equally part of his plan that in themselves they should be plain and simple, and by no means loud, glaring, or new. The name of the company was inscribed on the wire blind in the lower room, in small tasteful letters, the brass plates on the door-jambes were simple and unpretending; the hall-porter was dressed in sober brown, a little relieved by red piping, and the messengers looked like well-to-do waiters.

"We don't want any fuss or flurry," said Mr. Delabole, speaking on this point; "we don't beat drums or blow trumpets, like mountebanks vending their nostrums in the market-place; we don't combine life insurance with loans, like the Friendly Grasp opposite, or tout for banking business like the Deferred Depositors, a little lower down. We are a mining company, and not all the brass plates or polished furniture in the world would increase by one the yield of oitavas, or the value of the lode. No, the quieter we keep in that way the better!" Thus Mr. Delabole to his brother directors, adding, "The real publicity which we want is to be gained by advertising, by squaring newspaper proprietors and City correspondents, and fellows who go about and talk and earwig people. Put aside a certain sum for them, and go it!" And they went it accordingly.

After dismissing his brougham, Philip Vane, preceded by the porter, who opened the doors for him, passed through the outer public offices, where a dozen clerks, some old, some young, but all of most respectable appearance, were bending over their desks, and entered an inner room, the glass half of the door of which bore the word "private." A large comfortable room, lit by a skylight,

the big square writing-table covered with documents, tape-tied, docketed, and neatly arranged; with several easy-chairs about, and a high standing desk in one corner. One of the walls was covered by a frame of maps, and over the mantelpiece hung a large and admirably executed photograph of the central shaft of the Terra del Fuegos mine, with smaller ones representing other portions of the works, natives in their mining dresses, the English engineers standing in a row, looking preternaturally grim and solemn, and very bulgy about the boots and hands, &c. In the corner of the room stood a large square glass case, containing various specimens of the ore, each duly labelled, and standing opposite to this glass case, and apparently deeply interested in the examination of its contents, Philip Vane found Mr. Delabole.

That gentleman turned at the sound of the opening door and nodded to his friend.

"You here already?" said Philip Vane; "there must be something particularly attractive in the worm line hereabouts, to bring such a bird from his nest so early."

"No," said Mr. Delabole, "my early birdiness is rather due to the fact that I was feverish, and could not rest."

"Too much claret last night?" asked Vane.

"No," said Mr. Delabole, "I think not, though I took a good deal of it, knowing the tap, as I have done for many years. I rather imagine that this confounded hot weather is knocking me up; I must run away somewhere and get change of air."

"Not yet," said Philip Vane, sharply, looking steadily at him. "You must not go yet."

"Must not?" said Mr. Delabole, raising his eyebrows.

"Must not," repeated Vane. "There are, as you know, two or three affairs connected with this place now in the balance, and until they are settled you must not go."

"What a man of business he has become," murmured Mr. Delabole, looking at his companion admiringly through his half-shut eyes. "What energy, what industry, what determination; and all for his friends too. No thought of himself in any one of his proceedings." Then louder: "You are perfectly right, my good fellow, I should not dream of leaving London until these matters were settled."

"Have you taken any further steps as regards Irving?"

"My dear fellow, I am always taking

steps as regards everybody! That is the one, and only one defect, my dear Philip, in you. Utterly unaccustomed to business during the early days of your life, you have now taken to it with an energy and relish marvellous to behold; but your ideas on one point are a little antiquated. You don't understand progress being made except in the regular routine; you transact your business with ledgers and day-books, and leaden inkstands, and long quill-pens, and very respectable, but confoundedly dull people for your clerks. Now I do my business in evening dress, at the Opera, in society, over a flet, a glass of claret, a woman's fan! And yet I will back myself to make more way and get more influence after my fashion than you after yours."

"Very likely," said Philip Vane, grimly. "I am sorry my way of doing business does not please you; but it can be altered of course. We need not keep any accounts at all; or such as we are compelled to have can be kept by comic clerks, chirping music-hall ditties over little account-books, gilt-edged and bound in Russia leather. Would that suit you?"

"No," said Mr. Delabole, quietly, "it would not, nor does it ever suit me to be sneered at by—any one! Let us drop the subject."

Philip Vane saw that his companion was annoyed. There was scarcely another man in the world whom, prompted by his natural spirit of insolence, he would have hesitated to affront, but he could not afford to quarrel with Mr. Delabole, and he knew it, so he changed his tone and manner in an instant.

"I fancy that the hot weather has had something to do with all our tempers," he said, with a half-laugh. "I know that I am unstrung and irritable to a degree, so I went for a long ride round the suburbs last night, to try if I could not get some freshness into me."

"You were alone?" asked Mr. Delabole, looking at him steadily.

"Quite alone."

"I am glad of it," said Mr. Delabole. "It would not do to be playing any pranks just now. I expected to find you on duty in Harley-street."

"No, I was asked, but on the whole I thought it better not to go. It is a little too soon to afficher the affair so publicly. Don't you agree with me?"

"Are you perfectly certain of your position?"

"Perfectly."

"You proposed yesterday as you intended?"

"I did."

"And she accepted you?"

"She did."

"Any tangible proofs?"

"This," said Philip Vane, uncoupling the locket from his chain, and placing it in his friend's hand, "this, which she gave me yesterday."

"That's not much," said Mr. Delabole, unconsciously, and from mere force of habit, weighing the trinket in his hand.

"Nothing else?"

"This," said Philip Vane, taking his note-case from his breast-pocket, and holding up the letter which he had been reading in his brougham; "this, which she wrote me last night."

"Ah!" said Mr. Delabole, drawing his breath, "that looks better. Does she commit herself?"

"Unquestionably."

"That will do," said Mr. Delabole. "I congratulate you. It is your modesty, I suppose, that prevented you dining there last night," he added, with a grin.

"What some people would call modesty, I suppose; but what I call tact," said Philip Vane. "I thought it better not. Had you a pleasant party?"

"Very pleasant," said Mr. Delabole; "Mrs. Bendixen herself looked splendidly handsome, and was in capital form, no doubt the result of her morning's interview with you. Then there were Poss and his wife, both very nervous, looking round to see how other people behaved and ate, and evidently disappointed at there being so little fried fish; a good-looking woman, whose name I could not catch, a grass widow, with a husband in India, or one of those convenient places; old Lord McTaggart, who came screwing up to me after dinner, and asked me to put him on to something good, he didn't care what; Asprey, and a deuced good-looking young fellow, whose name I have been trying to recollect, but can't. Queer name, too, high-sounding, romantic, like one of those odd combinations of aristocratic family names, used by the theatrical people who advertise in the Haresfoot for engagements."

"I never see the Haresfoot," said Philip Vane.

"Don't you?" said Mr. Delabole. "It is a deuced amusing paper; but you never did take any interest in theatrical matters," he added, looking at his companion closely.

"However, Asprey got talking to me about

this young fellow after dinner. It appears that he is the adopted son of some old lady with an immense lot of money, all of which, when the old lady dies, it is supposed, he will inherit. The old lady is very ill just now, and Asprey is attending her."

"Indeed," said Philip Vane. "If Asprey is attending her that looks well for the youth's chances of speedy inheritance, particularly if the doctor is interested in the matter."

"The doctor is a very wide-awake customer, as you know perfectly well, my dear Philip; and, as you know equally well, believes in us, and is in heavily with us. He thinks it very advisable that we should get hold of this young—Gerald Hardinge; that's the fellow's name."

"Gerald Hardinge!" repeated Vane.

"Yes," said Delabole, quickly. "Do you know him?"

"The name somehow seems familiar to me," said Vane, pondering. Then, after an instant's pause, "No, it cannot be the same."

"Why not?" asked Mr. Delabole. "Who was your friend?"

"He was no friend of mine," said Vane; "I never saw him. I think I recollect the name as scene-painter, or something of that sort, in the same theatrical company with that Miss Pierrepont, the girl, you may remember, I spoke to you about, who I thought would suit your friend Wuff, but who would not go."

"I recollect," said Mr. Delabole, "there was a good deal of promise about that girl. Did you ever hear what became of her?"

"Not I," said Philip; "I had no interest in her, and only thought to do Wuff a turn. She's married, I suppose, or dead."

"Ah," said Delabole, "pretty much the same thing in her profession. I am not at all sure that this is not your man; there was some talk about his painting, I recollect, and Asprey said his was rather a romantic story. He promised to come here this morning and tell me all about it."

"You are rather weak in your pronouns, my dear Delabole," said Philip Vane. "Who is 'he'—the doctor or the dupe?"

"You are rather strong in your language, my dear Vane," retorted Delabole. "Dupe is an awkward word to use, even amongst friends; it is the doctor, Doctor Asprey, whom I expect here this morning."

"I am glad he is coming," said Philip Vane, with apparent heartiness, anxious to conciliate his companion; "a capital fellow Asprey, and one who has been of much service to us. He is such an excellent— There, I was going to use another word that might possibly offend your susceptibilities. I was going to say he is such an excellent decoy."

"Decoy is a good word," said Mr. Delabole, "and peculiarly applicable to Asprey. Yes, he has been very useful to us, and has probably been the means of bringing better people and more money into our various concerns than any of the outsiders. I never met another man with that peculiar power of propagating his ideas without unduly forcing them, or in the least committing himself."

"Do you think that it would be tolerably easy to get hold of this young fellow?"

"My dear Philip, the mere fact that the fellow is young, conveys to me the notion that it is easy to get hold of him either for good or evil, but certainly for evil. The mere fact that he has been poor, and he must have been poor when this old woman adopted him, conveys to me the certainty that he will be covetous and grasping, when he finds himself rich without any merit or labour of his own. He will want, without trouble, to double the fortune which will be left him, and—we will show him the way."

Then came a tap at the door, followed by the entrance of a messenger, who announced "Doctor Asprey."

"Show him in," said Philip Vane.

"By all means," added Mr. Delabole; "the very man we were wishing to see."

Hundreds of people had wished to see Doctor Asprey; people of very different kinds, and had wished to see him for very different reasons. Men stricken with what might be mortal illness, lying in their beds raised upon their elbows, and listening with eager ears for the roll of his chariot wheels, or the soft sound of his footstep on the stairs. For not merely did the doctor's professional talent rank very highly, but relying on the strength of his reputation, he would give vent to the boldness and fertility of invention inherent in him, and have recourse to experiments from which most professional men would have shrunk, but which, with him, nearly always proved successful. In the smoking and card-rooms of clubs, too, few more welcome guests presented themselves; for the doctor had a fund of anecdote of all kinds, and

when he occasionally chose to spare the time, proved that he could hold his own with most men at a rubber. Women, too, delighted to see him, for he had a soft voice and pretty manners, and humoured and played with their little weaknesses without degrading himself or them; and he was adored by children, whose diseases he had made a special study, and whom he would comfort and cure as much by his kindness as by his prescriptions.

Universally respected and beloved then? Not quite. Doctor Tileoff, very old, very eccentric, by some supposed to be mad, but still practising as a consulting physician, had many years before refused to meet Doctor Asprey in consultation, declaring, when pressed for his reasons, that however much he respected the courage of a man who murdered his wife, he did not feel inclined to shake hands with him. Sir Scott Peebles, sergeant-surgeon to the Queen, declined the honour of Doctor Asprey's acquaintance, and when the doctor did not receive the appointment of physician extraordinary, for which several of the newspapers had designated him, people said it was owing to Sir Scott's influence at court. Wondering why the usually benevolent old baronet should be so inimical towards his brother practitioner, people remembered that Sir Scott was brother to Mr. Donald Peebles, of the firm of Peebles and Murray, who had been the solicitors to an old lady whom Doctor Asprey attended, and whose will in his favour was successfully contested by her relatives. Baron Bronck, head of the English branch of the great European house of Bronck Brothers, refused to receive Doctor Asprey, who had been recommended to attend the baroness in her confinement, and when asked for his reasons, declared simply that he had seen too much of the doctor's transactions in the City and in the share market, to wish for any further acquaintance with him.

Of course stories like these had their exactly opposite stories, to balance them. Doctor Asprey's friends declared that old Doctor Tileoff was a lunatic, who ought to hold his consultations in a padded room, and that the story about Mrs. Asprey was a figment of the old man's muddled brain, warped and twisted by his knowledge of the fact that Doctor Asprey had long since pronounced him imbecile and unfit to give any medical opinion. The animosity exhibited by Sir Scott Peebles was attributed to professional jealousy of a younger man, who was rapidly ousting the senile baronet

from his position and his practice. While as regards Baron Bronck, it was averred that Doctor Asprey had taken his natural acumen into the City with him; and in investigating certain concerns vouched for by Bronck Brothers, had discovered—well—Doctor Asprey's friends would say no more—but when the next panic came, let Bronck Brothers and their clients look out. So there was a pro-Asprey party and anti-Asprey party, but the former was by far the largest, and the doctor's popularity and practice were immense.

His appearance was decidedly in his favour. A tall, upright man, with high forehead and regular features, iron-grey hair and whiskers, and white teeth; always dressed in a dark blue closely buttoned frock-coat and grey trousers, black high neckerchief, the whitest of linen, and the brightest of boots. His manner earnest without being grave, and pleasant without being undignified; his smile infrequent, but marvellously winning when it came; his interest in the person whom he was addressing intense and undivided. Such outwardly was John Asprey, M.D., of Cavendish-square, and principal physician to St. Vitas's Hospital.

"The very man we were wishing to see," repeated Mr. Delabole, as the doctor entered, and having given the hands of each of his friends a strong squeeze—there was always immense meaning in his hand-shake—sank gracefully into an easy-chair.

"I am delighted to hear you say so," said the doctor; "not frightened of me? 'Nec Asprey terrent,' to make once more my oft-repeated joke. Some men are always uneasy in the presence of a doctor, but with a chest and a constitution like yours, my dear Delabole—"

"Yes," interrupted Mr. Delabole, who was, nevertheless, chafing under the doctor's fixed look; for he was perfectly conscious of the inelegance of his figure, and hated any attention being called to it; "quite so, as you say. And what is the news this morning?"

"I have not yet seen the paper," said the doctor, unconsciously parodying a great statesman. "That was a charming dinner we had last night? I fully expected to see you there, Mr. Vane," he continued, turning to Philip.

"Mrs. Bendixen was good enough to ask me," replied Vane; "but I was unfortunately detained here until it was too late to go home and dress; the slave of the lamp, you know, doctor."

"Why not, my dear Mr. Vane," said the doctor, bending forward with a pleasant smile, "why not transform yourself into the slave of the ring? Do you blush? Is there any truth in the rumours which the little birds are whispering about?"

"The little birds are canards, doctor, and you know what faith is to be put in them."

"I think not," said the doctor, placidly, "I think not, or a lovely ear, which I noticed last night, more lovely by far than the diamond which it held, would have listened more graciously to the honey sweet which one of the company present was endeavouring to instil into it."

"Indeed," said Philip; "one of the company present; and who might that be?"

"The doctor himself," said Delabole, "of course."

"Not I—not I, indeed," said Doctor Asprey. "A man much younger, much handsomer, and more likely in every way to win favour in the eyes of a peerless lady—Mr. Gerald Hardinge."

"Ah, by the way," said Mr. Delabole, rising and drawing a heavy curtain across the door, which opened into the outer office, "let us hear all you know about that young gentleman."

"All I know is not very much," said Doctor Asprey. "I first met him some two years ago at the house of Mrs. Entwistle, an eccentric old woman, whom I was called in to attend for a spinal complaint under which she had long been suffering, and which so cripples her that she has lost all power of motion, and even in the house is wheeled about in a chair. I saw this young fellow in constant attendance upon the old lady, discussing her case with me, giving orders to the servants, &c., and I naturally imagined that he was Mrs. Entwistle's grandson. It was not until lately that I discovered that he is in no way related to her; that before she had ever seen him the old lady took a fancy to some pictures he had painted, and sent to London for sale; that when he called upon her she took a great affection to him, declaring him strongly to resemble some dead member of her family, and that he has, ever since, remained with her as her adopted son."

"Deuced pleasant for him," said Mr. Delabole. "Why didn't some nice old lady take a fancy to me when I was a lad?"

"Yes," said Philip Vane, "and teach

you to play cribbage instead of baccarat, and Pope Joan instead of three-card loo! What a comfort you would have been at the old lady's fireside!"

"Young Hardinge has been remarkably steady, I understand, and will reap the benefit of his prudence by inheriting all Mrs. Entwistle's money," said Doctor Asprey, cutting in.

"Is that certain?" asked Mr. Delabole.

"Certain!" said Doctor Asprey. "I had it from Platting, who is her attorney."

"And how long is Mrs. Entwistle likely to live?" asked Philip Vane.

"Not more than two months," said the doctor, "but in all probability nothing like so much; her life hangs on a thread; she may expire at any moment."

"Then the sooner we make young Hardinge's acquaintance the better," said Mr. Delabole.

"Will you meet him at dinner at my house on—say Tuesday next," said the doctor, looking at his note-book; "and you, too, Mr. Vane?"

Both of them said they should be delighted.

And so Madge Pierrepont's husband, and the man who had loved Madge Pierrepont so dearly, were about to be brought face to face!

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THE DRUMMER OF TEDWORTH.

ONE of the favourite ghosts of modern spiritualists is the "crockery-breaking ghost." This peculiar being apparently returns from the other world merely to play practical jokes in the interest of the proprietor of the nearest china-shop. It discloses nothing, lets no ray of light pass through the dark doors of death, merely indulges a malicious kind of coarse humour, and makes itself as disagreeable as it well can. A trail of broken dishes marks its path, and its visits are as costly as they are unworthy of the supernatural character of the visitor.

One of the most favourite of these cases cited by the credulous of the present day, is the ghostly Drummer of Tedworth. The story runs thus, and in its time it made many a brave Cavalier shudder, many an old Ironside look behind him as he rode home across the lonely down. The scene of the story was the house of a Mr. John Mompesson, of Tedworth, near Salisbury. In March, 1661, this gentleman, who was a magistrate, ordered the arrest of a vagrant

drummer (probably a real or sham old Cromwellian soldier), drunken, impudent, and bragging, we may presume, by the fact that he accompanied his clamorous demands for alms with a noisy, outrageous, and deafening devil's tattoo on an old battered drum, which he would swear had smelt powder in five hundred battles, skirmishes, and cavalry affairs, from the rush at Edgehill to the great break up at Worcester. This troublesome rascal was at last drubbed, secured, and dragged before the Wiltshire squire, who set him in the stocks, or otherwise punished him, and gave the not-to-be-endured drum, in spite of the old soldier's vociferous entreaties, into the hands of his bailiff. There seemed no great cruelty in the case, and the sturdy beggar limped sulkily away, perhaps to steal a drum in the first barrack town, perhaps to die in the next ditch, or among the furze-bushes of the nearest down. There did not seem much to interest the supernatural world in the matter. The beggar might have gone on living, drunken, but reasonably happy, for years. No one could have presumed that Asmodeus, Mephistopheles, or any other of the sulphurous fraternity, would have troubled themselves about a sham soldier's drum, or, indeed, that the beggar himself was warlock enough to have evoked such assistance. The result, however, proved that Beelzebub himself took up the matter very seriously, and poor Mr. Mompesson had a dreadful life of it. He would soon have given all the drums in England to have let that poor broken-down beggar alone.

About the middle of April, 1661, just as Mr. Mompesson was getting his valises, pistols, and saddle ready, preparing to start for London, the bailiff shut up the beggar's drum in the squire's house, as a waif and stray of justice that no one cared for. When the squire was away, and the house in that rather nervous, sensitive state in which a house always is when under a female regent, and in the absence of the master, there was one night an alarm of thieves. Voices were heard, or were imagined, hands roughly tried the windows, heavy feet shuffled round some back door. The thieves of those days were brigands, who thought nothing of murder and arson, and would boldly besiege a house that resisted them. Roads were bad, justice was slow, assistance was far off. There was great danger if the attacking force was bolder or more numerous than the defenders. It was just a question which had the toughest

heads, and whose skin would endure the most sword-cuts. The old disbanded troopers of both sides made desperate highwaymen, and they had not by any means forgotten how to rifle pockets and cut throats. There was, therefore, great alarm at Squire Mompesson's about these rascals. They were discussed in the parlour, in the buttery, in the stable, in the still-room; and no doubt Mrs. Mompesson was more pleased even than a good wife generally is, to hear the hoofs of her husband's horse beat a gallop up the London road. The squire would look graver as he stopped his news of the king's doings, and heard of the danger that had threatened all he valued and loved. Be sure the first night he ground his sword sharper, looked to his pistol priming, and placed both weapons near the head of the great plumed and cushioned bed. No disturbance came that night however, but three nights after, the squire and his wife were awoke by alarming sounds, rude thrusts at the oak doors, and loud defiant knocks challenging admittance. Mompesson was no coward, so up he leaped, put on his slippers, struck a light, snatched up his pistols, and down the warning stairs, that creaked as if they were frightened, he went. The hands were still beating angrily at the hall-door, so he, angry and ready to give whoever was there sudden death, in the shape of two bullets, threw the door open and held his lantern out sideways into the darkness, at which he pointed his weapon. But no savage face met his. There was no one—nothing but the vast, mute darkness, that receded continually before the light he carried. As he stood there the knocking began again at another door. Sure now of where the impudent thieves were, and eager to attack them, Mompesson flung back the bolts, and dashed open the second door, expecting a rush of furious men as he did so, and calling probably to his tardy serving-men for help. But again there was only the darkness, and a sense of alarm and superstitious ocreeping horror now began to steal over him. He went round the house and examined every door and window. There was nothing; yet still a certain distant, hollow, and unaccountable sound struck his ear.

Just as he got back into bed, and was talking over the extraordinary occurrence with his wife, a remarkable thumping and drumming broke out on the very top of the house, which, conveniently for these spiritual demonstrations, was built almost entirely of wood. It was now but too evident to Mom-

esson that sword and pistol were ineffectual against such an intruder, and that the spirit of the beggar drummer was bent on taking a ghastly and terrible revenge.

The noise generally returned when everything was shut up and the house was settling down to sleep. After a month's knocking at outer doors, and in the open air, the sounds grew bolder, and came into the room where the fatal drum lay. They were usually heard four or five nights in seven, beginning when the family was safe in bed, and continuing for about two hours, that is to say, till the drummer himself (probably some artful servant or accomplice concealed behind a panel) grew tired. The disturbance usually commenced with what contemporaneous writers vaguely call "a hurling in the air over the house," and concluded by a beating of the drum as at the breaking up of a guard. This agreeable nocturnal visitor continued his distracting drummings for two months, during all which time Mr. Mompesson, perspiring profusely with fear, listened to it nightly with strained ears. Whoever was the cheat, the ghostly drummer had evidently been a soldier, for he played well-known old Cavalier points of war, and the different tattoos.

During Mrs. Mompesson's subsequent confinement, and three weeks after, the drummer, no doubt from sheer compassion, ceased his maddening parchment music. After this the old malice again broke out, and the ghostly drummer raged again, worse than before, particularly tormenting the children, an unworthy occupation even for a devil. In the dark their bedsteads were shaken, so that people in the room expected they would fall to pieces. Those who touched the beds at the time this was going on, could feel the shaking, but could not feel any ghostly blows at any special point. Then came dreadful scratchings under the children's beds, as if by some terrible creature with iron claws. Sometimes the frightened children would be lifted up in their beds, and whatever room they went to the annoyance continued.

The drummer and his crew became at last so unbearable, that a clergyman was sent for to exorcise these untoward spirits. When he arrived, grave and important, and had been duly refreshed with good sherry, he knelt down at the children's bedsides, and read suitable prayers, sufficient to have started any respectable ghost post-haste to the Red Sea. The spirit was, evidently, a good Church of England ghost, for it with-

drew into the cock-loft while the prayers were being read, and ceased all scratchings and liftings of beds. But prayers over, the drummer grew more outrageous than ever, and defied all religious purgations. In the presence of an aghast company the chairs walked about the room by themselves, and the children's shoes were thrown over people's heads. Every loose thing in the chamber began to fly about, and even a bed-staff was gently thrown at the astonished minister, on whose legs it fell soft as a lock of wool, and sank to the ground without rolling.

Mr. Mompesson perceiving that the evil spirit especially persecuted his poor children, sent them to lodge at a neighbour's house, taking his eldest daughter, a child of ten, into his own chamber, which the drummer had not disturbed for a month before. As soon, however, as the child was snug in bed, relying on its safety in its father's room, the cruel drummer again began his pranks, answering questions by raps on the drum. It was also noted, with horror, that the terror at the knocking spread like an infection to even the animals; for when the noise was loudest, and burst out with the most sudden and surprising violence, no dog about the house would move, though the rapping was so violent, and boisterous, and rude, that it could be heard, like some gigantic death-watch, far across the fields, and even awakened neighbours of the Mompessons in the village, which was at some distance.

On the 1st of November, 1662, the spirit displayed himself in a new character. A serving-man, who was in the children's room listening to the supernatural sounds then raging, suddenly, in the full daylight, and in the presence of a crowd of frightened neighbours, observed two of the floor-planks move. Upon this he half mockingly asked the spirit to give him one of them. Instantly the board glided within a yard of him. He then said defiantly, and proud of the response to his wish, "Let me have it in my hand," upon which it pushed close to him. He thrust it back several times, but each time it returned to him. This trick the ghostly plank repeated twenty times, till Mr. Mompesson, disliking any communication with the spirit that tormented the house, "forbade such familiarities." That same day a sulphurous smell spread through the room, proving clearly to those simple Wiltshire people that the whole affair was diabolical in its origin. Soon after that, the neighbour's house in which the children

were being full of visitors, beds were made up for the little ones in the parlour, which no ghostly sounds had yet disturbed. Very soon here invisible hands began in the darkness to pluck them by the hair and night-clothes, but no drummings were heard.

About the end of December, 1662, the drummer seemed to grow tired, but there was next nightly heard a noise like the jingling of money, and tossing and clashing of coins. It was soon remembered that Mr. Mompesson's mother had, the day before these sounds began, been joking about the money fairies were sometimes said to leave to favoured persons, saying that, if the drummer would only leave some money to pay for the trouble he had caused them, she would forgive him. After this the spirit took to small mischievous tricks. On Christmas Eve, a little before day, one of the younger boys getting out of bed in the half-darkness, was hit upon a sore part of his heel with the latch of the door; a latch, moreover, peculiarly difficult to unfasten. The night after Christmas Day, the clothes of old Mrs. Mompesson were thrown about the room, and her Bible was hidden in the ashes.

The spirit then began to persecute John, a servant of Mr. Mompesson, "a stout fellow and of sober conversation." For several nights together, hands tore the bed-clothes off him, or, if he held them fast, struggled with him for them. Sometimes his shoes were thrown at his head, or he was held as if bound hand and foot. But he always found that when he reached for his sword and struck round with it, he became free, a certain proof, to any one not blinded by superstition, that the spirit was mere flesh and blood after all.

A short time after this, a son of Mr. Bennet, a neighbour of Mr. Mompesson's, with whom the drummer had once worked, came and stopped a night at Tedworth, and told Mompesson of threats the drummer had uttered when he was arrested. His servant slept with John the persecuted. That night, as soon as they were in bed, the drum was beat violently in Mr. Bennet's room, upon which he rose and called his man. The moment the man had gone, John heard a rustling sound in his chamber, and somebody, as if dressed in silk, came to his bedside. The fellow instantly reached for his sword, usually so efficacious, but, to his horror, he found it held firmly from him, and it was only with much difficulty and tugging that he

at last got it in his grasp; and, as soon as he had, the spirit, whose incorporeal essence seemed always to dread cold steel, at once left him.

The spirit was versatile. Early in January, 1663, there began to be a singing in the chimney before the spirit appeared. One night, lights like corpse-candles were seen about the tormented house. A blue and glimmering flame came into Mr. Mompesson's chamber, and those who saw it felt a pain in the eyes. After the light, some one, apparently without shoes, was heard coming up the stairs. The light was seen, four or five times, in the children's rooms, and the doors were opened and shut, at least ten times. When they were opened, half a dozen persons seemed to enter and walk round the room, and Mr. Mompesson himself heard the rustling of silk. At last the spirit openly avowed his evil design. During the knocking, a gentleman, who with Sir Thomas Chamberlain and others was present, said boldly, "Satan, if the drummer set thee to work, give three knocks, and no more." Three knocks, and no more, were then at once distinctly given. The gentleman knocked again after that to see if it would answer him as usual, but it did not. He then bid it, if it were the drummer, to give four knocks, and no more, that night, which it did, and left the house quiet all the night after.

On Saturday morning, January the 10th, an hour before day, the ghost beat outside Mr. Mompesson's chamber, then went to the other end of the house, where some gentlemen visitors were, played four or five tunes at their door, then passed away. The next night, a blacksmith from Tedworth sleeping with John the servant, there was a noise in the room as of shoeing a horse, and something came like a pair of pincers, and snipped at the smith's nose half the night. It was now universally allowed in Wiltshire that the vagrant drummer had bewitched Mr. Mompesson's house and household, and countless visitors came to see the place, and hear the sounds. The possibility of their being caused by some knavish servant, acquainted with secret passages in the walls or roof, seems to have been entirely ignored, except by a few stubborn sceptics, who from the beginning declared the whole affair to be a rank imposture.

New manifestations soon appeared as the tricksters grew more daring. One morning Mr. Mompesson, rising to go a journey, heard a great noise below, where the

children lay, and running down with a pistol in his hand, heard the cry of "A witch! a witch!" but on his entrance all became quiet. The ghost that feared cold steel seems also to have had a respect for hot lead.

One night, after playing many apish tricks at the foot of Mr. Mompesson's bed, the ghost went to one of his daughters' beds, and passed under several times, lifting up the bed as it passed. There were three kinds of noises heard in the bed, and on thrusting at the ghost with a sword, it seemed to shift and avoid the thrust, but still continued the movement. The night after it came panting like a tired dog. On a servant taking up a bed-staff to strike at the invisible intruder, the staff was snatched out of her hand and thrown away; and when visitors came up to see the room there was a sulphurous smell and a heat, though it was sharp winter at the time. The spirit kept up this panting and scratching for an hour and a half, then went into the next chamber and knocked a little, and seemed to rattle a chair. This was done for two or three nights together. After this the old lady's Bible was again found in the wood ashes. The next night the Mompessons strewed ashes over the room to see what footprints would be left, and the next morning found, to their horror, the print of a great claw, some unintelligible letters, and many circles and scratches.

About this time a distinguished visitor came to Tedworth, no less a person than the Reverend Joseph Glanvil, chaplain in ordinary to his most worthless majesty Charles the Second, a Fellow of the Royal Society, and an intimate friend of Baxter and Mr. Boyle. He came, full of credulity, to investigate the case and report on the remarkable phenomena.

"I went to bed," he says, "the night I was there, about eight of the clock, when a maid-servant, coming down from the children, told us that it was come. The neighbours that were there, and two ministers who had seen and heard it divers times, went away, but Mr. Mompesson, I, and a gentleman that came with me, went up. I heard a strange scratching as I went up the stairs, and, when we came into the room, I perceived it was just behind the bolster of the children's bed, and seemed to be against the tick. It was as loud a scratching as one with long nails could make upon a bolster. There were two little girls in the bed, between seven and eight

years old, as I guessed. I saw their hands out of the clothes, and they could not contribute to the noise that was behind their heads. They had grown used to it, and had still somebody or other in the chambers with them, and, therefore, seemed not to be much affrighted. I standing at the bed's head thrust my hand behind the bolster, stretching it to the place where the noise seemed to come, whereupon the noise ceased there, but was heard in another part of the bed; but when I had taken out my hand, it returned, and was heard in the same place as before. I had been told it would imitate noises, and made trial by scratching several times upon the sheet, as five, and seven, and ten, which it followed, and then stopped at my number. I searched under and behind the bed, turned up the clothes to the bed-cords, pushed the bolster, sounded the wall behind, and made all the search I possibly could to find if there were any trick, contrivance, or common cause of it. The like did my friend, but we could discover nothing. So that I was then verily persuaded, and am so still, that the noise was made by some demon or spirit. After it had scratched about half an hour or more, it went into the middle of the bed under the children, and there seemed to pant, like a dog out of breath, very loudly. I put my hand upon the place, and felt the bed bearing up against it as if something within had thrust it up. I grasped the feathers to feel if anything living was in it. I looked under and everywhere about to see if there were any dog or cat, or any such creature, in the room, and so we all did, but found nothing. The motion caused by the panting was so strong that it shook the room and windows very sensibly. It continued thus more than half an hour, while my friend and I stayed in the room, and as long after, as we were told. During the panting I chanced to see something (which I thought was a rat or mouse) moving in a linen bag that hung up against another bed that was in the room. I stepped and caught it by the upper end with one hand, with which I held it, and drew it through the other, but found nothing at all in it. There was nobody near to shake the bag, or if there had, no one could have made such a motion, which seemed to be from within, as if a living creature had moved it. . . . It will then be said by some that my friend and I were under some affright, and so fancied noises and sights that were not. This is the eternal evasion. But if it be possible to know how a man

is affected when in fear, and when unconcerned, I certainly know, for my own part, that during the whole time of my being in the room and in the house, I was under no more affrightment than I am now while I write this relation. And if I know that I am now awake, and that I see the objects that are before me, I know that I heard and saw the particulars I have told. There is, I am sensible, no great matter for story in them, but there is so much as convinceth me that there was somewhat extraordinary, and what we usually call preternatural, in the business."

That same night Mr. Glanvil and his friend slept in the haunted chamber, and slept well; but about four o'clock in the morning a great knocking came, just without their chamber door. Glanvil started up and asked who was there, several times, but the knocking still continued. At last mastering courage, Mr. Glanvil said:

"In the name of God who is it, and what would you have?"

To which a voice answered, "Nothing with you."

Taking it to be a servant who had mistaken the door, Mr. Glanvil then lay down and went to sleep. But on telling Mr. Mompesson at breakfast, he was assured that no servant slept near that room, or had business there, and that none of the servants were up till after daybreak. Nor did the supernatural events of that night end there. For presently one of Mr. Glanvil's servants came and told him that his horse was all in a sweat, and seemed to have been ridden all night. The groom being asked, said it had been well fed and dressed as usual; but that day, after a mile or two only over plain down, the horse fell lame, and died in two or three days after the completion of the journey.

The disturbances now grew worse than ever. Lights came in the morning into the children's chamber, and voices cried "A witch! a witch!" for a hundred times together. Another time, in the daylight, Mr. Mompesson, seeing some wood move in the chimney of the room where he was, discharged a pistol at it, and (no doubt hitting the rat that caused the movement) soon after found several drops of blood on the hearth and on the stairs. For two or three nights after that the ghost was quiet; then it came again and began to torment a little child just taken from nurse. It would not let the child sleep for two nights together, and if candles came into the room they were carried away high up the chimney, or thrown under the bed. The ghost

nearly frightened the child to death by leaping upon it, so that again the children had all to be removed. The next night, something, about midnight, came up the stairs and knocked at Mr. Mompesson's door; but he lying still, it went up another pair of stairs to the man's chamber, and to John it appeared, in what shape and proportion he could never correctly describe, but large, and with two red glaring eyes fixed steadily upon him, of that he was sure. It then quietly disappeared.

Another night, when strangers were present, it purred like a cat in the children's bed, and lifted up the clothes and the children, though six men held them down. The children were then removed to a second bed, that the first might be ripped open, but the annoyance began again worse than before. This continued four hours, till the children getting their legs bruised against the bedposts, had to rise and sit up all night. At other times ashes were strewn in the bed, and one night a long pike-iron was placed in Mr. Mompesson's bed, and in his mother's a naked knife upright.

In April, 1663, a gentleman staying with the Mompessons, found one morning that all the money in his pocket had turned black in the night, and a few days after Mr. Mompesson discovered his favourite horse in the stable with one of its hind feet jammed in its mouth. Later in the month, for several nights together, Tedworth House was beset with seven or eight ghostly shapes, which, when a gun was discharged, shuffled away together into an arbour and disappeared.

In the mean time the real drummer had been going from bad to worse, and was at last committed to Gloucester Jail for stealing. While in that place of durance, a Wiltshire man came to the prison from curiosity, and the warlock asked what news there was in Wiltshire. The visitor said, "No news."

"No," quoth the drummer. "Did you not hear of the drumming at a gentleman's house at Tedworth?"

"Yes, I've heard enough of that," said the Wiltshire man.

"Ay," replied the drummer, "I've plagued him, and he shall never be quiet till he hath made me satisfaction for taking away my drum."

Upon this being reported to Mr. Mompesson, the man was taken and tried for a wizard at Salisbury. The drummer was indicted under the Act (first James the First, chapter twelve) against any one who fed, employed, or rewarded any evil spirit.

The grand jury found a true bill, but the petty jury acquitted him, though it was proved that he had boasted of books he had bought from an old wizard. While in prison the drummer sent to Mr. Mompesson to say, if he would give him leave to work for him as a harvest-man, he did not question that he could do him good in the matter of the noises. To this the Wiltshire squire, with discreet horror of wizards and witches, prudently replied, that he knew the man could do him no good in any honest way, and therefore he would none of him.

Soon after this, Mr. Hill, a friend of Mr. Mompesson, told the story of the drummer to a Somersetshire quack doctor. This man assured him that Tedworth House had become a rendezvous of witches, and that for a hundred pounds he would undertake to rid the house of all disturbances. He then, to prove his power, took up a looking-glass that was in the room, and asked Mr. Hill whom he desired to see. Mr. Hill replied his wife, who was then many miles distant. He looked, and at once saw in the glass the exact image of his wife, working at her needle.

"The gentleman himself," says Glanvil, "averted that to me, and he is a very sober, intelligent, and credible person." After about two years' vexation the ghostly Tedworth drummer finally laid down his obnoxious instrument.

Mr. Mompesson was much annoyed at the time by reports that the noises were the result of mere imposture, and wrote a public announcement denying that he had ever made any such confession. He really seems to have been an honest man, fully impressed with a belief in the supernatural character of the visitation. Mr. Glanvil says of him: "He is a gentleman of whose truth in this account I have not the least ground of suspicion, he being neither vain, nor credulous, but a discreet, sagacious, and manly person, neither crazy nor imaginative." He suffered by the affair in his name, estate, and general peace of his family. Sceptics called him an impostor. Many others declared his misfortune to be the judgment of God against him for some notorious wickedness or impiety. His estate was injured by the concourse of visitors, and servants could hardly be induced to live with him. The king himself sent gentlemen to hear the noises, but nothing was seen or heard that night: a fact which delighted the disbelievers.

The whole story is a very remarkable instance of a long sustained, apparently

purposeless, yet successful imposture,* and is a good example of the superstitions prevalent in the reign of Charles the Second. The noise seems to have been the result of some secret conspiracy of servants, whose intimate knowledge of the nooks and crannies of the house probably rendered them able to constantly vex and alarm the inmates, especially when the notion of ghosts and witches had been once started, and confirmed by the rapping. The rats, with whom the old wooden house was no doubt full, probably played a subordinate but important part in the same supernatural visitation. Addison afterwards wrote a comedy on this vexatious imposture.

A CHOICE.

In yonder mansion in the park
There dwells a man of money,
He owns both gold and ships and land,
And all his days are sunny;
He in a gilded chariot, drawn
By prancing greys, goes stately,
His face is something grim for one
Whom Fortune loves so greatly.

Hard by the park a peasant thight
His straw-thatched hut hath chosen,
He owns a jackass and a cow,
And cocks and hens—a dozen;
He toils afield from morn to night,
And seldom looketh sadly,
But hath a merry face for one
Whom Fortune treats so badly.

* It is but justice to the modern believers in the Drummer of Tedworth to give the following communication, lately received by us from a Wiltshire correspondent: "I have known the house in question for about thirty years. I have had, therefore, a good opportunity of testing the accounts given by people in the neighbourhood. I formerly knew an old lady who, in her young days, lived in the house. I have compared her accounts given with others I obtained from other old people, and they all agree in this, that there was, in or about the house, something they could not understand. They all agree in this account, that about midnight a terrific noise commenced in the top of the house, similar to the beating of a side-drum, only much louder. This continued until near morning incessantly. The house has been repaired at different times, and occupied, soon, however, to be deserted, the people declaring they could not live there for the incessant drumming. About fourteen years ago I was working on the Tedworth estate for T. Assheton Smith, Esq., of fox-hunting notoriety. The house was then repaired, and put in habitable order, for the holding of the national school (it had been shut up for six years before this). Two sisters went there as schoolmistresses, with whom I was well acquainted. They could not stay there, and in consequence the school was removed to another building. I ridiculed the assertions of these young women, but neither ridicule nor banter could turn them from their story, and it was the old one—the incessant drumming. I may further say that all those of whom I have inquired agree in their assertions that there is something supernatural in connexion with the house. The house stands in a very pleasant situation in a meadow in close proximity to the churchyard. It is a brick-built house. I have been in it many times. I believe there is no more wood used in the building than there would be in ordinary buildings, the partitions, &c., being, as near as I can recollect, of bick, four inches in thickness."

The gentleman a daughter hath.
Too proud for common gallants,
Her face is somewhat coldly cut,
But she has wondrous talents.
For Maud hath slowly nurtured been
By a wise man from college;
She plays Beethoven, sings with taste,
And brimful is of knowledge.

The peasant has a daughter too,
Some happy wight may win her;
Poor Bessie cannot play or sing,
Though she can cook a dinner.
She milks the cow, she weaves the wool,
Knits stockings for her father,
Her cheek is redder than the rose
You from her porch may gather.

Now both were fair and both were sweet,
Both willing to be mated,
And many a day between the two,
My wild heart oscillated.
Between the cottage and the hall
I spent a wild existence,
And watched the maidens as a hawk
Eyes chickens from a distance.

At last the lady's learned eyes
And white brow made me falter,
I spoke and wooed that maiden wise,
And led her to the altar.
Heigho! close by dwells Bessie, wed
To one of lowly station;
She milks, she spins, and she can love;
But Maud has—cultivation!

STAGE WHISPERS.

WHEN the consummate villain of melodrama mysteriously approaches the footlights, and, with a scowl at the front row of the pit, remarks, "I must dissemble," or some such words to that effect, it is certain that he is perfectly audible in all parts of the theatre in which he performs; and yet it is required of the personages nearest to him on the stage—let us say, the rival lover he has resolved to despatch and the beauteous heroine he has planned to betray—that they should pretend to be absolutely deaf to his observation, the manifest gravity of its bearing upon their interests and future happiness notwithstanding. Moreover, we who are among the spectators are bound to credit this curious auricular infirmity on the part of the lover and the lady. We can of course hear perfectly well the speech of their playfellow, and are thoroughly aware that from their position they must of necessity hear it at least as distinctly as we do. Yet it is incumbent upon us to ignore our convictions and perceptions on this head. For, indeed, the drama depends for its due existence and conduct upon a system of connivance and conspiracy, in which the audience, no less than the actors, are comprehended. The make-shifts and artifices of the theatre have to be met half-way, and indulgently accepted.

The stage could not live without its whispers, which, after all, are only whispers in a non-natural sense. For that can hardly be in truth a whisper, which is designed to reach the ears of some hundreds of persons. But the "asides" of the theatre are a convenient and indispensable method of revealing to the audience the state of mind of the speaker, and of admitting them to his confidence. The novelist can stop his story, and indulge in analytical descriptions of his characters, their emotions, moods, intentions, and opinions; but the dramatist can only make his creatures intelligible, by means of the speeches he puts into their mouths. So, for the information of the audience and the carrying on of the business of the scene, we have soliloquies and asides, the artful delivery of which, duly to secure attention and enlist sympathy, evokes the best abilities of the players, whom it behoves to invest with an air of nature and truth-seeming purely fictitious and unreasonable proceedings.

But there are other than these recognised and established whispers of the stage. Voices are occasionally audible in the theatre which obviously were never intended to reach the public ear. The existence of such a functionary as the prompter may be one of those things which are "generally known," but the knowledge should not come, to those who sit in front of the curtain, from any exercise of their organs of sight or of sound. To do the prompter justice he is rarely visible, but his tones, however still and small they may pretend to be, sometimes travel to those whom they do not really concern. One of the first scraps of information acquired by the theatrical student relates to the meaning of the letters P. S. and O. P. Otherwise he might, perhaps, have some difficulty in comprehending the apparently magnetic attraction which one particular side of the proscenium has for so many of our players. We say *our* players advisedly, for the position of the prompter is different on the foreign stage. Abroad, and, indeed, during alien and lyrical performances in this country, he is hidden in a sort of gipsy-tent in front of the desk of the conductor. The accommodation provided for him is limited enough: little more than his head can be permitted to emerge from the hole cut for him in the stage. But his situation has its advantages. He cannot possibly be seen by the audience; he can conveniently instruct the performers without requiring them "to

look off" appealingly, or to rush desperately to the wing to be reminded of their parts; while the sloping roof of his temporary abode has the effect of directing his whispers on to the stage, and away from the spectators. It seems strange that this system of posting the prompter in the van instead of on the flank of the actors has never been permanently adopted in this country. But our stage is steeped in the densest Toryism, and a change of the kind indicated would certainly be energetically denounced by a number of very respectable and sensible people as "un-English," an objection that is generally regarded as quite final and convincing, although it is conceivable, at any rate, that a thing may be of fair value and yet of foreign origin. "Gad, sir, if a few very sensible persons had been attended to we should still have been champing acorns!" observed Luttrell the witty, when certain enlightened folk strenuously opposed the building of Waterloo Bridge on the plea that it would spoil the river.

It is certain, however, that with the first introduction here of operatic performances came the gipsy-tent, or hut, of the prompter. The singers voted it quite indispensable. It was much ridiculed, of course, by the general public. It was even made the special subject of burlesque on a rival stage. A century ago the imbecility was indulged in of playing the *Beggars' Opera* with "the characters reversed," as it was called; that is to say, the female characters were assumed by the actors, the male by the actresses. This was at the Haymarket Theatre, under George Colman's management. The foolish proceeding won prodigious applause. A prologue or preliminary act in three scenes was written for the occasion. The fun of this introduction seems now gross and flat enough. Towards the conclusion of it, we read, a stage carpenter raised his head through a trap in the centre of the stage. He was greeted with a roar of laughter from the gallery. The prompter appears on the scene and demands of the carpenter what he means by opening the trap? The carpenter explains that he designs to prompt the performers after the fashion of the Opera House on the other side of the Haymarket. "Psha!" cries the prompter, "none of your Italian tricks for me! Shut up the trap again! I shall prompt in my old place; for we won't do all they do on the other side of the way, till they can do all we do on ours." So soundly English a speech is received with great cheering—the foreigners and their new-fangled ways

are laughed to scorn, and the performance is a very complete success.

To singers, the convenient position of the prompter is a matter of real importance. Their memories are severely tried, for, in addition to the words, they have to bear in mind the music of their parts. While delivering their scenes they are compelled to remain almost stationary, well in front of the stage, so that their voices may be thrown towards their audience and not lose effect by escaping into the flies. Meanwhile, their hasty movement towards a prompter in the wings, upon any sudden forgetfulness of the words of their songs, would be most awkward and unseemly. It is very necessary that their prompter and their conductor should be their near neighbours, able to render them assistance and support upon the shortest notice. But this proximity of the prompter has, perhaps, induced them to rely too much upon his help, and to burden their memories too little. The majority of singers are but indifferently acquainted with the words they are required to utter. They gather these, as they want them, from the hidden friend in his hutch at their feet. The occupants of the proscenium boxes at the opera-houses must be familiarly acquainted with the tones of the prompter's voice, as he delivers to the singers, line by line, the matter of their parts, and occasionally these stage whispers are audible at a greater distance from the footlights. In operatic performances, however, the words are of very inferior importance to the music; the composer quite eclipses the author. A musician has been known to call a libretto the "verbiage" of his opera. The term was not perhaps altogether inappropriate. Even actors are apt to underrate the importance of the speeches they are called upon to deliver, laying the greater stress upon the "business" they propose to originate, or the scenic effects that are to be introduced into the play. They sometimes describe the words of their parts as "cackle." But perhaps this term also may be accepted as applying, fitly enough, to much of the dialogue of the modern drama.

It is a popular notion that, although all persons may not be endowed with histrionic gifts, it is open to everybody to perform the duties of a prompter without preparation or study. Still the office requires some exercise of care and judgment. "Here's a nice mess you've got me into," said once a tragedian, imperfect in his text, to an inexperienced or incautious prompter. "What am I to do now? Thanks to you, I've been

and spoken all the next act!" And the prompter has a task of serious difficulty before him when the actors are but distantly acquainted with their parts, or "shy of the syls," that is, syllables, as they prefer to describe their condition. "Where have they got to now?" he has sometimes to ask himself, when he finds them making havoc of their speeches, missing their cues, and leading him a sort of steeple-chase through the book of the play. It is the golden rule of the player who is "stuck"—at a loss for words—to "come to Hecuba," or pass to some portion of his duty which he happens to bear in recollection. "What's the use of bothering about a handful of words?" demanded a veteran stroller. "I never stick. I always say something and get on, and no one has hissed me yet!" It was probably this performer, who, during his impersonation of Macbeth, finding himself at a loss as to the text soon after the commencement of his second scene with Lady Macbeth, coolly observed: "Let us retire, dearest chuck, and con this matter over in a more sequestered spot, far from the busy haunts of men. Here the walls and doors are spies, and our every word is echoed far and near. Come, then, let's away! False heart must hide, you know, what false heart dare not show." A prompter could be of little service to a gentleman so fertile in resources. He may be left to pair off with that provincial Montano who modernised his speech in reference to Cassio:

And 'tis great pity that the noble Moor
Should hazard such a place as his own second
With one of an ingraft infirmity.
It were an honest action to say
So to the Moor—

into "It's a pity, don't you think, that Othello should place such a man in such an office. Hadn't we better tell him so, sir?"

In small provincial or strolling companies it often becomes expedient to press every member of the establishment into the service of the stage. We read of a useful property-man and scene-shifter who was occasionally required to fill small parts in the performance, such, for instance, as "the cream-faced loon" in Macbeth, and who thus explained his system of representation, admitting that from his other occupations he could rarely commit perfectly to memory the words he was required to utter. "I tell you how I manage. I invariably contrives to get a reg'lar knowledge of the natur' of the *char-acter*, and ginnerally gives the haudience words as

near like the truth as need be. I seldom or never puts any of you out, and takes as much pains as anybody can expect for two and six a week extra, which is all I gets for doing such like parts as mine. I finds Shakespeare's parts worse to get into my head nor any other; he goes in and out so to tell a thing. I should like to know how I was to say all that rigmarole about the wood coming; and I'm sure my telling Macbeth as Birnam Wood was a-walking three miles off the castle, did very well. But some gentlemen is sadly pertickler, and never considers circumstances."

Such players as this must needs be the despair of prompters, who must often be tempted to close their books altogether. It would almost seem that there are some performers whom it is quite vain to prompt: it is safer to let them alone, doing what they list, lest bad should be made worse. Something of this kind happened once in the case of a certain Marcellus. Hamlet demands of Horatio concerning the ghost of "buried Denmark," "Stayed it long?" Horatio answers, "While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred." Marcellus should add, "Longer, longer." But the Marcellus of this special occasion was mute. "Longer, longer," whispered the prompter. Then out spoke Marcellus, to the consternation of his associates, "Well, say two hundred!" So prosaic a Marcellus is only to be matched by that literal Guildenstern who, when besought by Hamlet to "play upon this pipe," was so moved by the urgent manner of the tragedian, that he actually made the attempt, seizing the instrument, and evoking from it most eccentric sounds. But this is, perhaps, one of those stories of which the theatre is abundantly possessed, remarkable rather for their comicality than their truthfulness.

It is curious how many of the incidents and details of representation escape the notice of the audience. And here we are referring less to merits than to mischances. Good acting may not always obtain due recognition; but then how often bad acting and accidental deficiencies remain undetected! "We were all terribly out, but the audience did not see it," actors will often candidly admit. Although we in front sometimes see and hear things we should not, some peculiarity of our position blinds and deafens us to much. Our eyes are beguiled into accepting age for youth, shabbiness for finery, tinsel for splendour. Garrick frankly owned that he had once appeared upon the stage so inebriated as

to be scarcely able to articulate, but "his friends endeavoured to stifle or cover this trespass with loud applause," and the majority of the audience did not perceive that anything extraordinary was the matter. What happened to Garrick on that occasion has happened to others of his profession. And our ears do not catch much of what is uttered on the stage. Young, the actor, used to relate that on one occasion, when playing the hero of the Gamester to the Mrs. Beverley of Sarah Siddons, he was so overcome by the passion of her acting as to be quite unable to proceed with his part. There was a long pause, during which the prompter several times repeated the words which Beverley should speak. Then "Mrs. Siddons coming up to her fellow-actor, put the tips of her fingers upon his shoulders, and said, in a low voice, 'Mr. Young, recollect yourself.'" Yet probably from the front of the house nothing was seen or heard of this. In the same way the players will sometimes prompt each other through whole scenes, interchange remarks as to necessary adjustments of dress, or instructions as to "business" to be gone through, without exciting the attention of the audience. Kean's pathetic whisper, "I am dying, speak to them for me," when, playing for the last time, he sank into the arms of his son, was probably not heard across the orchestra.

Mrs. Fanny Kemble, in her Journal of her Tour in America, gives an amusing account of a performance of the last scene of Romeo and Juliet, not as it seemed to the spectators, but as it really was, with the whispered communications of the actors. Romeo, at the words "Quick, let me snatch thee to thy Romeo's arms," pounced upon his playfellow, plucked her up in his arms "like an uncomfortable bundle," and staggered down the stage with her. Juliet whispers, "Oh, you've got me up horridly! That'll never do; let me down. Pray let me down!" But Romeo proceeds, from the acting version of the play, be it understood:

"There, breathe a vital spirit on thy lips,
And call thee back, my soul, to life and love!"

Juliet continues to whisper: "Pray put me down; you'll certainly throw me down if you don't set me on the ground directly." "In the midst of 'crnel, cursed fate,' his dagger fell out of his dress. I, embracing him tenderly, crammed it back again, because I knew I should want it at the end." The performance thus went on:

ROMEO. Tear not my heart-strings thus!
They break! they crack! Juliet! Juliet!
(Dies).

JULIET (*to corpse*). Am I smothering you?
CORPSE. Not at all. But could you, do you think, be so kind as to put my wig on again for me? It has fallen off.

JULIET (*to corpse*). I'm afraid I can't, but I'll throw my muslin veil over it. You've broken the pial, haven't you? (*Corpse nodded*).

JULIET (*to corpse*). Where's your dagger?

CORPSE (*to Juliet*). 'Pon my soul I don't know.

The same vivacious writer supplies a corresponding account of the representation of *Venice Preserved*, in which, of course, she appeared as *Belvidera*. "When I went on, I was nearly tumbling down at the sight of my *Jaffier*, who looked like the apothecary in *Romeo and Juliet*, with the addition of some devilish red slashes along his thighs and arms. The first scene passed off well, but, oh! the next, and the next, and the next to that! Whenever he was not glued to my side (and that was seldom), he stood three yards behind me; he did nothing but seize my hand and grapple it so hard that, unless I had knocked him down (which I felt much inclined to try), I could not disengage myself. In the senate scene, when I was entreating for mercy, and struggling, as *Otway* has it, for my life, he was prancing round the stage in every direction, flourishing his dagger in the air. I wish to Heaven I had got up and run away; it would have been natural, and have served him extremely right. In the parting scene—oh, what a scene it was!—instead of going away from me when he said 'Farewell for ever!' he stuck to my skirts, though in the same breath that I adjured him, in the words of my part, not to leave me, I added, aside, 'Get away from me, oh do!' When I exclaimed, 'Not one kiss at parting!' he kept embracing and kissing me like mad, and when I ought to have been pursuing him, and calling after him, 'Leave thy dagger with me!' he hung himself up against the wing, and remained dangling there for five minutes. I was half crazy. I prompted him constantly, and once, after struggling in vain to free myself from him, was obliged, in the middle of my part, to exclaim, 'You hurt me dreadfully, Mr. —' He clung to me, cramped me, crumpled me—dreadful! I never experienced anything like this before, and made up my mind that I never would again."

Yet the ludicrous imperfections of this performance passed unnoticed by the audience. The applause seems to have been unbounded, and the *Jaffier* of the night was even honoured by a special call before the curtain.

We have little space for further record of the curiosities of stage whispers; but

here is a story of a communication of this kind which must have gravely troubled its recipient. A famous *Lady Macbeth*, "starring" in America, had been accidentally detained on her journey to a remote theatre. She arrived in time only to change her dress rapidly and hurry on the scene. The performers were all strangers to her. At the conclusion of her first soliloquy, a messenger should enter to announce the coming of *King Duncan*. But what was her amazement to hear in answer to her demand, "What is your tidings?" not the usual reply, "The king comes here to-night," but the whisper, spoken from behind a Scotch bonnet, upheld to prevent the words reaching the ears of the audience, "Hush; I'm *Macbeth*! We've cut the messenger out—go on please!"

Another disconcerted performer must have been the provincial *Richard the Third* to whom the *Ratcliffe* of the theatre—who ordinarily played *harlequin*, and could not enter without something of that tripping and twirling gait peculiar to pantomime—brought the information, long before it was due, that "the *Duke of Buckingham* is taken!" "Not yet, you fool," whispered *Richard*. "Beg pardon. Thought he was," cried *Harlequin Ratcliffe*, as, carried away by his feelings or the force of habit, he threw what tumblers call "a *catherine-wheel*," and made a rapid exit.

We conclude with noting a stage whisper of an old-established and yet most mysterious kind. In a book of recent date dealing with theatrical life, we read that the words "*John Orderly*" uttered by the proprietor of a strolling theatre, behind the scenes, or in the wings of his establishment, constitute a hint to the players to curtail the performances and allow the curtain to fall as soon as may be. Who was "*John Orderly*," and how comes his name to be thus used as a watchword? The life of *Edwin the actor*, written by (to quote *Macaulay*) "that filthy and malignant baboon, *John Williams*, who called himself *Anthony Pasquin*," and published late in the last century, contains the following passage: "When theatric performers intend to abridge an act or play, they are accustomed to say, we will *JOHN AUDLEY* it. It originated thus: In the year 1749, *Shuter* was master of a booth at *Bartholomew Fair* in *West Smithfield*, and it was his mode to lengthen the exhibition until a sufficient number of persons were gathered at the door to fill the house. This event was signified by a fellow popping his head in at the gallery door and bellowing out *JOHN*

AUDLEY! as if in an act of inquiry, though the intention was to let Shuter know that a fresh audience were in high expectation below. The consequence of this notification was that the entertainments were instantly concluded, and the gates of the booth thrown open for a new auditory." That John Audley should be in time corrupted into John Orderly, is intelligible. We don't look to the showman or the strolling manager for nicety or correctness of pronunciation. But whether such a person as John Audley ever existed, who he was, and what he did, that his name should be handed down in this way, from generation to generation, we are still left inquiring.

THE GROTTO OF HAN.

At last I have seen the Grotto of Han. For twenty years have I resolved to see this grotto; but something or other has always occurred to cross my purpose; and I have gone on looking wistfully at the passages in my Murray, or in my Continental Bradshaw, whereby the existence of the natural wonder is indicated, and the useful information is conveyed that it is not to be seen for less than five francs. Till last August the Grotto of Han had been continually dwindling in my mind, until it had become something like the dream of a past, in which one has never lived. The description I had read was anything but exhaustive, and had produced nothing that by the most violent use of terms could be called an image. Thanks to letter-press and pictorial art, including photography, there are certain foreign spots which are almost as familiar to him who never crossed the seas, as to the most inveterate of travellers. Who could not figuratively shake hands with the chief buildings of Venice as with old acquaintances, and give a nod of recognition to Niagara? Nevertheless, the Grotto of Han has been declared one of the marvels of the world, and Britons know next to nothing about it.

Perhaps the want of intimacy with the grotto may be attributed to the fact, that it is at once too near and too much out of the way. Perhaps, too, from a similar reason, a large number of the inhabitants of London have never set eyes on St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, curious though it be in itself, and on account of its many associations. Everybody who threads our streets must perforce see Temple Bar, but none, save those who have especial business and de-

sires in that quarter, ever find themselves in that long dull road that advances northwards from West Smithfield. The gate is too near to provoke the energy necessary for making it the object of an exclusive visit. One can see it at any time, and things that can be seen at any time are precisely those which are generally seen at no time. Again, it is too much out of the way to be seen by accident, save by a chosen few.

The Grotto of Han is in the south of Belgium, distant about five hours' carriage journey from Dinant, a picturesque town in the valley of the Meuse. Now, Dinant is very well known to a select circle of holiday-makers, and if this paper falls into the hands of one of these, he will marvel at my impertinence in stating the whereabouts of so familiar a place. I excuse myself with the declaration that to the ordinary class of tourists Dinant is not known at all, though possibly the new interest attached to Sedan may increase the number of its patrons, inasmuch as it lies in the line of railway connecting that city with Namur. Indeed, it is on record that within its precincts no American was ever seen, and we may safely assume that a place thus overlooked by our sight-hunting Transatlantic cousins is out of the usual routine.

There are two districts, equally easy of access, which are commonly neglected by travellers on the Continent, namely, Holland and South Belgium, both admirably worth seeing, the former on account of its quaint cities, so different from anything else in Western Europe, the latter on account of its natural scenery, its bold varieties of hill and dale singularly contrasting with the flatness of Flanders and Brabant. Neither of them lies on the chosen tracks to the Rhine, which to tourists practically begins at Cologne, and it is to the Rhine that nearly every one who sets foot in Ostend or Antwerp purposes to go, unless, indeed, he has selected Ostend as a seaside place, to be regarded as a Belgian Ramsgate. Bruges, Brussels, Ghent, Mechlin, fall of their own accord into the way of travellers from or to Ostend, who do not, however, care to stop for an hour or two at Louvain, and admire its wonderful town-hall; but as for South Belgium, an affectionate leave of it is taken at Verviers, save by the particular circle who stop at Spa and form a set by themselves. With the province of Namur none have anything to do. Nevertheless, nothing can be prettier than the scenery on the coast from Liege to the city of Namur, and thence to Dinant,

the journey being almost entirely performed in the valley of the Meuse.

To know Dinant is to like it, unless, indeed, the visitor is one of the worshippers of "gaiety," who think that the bustle of a London or Parisian season is to be sought all the world over, and to whom "dulness" is the ugliest word in the dictionary. At present its English patrons chiefly consist of anglers, to whom the Meuse is associated with prospects of jack and trout; and landscape painters, to whom its banks present a rich variety of subjects. Neither class is given to reckless extravagance, and there is this advantage in Dinant, that not only is the scenery highly picturesque, but the living is very good, very substantial, and very cheap.

Of the chosen few who patronise this retired little town, it might naturally be supposed that nearly all make a point of exploring the Grotto of Han, which is the great lion of the district, and of which a most elaborate and exciting description is given in a special book, published at Brussels some three years ago, and vended at the Namur station, where the traveller to Dinant is sure to stop. Nothing of the sort. I was nearly a week at Dinant, and dined at a table d'hôte, where people freely conversed, but not a soul did I meet who had either been or intended to go to the marvellous grotto. Everybody had heard that it was a wonder of wonders, but nobody had cared to test his information by personal experience. It was with the grotto as with supernatural apparitions. We meet over and over again with a man whose relative or friend has seen a ghost, but a man who has seen one with his own eyes is almost as rare a phenomenon as the ghost itself. When I announced my intention of hiring a carriage one fine morning, and starting for the grotto, a compassionate smile passed over the countenances of my temporary friends, and they wished me safe back again, in a tone that was more affectionate than encouraging.

The book, published at Brussels, which I had purchased at Namur, promised much. It was adorned with twelve lithographs, admirably executed, and strangely combining the beautiful with the ghastly; also with a large map, which suggested the notion that one was about to explore the interior of some vast, irregularly shaped crustaceous animal, without leaving out any of the smaller claws. Then every cavern and gallery had a name fitted to awaken

sensations of wondering awe. Thus there was a Gallery of Beetles, a Gallery of Frogs, an Incomparable, a Mysterious, a Marvelous, a Gallery of the Imprudent, a Boudoir of Proserpine, a Gallery of Cocytus. Nay, a bit of the River Lesse, on which stands the Wood of Boëm, a hill crowned with verdure, in which the grotto is contained, is named the Styx. To use a slang expression, the agony was well piled up. The letter-press, too, was on a level with the lithographs, the author cleverly striving between a Scylla and a Charybdis that threatened his progress. His object was, of course, to draw visitors to the grotto, and he clearly felt that if, on the one hand, he represented it as replete with dangers, he might repel where attraction was desirable; but that on the other hand, if he made out that its exploration was as free from peril as an ordinary getting up-stairs, he might damp curiosity. He therefore judiciously struck into a middle path, and showed that, although great dangers had been incurred in former times, those were all over now, but, nevertheless, that a wholesome source of danger was still to be experienced. "All accident," he says, "has now become impossible; but this not in the least detracts from the merit of the heroine who dares to enter there; she is certain to find a terrible place and a vast field of emotion."

Dimly enlightened by my book, I started for the grotto at eight o'clock in the morning, and early in the afternoon reached the small hotel, in the village of Han, where passengers are wont to alight and refresh themselves as best they may. The guides, three in number, were all engaged in escorting earlier visitors, and when, after a considerable delay, one at length made his appearance, it was only to inform me that he was going to take his dinner, and that I must condescend to wait a little longer. Nay, when the meal had been consumed, and he was again manifest, it was for the purpose of introducing me to a female guide, who conducted me and three others, who had joined me, to the entrance of the grotto, which was distant about a mile and a half from the hotel. There we should find him, after he had penetrated the grotto, entering the aperture which serves for the egress of the visitors. The walk, in the heat of a broiling sun, was weary, though through a picturesque country, and we were scarcely gratified when, on reaching the hoped-for entrance, we learned that the guide had not arrived, and that

it was customary to go some distance further, and contemplate the "Trou de Belvaux," a cavern through which the waters of the Lesse rush into the grotto with a tremendous noise, to leave it at the visitors' place of egress. The information we received to the effect that light articles, such as corks and the like, when flung into the stream at the "Trou de Belvaux," never reappeared at that point, was more curious than cheering. Were human beings certain to be more fortunate than corks?

Returning to the entrance of the grotto, we found the guide and a young woman waiting our arrival, took leave of our conductress, and walked into—what? Our eyes had been dazzled by a bright sunlight, and there was now nothing before them but a darkness visible, extending over a space which might have been infinite or extremely narrow. We were asked to sit down for awhile, and accustom our eyes to the contemplation of semi-obscurity, before we ventured further. This we did, and then on we went, our guides, male and female, carrying double lamps, which were only, however, sufficient to show the way. When any object of interest was to be seen the guide set fire to large heaps of straw, which lighted up, in strange weird fashion, the caverns, at once gloomy and gorgeous, through which we successively passed.

These caverns, or "halls" (salles) as they are called, are most richly adorned with stalactites and stalagmites, the latter term denoting the formation of spar on the ground of the cavern, whereas the stalactites are suspended from above. Both, it may be observed, have the same origin, namely, the rain-water which penetrates the grotto from above. When this descends too abundantly to remain suspended as a stalactite, and falls to the ground, the formation of the stalagmite has commenced, to be continued by the addition of new material. In some instances specimens of the two formations may be found joined together, so as to make one continuous column. A third kind of formation takes place along the sides of the caverns, and in this case all sorts of fantastic drapery are produced.

When I say that the number of caverns is so considerable that they cannot be explored in much less than three hours, that the largest of them is three hundred feet high, and that all of them are incrustated with ornaments of nearly every shape and size, from that of a tall massive column or mausoleum to that of a tiara of glittering

diamonds, I may trust the reader to imagine that the Grotto of Han presents a spectacle of no ordinary magnificence. Moreover, the natural wonders derive a supernatural appearance from the uncertain light which renders them visible, and produces the most violent contrasts of light and shade. Frequently the guide, taking a quantity of burning straw in his hand, and achieving a series of seemingly perilous leaps from point to point, looked like a fiend, frantically exulting in the glories of Pandemonium, though, seen by the light of day, he was as prosaic a specimen of civil humanity as one would care to behold. Let me observe that his apparent dangers made an appeal to our sympathies which could not possibly fail. Nero himself, had he been in the Grotto of Han, could not have been indifferent to the fate of his guide. What would have become of us four poor creatures if our conductor had broken his leg, not to say his neck? We must have awaited the arrival of another guide with another party, which perhaps would not take place till the following day, and should probably have amused ourselves by meditating on the doom of these unlucky corks that entered the grotto never to reappear.

I have observed that whereas only a chosen few can appreciate the sublime or the beautiful, nearly everybody can be struck by a coincidence. With a knowledge of this peculiarity of human nature, the guide, following the example of the guide-book, was never more delighted than when he could point out a resemblance between one of the numerous formations in the grotto and some remote object. A head of Socrates, in strange conformity with recorded portraits, a lumpish approximation to humanity, honoured with the name of Saint Nicholas, stand high among the wonders of that wondrous place, but above all is the semblance of a swan, hung by the neck, with extended wings. Even painters of dead game would scarcely select for a subject that noble aquatic bird, whereby we symbolise Shakespeare, in such an unpleasant predicament, and surely it is odd that such a combination should arise from the fortuitous petrification of rain-water. Ah, my friend! when every variety of combination is possible, why should we wonder even at a copy of your face or mine? More interesting than that hanged swan is a broad curtain, which descends in massive folds, and which, a light placed behind it, is seen to be semi-transparent.

Sated with wonders, we at last, accompanied by our guides, entered a broad boat, and gradually floated into the light of day, which, striking against the sides and roof of the cavern of egress, produced glorious effects. It is customary to test the echo of this cavern by firing a small cannon, but the experiment necessitates an expenditure of two francs, which we thought too high a price for an offensive noise, especially as we had already heard frequent echoes wakened by the shouts of our guide. We had seen and heard enough of subterranean marvel, and were not sorry to find ourselves in the world of ordinary humanity, within a few yards of the hotel. Our journey, I should observe, had been attended by a difficulty peculiar to the present year of grace 1871, which had not been contemplated by the author of the guide-book. Through the violent rains of the summer, the ground of the grotto had been so completely overlaid with slippery mud, that it is scarcely too much to say that we glided through nearly our entire journey. Even the rude stone steps that had been constructed at various points afforded us no relief, for they were muddy likewise, besides being in a very dilapidated condition. Such a state of things had been unknown, the guide informed me, for at least eighteen years.

The curiosities of the Grotto of Han amply repay the toil of those who enter to explore it. But what a life must be that of a guide, who goes through all the halls and galleries, three times a day, for a considerable series of months!

THE CASE OF JOSIAH MORSE.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. ADOLPHUS PECK found his way repeatedly to Pleasant-terrace, bent on ascertaining the state of his subordinate. His manner was most kind and pleasant, Mrs. Morse affirmed. It quite did her good to see him. He came late at night, generally whirling to the door in a cab, smoking his cigar, which he always abandoned before entering the house. So considerate, said Mrs. Morse, who didn't, however, in the least object to tobacco smoke. Mr. Peck was attentive even to beneficence. He brought, for the greater comfort of the invalid, baskets of grapes and bottles of choice French brandy.

"Mix him a good stiff tumbler of it, Mrs. Morse," he had said, in his cheery way, "it will do him all the good in the world."

But Doctor Block had strictly prohibited so violent a measure. That Mr. Peck meant well there could be no question; but his counsel, the state of the patient being considered, was most injudicious. Strong stimulants were, under the circumstances, particularly objectionable. Further, the polite secretary tendered for Mrs. Morse's acceptance a gift of hothouse flowers. The poor woman was overwhelmed with her gratitude. Mr. Peck won golden opinions of her. She declared him the nicest, kindest, most delightful gentleman she had ever met with. She felt that she should never be able to repay him for all his benefactions. She hoped that all her boys—or some of them at any rate—would grow up to be Mr. Pecks as near as might be. With a reduced measure of his vivacity, and what she called "flow of spirits," she admitted she could be content. But on the whole she deemed him an exemplar of manners, conduct, and aspect, such as her sons might well strive to imitate.

The secretary was most anxious that Josiah's best interests should be cared for; that he should not be urged prematurely to resume his duties; that ample time should be allowed for his complete restoration. This was the more kind of him, as Mrs. Morse held, because it was so clear that he was much inconvenienced by Josiah's absence. Though lively as ever in manner, he begun himself, poor gentleman, she noticed, to look pale and fagged. On this head he said nothing. But he was very particular in his inquiries concerning his clerk, how he looked, how he talked, what he said, what the doctor thought of him, whether his mind was still unsettled, and whether he still distressed himself about the accounts and affairs of the company, and so on. Mrs. Morse supplied him with all the information she thought prudent. But she still—fortified by the advice of Doctor Block—prevented a meeting between her husband and Mr. Peck. In this regard she was very resolute.

It could only be a coincidence, of course, there could be no real logical connexion between the two circumstances, but still it may yet be deserving of passing mention, that contemporaneously with Morse's illness there occurred a considerable depression in the prices of the stock and shares of the Great Company. There seemed to be a growing inclination among its proprietors to reduce the amount of their investments. Quotations fell, unaccountably, and an impression prevailed that the market had

been rather overburdened with Patagians. The secretary comforted inquirers.

"The bears are at work," he said. "They were bringing down Seringapatams last week; now it is our turn. We must expect that sort of thing to happen now and then. It's a conspiracy, that's what it is. They've determined on a fall. I'm bound to say they're doing it cleverly, and we can't stop them. But they'll be sold, you see if they won't. There'll be a sudden recovery, they'll overdo the thing, and then you'll find a lot of bears going about with sore heads. That will be the end of it."

He laughed pleasantly. Yet many people fancied—it might only have been fancy—that Mr. Peck had lost something of his old ease and light-heartedness of manner, that his mirth had now rather an artificial ring about it, that he was in truth anxious and nervously excited.

Still Mr. Peck, harassed as he was, found time to visit the Morses. And now he first let fall, in reference to Josiah's case, the word "asylum."

"You wouldn't take him from me, sir," cried poor Mrs. Morse, imploringly.

Mr. Peck spoke of "his directors," and their views and wishes. They could not be expected to go on as they had been going on. They were inclined to be liberal, but still, out of regard for the interest of those they represented, they were bound not to be extravagant. They were anxious for the restoration to perfect health of their official. Now, if this could be the sooner and the more economically effected by his brief sojourn in an asylum, under the care of the most competent physicians in the land, was it surprising, were they to be blamed, if they insisted upon some such course being adopted? Mr. Peck put it to Mrs. Morse, as a wife, a mother, a sensible woman, would not this be really the best thing to do for Josiah's, for her own, and the children's sake?

She burst into tears. "To think of my poor Josh being locked up in Bedlam!" she cried.

No, no; not Bedlam, he explained. Nothing of the kind. A strictly private and most comfortable asylum. Less an asylum, indeed, as the word was generally understood, than a home, the bosom of a peaceful and affectionate family, where every care and attention would be lavished upon him, where the best advisers were always at hand. Surely Mrs. Morse would not hesitate?

But she did. Could her husband, she

demand, find a home and a family, or care and attention, were she was not? She would not believe it. For the first time she began to think Mr. Peck was hard and inconsiderate, cruel, and even ungentlemanly. He persisted, always as the representative of his directors' views in the matter. "An asylum is really the best, the only place for him now, Mrs. Morse," he said at length. And then he hinted, in the gentlest way possible, that there would be danger of the company's generosity, in regard to the payment of Josh's salary, suddenly ceasing, if the course advised was not followed.

Still, with the obstinacy of despair, Mrs. Morse held out. Her husband should never, she said, with her consent, be torn from her side. She was persuaded ultimately, indeed she could scarcely decline, to consult Doctor Block upon the question, and to be guided in a great measure by his advice. On his side Mr. Peck undertook to bring down the company's consulting physician to consider the case of Josiah Morse.

To Mrs. Morse's extreme pain and horror, Doctor Block offered no objection to the measure proposed. He spoke with hesitation, he was without confidence in his opinion, still he was far from presenting any obstacle to the removal of his patient to an asylum. He even thought the step might be advantageous in "rousing" Josiah. In truth, perhaps, the doctor felt that the case was beyond him—out of the radius of his usual practice and comprehension. Naturally loth to lose a patient, yet, as a man of sense and feeling, it was clear to him that he could not resist a proposition in itself reasonable, which might be of real advantage to the invalid. Asylums were for the demented. Or why asylums at all? And was not Mr. Morse demented?

Mr. Peck brought down the consulting physician: he was called Doctor Blissett, a much younger man than Mrs. Morse had expected to see. He had a round, smooth face, was rather smartly dressed, and habitually wore a glass sustained in its place before his eye by the muscular action of his right cheek and brow. The two gentlemen had evidently smoked cigars in the cab that carried them to Pleasant-terrace. Moreover, Mrs. Morse was afterwards prepared to affirm that they smelt of spirits when they entered the house. They had possibly paused in the course of their journey, finding it a long one, to obtain refreshments. They were hilarious, and noisy,

and talkative to excess, the object of their visit being duly considered.

Doctor Blissett was led up-stairs, and admitted to a brief interview with Josiah in his bedroom.

"You're quite right," said the physician to the secretary, on returning to the parlour. "You're quite right. He must be locked up."

"Locked up!" cried Mrs. Morse, with some vehemence.

"I mean we must lodge him in an asylum," the doctor explained, a little abashed.

"You must take him away! But for how long?"

"Well, that depends. Until he gets better, I suppose."

"But what's to become of his children? What's to become of me? It will kill him!"

"Nonsense. Do him all the good in the world."

"Dear gentlemen, you won't do anything so cruel," pleaded Mrs. Morse, piteously.

"My good woman, it will be for his benefit. It's his only chance. You don't know how ill he is."

"I know he's not quite himself."

"Not quite himself? He's mad, quite mad, mad as a hatter," said the physician.

"No I ain't," Josiah was the speaker. He had entered the room with ghostly noiselessness. A bright-hued shawl hung about him like the robes of a peer, or of a stage king. He was very pale, but his eyes were now strangely bright. Still his face had lost its wild expression. He was excited and tremulous, but yet there was an air of intelligent resolution about him. He spoke in firm and decided tones, amid the solemn silence of his auditors.

"I *have* been mad, perhaps. I ain't sure about that. But I'm clear enough about most things now. I've been nearly driven crazy, may be. But I'm my own man again. Mr. Peck, you should know better. I told you of it before; the last time I was in the City; before my illness came on me. I warned you." Here Josiah pointed a gaunt denouncing forefinger at the secretary. "I told you I'd found out how things had been going on. You're a forger and a thief! That's what you are. You've robbed the company, you know you have. I'm sorry enough to say it. I wouldn't say it if I could help it. But it's true; you know it is. It's turned my brain thinking of it, and it's breaking my heart to say it now. Because I've respected you, because

I couldn't believe it of you, because I felt myself grateful to you and to those before you as was in the old firm where first I had employment. I thought it as likely as I'd robbed the shareholders myself as that you had. But the truth must be spoke. You're a wicked thief, and you know it; and I'm bound to expose you, and to give you in charge. As an honest man, I can't do less, though, God knows, I don't care to do it. Where's a policeman?"

"Hush, Josh, hush!" cried his wife, endeavouring to pacify him. She thought him raving. "Go up-stairs again, and lie down, there's a dear. Don't mind him, gentlemen."

"How dare he say these things to me?" demanded the secretary. His face was very white, and he was trembling in every limb.

"Be quiet, Peck. He's as mad as a hatter, of course. This proves it convincingly," urged the physician.

"Let go of me," said Josiah to his wife. "You've no cause to be frightened. It's true, every word, what I said, true as you're standing there. And I'll go before the Lord Mayor the first thing in the morning, and say it all over again. There's no mistake. Give me the company's books, and I can make good my words. There's been swindling going on, embezzlement, and forgery, and the shareholders have been plundered. Call me mad if you like, and lock me up out of sight in an asylum, away from my wife and children, but I'll prove these things first to the very letter, and then there'll be some one else as will be locked up besides me, Mr. Peck."

"You libellous scoundrel," cried the secretary. "You shall suffer for this. How dare you insult me like this? But it's actionable. You shall pay for it."

"Yes, it's actionable, and you shall pay for it, Mr. Peck. You shall appear at the Mansion House to-morrow. You shall answer my charge if you can. I gave you a chance. It was wrong of me, perhaps, but I couldn't help it. I thought of old times, and the credit of the firm, and of poor old Mr. Piper, my first benefactor, as is in his grave now, if he can stay there, poor soul, and these shameful things going on above ground. I warned you. You might have been off long ago. But you've stayed, to brazen it out, or to steal more money. But no, it shan't be. I won't have it. I'm a poor man, but I've been honest hitherto, and, please God, I'll keep so still, and these frauds shan't go on. I'll be a dupe and a tool no longer; nor I won't be

locked up as a madman because you're a thief. Get out of my house, or I'll have a policeman in, and give you in charge straight off."

"Mad, quite mad. I said so. Who can doubt it after this? Come away, Peck, or we shall go mad too, listening to these ravings."

So saying, the physician led away the secretary, the latter, with much agitation of manner, muttering threats and expostulations. For Mr. Peck seemed now much less convinced than his companion that Josiah Morse was mad.

Mad or sane, however, he pursued the secretary to his cab-door with repetitions, vehemently uttered, of the charge of forgery and fraud.

Mrs. Morse was in an agony of fear. What would the poor creature do next? He had turned upon his best friend, insulted and abused him shamefully, cruelly. Was she safe? Might he not now mistake her also for an enemy? He had even, she thought, gone near to striking the secretary. Would he strike her?

But, the visitors departed in their cab, Josh grew calm. He was weak and fatigued, and his eyes filled with tears. But he was quite rational. He kissed his wife tenderly, and inquired after the children. He soothed her fears, and bade her be of good heart, for now the worst was over. He was himself again. "Don't cry," he said; "they shan't part us."

Doctor Block had said of his patient that he needed "rousing." Well, apparently he had been now sufficiently roused, and with unmistakably good results. Later in the day the doctor called, and expressed gratification and surprise at Josh's improved condition. He tried to look as though he had been prepared all along for the disorder suddenly ameliorating in this way. "We must guard against a relapse, however," he thought it prudent to add.

"And about the asylum?" whispered Mrs. Morse, timorously.

"Well, at any rate the matter doesn't press. We'll talk of it some other day."

"And may he have what he likes?"

"Well, yes. Why not? Anything in reason."

"He's been asking for his pipe."

"Then let him have it. It can't hurt him."

"And his gin-and-water."

"I see no objection," said the doctor. Then with a sudden resumption of a professional air, he added, "Only—cold water,

and no sugar, or only one small lump if he seems to wish it very much. You'll be particular about that?"

CHAPTER VIII.

THERE was grave uneasiness in the City—great alarm, and then absolute consternation. The secretary of the Great Company was missing. He had been seen by several persons late in the afternoon cashing cheques of large amount in Lombard-street and its precincts. Afterwards, at eleven o'clock at night, a witness, present by the merest accident, had perceived a man, much muffled up, but whom he identified as no other than Mr. Adolphus Peck, stepping on board the Ostend steamboat at London Bridge Wharf. Important evidence had been adduced before the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House, and a warrant had been issued for the apprehension of the absconding official.

It avails little to dwell much more particularly on this portion of the narrative. The frauds with which the name of Peck is identified were not entirely unprecedented even in his time, and they have been frequently repeated, and even surpassed, by subsequent criminals. But for a considerable period the Great Patagonian Swindle, as it came to be called, absorbed attention and distressed society. It involved many in ruin. It disturbed credit and destroyed faith.

The shareholders, of course, suffered terribly, and after the swindler Peck had done his worst in the way of dealing vampire-fashion with their property, came that duly qualified and most reputable leech the Court of Chancery, to breathe more veins, and even to pick the bones of what was fitly called the corpus of their estate. Chancery, bankruptcy, liquidators, accountants, and the irrepressible and inevitable "gentlemen of the long robe" banqueted richly upon the body of the Great Company. They regarded the affair something in the light of a charity dinner, and, thoroughly gorged, and singing in chorus *Non nobis, &c.*, they tendered at last a small contribution in the shape of a twopenny halfpenny dividend to the hungry swarm of proprietors.

Still the ill wind, though it blew a prolonged gale, had its favourable gust for a few. Among these was Josiah Morse. He prospered more, perhaps, by the adversity of the Great Company than he had profited in its flourishing times. He was of great service to the liquidator and to the proprietors. His acquaintance with the concern

was intimate, and he afforded most valuable information in regard to it. It was, of course, upon his evidence that the Lord Mayor issued his warrant for the apprehension of Mr. Peck. Josiah, indeed, spared himself in no way; laboured most indefatigably to serve the interest of the creditors and shareholders. There was at one time even a talk of presenting him with a testimonial of some kind in recognition of his admirable exertions. This design—if it ever existed—was not carried into execution, however. It was held, perhaps, that inasmuch as Josiah had really done something to merit a testimonial, it was as well to depart from the prevailing rule, to make an exception in his case, and to give him—nothing. Still, this much was done for him, or rather effected by his own merits: he secured a good situation in the office of a City accountant of good standing and repute. There, hard-working, but fairly rewarded for his toil, and therefore happy, we will leave him, just noting that the baby was not christened Adolphus, as Mrs. Morse had at one time planned, and that that estimable woman has long ceased desiring that her sons should follow in the footsteps of Mr. Peck.

Doctor Block's experiences in regard to dementia were no doubt enlarged by his attendance upon Josiah Morse, during his grave illness. But it may be doubted whether the good doctor was ever thoroughly satisfied in relation to the peculiarities of the case. He decided at last that his patient had undergone an attack of temporary monomania or partial hallucination. He had perceived with perfect justice that much wrong-doing had been in progress about him in his official life, but, his mind being overbalanced by the sudden shock of this discovery, he had for a time attributed to himself the misdeeds of another, to whom he had been long accustomed to look up with inordinate reverence. Moreover, at this period his health had been much enfeebled by incessant labour and neglect of sanitary precautions; his overtaxed brain was predisposed to entertain delusions. Gradually, however, he had regained bodily strength, and his reason had in every respect been permanently restored. This view of Josiah's case, if not absolutely complete, will perhaps sufficiently meet the requirements of non-medical readers for explanation of the

matter. Certainly Josiah was never further afflicted with hallucinations, unless his firm convictions that he had the best wife, and was father to the finest family of children discoverable on the whole face of the habitable globe, are so to be considered. And if these be delusions, happy and enviable indeed is the husband who entertains them.

Of Mr. Peck it only remains to be said, that although tracked and pursued all over the Continent, he was not arrested at last, but, having exhausted all his available resources, he quietly surrendered to the officers of justice. He had enjoyed a prolonged foreign tour, which, although it involved much hurrying hither and thither, and incessant change of plan, had otherwise been as pleasant as liberal expenditure could make it. He was brought home for trial so long after the perpetration of his frauds that animosity had greatly cooled in regard to him, and the majority of people had no very clear recollection or opinion as to who he was, what he had done, or of what punishment, if any, he was deserving. The City has at all times a short memory, and is really so much occupied with the present that it has but a modicum of thought to bestow upon the past. A feeling even sprung up of sympathy with the accused; an inclination to view him as one who had, without doubt, pushed indiscretion to extremes, but who was yet entitled to some respect by reason of his audacity and enterprise. He was but languidly prosecuted. Of the heaviest charge he was acquitted amid general applause. Upon some minor count he was convicted, however, and was sentenced to two years' hard labour. Probably Mr. Peck's knowledge of business, engaging manners, and intrepid nature, may yet obtain for him further distinction and better success in the worlds of commerce and of speculation. One thing is very clear, however, Josiah Morse will never more be officer of his.

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BOOK II.

CHAPTER V. "SCENE: A STREET IN LYONS."

SUCH of the good people of Springside as took an interest in the affairs of their neighbours (and they were by no means a small proportion of the population), were both astonished and disappointed at no match being made up between the Reverend Onesiphorus Drage and the pretty widow, to whom the care of his child had been confided during his absence. The story of Mrs. Drage's last request, which was assiduously bruited about immediately after that good lady's death, had been received with a certain amount of discredit, and a large amount of scorn. Virgin noses, brought together in conclave at Dorcas meetings, had sniffed their contempt at Mrs. Pickering's boldness, and wifely lips had laughed in disdain at Mr. Drage's innocence, in thinking that any woman would not merely recommend her husband to fill her place, but would actually nominate her successor. Mr. Drage's temporary absence from Springside, and Mrs. Pickering's quasi-adoption of little Bertha, were regarded by the worthy townspeople as devised by the acuteness of the widow, who, bold as she might be, had not sufficient audacity to permit her courtship by the parson to be carried on "under the noses," as they expressed it, of those who had known his deceased wife. And when the news was spread that Mr. Drage was coming back, the usual amount of tea-table hospitality received a great impetus, and all the scandal-mongers of the place were expectant of their prey. The question

whether Mrs. Pickering would remain at the rectory was for some time debated with the keenest anxiety, until at last it was proved, to the satisfaction of all parties, that, whether she stopped or whether she went, she would be equally wrong. By stopping she would outrage all laws of society, and it would be a question whether a statement of the facts ought not to be submitted to the bishop; by going she would act most artfully, and take the surest step to induce the rector to invite her to come back to the house as its head.

Even the fact that Mrs. Pickering, immediately after the rector's return, took up quite a new line of life, and entered upon her duties as housekeeper to Sir Geoffrey Heriot, the new tenant of Wheatcroft, did not suffice to disabuse the Springsideites of their belief in her ultimate intentions about their rector. Mrs. Pickering had found the parson more difficult to ensnare than she had at first believed, said the worthy townsfolk to each other, and, though they were by no means aware of it, accredited her, as a disciple of Mrs. Peachum's doctrine, "by keeping men off you keep them on." Over the evening muffins and tea-cakes (Springside is renowned for its confectionery, and has given its name to a particularly luscious and sticky kind of bun) were breathed rumours that the housekeeper had already constituted herself a great favourite with her new master, whom she was reported to be "playing off" against her former employer. That there were reasons for these rumours was generally believed; even the most incredulous could not help admitting that, during the whole time he had held the living, the rector's visits had never been so frequent to any of his parishioners as they were now to Wheatcroft.

So ran the gossips' talk, which like nearly all gossips' talk, however exaggerated, had some truth in it. After the first shock of her revelation to him that she was no widow, but a woman who had been deserted by a husband yet alive, Mr. Drage had determined upon the line of conduct which he would for the future pursue in regard to Mrs. Pickering, and had carried it out to the letter.

"There is an end, then," he said to her, after a few minutes had passed away, and the first shock of astonishment and grief had subsided, "there is an end, then, to my dream of the last twelvemonth! It passes away as other dreams have passed before it; name, and fame, and—health; I have dreamed of all, and found none! It is wisely ordained, doubtless," he continued, "but—it is a great blow. I had built so on it; why, I know not, for, try my hardest, I could never find any expression in your letters which would lead me to believe you understood my feelings towards you; yet I had built so on it, I can scarcely believe even now that the whole fabric lies shattered at a word. We shall still be friends though, now?"

"Surely we shall still be friends!" she replied; "you cannot for an instant think that what you have said to me just now could cause any alteration in the regard and gratitude which I have always felt towards you."

"No," he said, somewhat nervously, "I suppose not."

"Rather," she continued, "should you think what perfect trust I must have in you to confide to you the secret of my life! There is no one else in the whole world who knows of my marriage; the fact has been concealed even from my sister; it is known but to me—and to him!"

There was a lengthened pause, during which, though Mr. Drage sat with his face shaded by his hand, it was evident he was under the influence of deep emotion. When he looked up again there were traces of tears upon his cheeks, and his voice was unsteady as he said, "Will—will what has happened make any difference in your decision upon Captain Cleethorpe's proposition?"

"No," she said, "it will not."

"And your decision is——?" he asked.

"To accept it without doubt," she replied. "Even had I a choice of the ways of life, I do not think I should hesitate in accepting what has been offered to me in such a kindly spirit, and which, quite

peaceful and retired as it must be, will suit me so well. That illness from which, under Providence, I was rescued by your kindness, robbed me of a certain amount of youthful strength, and left me unfitted for any very active employment; besides, I have formed friendships here, which I should regret giving up, and I should scarcely have the heart to commence anew in a strange place."

"You are right," said the rector, still sitting with averted face. "It was selfish, indeed, to imagine for an instant that you could come to any other decision. And it would not much matter to me," he added, struggling with his breaking voice; "my stay must be so very short."

The peculiarity of his manner struck Madge instantly.

"What do you mean, Mr. Drage?" she asked, laying her hand lightly on his sleeve.

"Simply," he said, removing his hand from his face, in which burned the hectic flush, which always fluttered there when under mental excitement, "I mean I could not trust myself to be near you, to be frequently brought within the charm of your presence, under the spell of your voice, without thinking of you as I have done during—during all the time I have been abroad. There was no sin in it then, Heaven knows! What I dared to hope in regard to you had been hoped by my dead wife, and was thought of almost as much in the interest of my little child as my own! Had you been free, and had rejected me, I should still have hoped, and hoping died; but what you have told me to-day renders such a thought of you a sin, and—and I am too weak to fight against it."

When he ceased he leaned back in his chair apparently quite overcome.

"You misjudge your own strength, Mr. Drage," said Madge, bending towards him; "you don't know yourself so well as I know you; you are physically weak just now, and overwrought by this interview, which has, indeed, been sufficiently trying to both of us, but after a few days' rest you will be yourself again, and you will find your inclination keeping you where your duty lies, sentinel at this outpost which has been committed to your keeping."

"You think so?" he asked, anxiously.

"I am sure of it," she replied. "Do not let me think that, with the full knowledge that you could be nothing more to me than a friend, you would refuse me that friendship, that counsel and comfort, of which I stand so much in need. It would be hard

indeed that the fact of my having confided to you the secret of my forlorn position, should have lost me that regard which I valued most!"

"My own folly would have been the cause, not what you told me," he interrupted.

"What I told you would have brought about the result which I am showing you," she replied. "And, again, where would the peaceful, happy future, which I have pictured to myself, be for me, with the thought that my remaining here had driven you out from amongst the people who love you, and with whom so many happy years of your life had been spent? Where would be my peace of mind when I reflected that all this wretchedness would have been spared to you and yours, had I not come among you in a false name and under a false pretence?"

He motioned with his hand for her to cease, then said in a low tone, "You must not speak thus of yourself."

"I must," she said, "for it is true! If you would silence me, accept the position I offer you and entreat you to take—be my dear, dear friend, helping me, as you have done, to fight the battle here, and to look for the reward—hereafter!"

And amid the tears which fell like rain down his wan cheeks she heard him say solemnly:

"I will!"

Not another word was uttered, but the compact which was entered into was nevertheless religiously kept. The next morning Captain Cleethorpe called upon Mrs. Pickering, and heard with great delight that she had determined on accepting the position which he had offered her, and seldom had the retired Indian officer cared to express his pleasure more openly.

"I don't mind telling you now, Mrs. Pickering," said he, "but this has been quite a pet project of mine. I was a bit doubtful about the padre at one time, and fond of him as I am, as we all are indeed, I should have been glad if he could have postponed his arrival for a few days. I knew the great interest he took in you, and I thought he might feel that the house of an old retired Indian officer, no matter how old or how retired, might scarcely be a fit place for you. However, I shall take an early opportunity of bringing Mr. Drage and Sir Geoffry Heriot together, and I am sure that they will get on remarkably well. What I want you to understand, and what I am sure you will feel as soon as you have

been a few days at Wheatcroft, is that your position of housekeeper will be simply a nominal one. By this I mean to say that it must have some name, and as you cannot be called military secretary, or commissary-general, or aide-de-camp, one is obliged to fall back upon the ordinary British formula. If I had had my way, I would have had you called chief of the staff; and if the old general only appreciates you as much as I expect, you will find your position both a confidential and a pleasant one."

Captain Cleethorpe's predictions came true to the letter. When, a few days afterwards, Sir Geoffry Heriot arrived at Wheatcroft, and Mrs. Pickering was personally introduced to him, with admirable tact, by the captain, she found in her new employer a man accustomed to command, so accustomed, indeed, as to be not unwilling to slip out of his buckram suit, and to have the burden of responsibility removed to other shoulders. Time had whitened Sir Geoffry's iron-grey hair, leaving it massed and curling as before, and blanched his small moustache, but the bronzed cheeks shone even more deeply red, in contrast with the white hair, and, under the bushy eyebrows, the glance of the dark eyes was prompt and expressive as ever.

Little time did it take Sir Geoffry Heriot to appraise the character and qualities of the new addition to his domestic circle. He had written for a housekeeper, and had expected to find a stout, elderly personage, of motherly presence and dubious grammar, who would take care that his dinners were ordered, his rooms dusted, and his linen aired; and would act as a species of buffer between himself and his tradespeople. What he found was, a young and handsome woman of good education, refined and lady-like in her manner; such a woman, in fact, as he might have met with on the rare occasions when he accepted some of his brother officers' hospitality in India, but such a one as he had not been brought into close or frequent contact with since his youthful days. Over the old man, strict disciplinarian, bitter, hardened cynic and woman-hater as he was, Madge Pierrepont exercised her accustomed influence. Not that, for one instant, Sir Geoffry Heriot dreamed of falling in love with her, the absurdity of such a proceeding in a man of his age towards a woman of hers, and the difference in their respective positions (a difference never insisted on, but, at the same time, never forgotten), would have prevented his allowing himself so to

blunder, even had he the smallest inclination. But he did not disguise from himself that the perpetual presence of such a woman around and about him, had a certain softening and refining influence, and that, week by week, his consideration for her increased, as she rendered herself more and more essential to his well-being, and to the comfort of all around him.

This influence was shown in odd and various ways. To Captain Cleethorpe, as a man of good position in his own profession, as the intimate ally of his friend, Colonel Goole, and as a gentleman who had taken some trouble in regard to the purchase of Wheatcroft, Sir Geoffrey was polite, and, to a certain extent, genial, placing himself, as it were, under the captain's wing, so far as the Springside society was concerned, accepting introductions to the retired Indians, both military and civil, at the club, and altogether so conducting himself as to give his acquaintances reason to believe that the stories of his cold hauteur, which had heralded his advent, were exaggerated, if not absolutely false. But when Captain Cleethorpe, a few days after Sir Geoffrey's arrival, drove out to Wheatcroft, taking with him the Reverend Onesiphorus Drage, the new tenant of that pleasant abode relapsed into such a state of ramrod stiffness, and curt phraseology, as rendered the visit anything but a pleasant one.

Determined not to be discouraged, on the next occasion of his meeting with the old officer, Captain Cleethorpe mentioned Mr. Drage's name, which elicited from Sir Geoffrey an expression of his contempt for what he was pleased to term "psalm smiting," and of his aversion to the clerical profession in general. Captain Cleethorpe did not pursue the subject, but took occasion later on, in the presence of other persons, to whom he apparently addressed himself, to tell the story of the manner in which Mr. and Mrs. Drage had tended Mrs. Pickering, during the illness which attacked her on her first arrival in Springside, and had devoted themselves to her on her recovery.

Sir Geoffrey said nothing at the time, but he requested Mrs. Pickering's attendance in the library that evening, and after handing her to a chair with as much ceremony as he would have shown in the old days to the wife of the Governor-General, he spoke to her on a few unimportant topics, and gradually led her to speak of the commencement of her first acquaintance with

Mr. Drage. Madge, who knew nothing of the reception which the rector had experienced at Sir Geoffrey's hands, spoke as she felt, in the warmest and most enthusiastic manner of her old friend. And the next day Sir Geoffrey called at the rectory, and took especial care to obliterate any traces of the ill-feeling which might be lingering in Mr. Drage's mind.

The acquaintance, thus strangely begun, speedily ripened. It was impossible for any one to be thrown much in company with the rector, so simple-minded in worldly matters, so steadfast and earnest in his calling, without becoming interested in him. Sir Geoffrey Heriot had met no such specimen of man before; during his career in India he had always regarded the regimental chaplain in the light of an objectionable, though necessary excrescence, and since his return home he had paid but little attention to the public rites of religion, or to those administering them. But he became so profoundly impressed with the views and conversation of his new-made friend when "out of the wood," as, in his old style of garrison slang, he was accustomed to speak of it, that Mr. Drage, rising in the reading-desk one Sunday, was astonished to find himself confronted by the martial figure of the old general, who paid strict attention to the service, and, on the next occasion of the rector's visit to Wheatcroft, was remarkably stringent in his criticism on the curate's sermon.

The plunge once made, the Sunday visit to the church became a regular habit, and the intercourse between this oddly-assorted pair of friends was much increased thereby.

The first and chief point of interest between them was, of course, their common regard for Mrs. Pickering. To sing her praises; to talk of her, as, indeed, he felt towards her now, after the schooling to which he had necessarily subjected himself, with something like brotherly affection; to dwell upon the regard which she had inspired in his dead wife, and the worship in which she was held by his little child, was the rector's greatest delight. To this hymn of praise the old general growled a supplementary chorus. The knowledge which, in the short time, he had gained of his friend's singleness of purpose and simplicity of character, rendered him confident of the sincerity of the rector's expressed opinion about Mrs. Pickering, and Sir Geoffrey often wondered why Mr. Drage had never attempted to supply the place of his late wife by one whom the deceased

lady esteemed so highly. "Perhaps the very reason!" the old warrior said grimly to himself; "if the rector is ever to fall a victim again, it will probably be to a totally different sort of person, some prattling and flirting jade, who will amuse herself by worrying his old age, and snubbing her step-daughter."

With little Bertha, indeed, Sir Geoffrey did not make friends. When, as not unfrequently happened, she accompanied her father to Wheatcroft, she almost invariably remained with Mrs. Pickering, while the gentlemen were smoking in the library or in the garden: and when occasionally the general came across her, he bestowed upon her but a slight and ceremonious greeting, in no way in accordance with his usual manner towards his adult visitors. Madge noticed this, but said nothing. One day Bertha was unwell. The next day Mr. Drage came tearing up to Wheatcroft in a fly, to announce that the doctor had declared the illness to be one of childhood's diseases in a virulent form, and to implore Mrs. Pickering's assistance, if Sir Geoffrey would consent to her going to the little patient, already clamouring for her.

Both agreed at once, the one heartily the other graciously, and Madge went, and was away from Wheatcroft for four days, installed in the sick-chamber.

Those were dull days for Sir Geoffrey Heriot. He missed the companionship he had grown accustomed to, and rebelled against the chance which had deprived him of it. The old, hard, cynical spirit in which he had erst revelled, came back upon him, and made itself his master once more; Riley and the other servants, who, under Madge's sway, imagined they had enjoyed a foretaste of Paradise, found out the difference, and were quickly relegated to the Inferno. If Mr. Drage could have come, he might have had some softening influence, but he was of course in constant attendance on his sick child.

When Mrs. Pickering returned she went straight into the library, where Sir Geoffrey sat over his newspaper. He rose to receive her, and offered his hand, in an old-fashioned, ceremonious manner.

"You are welcome back," said he. "I am glad to see you."

"The child is out of danger," said Madge, without reference to his remarks; "the doctor says she will live."

"I suppose that is a matter for congratulation?" said Sir Geoffrey, coldly.

"You suppose, Sir Geoffrey?"

"I have known a child grow up to be a

disgrace to his father, and a girl become a woman when she had better have died in childhood."

Madge looked at him. His face was set, and grey, and rigid, and, looking at it, she held her peace.

But she guessed what she had often suspected before, that Sir Geoffrey was the victim of some domestic trouble. What his previous private life had been she knew not; she had never inquired. All she knew of him was learned from himself, and he had never hinted at wife or family; but in the tone of his voice, and in the hardness of his manner, Madge recognised something more than his ordinary cynicism, and made up her mind that, in his reference to Bertha, he was alluding to a daughter of his own who had brought trouble upon him.

The subject had an unpleasant fascination for her, and at last she determined upon speaking about it to Captain Cleethorpe, who had been acquainted with Sir Geoffrey for many years, and would doubtless be able to set her mind at rest. So she seized her opportunity and spoke to him.

Had Sir Geoffrey been married? Captain Cleethorpe thought undoubtedly. Was the lady dead? Captain Cleethorpe thought no question of it. Had there been any family? Yes. A girl? Not that Captain Cleethorpe knew of. A boy, who had died? No, Captain Cleethorpe could not say he had died; the fact was—shy of mentioning these sort of things generally, don't you know, but between us, intimately connected with Sir Geoffrey, Mrs. Pickering, it don't matter—the fact was the boy had gone to grief, and nobody had ever known exactly what had become of him.

Gone to grief? Captain Cleethorpe meant that the young man had deserted his home, and perhaps been discarded by his friends. Madge found herself frequently cogitating about this boy. His position must be like Gerald's, she thought, as Gerald was when she knew him; but, according to Rose's account, Gerald had now been restored to his friends, and was living in happiness and affluence. Could not a similar reconciliation be effected between Sir Geoffrey and his son? From what she could make out from Captain Cleethorpe, sufficient time had passed to dull the keen edge of such injuries as either father or son might have imagined they had received. She would try her influence with Sir Geoffrey, but first she must find out who the young man was, and where and what he was then doing.

This discovery she made in an unexpected manner. Sir Geoffry had begged her to go through the contents of an old bullock trunk, which, on his arrival, had been stowed in the housekeeper's room, but which, when he came upon it in the course of a tour of inspection, he pronounced mouldy and broken, and only worthy of being got rid of. The contents were many and various. Some books, damp and musty smelling; several suits of light clothing intended for a hot climate, but now stained and mildewed; two or three faded uniform sashes; bits of dull and tarnished lace; a number of Indian newspapers tied together in a roll; and many letters and memoranda huddled together in hopeless confusion at the bottom of the trunk. Madge went carefully through this heterogeneous mass, and had put aside a certain number of papers for destruction, and another lot to await Sir Geoffry's decision, when, in taking up a letter, an enclosure dropped from it. It was a water-colour sketch, roughly but cleverly done, of a street in an old French town. Looking at it, she seemed to recognise the place at once as one perfectly familiar to her. There was the great two towered cathedral, with the market-place at its base, full of life and bustle; there were the cafés and the estaminet, with a big wooden barrel as a sign swinging over its portal; there was the cooper's with the billets of wood lying in front of his door; the glove-maker's, with the great wooden hand; there were even the hooded cabriolets, in which the peasantry had come in from the rural districts, and the dogs dragging the produce-laden barrels. Here it all was, just exactly as she had seen it. Seen it; she had never been abroad, and yet every detail in the picture was perfectly familiar to her.

Thinking it over, she had a strange recollection of Dobson, the manager at Wexeter, in a uniform and cocked-hat, and Mr. Boodle also in uniform, and old Minneken in tights and Hessian boots, with tassels to them—yes, now it all came back to her! Dobson was General Damas, Boodle was Claude Melnotte, and Minneken was Beauséant, the play was the *Lady of Lyons*, and the scene was one which Gerald Hardinge had painted for the Wexeter Theatre! They had all admired it, she remembered; they had all said, such of them as knew anything about it, how wonderfully true to nature it was. And Gerald had laughed, and said he had drawn it from an early

recollection. Nay, more, if she had wanted further corroboration, there were the initials "G. H." in the corner of the sketch.

How did Sir Geoffry Heriot come into possession of a sketch done six months ago by Gerald Hardinge? The letter would tell her that. She took it up and read it. It was written in a boy's round hand, dated from Lille, and commenced, "My dear father." Dull and uninteresting enough, written as though to order, detailing the course of his studies, and the unvarying manner of his life. It expressed a hope that the person to whom it was addressed would return in good health, and that they should soon meet. The last paragraph ran thus:

I think you will say that since I addressed you six months ago, I have made some improvement in my drawing; I take great interest in it, and am very fond of it. I send you a sketch of our market-place, which I copied from nature, and which, the professor says, is very good.

Your affectionate son,
GEORGE HERIOT.

As the letter fluttered to the ground, Madge Pierrepoint knew that Sir Geoffry Heriot's discarded son, and the scene-painter, Gerald Hardinge, were one and the same man.

THE WAHABEES.

WHO are the Wahabees, and why should the distressing murder of Mr. Justice Norman be laid at their door? There has been much correspondence in the newspapers, and considerable diversity of opinion on this head. Old Indian officials on the one hand, and intelligent Mahomedans on the other, have held forth for and against the theory that an English judge has been slaughtered by a Wahabee. Other murders by Indian fanatics have been cited; the personal experience and recollections of eminent men have been quoted, the movements of people known to be Wahabees have been watched, and the result flashed to Europe by telegraph, and the upshot of it all has been to puzzle and distress the average newspaper reader exceedingly. Yet the rise, progress, and objects of the sect so often referred to lately, as well as the grievances of our loyal Mahomedan fellow-subjects, and the present unsatisfactory condition of our Indian Empire, have been set forth with great clearness within the

few weeks by an Indian civil servant; the published result of his labours opens the English mind to comprehend, more clearly than it could otherwise hope to do, the controversies to which the lamentable death of the late Justice Norman has given rise. Doctor W. W. Hunter, of whose *Annals of Rural Bengal* the *Spectator* wrote, "If their author does not ultimately compel recognition from the world as an historian of the very first class—of the class to which not a score of Englishmen have ever belonged—we entirely mistake our trade," has produced a work which, under the title of "The Indian Mussulmans: are they bound in Conscience to rebel against the Queen?" goes to the root of the whole question of Mahomedan discontent, and reveals a condition of affairs which may well cause anxiety to well-wishers of the Anglo-Indian rule.

Doctor Hunter, who will speak to the reader in his own nervous English throughout this article, gives the key-note to his book in its dedicatory epistle. The greatest wrong that the English can do to their Asiatic subjects, he says, is not to understand them. The chronic peril which threatens the British power in India, is the gap between the rulers and the ruled; and the present spirit of unrest among our Mahomedan fellow-subjects, the events which led to the formation of a rebel colony on our frontier, the treasonable organisation by which the leaders of that colony draw unflinching supplies of money and men from the interior districts of the empire, are many of them traced to this cause. The rebel camp on the Punjab frontier owes its origin to Sayyid Ahmad, one of those bold spirits whom our extermination of the Pindari power scattered over India half a century ago. He began life as a horse soldier in the service of a celebrated treebooter, after which he spent three years in studying the sacred law of Mahomed, under a doctor of high repute in Delhi. He next went forth as a preacher, and by boldly attacking the abuses which have crept into the Mahomedan faith in India, obtained a zealous and turbulent following. In the year 1820, this apostle journeyed slowly southwards, his disciples rendering him menial services in acknowledgment of his spiritual dignity, and men of rank and learning running like common servants, with their shoes off, by the side of his palanquin. During a protracted stay at Patna, his followers became so numerous as to require a regular system of government, and Sayyid Ahmad was equal to the

occasion. He appointed agents, to go forth and collect a tax from the profits of trade, in all the large towns he had passed through. He nominated four caliphs, or spiritual vice-regents, by a formal deed, such as the Mahomedan emperors used in appointing governors of provinces. Having thus formed a permanent centre at Patna, the apostle followed the course of the Ganges to Calcutta, appointing agents in all the important towns, and making countless converts by the way. In Calcutta itself, the masses flocked to him in such numbers, that he was unable even to go through the ceremony of initiation by the separate laying on of hands. Unrolling his turban, therefore, he declared that all who could touch any part of its ample length became his disciples. This freebooter saint inaugurated a sort of holy war against the Sikhs in 1826, and was surprised and slain by a Sikh army in 1831. But the evil he had done in stirring up rebellion lived after him. In 1852, Lord Dalhousie recorded two important minutes against the treasonable organisation of his fanatical followers; in 1853, several of our native soldiers were convicted of correspondence with these traitors; and between 1850 and 1863, twenty separate expeditions were despatched against the fanatical colony, which has never ceased to maintain the most subtle intercommunication with the Mahomedan subjects of the Queen. One of the fruits of Sayyid Ahmad's teaching, according to Doctor Hunter, is, then, that for years a rebel colony has threatened our frontier, from time to time sending forth fanatic swarms, who have attacked our camps, burned our villages, murdered our subjects, and involved our troops in costly wars. Month by month this hostile settlement across the border has been, our author insists, systematically recruited from the heart of Bengal. Successive state trials prove that a network of conspiracy has spread itself over our provinces, and disclose an organisation which systematically levies money and men in the Delta, and forwards them, by regular stages, along our high roads, to the rebel camp two thousand miles off. Men of keen intelligence and ample fortune have embarked in the plot, and a skilful system of remittances has reduced one of the most perilous enterprises of treason to a safe operation of banking.

While the more fanatical of the Mussulmans have thus engaged in sedition, the whole Mahomedan community have

been openly deliberating on their obligation to rebel. During the past twelve months the leading newspapers in Bengal have filled their columns with discussions as to the duty of the Mahomedans to wage war against the Queen. The duty of rebellion has been formally and publicly reduced to a nice point of Mahomedan law. Somehow or other, every Mussulman seems to have found himself called upon to declare his faith; to state openly whether he will or will not contribute to the traitor's camp on our frontier; and to elect, once for all, whether he shall play the part of a devoted follower of Islam, or of a peaceable subject of the Queen. In order to enable the Mahomedans to decide these points, they have not only consulted the leading doctors of their law in India, but they have gone as far as Mecca itself. The obligation of the Indian Mussulmans to rebel or not, hung for some months on the deliberations of three Suni priests in the holy city of Arabia. Nor is this all. The Mussulmans of India are, and have been for many years, according to our author, a source of chronic danger to the British power in India. For some reason or other they have held aloof from our system, and the changes in which the more flexible Hindus have cheerfully acquiesced, are regarded by them as deep personal wrongs. The aim of Doctor Hunter's book is to inquire into the grievances of the Mahomedans under English rule, and to point out their real wrongs, and the means of remedying them. Meanwhile, we are assured that any attempt at even the briefest epitome of the Wahabee treatises in prose and verse, on the duty of waging war against the English, would fill a volume. The sect has developed a copious literature filled with prophecies of the downfall of the British power, and devoted to the duty of religious rebellion. The mere titles of its favourite works suffice to show their almost uniformly treasonable character. Many of them are of so flagrant a kind as to require to be secretly passed from hand to hand in manuscript. Others are widely circulated. The poison, however, is not confined to their readers alone, but is carried into every district of Bengal by a swarm of preachers, every one of whom is carefully nurtured in

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... teaching by which the

duty of treason is enforced: "The Indian Mahomedan who would save himself from hell has the single alternative of war against the infidel, or flight from the accursed land. No True Believer can live loyal to our government without perdition to his soul. Those who would deter others from holy war or flight, are heart hypocrites. Let all know this. In a country where the ruling religion is other than Mahomedanism, the religious precepts of Mahomed cannot be enforced. It is incumbent on Mussulmans to join together, and wage war upon the infidels. Those who are unable to take part in the fight should emigrate to a country of the True Faith. . . . In short, oh brethren, we ought to weep over our state, for the messenger of God is angered with us because of our living in the land of the infidel. When the prophet of God himself is displeased with us, to whom shall we look for shelter? Those whom God has supplied with the means should resolve upon flight, for a fire is raging here. If we speak the truth we shall be strangled; and if we remain silent, injury is done to our faith."

It is satisfactory to learn from Doctor Hunter, that the Wahabees have not been allowed to spread their network of treason, without some opposition from their countrymen. Besides the odium theologium which rages between the Mahomedan sects almost as fiercely as if they were Christians, the presence of Wahabees in a district is a standing menace to all classes, whether Mussulman or Hindu, possessed of property or vested rights. Revolutionists alike in politics and in religion, they go about their work not as reformers of the Luther or Cromwell type, but as destroyers in the spirit of Robespierre. It is not surprising, therefore, that every Mussulman priest, with a dozen acres attached to his mosque or wayside shrine, has been shrieking against the Wahabees during the past half-century. In India, as elsewhere, the landed and clerical interests are bound up by a common dread of change. The Mahomedan landholders maintain the cause of the mosque, precisely as English landholders defend the Established Church. Any form of dissent, whether religious or political, is perilous to vested rights. Now the Indian Wahabees are extreme dissenters in both respects, Anabaptists, Fifth Monarchy men, so to speak, touching matters of faith; Communists and Red Republicans in politics. Nor, indeed would the religious Jacquerie of the Wahabee's ad-

vocate find favour with the fund-holding community, or with any section of the comfortable classes. In Bengal, however, one entire trade (and a very rich and powerful one) has been steadily on their side. The skinner and leather worker ranks at the very bottom of the Hindu community. He lays impious hands on the carcass of the sacred animal, the cow, and profits by its death. He is a man unclean from his birth, an outcast from decent society, whom no wealth or success in his detested vocation can raise to respectability. This degraded position he accepts like a true Hindu, with an untroubled mind. No exertions can raise him in the social scale, so he never attempts to rise. No honesty or sobriety could win for him the regard of his neighbours, so he lives quite happy without it. If the cows belonging to the village die in sufficient numbers to supply him with leather, well and good. If they show a reluctance to mortality, he stimulates the too tardy death-rate with a little arsenic. A man of this hopeless sort never rises above petty retail dealings, and the wholesale hide trade (one of the great Indian staples) has thus fallen into the hands of Mussulman merchants. These form one of the richest classes of the native mercantile community, but they are looked on with hatred and abhorrence by the Hindus. This detestation they pay back in kind. They well know that if the Brahmin got the upper hand, they would be the first spoil of the infidel. They accordingly regard the infidel Hindu as a fair spoil for themselves, and form the wealthiest and most powerful contributors to the Wahabee sect, whose very *raison d'être* is to wage war upon the unbeliever. But it is not to any single class, however rich or powerful, that the Wahabees owe their strength. They appeal boldly to the masses; and their system, whether of religion or of politics, is eminently adapted to the hopes and fears of a restless populace. Among these Wahabees are, as Doctor Hunter admits, thousands of sincerely pious men, who look upon self-abnegation as the first duty of life. On the other hand, the more fanatical of the sect have blazed up in denunciations against those who, from fear of an infidel government, have abandoned the cause of the faith. These last stigmatise the deserters as cowardly and self-seeking, and indignantly reject the Laodicean casuistry, by which the comfortable classes strive to serve both God and the world. For a time the well-to-do Mahomedans

bore these reproaches in silence. But they had the whole vested interests of the Mussulman clergy to back them, and have by degrees drawn out a learned array to defend their position. They began to contest the Wahabee doctrine of holy war on first principles, and to deny that they were under any obligation to wage war against the Queen. During the past few years, a whole phalanx of Fatwas, or authoritative decisions, have appeared on this side, and even the three great high priests at Mecca have been enlisted, to liberate the Indian Mussulmans from the dangerous duty of rebellion against the English crown. The Wahabees, therefore, stand condemned by Mahomedans of the better class, but this circumstance only inflames their fanaticism and makes their protests louder. It remains to ask with Doctor Hunter whether, if in any matter we have hitherto done injustice to the Mahomedans, it would not be mischievous vanity to allow anything to delay our doing justice to them now? The British government of India is strong enough to be spared the fear of being thought weak. It can shut up the traitors in its jails, but it can segregate the whole party of sedition in a nobler way, by detaching from it the sympathies of the general Mahomedan community. This, however, it can do only by removing that chronic sense of wrong which has grown up in the hearts of the Mussulmans under British rule. For there is no use shutting our ears to the fact that the Indian Mahomedans arraign us on a list of charges as serious as have ever been brought against a government. They accuse us of having closed every honourable walk of life to professors of their creed. They accuse us of having introduced a system of education which leaves their whole community unprovided for, and which has landed it in contempt and beggary. They accuse us of having brought misery into thousands of families, by abolishing their law officers, who gave the sanction of religion to the marriage tie, and who, from time immemorial, have been the depositaries and administrators of the domestic law of Islam. They accuse us of imperilling their souls, by denying them the means of performing the duties of their faith. Above all they charge us with deliberate malversation of their religious foundations, and with misappropriation on the largest scale of their educational funds. Besides these specific counts, which they believe susceptible of proof, they have a host of sentimental grievances, perhaps of

little weight with the unimaginative British mind, but which, not less in India than in Ireland, keep the popular heart in a state of soreness to their rulers.

The Cornwallis code first broke in upon their monopoly; but for the first fifty years of the company's rule the Mussulmans had the lion's share of state patronage. During its second half-century of power the tide turned, at first slowly, but with a constantly accelerating pace, as the imperative duty of conducting public business in the vernacular of the people, and not in the foreign patois of its former Mahomedan conquerors, became recognised. Then the Hindus poured into, and have since completely filled, every grade of official life. Even in the district collectorates, where it is still possible to give appointments in the old-fashioned friendly way, there are very few young Mussulman officials. The Mahomedans who yet remain in them are white-bearded men, and they have no successors. Even ten years ago the Mussulmans invariably managed to transmit the post of nazir, or chief of the revenue bailiffs, to men of their own creed, but now, one or two unpopular appointments about the jail are the most that the former masters of India can hope for. The staff of clerks attached to the various offices, the responsible posts in the courts, and even the higher offices in the police, are now recruited from the pushing Hindu youth of the government school.

With regard to the first two great sources of Mahomedan wealth, namely, the army and the higher administrative posts, we had good reasons for what we have done, but our action has brought ruin upon the Mahomedan houses of Bengal. We shut the Mussulman aristocracy out of the army, because we believed that their exclusion was necessary to our own safety. We deprived them of their monopoly of the most lucrative functions in the administration, because their deprivation was essential to the welfare and just government of the people. But these grounds, however good in themselves, failed to convince an ancient nobility suffering under the blight of British rule. Their exclusion from the army seems to the Mussulman a great public wrong; our departure from their ancient fiscal system an absolute breach of faith. The other source of Mahomedan greatness was, as has been shown, their monopoly of civil employ. It would be unfair to lay much stress on the circumstance; but it is nevertheless a significant fact, that none of the native gentlemen

who have won their way into the covenanted civil service, or up to the bench of the high court, are Mussulmans. The proportion of Mahomedans to Hindus, in the service of the state, is now less than one-seventh. The proportion of Hindus to Europeans is more than one-half. The proportion of Mussulmans to Europeans is less than one-fourteenth. The proportion of the race which a century ago had the monopoly of government, has now fallen to less than one-twenty-third of the whole administrative body.

Doctor Hunter is not satisfied with mere generalisations, but follows up this branch of his subject by some very startling statistics. In the highest grade in which the appointments dated from a previous generation, the Mahomedans had not, he remarks, much to complain of, as in April, 1869, there was one Mussulman to two Hindus; there is now but one Mussulman to three Hindus. In the second grade there were then two Mahomedans to nine Hindus; there is now one Mussulman to ten Hindus. In the third grade there were then four Mussulmans to a total of twenty-seven Hindus and Englishmen; there are now three Mussulmans to a total of twenty-four Hindus and Englishmen. Passing down to the lower ranks, there were in 1869 four Mussulmans among a total of thirty of all creeds; there are now four among a total of thirty-nine. Among the probationers from whom the service is recruited, there were only two Mussulmans in a total of twenty-eight; there is now not one in this rank. It is, however, in the less conspicuous departments in which the distribution of patronage is less keenly watched by the political parties in Bengal, that we may read the fate of the Mussulmans. In 1869, these departments were filled thus: In the three grades of assistant government engineers, there were fourteen Hindus, and not one Mussulman; among the apprentices there were four Hindus and two Englishmen, and not one Mussulman; among the sub-engineers and supervisors of the public works department, there were twenty-four Hindus to one Mussulman; among the overseers, two Mussulmans to sixty-three Hindus. In the offices of account there were fifty names of Hindus, and not one Mussulman; and in the upper subordinate department there were twenty-two Hindus, and again not one Mussulman. In one extensive department the other day it was discovered that there was not a single employé who could read the Mussulman dialect; and, in fact, there is now scarcely a government office in Calcutta in which a Mahomedan

can hope for any post above the rank of porter, messenger, filler of ink-pots, and mender of pens.

We commend these grave facts to the consideration of a government which professes to know no distinction of colour or creed; and, above all, we advise the reader to study for himself the volume from which this article has been compiled. The motives which have swayed mankind in all ages appear to be ranged against the English rule over Indian Mahomedans in terrible array, and the comments upon, and the apprehensions caused by the murder of Justice Norman, whether well or ill founded, give a lurid significance to the protests and warnings of an Indian civil servant who is distinguished among his fellows for his powers of observation and his knowledge of the native mind; and who has had unusual opportunities of bringing these special gifts to bear upon the subject of which he treats.

OUR SUBURBAN COMMON.

OUR common enjoys a great publicity, and has at the same time a privacy of its own. For the London road cuts straight across it, approaching, however, with a sort of respect, abating its stiff pretensions, and condescending to a sort of narrow rustic approach, before it enters on the expanse of our common. Then the strangers aloft on the omnibuses wonder at our rural and quietly picturesque air; and the superior tenants of the open carriages look around approvingly and say, "What a retired, old-fashioned spot!" The carters and waggons, of whom there is a vast number, are never troubled with speculations of the kind. All they think about is simply the Wheel of Fortune public-house, whose tap enjoys a wide celebrity, not, however, unaided by singular local advantages. The Wheel of Fortune commands the entry to our common; sweeps, rakes that entry, as though it were a fort, and levels its pieces so seductively, that he must be no true waggoner who can avoid halting in that convenient plateau, just to moisten his parched throat after that dusty bit of travel. There is a glaring publicity along the broad high road, which is seen for half a mile, and the better principle has time to muster its forces; but here there is no time for reflection, for the victim finds himself under the guns of the fortress in a second, and must surrender.

Our common is a large sweep of green,

stretching away, and bounded on all sides by veteran houses. It would be impossible to define its shape accurately. It rambles away after its own devices. Indeed, taking its shape in connexion with the texture of its grass, it often suggests to me a vast and ragged old blanket, worn and ravelled away out of its original square, and stretched and tacked down over our common. A rather rickety white fence, consisting of a single rail, straggles round it, and within this enclosure a veteran and bony steed browses away, though the green blanket is worn into holes and patches, while round him younger and equally mendicant horses take their meals. In the morning it is a favourite pastime to go and see two or three unhappy men striving to catch these animals, halter in hand. The steeds are slowly driven into a corner with much waving of arms and menace; and I must say, much nervousness on the part of the men, as they seem on the eve of securing their prey. The old bony, in whom his followers seem to have implicit confidence, throws a careless glance over his impatient shoulder, as he retires, which is full of significance. He is biding his time, as his enemies well know, and malignantly chooses the moment when the halter is almost on his neck to give his signal. In an instant he throws up his heels, makes a feint to the right, another to the left, causing his oppressors to dance backwards and forwards, and fiercely is away through an opening, his old heels up again, followed by the whole party, save one little roan, who is cut off. This escape is attended by execrations from the panting men, who have to begin over again, while the bony old horse careers away full of pride, and, admired by his friends, begins to graze with an appetite. The little roan, in evident despair, makes frantic efforts, and charging straight at his persecutors, scares them, and careers out gallantly to join its friends, who seem to welcome it with delight. This seems a heart-breaking process for the would-be captors, and must, I should say, counterbalance all the advantages of free grazing on the common.

I delight in the irregularity of the old houses which fringe our common, not two of which are of the same height or stoutness. They are all veterans, a good deal decayed, and seem to lean on each other for support. Nearly all have old rusty, red-tiled roofs, which are scooped like shells or spoons. Some have thick warm "Ulsters" of ivy that reach to their very

heels, and give a very cosey air. Off our common are various green lanes, in one of which a builder, with more taste than is found in such beings, has erected a long row of Elizabethan little buildings, less than villas, more than cottages, many of which for some reason unknown stand unlet. In front is a hedge-row and green fields, and the tea-gardens of the Wheel of Fortune, where of Sundays and holidays re-echo the humorous notes of our London 'Arry and his female friend. In fine weather these little tabernacles are charming, with the Virginia creepers overgrowing the whole front of the house, their little rooms, French windows, and tiny kitchens, like the fore-castle of a yacht. If I were a writer of very limited means, I could do well in these establishments, for the rent is no more than thirty pounds a year, and the fee-simple can be purchased for three or four hundred pounds. Here an anxious, wiry woman, with corkscrew curls, considerably older than her half-military, half-tailor-like husband, looks after our wants, and talks with nervous awe of the Wheel of Fortune and Mr. Lightband, the proprietor; for in the associations connected with our common I can see that the Wheel of Fortune and Lightband hold an awful place. Everything seems to be referred to the Wheel of Fortune. Its proprietor is the link between it and the outer world, and is supposed to be rolling in wealth. If anything be wanted we can send up to the Wheel. If there is a difficulty we can ask at the Wheel. When everything is run out it can be got at the Wheel. The stray butcher, stray grocer, stray baker may fail, which they often do, but we run to the Wheel, and all is repaired.

Our common is ordinarily a dreamy sort of place, and seems to doze and blink in the sun all day. The church, an old-fashioned structure, is set down in the middle with a little tray of dominoes behind it, which are its tombstones, and which are enclosed so neatly within the edges of the tray, that one almost expects some gigantic footman to come and "take away." A royal duchess comes sometimes and sits in state. But on Sunday evenings no one would know our common; all access to the Wheel is cut off by a block of light carts, waggons, hansoms, and "shandrydans," while inside the open windows can be seen innumerable 'Arrys and Jemimars in the full display of that half-amatory, half-gormandising joviality, which is their notion of happiness, 'Arry's harm (meaning,

position of repose round Jemimar's waist. As we pass down to the other extremity of our common, to its river side, we find whole lines of gigs and Whitechapels, in a rickety state of genuflection about the shafts, their horses picketed about, or bestowed in stables. Every house in the row is devoted to "Tea at ninepence," affects a kind of rustic air, and by the aid of a few flower-pots, ambitions the designation of "tea-gardens." As the evening wears on the merriment becomes uproarious. Should one be inclined to take counsel with the keeper of the pike on the bridge, he could give us some strange little illustrations of our 'Arry's mode of taking his fun; sport to us, but, in a commercial sense, death to him—the pike-keeper. When 'Arry comes down in his thousands, in vans, waggonettes, and 'buses, and, after rowing on the river, and drinking at the Wheel, and osculating profusely on our common, advances in an enormous and riotous band to the gate, our pike-keeper closes it, regardless of two or three omnibuses bound for London; and two policemen having been engaged as aides, the gate is opened just wide enough to allow a fare to squeeze through on payment. I was fortunate enough to witness one such scene, when the whole amalgamated 'Arrys and Jemimars were congregated at the gate, struggling to get through. The real entertainment was the perspiring agitation of the pikeman, in whose face could be read a nervous certainty that he was to be the loser. He was but inefficiently supported by the gentry in the helmets. He was clutching at this hand and that, applying now his shoulder, now his back, to stay the pressing torrents. He would have given worlds to close his gate again, but that was impossible, the aperture was widening every instant slowly but surely; the Jemimars, judiciously placed in the front, where any rude uncivil touch extorted a cry of shame, pushed on more boldly, the gate gave way, and the whole throng tumbled through in a torrent, sweeping over helmets and pike-keeper, in an irresistible rush of triumphant 'Arrydom.

THE BOOK WORM.

With spectacles upon his nose
 He shuffles up and down,
 Of antique fashion are his clothes,
 His napless hat is brown;
 A huge great watch of silver wrought
 Keeps time in sun or rain
 To the dull ticking of the thought
 Within his rusty brain.
 To see him at the bookstall stand
 And bargain for the prize,
 With the odd sixpence in his hand,

Then conquering seize the book, half blind,
And take the homeward track
For fear the man should change his mind
And want the bargain back.

The waves of life about him beat,
He scarcely lifts his gaze,
He hears within the crowded street
The waah of ancient days;
If ever his short-sighted eyes
Look forward, he can see
Vistas of dusty libraries
Prolong'd eternally.

The mighty world of human kind
Is as a shadow dim.
He walks through life like one half blind
And all looks dark to him;
But put his nose to leaves antique,
And hold before his sight
Some preat and wither'd flowers of Greek,
And all is life and light.

But think not as he walks along
His brain is dead and cold,
His soul is thinking in the tongue
Which Plato spake of old;
And while some grinning cabman sees
His quaint shape with a jeer,
He smiles, for Aristophanes
Is joking in his ear!

Around him stretch Athenian walks
And strange shapes under trees,
He pauses in a dream and talks
Great speech with Socrates;
Then, as the fancy fails, still mesh'd
In thoughts that go and come,
Feels in his pouch and is refresh'd
At touch of some old tome.

O blessings on his hair so grey
And coat of dingy brown!
May bargains bless him every day
As he goes up and down!
Long may the bookstall keeper's face,
In dull times, smile again
To see him round with shuffling pace
The corner of the lane.

A good old rag-picker is he,
Who following morn and eve
The quick feet of humanity,
Searches the dust they leave;
He pokes the dust, he sifts with care,
He searches close and deep,
Proud to discover here and there
A treasure in the heap!

CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

WHITEFRIARS.

So rich is London in legend and tradition, that even some of the spots that now appear the blankest, baldest, and most uninteresting, are really vaults of entombed anecdote, and treasure houses of old story.

Whitefriars—that dull, narrow, uninviting lane sloping from Fleet-street to the river, with gasworks at its foot, and mean shops on either side—was once the centre of a district full of noblemen's mansions, but Time's harlequin wand by-and-bye turned it into a debtors' sanctuary and a thieves' paradise, and for half a century its bullies and swindlers waged a ceaseless war with their proud and rackets neighbours of the

Temple. The dingy lane, now only awoke by the quick wheel of the swift newspaper cart, or the ponderous tires of the sullen coal waggon, was in old times for ever ringing with clash of swords, the cries of quarrelsome gamblers, and the drunken songs of noisy Bobadils.

In the reign of Edward the First, a certain Sir Robert Gray, moved by qualms of conscience or honest impulse, founded on the Thames bank, east of the well-guarded Temple, a Carmelite convent, with broad gardens, where the White Friars might stroll, and with shady nooks where they might con their missals. Bouverie-street and Ram-alley were then part of their domain, and there they watched the river, and prayed for their patrons' souls. In 1350, Courtenay, Earl of Devon, rebuilt the Whitefriars church, and in 1420 a Bishop of Hereford added a steeple. In time greedy hands were laid roughly on cope and chalice, and Henry the Eighth seized on the friars' domains, and gave his physician—that Doctor Butts mentioned by Shakespeare—the chapter-house for a residence. Edward the Sixth, who, with all his promise, was as ready for such pillage as his tyrannical father, pulled down the church, and built noblemen's houses in its stead. The refectory of the convent being preserved, was afterwards the Whitefriars Theatre. The mischievous right of sanctuary was preserved to the district, and confirmed by James the First, in whose reign this slum became jocosely known as Alsatia, from Alsace, that unhappy frontier so often contended for by French and Germans, just as Chandos-street and that shy neighbourhood at the back of the Strand, north-west, used to be called the Caribbee Islands, from its countless straits and intricate thieves' passages. The outskirts of the monastery had been disreputable at an early time, for, even in Edward the Third's reign, the holy friars had complained of the gross temptations of Lombard-street, an alley near Bouverie-street, and sirens and Armidas of all descriptions were ever apt to gather round monasteries. Whitefriars, however, even as late as Cromwell's reign, preserved a certain respectability, for here, with his supposed wife, the Dowager Countess of Kent, Selden lived and studied.

In the reign of James the First a strange murder was committed in Whitefriars. The cause of the crime was highly singular. In 1607, young Lord Sanquhar, a Scotch nobleman, who, with others of his countrymen, had followed the king to

England, had an eye put out by a fencing-master of Whitefriars. The young lord, a man of a very ancient, proud, and noble Scotch family, as renowned for courage as for wit, had striven to put some affront on the fencing-master at Lord Norriss's house, in Oxfordshire, wishing to render him contemptible before his patrons and assistants—a common bravado of the rash Tybalts and hot-headed Mercutios of those fiery days of the duello, when even to crack a nut too loud was enough to make your tavern neighbour draw his sword. John Turner, the master, jealous of his professional honour, challenged him with dagger and rapier, and, determined to chastise his ungenerous assailant, parried all his most skilful passadoes and staccatoes, and in his turn pressed Sanquhar with his foil so hotly and boldly, that he unfortunately thrust out one of his eyes. The young baron, ashamed of his own violence, and not convinced that Turner's thrust was only a slip and an accident, bore with patience several days of extreme danger. As for Turner, he displayed great regret, and was exonerated by everybody. Some time after, Lord Sanquhar, being in the court of Henry the Fourth of France, that chivalrous and gallant king, always courteous to strangers, seeing the patch of green taffeta, unfortunately, merely to make conversation, asked the young Scotchman how he lost his eye. Sanquhar, not willing to lose the credit of a wound, answered cannily, "It was done, your majesty, with a sword." The king replied, thoughtlessly, "Doth the man live?" and no more was said. This remark, however, awoke the viper of revenge in the young man's soul. He brooded over those words, and never ceased to dwell on the hope of some requital on his old opponent. Two years he remained in France, hoping that his wound might be cured, and at last, in despair of such a result, he set sail for England, still brooding over revenge against the author of his cruel, and now, as it appeared, irreparable misfortune. The King of Denmark, James's bibulous father-in-law, was on a visit here at the time, and the court was very gay. The first news that Lord Sanquhar heard was, that the accused Turner was down at Greenwich Palace, fencing there in public matches before the two kings. To these entertainments the young Scotchman went, and there, from some corner of a gallery, the man with the patch over his eye no doubt scowled, and bit his lip at the fencing-master, as he strutted beneath, proud of his skill, and

flushed with triumph. The moment the prizes were given Sanquhar hurried below, and sought Mr. Turner up and down, through court and corridor, resolved to stab him on the spot, though even drawing a sword in the precincts of the palace was punishable with the loss of a hand. Turner, however, at that time escaped, for Sanquhar never came across him in the throng, though he beat it as a dog beats a covert. The next day, therefore, still on his trail, Sanquhar went after him to London, seeking for him up and down the Strand, and in all the great Fleet-street and Cheapside taverns. The Scot could not have come to a more dangerous place than London. Some, with malicious pity, would tell him that Turner had vaunted of his skilful thrust, and the way he had punished a man who tried to publicly shame him. Others would thoughtlessly lament the spoiling of a good swordsman and a brave soldier. The mere sight of the turnings to Whitefriars would rouse the evil spirit nestled in Sanquhar's heart. Eagerly he sought for Turner, till he found he was gone down to Lord Norriss's house, in Oxfordshire, the very place where the fatal wound had been inflicted. Being thus for the time foiled, Sanquhar returned to Scotland, and for the present delayed his revenge. On his next visit to London, Sanquhar, cruel and steadfast as a bloodhound, again sought for Turner. Yet the difficulty was to surprise the man, for Sanquhar was well known in all the taverns and fencing-schools of Whitefriars, and yet did not remember Turner sufficiently to be sure of him. He therefore hired two Scotchmen, who undertook the assassination; but in spite of this, Turner somehow or other was hard to get at, and escaped his two pursuers, and the relentless man whose money had bought them. Business then took Sanquhar again to France; but, on his return, the brooding revenge, now grown almost to a monomania, again burst into a flame.

Again he hired two Scotchmen, Carlisle and Grey, who were to take a lodging in Whitefriars, to discover the best way for Sanquhar, himself, to strike a sure blow at the unconscious fencing-master. These men, after some reconnoitring, assured their employer that he could not himself get at Turner, but that they would undertake to do so, to which Sanquhar assented. But Grey's heart failed him after this, and he slipped away, and Turner went again out of town to fence at some country man-

sion. Upon this, Carlisle, a resolute villain, came to his employer, and told him, with grim set face, that, as Grey had deceived him, and there was trust in no knave of them all, he would e'en have nobody but himself, and would assuredly kill Turner on his return, though it were with the loss of his own life. Irving, a border lad, and page to Lord Sanquhar, ultimately joined Carlisle in the assassination.

On the 11th of May, 1612, about seven o'clock of the evening, the two murderers came to a tavern in Whitefriars, which Turner usually frequented as he returned from his fencing-school. Turner, sitting at the door with one of his friends, seeing the men, saluted them, and asked them to drink. Carlisle turned to cock the pistol he had prepared, then wheeled round, and, drawing the pistol from under his coat, discharged it full at the unfortunate fencing-master, and shot him near the left breast. Turner had only time to cry, "Lord have mercy upon me; I am killed," and fell from the ale-bench dead. Carlisle and Irving at once fled, Carlisle to the town, Irving towards the river; but the latter, mistaking a court where wood was sold for the turning into an alley, was instantly run down and taken. Carlisle was caught in Scotland, Grey as he was shipping at a sea-port for Sweden, and Sanquhar himself, hearing one hundred pounds were offered for his head, threw himself on the king's mercy by surrendering himself as an object of pity to the Archbishop of Canterbury. But no intercession could avail. It was necessary for James to show that he would not spare Scottish more than English malefactors.

He was tried in Westminster Hall on the 27th of June, before Mr. Justice Yelverton. Sir Francis Bacon, the Solicitor-General, did what he could to save the revengeful Scot, but it was impossible to keep him from the gallows. Robert Creighton, Lord Sanquhar, confessed himself guilty, and pleaded extenuating circumstances. He had, he said, always believed that Turner, as he had boasted, had put out his eye of set purpose, though at the taking up the foils he (Sanquhar) had specially protested that he played as a scholar, and not as one able to contend with a master in the profession. The mode of playing among scholars was always to spare the face.

"After this loss of my eye," continued the quasi-repentant murderer, "and with the great hazard of the loss of life, I must confess that I ever kept a grudge of my soul

against him, but had no purpose to take so high a revenge; yet in the course of my revenge I considered not my wrongs upon terms of Christianity, for then I should have sought for other satisfaction, but, being trained up in the courts of princes, and in arms, I stood upon the terms of honour, and thence befel this act of dishonour, whereby I have offended: first, God; second my prince; third, my native country; fourth, this country; fifth, the party murdered; sixth, his wife; seventh, posterity; eighth, Carlisle, now executed; and lastly, ninth, my own soul, and am now to die for my offence. But, my lords," he added, "besides my own offence, which in its own nature needs no aggravation, divers scandalous reports are given out which blemish my reputation, which is more dear to me than my life. First, that I made show of reconciliation with Turner, the which I protest is utterly untrue, for what I have formerly said I do again assure your good lordships, that ever after my hurt received I kept a grudge in my soul against him, and never made the least pretence of reconciliation with him. Yet this, my lords, I will say, that if he would have confessed and sworn he did it not of purpose, and withal would have foresworn arms, I would have pardoned him; for, my lords, I considered that it must be done either of set purpose or ignorantly; if the first, I had no occasion to pardon him, if the last, that is no excuse in a master, and therefore for revenge of such a wrong, I thought him unworthy to bear arms."

Lord Sanquhar then proceeded to deny the aspersion that he was an ill-natured fellow, ever revengeful, and delighting in blood. He confessed, however, that he was never willing to put up with a wrong, nor to pardon where he had a power to revenge. He had never been guilty of blood till now, though he had occasion to draw his sword both in the field and on sudden violences, where he had both given and received hurts. He allowed that upon commission from the king to suppress wrongs done him in his own country he had put divers of the Johnsons to death, but for that he hoped he had need neither to ask God nor man for forgiveness. He denied, on his salvation, that by the help of his countrymen he had attempted to break prison and escape. The condemned prisoner finally begged the lords to let the following circumstances move them to pity and the king to mercy: first,

the indignity received from so mean a man ; second, that it was done willingly, for he had been informed that Turner had bragged of it after it was done ; third, the perpetual loss of his eye ; fourth, the want of law to give satisfaction in such a case ; fifth, the continual blemish he had received thereby.

The Solicitor-General, in his speech, took the opportunity of fulsomely slandering the king after his manner. He represented the sputtering, drunken, corrupt James as almost divine in his energy and sagacity. He had stretched forth his long arms (for kings, he said, had long arms) and taken Grey as he shipped for Sweden, Carlisle ere he was warm in his house in Scotland. He had prosecuted the offenders "with the breath and blasts of his mouth." "So that," said this gross time-server, "I may conclude that his majesty hath showed himself God's true lieutenant, and that he is no respecter of persons, but English, Scots, nobleman, fencer (which is but an ignoble trade), are all to him alike in respect of justice. Nay, I may say further, that his majesty hath had in this matter a kind of prophetic spirit, for at what time Carlisle and Grey, and you, my lord, yourself, were fled no man knew whither, to the four winds, the king ever spoke in confident and undertaking manner, that, where-soever the offenders were in Europe, he would produce them to justice."

Mr. Justice Yelverton, though Bacon had altogether taken the wind out of his sails, summed up in the same vein, to prove that James was a Solomon and a prophet, and would show no favouritism to Scotchmen. He held out no hope of a reprieve. The base and barbarous murder, he said, with ample legal verbiage, "was exceeding strange—done upon the sudden! done in an instant! done with a pistol! done with your own pistol! under the colour of kindness. As Cain talked with his brother Abel, he rose up and slew him. Your executioners of the murder left the poor miserable man no time to defend himself, no time to pray for himself, scarce any time to breathe out these last words, 'Lord have mercy upon me!' The ground of the malice that you bore him grew not out of any offence that he ever willingly gave you, but out of the pride and haughtiness of your own self; for that in the false conceit of your own skill, you would needs importune him to that action, the sequel whereof did most unhappily breed your blemish—the loss of your eye." The manner of his death

would be no doubt as he (the prisoner) would think unbefitting to a man of his honour and blood (a baron of three hundred years' antiquity), but was fit enough for such an offender. Lord Sanquhar was then sentenced to be hung till he was dead. The populace, from whom he expected "scorn and disgrace," were full of pity for a man to be cut off, like Shakespeare's Claudio, in his prime, and showed great compassion.

On the 29th of June—St. Peter's Day—Lord Sanquhar was hung before Westminster Hall. On the ladder he confessed the enormity of his sins, but said that till his trial, blinded by the devil, he could not see he had done anything unfitting a man of his rank and quality, who had been trained up in the wars, and had lived the life of a soldier, standing more on points of honour than religion. He then professed that he died a Roman Catholic, and begged all Roman Catholics present to pray for him. He had long, he said, for worldly reasons, neglected the public profession of his faith, and he thought God was angry with him. The religion was a good religion—a saving religion—and if he had been constant to it, he was verily persuaded he should never have fallen into that misery. He then prayed for the king, queen, their issue, the state of England and Scotland, and the lords of the council and church, after which the executioner threw him from the ladder, suffering him to hang a long time to display the king's justice. The compassion and sympathy of the people present had abated directly they found that he was a Roman Catholic. The same morning, very early, Carlisle and Irving were hung on two gibbets in Fleet-street, over against the great gate of the Whitefriars. The page's gibbet was six feet higher than the serving-man's, it being the custom at that time in Scotland that, when a gentleman was hung at the same time with one of meaner quality, the gentleman had the honour of the higher gibbet, feeling aggrieved if he had not.

The riotous little kingdom of Whitefriars, with all its frouzy and suspicious population, has been admirably drawn by Scott in his fine novel of the *Fortunes of Nigel*, recently so pleasantly recalled to our remembrance by Mr. Andrew Halliday's dexterous dramatic adaptation. Sir Walter chooses a den of Alsatia as a sanctuary for young Nigel, after his duel with Dalgarno. At one stroke of Scott's pen, the foggy, crowded streets eastward of the Temple rise before us, and they are

thronged with shaggy, uncombed ruffians, with greasy shoulder-belts, discoloured scarfs, enormous monstaches, and torn hats. With what a Teniers's pencil the great novelist sketches the dingy precincts, with its blackguardly population. "The wailing of children," says the author of Nigel, "the scolding of their mothers, the miserable exhibition of ragged linen hung from the windows to dry, spoke the wants and distresses of the wretched inhabitants, while the sounds of complaint were mocked and overwhelmed by the riotous shouts, oaths, profane songs, and boisterous laughter that issued from the alehouses and taverns, which, as the signs indicated, were equal in number to all the other houses, and that the full character of the place might be evident, several faded, tinselled, and painted females looked boldly at the strangers from their open lattices, or more modestly seemed busied with the cracked flower-pots filled with mignonette and rosemary, which were disposed in front of the windows, to the great risk of the passengers." It is to a dilapidated tavern in the same foul neighbourhood that the gay Templar, it will be remembered, takes Nigel to be sworn in a brother of Whitefriars, by drunken and knavish Duke Hildebrod, whom he finds surrounded by his counsellors—a bullying Low Country soldier, a broken attorney, and a hedge parson; and here, at old miser Trapbois's, he narrowly escapes death from the poor old wretch's cowardly assassins.

The scoundrels and cheats of Whitefriars are well drawn by Dryden's rival, Shadwell. That most unjustly treated writer (for he was by no means a fool) has called one of his comedies, in the Ben Jonson manner, the Squire of Alsatia. It paints the manners of the place at the latter end of Charles's reign, when the dregs of an age that was indeed full of dregs, were vatted in that disreputable sanctuary east of the Temple. These copper captains, the degraded clergymen who married anybody without inquiry for five shillings, the broken lawyers, skulking bankrupts, sullen homicides, thievish money-lenders, and gaudy courtesans, Dryden's burly rival has painted with a brush full of colour, and with a brightness, clearness, and sharpness which are photographic in their force and truth. In the dedication, which is inscribed to the great patron of poets, the poetical Earl of Dorset, Shadwell dwells on the great success of the piece, the plot of which he had cleverly borrowed from the Adelphi of Terence. In the prologue, which was

spoken by poor Mountfort, the actor whom the infamous Lord Mohun stabbed in Norfolk-street, the dramatist justly ridicules his tormentor Dryden for his noise and bombast. With some vigour he writes:

With what prodigious scarcity of wit
Did the new authors starve the hungry pit!
Infected by the French you must have rhyme,
Which long to please the ladies' ears did chime.
Soon after this came ranting fustian in,
And none but plays upon the fret were seen.
Such daring bombast stuff which fops would praise
Tore our best actors' lungs, cut short their days.
Some in small time did this distemper kill,
And had the savage authors gone on still,
Fustian had been a new disease i' the bill.

The moral of Shadwell's piece is the danger of severity in parents. An elder son being bred up under restraint, turns a rakehell in Whitefriars, whilst the younger, who has had his own way, becomes "an ingenious, well-accomplished gentleman, a man of honour in King's Bench-walk, and of excellent disposition and temper," in spite of a good deal more gallantry than our stricter age would pardon. The worst of it is that the worthy son is always being mistaken for the scamp, while the miserable Tony Lumpkin passes for a time as a pink of propriety. Eventually he falls into the hands of some Alsatian tricksters. The first of these, Cheatly, is a rascal, who "by reason of debt does not stir out of Whitefriars, but there inveigles young men of fortune, and helps them to goods and money upon great disadvantages, is bound for them, and shares with them till he undoes them." Shadwell tickets him in his dramatis personæ as "a lewd, impudent, debauched fellow." According to his own account he lies perdu because his unnatural father is looking for him to send him home into the country. Number two, Shamwell, is a young man of fortune, who, ruined by Cheatly, has turned decoy-duck and lives on a share of the spoil. His ostensible reason for concealment is, that an alderman's young wife had run away with him. The third rascal, Scrapeall, is a low, hypocritical money-lender, who is secretly in partnership with Cheatly. The fourth rascal is Captain Hackum, a bullying coward, whose wife keeps lodgings, sells cherry brandy, and is of more than doubtful virtue. He had formerly been a sergeant in Flanders, but ran from his colours, dubbed himself captain, and sought refuge in the Friars from a paltry debt. This blustering scamp stands much upon his honour, and is alternately drawing his enormous sword and being tweaked by the nose. A lion in the estimation of fools, he boasts over his cups that he has whipped five men

through the lungs. He talks a detestable cant language, and calls guineas "megs," and half-guineas "smelts." Money with him is "the ready, the rhino, the darby," a good hat is "a rum nab," to be well off is to be "rhinocercical." This consummate scoundrel teaches young country Tony Lumpkins to break windows, scour the streets, and thrash the constables. They learn how to doctor the dice, and get into all depths of low mischief. Finally, when old Sir William Belfond, the severe old country gentleman, comes to confront his son during his disgraceful revels at the George Tavern, in Dogwell-court, Bouverie-street, the four scamps raise a shout of "An arrest! an arrest! A bailiff! a bailiff!" The drawers join in, the Friars in a moment is in an uproar, and eventually the old gentleman is chased by all the scum of Alsatia, shouting "Stop! stop! a bailiff! a bailiff!" He has a narrow escape of being pulled to pieces, and emerges in Fleet-street, hot, bespattered, and bruised. It was no joke to threaten the privileges of Whitefriars.

Presently a horn is blown, and there is a cry from Water-lane to Hanging Sword-alley, from Ashen Tree-court to Temple Gardens, of "Tipstaff! An arrest! an arrest!" and in a moment they are "up in the Friars" with a cry of "fall on." The skulking debtors scuttle into their burrows, the bullies fling down cup and can, lug out their rusty blades, and rush into the mêlée. From every den and crib, red-faced, bloated women hurry with fire-forks, spits, cudgels, pokers, and shovels. They're "up in the Friars" with a vengeance. Pouring into the Temple before the Templars can gather, they are about to drag old Sir William under the pump, when the worthy son comes to the rescue, and the Templars with drawn swords drive back the rabble, and make the porter shut the gates leading into Whitefriars. Cheatly, Shamwell, and Hackum, taken prisoners, are then well drubbed, and pumped on, and the gallant captain loses half his whiskers. "The terror of his face," he moans, "is gone." "Indeed!" says Cheatly, "your magnanimous phiz is somewhat disfigured by it, captain." Cheatly threatens endless actions. Hackum swears his honour is very tender, and that this one affront will cost him at least five murders. As for Shamwell, he is inconsolable. "What reparation are actions?" he moans, as he shakes his wet hair, and rubs his bruised back. "I am a gentleman, and can never show my face

amongst my kindred more." They then console themselves with cherry brandy from Hackum's shop, after which the copper captain observes, somewhat in Falstaff's manner, "A fish has a cursed life on't. I shall have that aversion to water after this, that I shall scarce ever be cleanly enough to wash my face again."

Later in the play there is still another rising in Alsatia, but this time the musketeers come in force in spite of all privileges, and the scuffle is greater than ever. Some debtors run up and down without coats, others with still more conspicuous deficiencies. Some cry, "Oars! oars! sculler; five pound for a boat; ten pound for a boat; twenty pound for a boat;" many leap from balconies, and make for the water to escape to the Savoy or the Mint, also sanctuaries of that day. The plot ends with a dignified protest against the privileges of places that harboured such knots of scoundrels. "Was ever," Shadwell says, "such impudence suffered in a government? Ireland conquered, Wales subdued, Scotland united. But there are some few spots of ground in London, just in the face of the government, unconquered yet, that hold in rebellion still. Methinks 'tis strange, that places so near the king's palace should be no part of his dominions. 'Tis a shame in the societies of law to countenance such practices; should any place be shut against the king's writ or posse comitatus?"

Be sure the pugnacious young Templars present all rose at that, and great was the thundering of red-heeled shoes. King William probably agreed with Shadwell, for at the latter end of his reign the privilege of sanctuary was taken from Whitefriars, and the dogs were let in on the rats, for whom they had been so long waiting. The Mint and the Savoy, however, escaped a good deal longer; and there the Hackums and Cheatlys hid their ugly faces when daylight was at last let into Whitefriars, and the wild days of Alsatia ceased for ever.

GRACE ALLEN.

"WELL, she's a pretty birdie, and too young for William; so it is not so bad as it might have been," said Aunt Maria, gravely, to her maid. "But, mercy me! what a daft-like thing to leave a bit lassie like that to our Will to take care of! That there was an Aunt Maria at home to hold things together, and keep his house from

falling about his ears, while Will was rambling about heathen parts, never entered poor Jack Allen's head; but then poor Jack—the Lord forgive me for speaking an ill word of the dead!—never had any head, so far as I know; and certainly to make my nephew, Will Magnus, guardian to a lass of sixteen, was about the foolishlest thing of a rare foolish life. However, we'll do the best we can for her, poor bit thing, and we cannot do more; eh, Jane?"

"No, ma'am," said Jane, demurely, mentally calculating the extra trouble which the young lady just arrived would give, and wondering that her mistress had borne so patiently with what mistress and maid well knew would be an immense interruption to the method and regularity of their lives. For both Aunt Maria and Jane Crupper her factotum were spinsters of a certain age, and as such not naturally inclined to the companionship of a pretty girl of sixteen, who was sure, they both thought, to have less sense than folly, and to be no good in the house, take her how they would. But if old maids, both women were substantially kind and generous; so poor little Grace was bidden welcome, with a magnanimous resolve to make the best of everything, and not to let molehills look too much like mountains.

Up-stairs, whiles crying whiles pondering, sat Grace Allen, poor Jack's orphaned child and William Magnus's ward. Grace had never known her mother, which was one among other reasons why the kind, soft heart of her father had yearned over her with such passionate tenderness, and why, had she been any one but Grace, she would have been spoilt ages ago. As it was, maybe she was just a shade spoilt on the outside, but then the heart of her was as pure as a bit of gold, and if she had been indulged she had not learnt to be selfish. Jack had brought her up on the principle of love, and on the whole his workmanship might be commended. Then she was pretty—very pretty; a fair-faced, brown-haired girl, tall for her years, with a skin like rose-leaves and cream, as her old nurse used to say, and a look of wholesomeness, if not of great strength, about her; a girl of warm and steadfast affections, not passions; faithful, loyal, truthful, loving; but a creature that cried rather than stormed when things went ill, and sorrows and disappointments, which not even Jack nor Nursey could keep from her, fell on her young head.

This was one of them. She had been

wretched enough six months ago, when she had lost her dear Nursey, who had been to her like a second mother; but what was even that to this other terrible grief, the loss of her good, tender father, her friend, her protector, her playmate, her beloved! No wonder that she cried, poor darling, if between whiles she pondered; and the shape her thoughts took chiefly was, "I wonder what kind of man my guardian is;" and "I wonder if I shall ever see Addy again, and if he will keep his promise and write to me."

Addy was a young man standing in the registrar's books as Adolphus Cayley, the son of colour-sergeant Cayley of the regiment where poor Jack had been major. Moreover he was Nursey's nephew: and not a gentleman. But he was a fine, handsome, gallant youth, learning now to be a civil engineer; a lad with brains and the knowledge of how to use them, and who, by the grace of natural refinement, quick perceptions, and some good fortune in early associations, had gained a quite passable amount of good-breeding, so that his manners, if not noticeably aristocratic, were by no means plebeian. And he had been much with Grace; both years ago when they were little people playing with cowslip balls and daisy chains in the meadows, and later, when, grown girl and youth, they had not found the two ends of the village where they lived so far apart that they could not meet every day, nor the barriers of rank so insuperable that they could not learn to be friends; dear friends; such friends as a boy and girl, used to each other from childhood, and whose affections have not been diverted by interlopers, are by habit and that mysterious thing we call nature. Jack Allen had never interfered with the acquaintance. Bohemian as he was by inclination, and easy tempered to a fault, so long as his little girl was pleased he was satisfied; and Nursey, who loved the bright brave boy like her own—well! Nursey shut her eyes, and kept on repeating to herself, "They are only children," long after Addy, at the least, had learnt enough of his own mind to know the contrary. So things had been in the past. What they would be in the future, with Aunt Maria's old-fashioned Scottish ideas about caste and maidenly dignity; with William Magnus's high notions of duty, and the care he ought to take of his dead friend's daughter; with Grace Allen's loyalty on the one side, and want of fight on the other; and with young Addy's per-

sonal pride to keep him to his point, and conventional sensitiveness to make him forbear to press that point—what they would be with all these warring elements to perplex and distract, remained now to be seen. Meanwhile poor little Grace cried, and Aunt Maria and her maid Jane generously resolved to make the best of a bargain not wholly to their mind.

"My dear, who's your correspondent?" asked Aunt Maria, for her a trifle sternly, as, two or three weeks after her arrival at High Elm, Grace Allen's fair face flushed and dimpled with delight, when the servant handed her a letter, addressed in a large, bold, well-written hand.

"Addy," replied Grace laconically.

"Addy? but who is Addy?"

"Addy Cayley," repeated Grace.

"Two daft words don't make one wise answer," said Aunt Maria, smiling and knitting her brows at the same moment. "'Addy,' first, and then 'Addy Cayley,' don't tell me much, lassie. Come, now, open out! Who and what is this Addy Cayley who writes—oh, my heart! but he writes long letters!"

"I have not much to tell you, Aunt Maria," said Grace, demurely. "Addy Cayley is a boy I know; poor papa knew him, and Nursey, and he is with Mr. Tine, the engineer, and he's going to make railroads out in India some day, and I've known him all my life, and I can't tell you any more."

"What's his father?" asked Aunt Maria, coming to the point.

"Colour-sergeant in poor papa's regiment," said Grace; and for the first time in her life she wished that Addy's father had epaulettes like a major's.

"Colour-sergeant! and in your poor papa's own regiment? Lassie, he's no fit companion for you," said Aunt Maria warmly, speaking broad Scotch as she always did when excited.

"Papa thought he was, and so did Nursey," said Grace, with a certain suggestive drawing in of her lips; a look that Aunt Maria was quick enough to read, and wise enough to not quite like; therefore, not to wish to provoke too much.

"Ah, but you see, my dear, it's your guardian, and in his case I, who have you now between hands," she answered, soothingly. "Besides, what might be when you were a wee thing, is no just blate for a young lady in her teens, and I think, lassie, if you will reflect, a moment's consideration will show you that the son of a

colour-sergeant in your father's regiment is not just a fit friend for your father's daughter. But how came he to get such a good education?" and she turned over the envelope curiously. "How was it he didn't take to the ranks, like his father?"

"Poor papa helped him, and Nursey had some money, and another person, a Miss Mead, where his mother had been house-keeper, helped him too," said Grace. "So among them all he was sent to a good school, and now he is with Mr. Tine; for he is such a dear, clever boy," she added innocently, "every one loves him, and every one wanted to help him. But papa and Nursey did the most; and papa liked me to be friends with him," she added, with the same drawing in of her lips, a little viciously this time.

"Well, my dear, we'll say no more about it now," said Aunt Maria, shutting her work-box with a resolute air, as if she shut up Grace, and Addy, and all relating to them, inside it. "Your guardian is coming home next week, and we'll hear what he says. If he likes such an intimacy for his ward, well and good; he can suit himself. I don't approve of it, and so I tell you frankly; but then I am old-fashioned, and behind my day, I dare say. However, Will is master, and when he's at home I'm only mistress. Maybe you'll know the difference some day, little lassie," she added, patting the girl's flushed cheek kindly as she left the room.

"They shan't take me away from Addy, whatever they do," said Grace to herself; and then she sat down and answered the boy's letter, and girl-like, told him all that had happened, with unintentional amplifications.

"I shall have to work hard," was Addy's unspoken commentary when he read her more than kind, and slightly less than exact outpour; "and I'll do it or die."

The week passed, and the day dawned the close of which was to see William Magnus, Grace Allen's guardian and Aunt Maria's nephew, once more at home to take the slack reins into his strong hands, and set those things straight which Aunt Maria's good-nature for the one part, and fear of interfering in matters beyond her ultimate control for the other, used to let go crooked. There were tenants to look after, and rents to receive, and leases to renew; for Will Magnus had a supreme distrust of all professional services, and preferred to let his affairs come to a standstill in Aunt Maria's keeping, while he was

rambling in foreign parts, to trusting them to any paid agent whatsoever. There was thus plenty for him to do at such times as he came home; and Aunt Maria was a little troubled to have this lassie and her silly affairs added to her favourite's burdens. But it had to be done, and to Will was left the task of coping with Addy Cayley.

Somehow Grace was desperately afraid of this guardian of hers. It is that way with young people when any one is held up to them as a bugbear; and Aunt Maria, being weak on all questions of authority, had the habit of putting forward her nephew as the ultima ratio impersonate, the bogie whom no one could withstand. So that when Grace was sent for in the gloaming to come down-stairs, and be introduced to her guardian, she entered the room with her foolish heart all in a flutter, and her cheeks with considerably more of the cream than the rose-leaf in them.

"And you are poor Jack's little girl!" said a kind, frank, cheery voice, and Grace, lifting up her shy blue eyes, saw standing before her a medium-sized, not particularly handsome, but square-built, powerful-looking man, with a bronzed genial face, and a pleasant smile, showing a row of small square teeth like ivory beneath the tawny gold of his bushy beard. Then Grace was no longer afraid. With the instinctive trust of a child, or an animal, she went straight up to her guardian, and laid both her hands on one of his broad outstretched palms. They were friends from that moment, to Aunt Maria's unfeigned surprise, and maid Jane's secret disapprobation.

"Miss Grace need not have been afraid or silly," she said, when discussing the subject in the sanctuary of the housekeeper's room; "but she might have been content with one hand, I think, and him a gentleman as she had never set eyes on before!"

If Jack Allen's daughter had studied under the cleverest and most rusée of instructresses, she could have done nothing wiser, so far as her guardian was concerned, than what she did when she frankly laid her hands on his, and claimed and accepted him as her friend. For the one besetting weakness of the strong man in whose care she had been left, was, that he liked to be loved, and valued trust more than anything else in the world. He was one of those men who are what others make them; to the suspicious an enemy, to the loving and believing a hero, a protector, a

friend. To Grace Allen, therefore, he was resolved to be henceforth her best and truest protector, her champion, care-taker, emphatically her friend.

William Magnus was given to making pets. Now it was a dog, now a horse, sometimes a child, sometimes a pursuit: and sometimes it was a woman. His fancies generally varied with each return home; so that Aunt Maria was not greatly surprised to see him give up all his other loves, even his pointer Fan and his bay horse Cub, for his new plaything, poor Jack Allen's daughter. He devoted himself to her. For her sake he abandoned certain savage ways, which he had never been known to abandon until now. He wore a dress-coat for dinner, instead of a loose sack more like a cloak than a coat; he smoked one cigar where formerly he had smoked three; and he came into the drawing-room of an evening and talked, instead of keeping in his own peculiar den, where no one but himself ever entered. He became indeed almost a nuisance from the persistency with which he hung about the drawing-room; whereas, in former times, he had been more slippery than an eel, and as difficult to catch as a wild hawk. Aunt Maria noted all these changes, but said nothing. Will was master, as she had said, and she knew her own interests too well to oppose his inclinations, whatever they might have been. And then Grace was but a bit lassie yet, she argued to herself; and she had no reason to be afraid. And yet, why afraid? Will was his own master; and if he chose to fall in love with Grace, and to marry her off-hand, who was there to say him nay, and why should he not? Yet somehow the prospect did not please Aunt Maria. Fine fellow, and strong and hearty as Will was, he was forty if a day, while Grace was but sixteen yet, not even that one year riper, "sweet seventeen." And though the difference might not be very shocking now, yet it would be hereafter, when the one would be a handsome woman of thirty, in the very prime of her life and the full meridian of her beauty, and the other would be fifty-four or five, waning, if not rapidly yet waning decidedly.

As for Grace, no prospective difficulties came to trouble her at present. She was happy, and quite content that things should go on as they were now for so long a time as—well, for as long as every one else was happy. There had been no talk of Addy, because the boy had not written to her

again; and Aunt Maria had not liked to make mischief; so that possible disturbance was in present abeyance, and youth having the happy knack of trust and contentment, the girl was perfectly well satisfied with her lot as it was; and if ever she thought of the future at all, it was only as a vague dream of some very wonderful happiness in which Addy shared, and to which she gave no name. So the time passed on, and the spring melted into the summer, and the summer ripened into the autumn, and then Grace began to think that Addy's next letter was long in coming, and that she wished he would write to her again.

And her wishes bore fruit; for not long after she had begun to cry a little of nights to herself, the post brought her one day at breakfast a letter in the same broad bold handwriting as before; and Aunt Maria's work was cut out for her.

"Aha, missy!" cried William Magnus, watching her vivid blush with an expression on his face not easy to read. And then he asked, as Aunt Maria had asked before, "Who's your correspondent?"

"Addy," answered Grace.

"Addy? And who's Addy?" laughing a little grimly.

"Addy Cayley," returned Grace, with the feeling that all this had been gone through before.

"Oh yes, Will," chimed in Aunt Maria; "that is a thing I wanted to tell you of, but I have had no opportunity until now. Do you approve of this young lad's writing to Grace?"

"I must first know all about him, and what it means," said William, with a grave look. "Come here, my little girl, and tell me, who is this Addy Cayley of yours? and why does he write to you? and what does he say?"

He held out his hand, but Grace, instead of running up to him, as she would have done under any other circumstances on such an appeal, hung her head a little lower, and remained motionless. She did not want to show Addy's letter. It had been a long time coming, but now that it had come it was very sweet and very tender, and it said one or two things which, child as Grace was, she was not too young to understand; and then at the end it slid in, by way of key-note to the whole, "I think I can trust you, Grace, to believe in me, even if you have to wait a long time before I have made my fortune. But you know I shall make it some day, and I think you

know, too, who it is that I would ask to share it, or rather who it is that I would give it all to. If you are in doubt, look in the glass, and it will tell you."

So this was what Grace did not want to show, all in a maze and tremor of trouble and delight as she was; and this was why she sat in her chair, and hung down her head, instead of running up to her guardian as else she would have done.

"Will you not come to me, Grace?" asked Will, in a tone perhaps more pained than severe, but both together.

The girl rose slowly, and went forward with childlike reluctance; but though she went on this second appeal, she halted before she had got quite close to her friend. He put out his hand, and drew her up to his knee; for, with a magisterial kind of instinct, he was sitting all this time.

"Come, look up, bonny one," he said kindly, putting his large hand under her chin, and lifting her face. "I do not like to see you so downcast as this, and for no reason. Tell me all about this Addy Cayley of yours. You are wise enough to know, little girl, that, as your guardian, I am entitled to know."

"There is nothing to tell," said Grace, part shy, part sullen.

"No? Then you must let me read his letter, that I may judge for myself."

"No, no!" cried Grace, vehemently. "I won't let you read the letter, Mr. Magnus! It is too bad of you to ask; it is too cruel, too horrible! Papa would not have done such a thing, and you shall not read it!" On which she thrust it into her pocket, and crushed it rebelliously in her hand in the depths; for indeed it seemed to her at this moment, trembling with love and virgin shame together, that it would have been worse than sacrilege to show it—it would have been gross, improper, treacherous, everything most vile and terrible.

William Magnus was not a patient man. There had been a time when, kind and brave as he was, and frail as was his opponent, he would have taken from her by force what she refused now to his request; but a change had somehow come over him of late, and, without another word, but with a curious pallor on his bronzed face, he rose from his seat and left the room, leaving Grace so far the conqueror; yet leaving her more unhappy than if she had yielded, as perhaps she ought to have done, and had given him the confidence he had claimed. And yet how could she show Addy's letter? You might as well have

asked her to lay bare her heart as it beat in her bosom. She was unhappy because of her disobedience, truly, and yet she did not feel as if she ought to have been more tractable. Addy and her guardian; love and duty; fidelity and obedience. Oh, why is not the path made plainer for tender souls who would fain do right to every one all round, yet who, if they are loyal to one, must needs fail the other!

"Grace, I am surprised at you," said Aunt Maria, with vague displeasure; and she too got up and went away, not caring to venture on a question which she was dimly conscious had depths beyond her sounding.

So Grace sat down and cried, feeling as if her fairy palace had suddenly melted away, and had left her standing in the midst of ruins. And yet had not Addy said he loved her, and was she not bidden to wait? And wait she would, though she had to wait in sorrow and tribulation, and with only ruins for her soul's habitation for the rest of her life.

Meanwhile Will Magnus wandered about the garden perplexed, disappointed, angry, and most miserable. Yes, most miserable. It seemed to him that no one in this wide world of suffering was so wretched as he was at this moment. He had known full well the truth of his own heart, but he had resolutely shut his eyes to the state of his feelings and the hostile chances of the future; and now he had to pay for his blindness. Yet she was such a child! He could not have acted differently. How could he, a man of forty with the silver beginning to spread over his gold, how could he make love to a child not yet seventeen, and his own ward? And yet he loved her; better than his own life, better than his past—than his dignity—if not better than his honour. And she, whom all this time he had thought a mere bit of wax which he was moulding to his desire, she whom he fondly hoped he was leading, as yet unconsciously, to love him, so that when she was a woman and able to choose she would choose him of her own free will—his child-love, his delight, his darling, she had already given her heart away; and what he thought he held safe in his own hands proved to be the mere outside appearance, no more! And now what could he do? Play the tyrant, and forbid her young lover ever to think of her again? or be magnanimous and give up his treasure to the earlier claimant? Yet why should he? She had shown no feeling for him; she

must have known what he suffered; and she had placed no trust in him. And at this thought his anger began to rise. She had placed no trust in him, he who of all men prized and desired confidence. Why, then, should he show her kindness? And was it not his duty to look into this matter narrowly, and to forbid it absolutely, unconditionally, at least for the present, no matter who this young scoundrel might be? He was a scoundrel; Will Magnus made sure of that beforehand, else he would not have written to her, child as she was, without first asking permission of her guardians and care-takers. Yes, the sense of duty cleared off his perplexities; he would forbid the whole affair.

So, armed with this resolution, he turned back to the house, and entered the dining-room as he had left it, by the window.

Here he found Grace sitting alone among the débris of the breakfast, looking, in his eyes, more like the picture of a naughty child sulking for a toy, than the dignified presentment of a woman, resolute to accept all manner of evil for love's sake.

"Grace," said Mr. Magnus sternly. She looked up and read her doom. "I asked you just now to tell me who this young man is, to give me your confidence, to make me your friend; you refused; and now I ask no more. I want to know nothing; for whatever you were to tell me would not change my decision a hair's-breadth; I positively, and with my whole authority, forbid any correspondence, any communication between you and this young fellow; at least while you are under my control. So now you understand. If you disobey me, I will make you a ward in Chancery; where this precious scamp of yours will find matters even a little harder on him than I can make them. No remonstrances," as Grace was about to speak. "You had your opportunity; you neglected it; and now you must abide by your own choice of action. Mine is made: and nothing that you could say will alter my decision."

Saying which he again left the room; and before the evening had come he had left the house, for two years' travel in the wilds of Abyssinia, giving Aunt Maria strict orders what to do and what to forbid, should Grace prove disobedient, or young Addy Cayley troublesome.

But Grace was a good girl in her own way. If she was rebellious in her fidelity she was not disobedient in act, and as her guardian had forbidden her to write, so that she was unable to do so openly, she

scorned to have recourse to any mean deception; so simply held on and trusted, and hoped that Addy would hold on and trust too. But it was weary work; and by the time the winter had fairly come, the suspense and sorrow in which she lived had begun to tell upon her sadly, and the rose leaves were fast fading from her face, leaving her so pinched, pale, distressed, that Aunt Maria's kind heart bled for her, and she even ventured once on a half-hesitating petition to her nephew, for leave to relax the severity of her jailership.

With poor Addy the case was almost as bad. No reply coming to his letter he tortured himself with fears that Grace had taken it ill, held it presumptuous, and by her silence wished him to understand that he had no chance, no hope. The fever into which his perplexity threw him nearly cost the poor lad his life; but he rallied again after a severe fight, and turned to his work again, resolute if sad, with no cowardly despair or despondency, for if hope, and love, and poetry were gone, he had at least work, fame, and ambition still left.

Meanwhile Grace faded steadily away, till by the spring time she looked more like dying than living. But she never complained. She simply wept and fretted, and could not eat, and grew weaker, and thinner, and paler; but she did not disobey her guardian's commands, and she did not cease to love and long for Addy.

Suddenly Will Magnus came home; no one knew why, and even he himself would have been troubled to give a reason intelligible to any one. But impelled by the restless dissatisfaction that had taken possession of him ever since his outbreak with Grace, he came back one day, as if he had dropped from the skies, and nearly killed his fragile ward by the suddenness of his arrival. She was lying on the sofa drawn up in the bay of the window, half dozing from mere weakness, when all at once she became conscious of some one looking at her. She opened her large blue eyes with a start and a cry; and the next instant was lying in a dead faint in her guardian's arms, who, for a long time, sobbing bitterly, strong man as he was, hung over what he thought to be the corpse of the sweet child he had killed. But she was restored before it was too late; and, after infinite pains and difficulty, once more looked out into the glad life of earth.

Will was kneeling by her, holding her

hands in his, when she finally recovered; careless of what Aunt Maria, of what Jane the maid, of what the doctor might think, kissing those pale, wasted little fingers, while his hot tears fell over them. Grace opened her eyes upon him. Feebly raising herself from the pillow, she slid one arm round his neck, and caressingly laid her cheek on his.

"Guardy dear," she whispered, putting up her other hand to his face, "send Addy to me. Let me see him again! Oh, let me see him again!" and then she fell back and fainted again.

But she had conquered. It was a struggle and a pain; but then life itself is but a struggle and a pain all through! Will felt the innocent ingratitude of the girl, perhaps, more than anything else. Here was he breaking his heart over her, and the first use she made of her restored life was to beseech him for his rival! However, it had to be done. It was not in him to resist such an appeal, made so tenderly, so confidently, with such an abandonment of self-restraint, such childlike trust in his goodness, appealing from him to himself. It had to be done; and it was done; and when the two young people were honestly and openly engaged, for all that Addy was but the son of a colour-sergeant, then Will Magnus again, and for the last time, left home.

Not many months after, the consul at Zanzibar wrote to Aunt Maria a sad, if brief, account of how her nephew had died of fever almost immediately on his arrival in the country; and how, with his last breath he had sent his love to "Grace Allen," and his dying prayers for her happiness.

So the strong bore the burden that the weaker might be spared; and the man went down in the noonday of his power, that the younger lives might blossom and brighten in his stead.

Next week will be commenced a STORY, in Eleven Chapters, by the author of "In that State of Life," entitled,

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A Weekly Journal

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BOOK II.

CHAPTER VI. THE WOMAN OF THE WORLD.

A COUNTRY cousin taken by his metropolitan host down Biffen-street, Park-lane, and told that the houses in that narrow and somewhat dingy locality were among the most tempting lots offered by fashionable house-agents to moneyed commerce desiring to establish itself in the regions of fashion, would surely be very much surprised. True that there is about them that surrounding of mews and small public-house seemingly inseparable from desirable residences. True that they are situate in the heart of that exclusive quarter, which is, as it were, the Faubourg St. Germain of London, concentrating within its limits the old families, and looking down with contempt upon Belgravia and Tyburnia. True that the drainage is imperfect, and that the rates are enormous. Granting all these advantages, the country cousin might yet be excused for wondering at there being anything like a struggle for the possession of a residence in Biffen-street.

For what he would see would be short rows of high-shouldered, tall houses, separated by a narrow, ill-paved street, with—running across it at right angles—another street, in which are horse-dealers' yards, and small chandlers' shops, and struggling dairies, and other attempts at domestic commerce on a very small scale. The doors of the houses in Biffen-street are so tiny, that one wonders how the enormous giants in plush, who, on fine summer evenings, are to be seen sunning themselves at the portals, manage to squeeze through them;

the windows looking upon the street are old-fashioned and airless, with small panes frequently not too clean, and sashes from which the paint is worn away; the areas are deep and narrow black tanks, and the houses, so far as outward appearance is concerned, are certainly not more desirable than those to be found in the lodging-letting purlieus of Russell-square.

But once inside, our supposed country cousin would find everything changed, and would speedily be able to understand why Biffen-street commands such high rents, and is so eagerly competed for. For on the west side, at least, the façade to the street is merely a brick delusion or a stucco snare, the fronts of the houses being, Hibernically speaking, at the back; the narrow-paned windows are either dummies, or might be, for all the use that is made of them, enshrouded as they are in bowers of luxurious creeping plants, or hidden away behind ferneries and aquaria; the rooms in the houses are not numerous, but nearly all are large, lofty, and well-proportioned, with great bay windows, which, chiefest charm of all, overlook the broad expanse of Hyde Park.

In a large room on the first floor of one of the best of these houses, on a sofa of peculiar make, with stuffed handles at either end, and small covered wheels in place of the ordinary castors, a woman lay with her face turned towards the window, and her head thrown back to catch as much as possible of the soft evening air. The lower half of the walls was fitted with book-shelves, the upper half hung with a few rare prints and engravings; the mantel-piece was above the height of an ordinary man's stature, the fireplace was tiled, and the space which in winter was occupied by the "dogs," was filled in with looking-

glass, in front of which were pots of rare flowers. The furniture, which was massive and antique, was in black oak and dark blue velvet; the thick carpet was of a sombre Persian pattern, and the whole room had the appearance of a studious man's library. But it was a woman of the world's boudoir, and its owner lay on the sofa at the window.

A tall woman, of some three-and-fifty years of age, of whom the young men of the day are accustomed to say that "she must once have been good-looking." If clear cut features, soft dark hair and eyes, and shapely figure constitute beauty, she is more than good-looking still. Her complexion is very pale, and constant suffering has left a half-worn, half-irritable expression visible in tell-tale lines round her mouth and brow; but her eyes are full of fire, and no physiognomist would fail to mark the firmness and determination evinced in the tight-closing of her lips, as she wrestles and battles with the sharp spasms of pain, which from time to time assail her. Unmistakably well-born and well-nurtured; dressed in a long flowing black cashmere robe, which, hanging in folds over her feet, is confined by a girdle round her waist; with a line of soft white muslin round the throat, and with a piece of handsome black lace brought down in a point, after the fashion of a modern widow's cap, on to her forehead, and falling gracefully over her shoulders.

Twilight has deepened into darkness, the rumble of a few carriages driving to entertainments in the now fast decaying season, is only occasional, and the hum of the people, who wearied out by their day's labour, or of the children who, cooped up in courts and alleys, have come to sit and play about on the greensward, to try and get some notion, however faint, of what the country may be like, has died away; but the occupant of the sofa still lies at the window, gazing out wearily and listlessly over the broad expanse before her. A shaded reading-lamp stands on a small table by her side, and a book with a library ticket pasted on it has fallen to the floor from the hand which hangs in weariness on the back of the sofa; but since that access of pain which caused her to drop it, she has made no attempt to move, and there she lies still, and mute, and uncomplaining.

Through the darkness glides a small, neat, womanly figure, until it reaches the sofa side, where it stops. There has been no sound of footfall, no rustling of dress,

but the lady seems aware of the presence, for she turns her head quietly and says in a full, rich voice, "You there, Willis?"

"Yes, madam, I came to tell you it had struck eleven."

"A work of supererogation, and as such to be avoided! The neighbouring churches are of use to me in one way at all events; I learn the flight of time from their clocks, if not from their preachers. What then?"

"Are you not ready for the morphia and for bed?" said the girl. "Are you not tired, madam?"

"Tired!" echoed the invalid. "Good Heaven! if you only knew how tired I am of everything, and yet how unwilling to give it up! Yes, Willis, I am tired, but I don't intend going to bed just yet."

"Doctor Asprey begged me to see that you were not up later than eleven."

"When you are Doctor Asprey's lady's-maid, you will attend to what he says; while you remain with me, you will obey me alone. I shall not leave this room until Mr. Gerald returns."

The girl had been too long in her mistress's service to attempt to argue with her, so she merely bowed, and was about to retire when the lady stopped her by a gesture.

"Stay," she said, "do not leave me, Willis; I have been alone now for a couple of hours, and there is no society I get so soon sick of as my own. That was a bad attack I had just now."

"It was, indeed, madam," said the girl, earnestly, "a very bad one."

"You thought I was dying, Willis?" said the lady, looking fixedly at her, with a smile upon her lips.

"I confess that I was very frightened," said Willis.

"As frightened as you were three years ago when we were in Greece?"

"Do you mean, madam, when we were at Mite—Mite—"

"At Mitylene."

"Yes! You looked so exactly the same, madam, this evening, as you did then."

"I felt exactly the same, Willis; that curious languor, that sense of my hold on life gradually, but surely, relaxing; that impossibility to fight against the icy numbness stealing over me; all those sensations I had at Mitylene. I had almost forgotten them until they were renewed to-night. Now tell me, what did Doctor Asprey say to you on the stairs?"

"He said——" and the girl's voice hesitated, and her cheeks flushed as she spoke,

"he said that—that you had been very ill, madam; but that you were better."

"That was oracular, indeed," said the invalid, smiling. "Did you come into my service yesterday, Willis? or do you take me for a fool, that you think to put me off with such nonsense? Tell me plainly, what did the doctor say?"

The girl hesitated again, but the invalid's eyes were fixed upon her, and she proceeded. "Doctor Asprey said, madam, that he had only arrived just in time to—to 'pull you through,' were his words, and that if you had another attack he—you—"

"I should die in it, I suppose," said the invalid, quietly.

"He would not answer for the consequences, was what the doctor said."

"It is pretty much the same thing! And you were frightened to tell me this? Have you not seen me for years looking death in the face, as it were, and do you think that the hint of its nearer approach could have any effect upon me? I told you, when you first came to me, that there was a chance of my dying at any moment, and that you would probably have to get your character for your next place from my executors, and now— Did I not hear the street-door shut? Mr. Gerald is returned, he will come straight to this room. There are tears in your eyes, Willis; dry them at once, and get away before he comes; you know how quick and observant he is."

Obedying this order, Willis hurried from the room. She had scarcely done so, when Gerald Hardinge, entering, walked straight to the sofa and seated himself in a low chair beside it, taking one of its occupant's hands between his.

Rose Pierrepont was right in saying that Gerald's personal appearance had greatly improved since the old days. His face had a colour in it, which it lacked then, and his strong active figure was set off by well-cut clothes. His voice, always soft and refined, sounded singularly sweet, as bending over the figure on the sofa, and lightly kissing its forehead, he said, "Why do I find you up so late, to-night; is not this dissipation against all orders?"

"This dissipation, as you call it, has occurred wholly and solely on your account. I sat up to see you."

"It is all very well to say that," said Gerald, laughing, "but you were always addicted to frivolity, and you have been amusing yourself, I know, with watching the people in the Park."

"My dear Gerald, even the philanderings of tall guardsmen with short plain cooks, and the pastimes of dirty children, have ceased to inspire me with much interest. That was all to be seen while daylight remained, and it has been dark for the last two hours."

"And yet you have remained here—I was going to say reading, but the position of the book," pointing to it, "is scarcely complimentary to the author."

"The book," said the invalid, glancing at the fallen volume, "is the usual accurate description of fashionable life from the scullery-maid's point of view. No, I have been amusing myself in thinking."

"Thinking of what?"

"Many things and persons, you among the number; but I will not inflict upon you an inventory of my thoughts, at all events just now. You dined with Doctor Asprey. Had you a pleasant party? Who were there?"

"Only two other men, neither of whom I think you know, a Mr. Delabole and a Mr. Vane."

"I have met Mr. Delabole, a coarse, common vulgarian, pushing and presuming; just the style of person one expects to find at Madame Uffizzi's, where I met him, and who is invited by her on account of business relations with her husband. Who is the other man, one of the Northumberland Vanes?"

"I should think not," said Gerald, laughing; "a pleasing, rattling, agreeable kind of fellow, who talked very well. He had to do a goodish deal of talking, by the way, for the doctor was sent for early in the dinner, and was away for an hour."

"What was his summons?"

"To a patient of course, and an urgent case I fancy, for he rose from the table directly his most mysterious butler whispered in his ear. I need not tell you that he did not mention the name or the case."

"Doctor Asprey is a model of discretion," said the invalid, with a faint smile; then leaning a little towards her companion, and laying her hand on his, she added, "Would it surprise you, my dear Gerald, to hear that it was to see me that Doctor Asprey left his friends?"

"You!" echoed the young man.

"Me. After you left the house, I had warning of a bad attack, and when its imminence became certain, I thought it better that the doctor should be here to stave it off, if possible."

"And you hadn't a thought to send for

me at such a time," said the young man, bending tenderly over her, but speaking in tones of reproach.

"What good could it have done?" she asked. "I knew you were enjoying yourself, and life is too short to let slip any such opportunity. You could have done me no good, and the sight of you, and the thought that I was leaving you, would not have rendered death more pleasant to me."

"You must not speak like that," said Gerald, gently.

"And why not?" said the invalid, with a smile; "the fact will not be averted or postponed by our ignoring it, and I have a strong conviction that my hold on life, which of late years has been sufficiently feeble, is gradually relaxing altogether."

"What makes you think that?" he said, in a low, tremulous voice.

"I do not think it," she replied; "I know it. Five or six years ago I went for a tour in the East alone, that is to say, with Willis for my sole companion; while in Constantinople I had a severe attack of rheumatism, and was recommended by a French physician, who attended me, to try the baths of Vassilica, in the island of Mitylene, which, at one time, were famous for their cure of such disorders. I went to Mitylene, and found it paradise; and when you have no longer this old woman to tie you to this detestable place, you must go there, Gerald, and recompense yourself for having given up a portion of your youth to her love of your companionship."

"If it pleases you to speak in this way, of course it is not for me to check you," said the young man, shrugging his shoulders.

"There," said the invalid, "I will say no more on that head since it displeases you, but will continue my story. The baths did me good, and the climate rendered me quite another being; it seemed to me that, for the first time, I knew what life was, as distinguished from existence. I forgot that perpetual gnawing pain which had never left me for so many years, and I began to think it not impossible that in time I should have some toleration for my fellow-creatures. Willis thought the Golden Age had arrived, and I had some idea of taking up my quarters there for good, and establishing myself as a kind of civilised Lady Hester Stanhope among the Greek rayahs, when something happened which changed all my intentions. Close to Mitylene is a place called Lovochari, or the Village of the Lepers, a ter-

rible place, where the people so afflicted are herded together. I had been warned not to go, but I persisted, and dearly I paid for my obstinacy. The sight was terrific, and 'once seen, was impossible to be got rid of. All day, after my return, I tried to shut it from my mental vision, but there it remained, and at night the hideous objects which I had seen rose before me more terrible than ever; I suppose the fatigue and the horror under which I laboured had something to do with it, but that night I experienced a new phase in my illness. During Willis's temporary absence from the room I fell into a comatose state, a kind of trance, in the commencement of which I felt my life, as it were, gradually slipping away from me; I seemed to be growing weaker and weaker, pulseless, dead; for I was dead, so far as power of motion, thought, or feeling was concerned. I need not tell you how I was brought round, or bore you with the details of my recovery, which was as sudden as had been the attack. I need only say, my dear Gerald, that this evening I have gone through an exactly similar phase of my illness, and that I know that Doctor Asprey thinks that the wolf, whose approach has been so often announced, is about to come down upon me at last."

Overcome by emotion, the young man sat silent, only pressing the hand which he held between his own.

"Do not think that I am going to be sentimental, my dear Gerald," continued the invalid, "or that I intend saying to you any 'last words,' or any nonsense of that kind. Notwithstanding all my ailments, I have amused myself sufficiently in life, and I am human enough to care sufficiently about such low creature comforts as good eating and drinking, warmth and luxury, not to be overjoyed at the prospects of having speedily to give them up; as for parting from you, I never intend to hint at the subject. I hope that one evening we shall say good-night as usual—there, now, I am drifting into the very sentimental nonsense that I wish to avoid. What I have to say and must say is purely practical. It will be no surprise to you to hear that I have left you all I have in the world."

His head was averted, and for an instant he made no response; when he turned round his cheeks were burning.

"It seems horrible to talk to you in this cold-blooded way," said he, "after all your goodness to me, and at such a moment, but you have given me an opportunity which

I have long wanted, and which I must not miss. What I want to say is, to say in all gentleness and affection, that I cannot accept any further kindness at your hands; that I cannot take this legacy from you to the exclusion of others who have doubtless claims of blood upon you."

The invalid smiled faintly as she said: "Persons with claims of blood I suppose are relations. Providence has kindly spared me any such annoyances! And I think you will allow, before we part to-night, that I have not been acting, nor am I going to act, like a stupid old woman, as the world most probably believes, but that, at all events, there has been method in my madness. Now, Gerald, take this key and open the middle drawer in that cabinet; close to the front you will find a small soft paper parcel—bring it to me."

The young man obeyed. The invalid was about to open the paper, but she refrained.

"Open it yourself," she said.

Gerald took off the outer wrappings of paper, and came upon a miniature painted on ivory, in the style so much in vogue half a century ago.

"Look at it well, and tell me if you know for whom it is intended."

Gerald took the portrait to the lamp and examined it carefully. It represented a young man of about five-and-twenty years of age, with whiskerless cheeks, and clear blue eyes, and fair hair, curling in a thick crisp mass on his head. He had on a scarlet uniform coat and white duck trousers, and his hand rested on the hilt of a sword.

Glancing at this portrait, Gerald started; bending down to observe it more closely, the colour left his cheeks, and his hand trembled.

"You know the original?" asked the invalid.

"I have seen him," faltered Gerald. "It is, I presume, intended for Sir Geoffrey Heriot."

"Exactly," said the invalid. "For your father, George!"

"You know me!" cried Gerald, placing the portrait on a table, and returning to his position by the sofa.

"Certainly, Gerald! I must call you Gerald, I could never get used to George. Certainly, I know you, Gerald!"

"Since when have you known my real name and my position, or rather," he added, bitterly, "what ought to have been my position?"

"Before I ever set eyes upon you," said

the invalid; "before I purchased those two pictures," pointing to two sketches in oil, resting on one of the cabinets, "which were not great triumphs of art, as you will allow, my dear Gerald, but which it suited me then to pay well for."

"And all this time that I have been living on your bounty, as it were, you knew that I was an impostor; that the name under which I passed was not my own; the story which I told you of my previous life was a fiction."

"You use harsh language in speaking of yourself, Gerald," said the invalid. "If you had not been who you are, I should have taken no interest in you or your fortune. You cannot suppose, for you are not a vain boy, that a sensible old woman like myself was idiotic enough to have fallen in love with you, and to take an interest in you for your beaux yeux. You cannot imagine that, true worldling as I am, I was actuated by philanthropy, or any preposterous motive of that kind, to adopt a young person whom I had never seen, to make him my companion and my heir. No, when I saw you, I liked your appearance and manner; when I came to know you, I learned to love you as my own child; but what induced me in the first instance to send for you—and when I sent for you it was with the determination to hold to you, if you had been as bad as you are good, to give you position, if you had been as totally unfitted as you are totally fitted for it—was the knowledge that you were Geoffrey Heriot's discarded son, and that all good fortune accruing to you would be, when he knows it—as he will! as he shall! sooner or later!—be gall and wormwood to Geoffrey Heriot!"

Gerald had sat open-eyed, regarding with wonder the fire which blazed in her eyes, and the expression of hatred and contempt which swept across her face at each mention of his father's name.

"You speak very harshly of Sir Geoffrey Heriot," he said, after a pause.

"I speak harshly because I hate him, but I hate him because I have cause."

"He must have known you well to have had the opportunity of raising such resentment in you?"

"I knew him too well; he embittered the whole current of my life; he—there is no need for any further mysteries, Gerald," she said, with an effort to calm herself. "I was always waiting for some chance of your hearing my maiden name mentioned in the world, when you would have at once

understood the source of my interest in you; but it is so long since I was a girl, and so long since I have been known as Mrs. Entwistle, that people seemed to forget I was once Florence Hastings!"

"Hastings! that was my mother's name," said Gerald, quickly, with a beating heart. "Was she related to you?"

"She was my sister," said Mrs. Entwistle, quietly.

REAL HORSES.

A HORSE in the highway is simply a horse and nothing more; but, transferred to the theatre, the noble animal becomes a *real* horse. The distinction is necessary in order that there may be no confusing the works of nature with the achievements of the property-maker. Not that this indispensable dramatic artist shrinks from competition. But he would not have ascribed to him the production of another manufactory, so to say. His business is in counterfeits; he views with some disdain a genuine article. When the famous elephant Chunee stepped upon the stage of Covent Garden, the chief performer in the pantomime of Harlequin and Padmanaba, or the Golden Fish, the creature was but scornfully regarded by Mr. Johnson, the property-man of Drury Lane. "I should be very sorry," he cried, "if I could not make a better elephant than that!" And it would seem that he afterwards justified his pretensions, especially in the eyes of the play-goers prizing imitative skill above mere reality. We read in the parody of Coleridge, in *Rejected Addresses*:

Amid the freaks that modern fashion sanctions,
It grieves me much to see live animals
Brought on the stage. Grimaldi has his rabbit,
Laurent his cat, and Bradbury his pig;
Fie on such tricks! Johnson, the machinist,
Of former Drury, imitated life
Quite to the life! The elephant in Blue Beard,
Stuffed by his hand, wound round his lithe proboscis
As spruce as he who roared in Padmanaba.

But no doubt an artificial elephant is more easily to be fabricated than an artificial horse. We do not encounter real elephants at every turn with which to compare the counterfeit. The animal is of bulky proportions, and somewhat ungainly movements. With a frame of wicker-work, and a hide of painted canvas, the creature can be fairly represented. But a horse is a different matter. Horses abound, however, and have proved themselves, time out of mind, apt pupils. They can readily be trained and taught to perform all kinds

of feats and antics. So the skill of the property-maker is not taxed. He stands on one side, and permits the real horse to enter upon the mimic scene.

When Don Adriano de Armado, the fantastical Spaniard of *Love's Labour Lost*, admits that he is "ill at reckoning," and cannot tell "how many is one thrice told," his page Moth observes "how easy it is to put years to the word three, and study three years in two words, the dancing horse will tell you." This is without doubt an allusion to a horse called *Marocco*, trained by its master, one *Banks*, a Scotchman, to perform various strange tricks. *Marocco*, a young bay nag of moderate size, was exhibited in Shakespeare's time in the court-yard of the *Belle Sauvage Inn*, on *Ludgate-hill*, the spectators lining the galleries of the hostelry. A pamphlet, published in 1595, and entitled *Maroccus Exstaticus, or Bankes Bay Horse in a Traunce; a Discourse set down in a Merry Dialogue between Bankes and his Beast*, contains a wood-print of the performing animal and his proprietor. *Banks's* horse must have been one of the earliest "trained steeds" ever exhibited. His tricks excited great amazement, although they would hardly now be accounted very wonderful. *Marocco* could walk on his hind legs, and even dance the *Canaries*. At the bidding of his master he would carry a glove to a specified lady or gentleman, and tell, by raps with his hoof, the numbers on the upper face of a pair of dice. He went through, indeed, much of what is now the regular "business" of the circus horse. In 1600, *Banks* amazed London by taking his horse up to the vane on the top of *St. Paul's Cathedral*. *Marocco* visited *Scotland* and *France*, and in these countries his accomplishments were generally attributable to witchcraft. *Banks* rashly encouraged the notion that his nag was supernaturally endowed. An alarm was raised that *Marocco* was possessed by the *Evil One*. To relieve misgivings and escape reproach, *Banks* made his horse pay homage to the sign of the cross, and called upon all to observe that nothing satanic could have been induced to perform this act of reverence. A rumour at one time prevailed that the horse and his master had both, as "subjects of the *Black Power* of the world," been burned at *Rome* by order of the *Pope*. More authentic accounts, however, show *Banks* as surviving to *Charles the First's* time, and thriving as a vintner in *Cheapside*. But it is to be gathered from *Douce's*

Illustrations of Shakespeare, that of old certain performing horses suffered miserably for their skill. In a little book, *Le Diable Bossu*, Nancy, 1708, allusion is made to an English horse, whose master had taught him to know the cards, being burnt alive at Lisbon, in 1707; and Grainger, in his *Biographical History of England*, 1779, states that, within his remembrance, "a horse, which had been taught to perform several tricks, was, with its owner, put into the Inquisition."

Marocco was but a circus horse; there is no evidence to show that he ever trod the stage, or took part in theatrical performances. It is hard to say, indeed, when horses first entered a regular theatre. Pepys chronicles, in 1668, a visit "to the King's Playhouse, to see an old play of Shirley's, called *Hide Park*, the first day acted [revived], where horses are brought upon the stage." He expresses no surprise at the introduction of the animals, and this may not have been their first appearance on the scene. He is content to note that *Hide Park* is "a very moderate play, only an excellent epilogue spoken by Beck Marshall." The scene of the third and fourth acts of the comedy lies in the park, and foot and horse races are represented. The horses probably were only required to cross the stage once or twice.

A representation of Corneille's tragedy of *Andromeda*, in 1682, occasioned great excitement in Paris, owing to the introduction of a "real horse" to play the part of Pegasus. The horse was generally regarded as a kind of Roscius of the brute creation, and achieved an extraordinary success. Adorned with wings and hoisted up by machinery, he neighed and tossed his head, pawed and pranced in mid-air after a very lively manner. It was a mystery then, but it is common enough knowledge now, that the horse's histrionic skill is founded upon his appetite. Kept without food for some time the horse becomes naturally moved at the sight of a sieve of corn in the side-wings. His feats, the picking up of gloves and handkerchiefs, even the pulling of triggers, originate but in his efforts to find oats. By-and-bye his memory is exercised, and he is content to know that after the conclusion of his "business," he will be rewarded with oats behind the scenes. The postponement of his meals attends his failure to accomplish what is required of him. Of old, perhaps, some cruel use of whip and spur may have marked the education of the "trick-horse."

But for a long time past the animal's fears have not been appealed to, but simply his love of food. Horses are very sagacious, and their natural timidity once appeased, they become exceedingly docile. An untrained horse has often shown himself equal to the ordinary requirements of the equestrian manager after only four days of tuition.

Pope satirised the introduction of horses in Shakespeare's *Henry the Eighth*, revived with great splendour in 1727, when a representation was given of the coronation of Anne Bullen, and the royal champion, duly mounted and caparisoned, proclaimed his challenge. But for many years the appearances on the stage of equine performers were only of an occasional kind. It was not until the rebuilding of Astley's in 1803, that the equestrian drama became an established entertainment. An extensive stage was then added to the circus, and "horse spectacles," as they were called, were first presented. A grand drama called the *Blood-Red Knight*, produced in 1810, resulted in a profit to the proprietors of some eighteen thousand pounds, a handsome sum, seeing that the season at that time only extended from Easter to the end of September.

The triumphs of Astley's excited the envy of the Covent Garden managers. Colman's drama of *Blue Beard* was reproduced, with Mr. Johnson's imitation elephant, and a troop of real horses. The performance was presented on forty-four nights, a long run in those days. There was, of course, much wrath excited by this degradation of the stage. A contemporary critic writes: "A novel and marked event occurred at this theatre on this evening (18th of February, 1811), which should be considered as a black epocha for ever by the loyal adherents to wit and the muses. As the Mussulmen date their computation of years from the flight of Mahomet, so should the hordes of folly commence their triumphant register from the open flight of common sense on this memorable night, when a whole troop of horses made their first appearance in character at Covent Garden." The manager was fiercely denounced for his unscrupulous endeavours "to obtain money at the expense of his official dignity." Another critic, alleging that "the dressing-rooms of the new company of comedians were under the orchestra," complained that "in the first row of the pit the stench was so abominable, one might as well have sitten in a stable." Still the "equestrian

drama" delighted the town. Blue Beard was followed by Monk Lewis's *Timour the Tartar*, in which more horses appeared. Some hissing was heard at the commencement of the new drama, and placards were exhibited in the pit condemning the horses; but in the end *Timour* triumphed over all opposition, and rivalled the run of *Blue Beard*. It is to be remembered, especially by those who insist so much on the degeneracy of the modern theatre, that these "horse spectacles" were presented in a patent-house during the palmy days of the drama, while the great Kemble family was still in possession of the stage of Covent Garden.

These equestrian doings were satirised at the Haymarket Theatre in the following summer. The *Quadrupeds of Quedlinburgh*, or the *Rovers of Weimar*, was produced, being an adaptation by Colman of a burlesque, attributed to Canning, in the *Anti-Jacobin*. It was designed to ridicule not merely the introduction of horses upon the stage, but also the then prevailing taste for morbid German dramas of the *Kotzebue* school. The prologue was in part a travestie of Pope's prologue to *Cato*, and contained references to the plays of *Lovers' Vows* and the *Stranger*.

To lull the soul by spurious strokes of art,
To warp the genius and mislead the heart,
To make mankind reverse wives gone astray,
Love pious sons who rob on the highway,
For this the foreign muses trod our stage,
Commanding German schools to be the rage.

Dear JOHNNY BULL, you boast much resolution,
With, thanks to Heaven, a glorious constitution;
Your taste, recovered half from foreign quacks,
Takes airings now on English horses' backs,
While every modern bard may raise his name,
If not on lasting praise, on stable fame.
Think that to Germans you have given no check,
Think how each actor horsed has risked his neck;
You've shown them favour. Oh, then, once more
show it

To this night's Anglo-German horse-play poet.

In the course of the play the sentimental sentinel in *Pizarro* was ridiculed, and the whole concluded with a grand battle, in which the last scene of *Timour the Tartar* was imitated and burlesqued. "Stuffed ponies and donkeys frisked about with ludicrous agility," writes a critic of the time. The play was thoroughly successful, and would seem to have retrieved the fortunes of the theatre, which had been long in a disastrous condition.

Drury Lane also struck a blow at the "horse spectacles" of the rival house. In 1812 was produced *Quadrupeds*, or the *Manager's Last Kick*. This was only a revised version of the old burlesque of the

Tailors, a Tragedy for Warm Weather, usually ascribed to Foote. In the last scene an army of tailors appeared, mounted on asses and mules, and much fun of a pantomimic kind ensued. Some years later, however, Drury Lane was content to derive profit from a drama in which "real horses" appeared, with the additional attraction of "real water." This was Moncrieff's play of the *Cataract of the Ganges*. Indeed, Drury Lane was but little entitled to vaunt its superiority in the matter. In 1803 its treasury had greatly benefited from the feats of the "real dog" in Reynolds's melodrama the *Caravan*. "Real water," indeed, had been brought upon the stage by Garrick himself, who owed his prosperity, not more to his genius as an actor than to his ingenuity as a purveyor of pantomimes and spectacles. One of his addresses to his audience contains the lines:

What eager transport stares from every eye,
When pulleys rattle, and our genii fly,
When tin cascades like falling waters gleam,
Or through the canvas bursts the real stream,
While thirsty Islington laments in vain
Half her New River rolled to Drury Lane.

Of late years a change has come over the equestrian drama. The circus flourishes, and quadrupeds figure now and then upon the stage, but the "horse spectacle" has almost vanished. The noble animal is to be seen occasionally on the boards, but he is cast for small parts only, is little better than a four-footed supernumerary. He comes on to aid the pageantry of the scenes; even opera does not disdain his services in this respect. A richly caparisoned charger performs certain simple duties in *Masaniello*, in *Les Hnguenots*, *L'Etoile du Nord*, *Martha*, *La Juive*, and some few other operas. The late M. Jullien introduced quite a troop of cavalry in his *Pietro il Grande*, but this homage to horseflesh notwithstanding, the world did not greatly prize the work in question. The horse no longer performs "leading business." Plays are not now written for him. He is no longer required to evince the fidelity and devotion of his nature by knocking at street-doors, rescuing a prisoned master, defending oppressed innocence, or dying in the centre of the stage to slow music. Something of a part seemed promised him when the popular drama of *Flying Scud* was first represented; at least, he supplied that work with its title. But it was speedily to be perceived that animal interests had been subordinated to human. More prominent occupation by far was assigned to the rider

than to the horse. A different plan of distributing parts prevailed when the High-Mettled Racer and kindred works adorned the stage. A horse with histrionic instincts and acquirements had something like a chance then. But now! he can only lament the decline of the equestrian drama. True, the circus is still open to him; but in the eyes of a well-educated performing horse a circus must be much what a music-hall is, in the opinion of a tragedian devoted to five-act plays.

THE CONSTANT COUPLE.

BLESS them! I say, fervently, sincerely, and emphatically. Constancy is not so very common a virtue that we can afford to let it go by, unrecognised, when we find it in our path; but I can scarcely traverse two steps without being reminded of the existence of the Constant Couple. Therefore, I would repeat, bless them. May their shadows—and their persons cast very lengthy shadows indeed—never be less. May they flourish “root and branch,” as the festive formula runs at City companies’ dinners. No oak ever struck deeper root than the Constant Couple have done; and as for their branches, they have spread more widely than those of a banyan tree. May they increase and multiply; and their name is Legion, already. Here is their health! The Constant Couple: with all the honours. The Constant Couple, with three times three!

Ay; they may well be toasted in triplets, for my personal acquaintance with the Couple goes back at least three hundred years. Deem it not that I am romancing, or that I wish to set up as Rip Van Winkle, Old Parr, or one of the Seven Sleepers. I can barely remember His Majesty George the Fourth. Bearing the consequences of my assertion fully in mind, I am about to make a statement even more astounding. It was in about the middle of the sixteenth century that I became familiar with my Couple as inseparably Constant; but I may say that I was aware of them two thousand years ago, albeit under slightly less indissoluble conditions. They were courting then, perhaps. She had not quite made up her mind, as to whether a more eligible partner might not be existent somewhere. He was not quite certain as to whether it was quite prudent to incur all the responsibilities of matrimony upon an income of seventy thousand a year. Don’t start at

the mention of such a sum. It is obvious that the Constant Couple are immensely wealthy. They are always dressed in the extreme of the fashion, and have been thus dressed, mind you, since the commencement of the Christian era; nay, in heathen times, as I shall presently show, they were accustomed to wear the most expensive togas and the most elegant stoles. They have always had horses and carriages when they chose; although, for their health’s sake, doubtless, they usually prefer to walk. They go into the very best society; and I know for a fact that they enjoy the entrée at St. James’s; that they are of every court ball and garden party; that they are always invited to the private view of the Royal Academy—he only attends the Academy dinner, and I can see him now, waving his napkin in a frenzy of enthusiasm, when Sir Francis Grant proposes the health of the Archbishop of Canterbury; and that they were present at the laying of the first stone of St. Thomas’s Hospital, the opening of the Isthmus of Suez Canal, the inauguration of the Holborn Viaduct, and the marriage of the Princess Louise. Do I err, then, looking at the splendour of their attire, the grandeur of their connexions, and the perpetuity of their locomotion, in assuming in their case the possession of vast riches?

As I have said, it was not until the time of the Renaissance, and especially until the period of the dissemination of wood engravings by means of the printing-press, that the Constant Couple came together, and commenced their affectionate practice of walking about the world arm-in-arm, seeing all that is to be seen, and taking apparently the liveliest interest therein. Long before the time of Holbein and Albert Durer, however, the Couple were to be found in old block-books, illuminated manuscripts, encaustic wall-paintings, carved bench-ends in cathedrals, and even in the bas-reliefs of ancient sarcophagi. If you will look at the oldest water-colour drawing in the world, and the finest, perhaps, ever executed—that beautiful distemper sketch preserved in the Vatican, and called the Nozze Aldobrandini—you will find the Couple, togaed, stoled, peplumed, filleted, and sandalled, side by side, gazing pensively at the newly-married pair. Close by them is an elegant altar, from which curls a slender skein of the blue smoke of incense. Surely in this charming performance, the forerunner of ever so many thousands of Corboulds, and Haghes, and Carl Werners, there

must have been likewise latent the idea of the first valentine. Straightway, I fancy, did the Couple in the Nozze catch at the glorious notion. "No more," they cried, "will we be apart." They sang the duet in Norma, "Yes, we together will live and die." Forthwith he slipped off his toga and assumed a blue coat with brass buttons, a canary waistcoat, and fawn-coloured pantaloons. With equal promptitude she dismantled herself of her stola and pepulum, and donned a pink muslin dress, a black satin jacket, a hat and feathers, and a very large blue parasol. There was nothing else needed after this but for them to be enshrined in a frame of artificial flowers, or cut paper imitative of lace, and to walk up a serpentine gravel-path in the midst of a meadow of the brightest emerald green, and to be arm-in-arm, and constant, for ever and ever.

But the valentine phase of the Constant Couple is their cheapest and their vulgarest one. They derogate from their station every February; and I am ashamed to confess, that at this season he often takes the guise of a journeyman butcher, and she of a milliner's apprentice. Nay, I have seen the Constant Couple brought down so low as to be sold for a penny; he daubed in the most staring colours, and with great red blotches on his cheeks and nose, and smoking a cheap cheroot; she holding up her dress to display an inordinate crinoline, and a preposterously high-heeled boot, and with a label issuing from her lips, expressive of the rudest things. It is only once a year fortunately that this sad exhibition takes place. The 14th of February once past, the Constant Couple revert to their normal status as the cream of the cream of aristocracy and refinement.

Let me travel back to the Middle Ages—the birth of printing and the development of wood engraving. The Constant Couple—the gentleman in a slashed doublet, monstrously bombasted trunks, shoes with huge rosettes, and a prodigious basket rapier; the lady in a quilted farthingale, and a ruff as big as a cart-wheel—are very great in the Nuremberg Chronicle, that quaint prototype of our Illustrated London News and Graphic. They may be seen beholding the triumphs of Maximilian and the crowning of the kaiser at Frankfort; taking no personal part, it is true, in holding out the platters for portions of the ox roasted whole, or goblets for the wine with which the great fountain runs; disdaining—as beseems their quality—to scramble for the largesse flung by the

heralds, or for fragments of the scarlet cloth on which the emperor walks, but still contemplating all these ceremonies with the liveliest complacency. I am sorry to say that in mediæval times their amusements were not always of this cheerful description. They were addicted, I fear, to sight-seeing of the sensational and ghastly kind; and in that grimmest of grim books, the *Praxis Criminis Persequendi* of Millæus, I light on the Constant Couple "assisting," as the French say, with an expression of the most intense interest at the question extraordinary by the strappado, at the breaking on the wheel of a highwayman, at the baking and boiling of sundry coiners, heretics, and Jews, and at the scourging of a wretched adventuress, who receives her punishment on a donkey's back, with her face turned towards the animal's tail. Strange that a Couple moving (arm-in-arm) in the first circles, accustomed to the very acmé of sweetness and light, creatures of the highest culture, and who never miss such truly elegant spectacles as the enthronisation of the Bishop of Winchester, or the presentation of purses to Her Royal Highness the Princess of Teck on the completion of a new wing to the Home for Little Boys, should give way to such morbid, to such degrading impulses. Yet so it is; and their addictedness to horrible spectacles has endured, I fear, to this day. I never yet saw a picture of Madame Tussaud's Chamber of Horrors; yet, in all likelihood, were such a representation produced, the Couple would be found blandly surveying the obnoxious criminals in wax-work; while he gave her a technical description of the working of the guillotine, and she, with the eye of a connoisseur, examined the texture of Maria Manning's Paisley shawl. On the other hand, the Constant Couple, watching the late Duke of Wellington as he gazed on the model of Napoleon lying on the identical camp-bed on which he died at St. Helena, is patent to all mankind. The Constant Couple were passionately fond of the Great Duke. When (with the assistance of Sir Edwin Landseer) the hero revisited the field of Waterloo in the company of the Marchioness of Douro, the couple, disguised as a Flemish boor in a blouse and a young vraw in a tall cap, lay on the turf at Mont St. Jean, and importuned the illustrious visitors to purchase a guide-book, and a quantity of sham relics. Of course they were present at the lying in state at Chelsea Hospital. She had her bonnet crushed, and lost one of her shoes in the

pressure of the crowd; he emerged from it with his costly attire as tattered and torn as that of the man in the House that Jack Built. I don't think I ever saw them in so pitiable a condition since the day when they waited from nine A.M. to six-thirty P.M. at the pit-door of Drury Lane Theatre, in the hope of securing front places to witness the performance of Master Betty. Their admiration for the Young Roscius cost them nearly all their clothes; but they were superior to misfortune, and appeared in brand-new suits on the bridge across the ornamental water in St. James's Park, on the occasion of the visit to this country of the Allied Sovereigns. He had his coat singed by one of Sir William Congreve's squibs discharged from the Temple of Concord, and her hat, with a prodigious top-knot of feathers, was in considerable danger from a stray rocket-stick; but they were bound to confront crowds and to surmount difficulties. They were in the smartest of wherries, and close alongside of the royal barge, when William the Fourth went in state to the opening of New London Bridge (I grieve to say that ten years previously they had caught sad colds, and ran a narrow risk of being sabred into the bargain by the Life Guards Blue, when mingling in the mob at Queen Caroline's funeral); but they were all themselves again at the coronation of Queen Victoria. "Themselves!" I should think so; the Constant Couple then came out in their proper colours. Their rank and state became revealed. He in the robes of a baron, and holding his coronet in his hand, and she with a lofty plume of ostrich feathers, and all Golconda in diamonds on her lovely person, stood arm-in-arm in Westminster Hall to see the sovereign pass. I saw them again under similar happy auspices no later than last spring, beneath the portico of the House of Lords. It was the day when parliament was opened by Her Majesty; and, the ceremonial being over, the Constant Couple were waiting for their carriage to come up.

But mark the modesty, the simple-mindedness of true virtue and worth. This manifestly high-born pair are not too proud, on occasion, to assume the garb, and to assimilate themselves to the condition of the middle classes. If the Queen travels to Scotland, the Constant Couple are, by favour of the station-master, admitted to the railway platform, and with loyalty beaming in their countenances, they hail the arrival of the royal train. Then he raises his hat, and she waves her handker-

chief. There never was such a Couple for raising their hat and waving their handkerchief. They are also devotedly fond of flower shows and fancy fairs; they moderately favour meetings of the Social Science Association, and they sometimes patronise a Sunday-school tea-meeting, or temperance gathering. I fancy though that he—as a rule the most docile of partners—is apt to be recalcitrant when Sunday schools or teetotalism are on the tapis. Strictly virtuous and unimpeachably genteel, he is yet, I imagine, somewhat of a jovial soul. But it is at International Exhibitions that the ubiquitous Abelard and Heloise are in their greatest glory. See them in Hyde Park in '51; at South Kensington in '62; in the Champs Elysées in '55; in the Cromwell-road in '62; in the Champs de Mars in '67, and at South Kensington in the present year of grace. They are indefatigable in their attendance; their great curiosity has stomach for all: machinery in motion, crown jewels, surgical preparations, and Mr. Cremer's toys; cashmere shawls, Barbédienne's bronzes, automaton singing birds, international fine art, the flora and fauna of the province of Tobolsk, and the pottery of all nations. In their perambulation of the galleries, I notice with indescribable joy that they have a companion of their wanderings, and a participator in their pleasures. I always thought—I always maintained, that they were a happy as well as a Constant Couple. See, Heaven has blessed their union with offspring! The Couple always take a child with them to the Exhibition; and from the fondly confiding manner—a kind of seraphic smirk—with which the pledge of affection looks up in their eyes, it is easy to see that the couple are his papa and mamma. Sometimes the pledge is a sprightly youth in black velvet knickerbockers, at other times a sylph-like girl in a short skirt and laced pantalettes. Their chief characteristic, apart from devoted filial love, is a continual thirst for information; and the Constant Couple have enough to do in answering a perpetual flow of Mangnall's Questions on art and industry, textile fabrics and ceramic ware.

The Constant Couple never fail to attend the University boat-race, and may be seen crossing over Barnes Common on horseback, he raising his hat, she waving her handkerchief in honour of the victorious, but absent crew. You will be sure, likewise, to meet them at the Oxford Commemoration. Then he wears a college cap and gown, and has evidently graduated high in honours; and she, just for the fun of the thing, pre-

tends to be his mother, or his sister, or his sweetheart. But meet them next week at the Crystal Palace—they never yet missed a Handel Festival, or an operatic Saturday—and they become man and wife again. As man and wife I have lately viewed them inspecting the manufacture of the Glenfield patent starch, and I have no doubt they take an equal interest in the preparation of ozokerit and sea moss farine. I know they do in the Derby and the Cattle Show at the Agricultural Hall, and the launch of the iron-clad turret-ship *Founderer*. And, upon my word—that wonderful Couple—there they were last week, all eyes and ears, in the riding-school at Versailles, spectators of the Communist trials. They had previously watched the demon firemen pumping petroleum into the blazing ruins of the Finance Ministry. Pictorial particulars of the opening of the Mont Cenis Tunnel have not come to hand as I close this paper, but when the abstract and brief chronicle (in wood-cuts) appears, I shall be bitterly disappointed if I do not find the Constant Couple awaiting the arrival of the first train through the Alps, and cheering the *Commendatore Grattoni* to the echo.

But halt—"basta!"—I have pursued my idle whim long enough, and must not worry it to death. The secret—it is but a secret de Polichinelle—is divulged. Go you, as I have done, to a few back volumes of the illustrated papers; go to the chromolithographic show-bills of tradesmen, and the headings of almanacks; go to the frontispieces of old books, the engravings in hand-books to London, and the designs for new public buildings, sent every year by imaginative and hopeful architects to the Royal Academy, and you will know as much about the Constant Couple as I do. Bless them again, I say, for their counterfeit presentiments have made me laugh heartily many a time. And to be able to laugh, as the world wags, is something.

SERENADE.

ART thou waking,
Merry sun? Yea, thou art waking;
On the heights thy smile is breaking,
While the cold stars fainter glowing
Fade, and morning winds are blowing
Warm and free.

ART thou waking,
Little bird? Yea, thou art waking;
Songs of morning thou art making,
In the sunlight thou art leaping.
Out and in the green boughs creeping
Merrily.

ART thou waking
Happy rose-bush? Yea, thy breaking
Blossoms the sweet light are taking;
And thy buds are lifted slowly,
That thy cups with dewdrops holy
Filled may be.

ART thou waking,
Pretty maiden? Art thou waking?
'Neath the window with heart aching,
I have waited fondly pining
That thy face's first sweet shining
I may see!

THOU art waking,
Dearest, brightest, thou art waking,
Thy white blind is sweetly breaking
Like a lily's leaves asunder,
And thine eyes with a sweet wonder
Shine on me.

ALL is waking,
All is waking! Day is breaking!
Each the new delight partaking,
Birds are singing, roses blowing,
And thy lover, yearning, glowing,
Waits for thee!

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

AN OLD RUGBY STORY. THE LITTLE BOTTLE OF LAUREL-WATER.

ON the 8th of April, 1759, Masulipatam, the capital of Golconda, was taken by storm from the French garrison. Foremost among the English assailants was a young subaltern of the Thirty-ninth Regiment, named Donnellan. This officer, eager for booty, undertook, for eight hundred rupees, to sort from the common loot some chests of treasure and rich bales claimed by certain black and Armenian merchants of the town. For taking this bribe Donnellan was tried by court-martial, and deprived of his commission. Unable to get any redress from Lord Clive, Donnellan returned to England to write an angry pamphlet against his colonel. In some way or other obtaining his half-pay, Donnellan now became a man of pleasure, a gambler, and a fortune hunter, ready to make money by any decorous imposture.

The new Pantheon (intended for a sort of winter Ranelagh), opened in 1772, was built by Mr. Wyatt, and cost some fifty thousand pounds. Horace Walpole, in one of his studied, agreeable letters, praises it as a chef-d'œuvre of architecture, "Imagine," says the clever Fribble, "Baalbec in all its glory." A very splendid sham paradise, no doubt, a paradise fit for Adams like Captain Donnellan, and Eves like the fashionable ladies of his day. Somehow or other the adventurer found means to buy two shares in this undertaking, and to be appointed master of the ceremonies. There he was in all his glory; smooth, graceful, stealthy as a snake, he charmed the Flutters and Teazles of the day, and

reigned butterfly king of that glittering sham world.

In due season he went to Bath to look for an heiress. In June, 1777, fortune sent him one. The inn at which he stayed was so full that there was not another bed. Two Warwickshire ladies, the Dowager Lady Boughton and her fair daughter, arrived, and were in despair. How could they sleep on chairs in a coffee-room? At that moment the door opened, and in glided Donnellan, young, handsome, soft of speech. He insisted on surrendering his bedroom to the two ladies. They accepted the offer with gratitude, and asked their benefactor to breakfast the next morning. He came, he saw, he conquered. Who could resist such a man? Shortly after, to the rage of the family, he eloped with Miss Boughton, and married her triumphantly. As the handsome adventurer, however, generously agreed to abandon all share in his wife's fortune, the family in time grew reconciled.

The handsome and agreeable captain came from Bath with his wife to reside at Lawford Hall, in June, 1778. In the same year, Lady Boughton went to fetch her son, Sir Theodosius, from Eton, where he had wallowed deeply in vice, to live with her quietly down in the Warwickshire house. He attained his twentieth year, August the 3rd, 1780. Wilful and untoward, the sickly young squire soon began to quarrel with his new brother-in-law, whose checks, reproofs, and cautions he took, as might have been expected, in very bad part. From several quarrels and embryo duels in Bath, in 1778, and also at the Assembly Rooms at the Bear Inn, Rugby, in September, 1779, the captain extricated him. Donnellan also saved the lad's life (or at least he claimed to have done so) on one occasion when his foot slipped, as he climbed to the top of Newbold Church to try and turn the weathercock. The captain had also (as he afterwards asserted) entreated the rash stripling never to bathe in the Lawford Hall pond without bundles of bulrushes or bladders. In fact, he had been so considerate and watchful, that Sir Theodosius hated him, and thwarted and snubbed him on every possible occasion.

Several times before August, 1780, the captain had spoken forebodingly of the young squire's health. One day he said in a mysterious way to Lady Boughton:

"Don't talk about leaving Lawford Hall; *something or other may happen*. The is in a very bad state of health. You cannot tell what may arise before that time."

Donnellan had also warned Lady Boughton not to drink out of the same cup

with her son (as he was being salivated), nor to touch the bread he cut, as there might be arsenic on his fingers, since he was fond of poisoning fish to kill the rats. Always considerate, always decorous, the captain became the self-elected guardian angel of Lawford Hall. On Saturday, the 26th of August, this amiable man had a conversation with the Reverend Mr. Newsum, rector of Newbold, who had just returned from a tour. He spoke of the alarming state of Sir The.'s health, and of the way he quacked himself with mercury, from prescriptions in some medical book his mother had foolishly given him. The illness seemed coming to a crisis, and "his intellects at intervals were so much affected, that nobody knew what it was to live with him."

"If that is the case," said the sympathising rector, gravely, "I should say his life is not worth two years' purchase."

"Not one," was the curt reply of the guardian angel.

The Tuesday following Lady Boughton's servant boy, Samuel Frost, was sent over to Rugby for some medicine, and Mr. Powell, the surgeon, delivered the bottle, neatly wrapped up and sealed in the usual trim medical manner, to the servant with his own hand. It was a harmless, commonplace, two-ounce draught of rhubarb, jalap, spirits of lavender, nutmeg water, and syrup, warm, soothing, smelling of spice, if anything at all, slightly purgative, and chiefly useful as a vehicle for charging eighteen-pence. The careless lad took the bottle, touched his hat, and rode back gaily to Lawford Hall. About half-past five the lad delivered the bottle to Sir Theodosius, whom he met on the staircase, and about six o'clock the young baronet went out fishing with Samuel Frost, and Lady Boughton and Mrs. Donnellan took an hour's walk in the garden. It was autumn, and there was fruit to gather, and past the great laurel shrubberies, glittering in the sunset, the two ladies walked, chatting about the grape bunches on this vine, and the freckled greengages yellowing upon that tree. About seven o'clock the gallant captain, debonair as usual, came out of the front door, rubbing his little white hands, and joined his wife and mother-in-law. He said:

"I have been down to see them fishing, and tried to persuade Sir The. to come in, lest he should take cold, but I couldn't." The wilful boy was always imprudent; there were the usual regrets, as it was getting late, and the dew was heavy, but nothing

else was said. The captain drank a cup of milk, and retired early. A little after nine Sir The. came in, very well, but tired; ate a little supper, and went to bed. As his mother was going up-stairs her son called her to his room, and asked permission to send her boy, Sam Frost, out the next morning with the net, for some fish, as Mr. Fonnereau, a Northamptonshire friend of his, was expected in the evening. That night the Boughton family (all but one) slept peacefully.

The next morning about six Sam Frost knocked at his young master's door, and, going in, asked him for some straps to buckle on the fishing-net; the lad, leaping out of bed, brisk and lively, went into the next room to get them. About seven Lady Boughton, as her son had requested her the night before, came in, as she went down-stairs, to give him his rhubarb draught. He appeared well, very well, and, on her inquiring where the bottle was, told her that it stood there upon the shelf. He then asked for a bit of cheese to take the taste out of his mouth, and desired her to read the label, to make sure it was the right bottle. She read: "The purging draught for Sir Theodosius Boughton." She then poured out the turbid, reddish-brown, aromatic liquid, forgetting to first shake it up. The lad at once called out, with all the imperiousness of an invalid, and all the selfish despotism of a spoiled child, "Pour it back again, and shake the bottle." With the slavish affection of a mother, Lady Boughton did so, and in doing so spilt a part upon the table. As Sir The. ruefully drank the thick brown potion, he stopped to say, "It smells and tastes very nauseous."

"I think it smells very strong, like bitter almonds," was Lady Boughton's reply.

He then bit some cheese, rinsed his mouth, and laid down. A minute and a half after he had taken the medicine the poor boy began to struggle, and there was a gurgling in his throat, as if he were unable to keep the nauseous medicine down. These symptoms lasted about ten minutes. Then he grew more composed, and seemed inclined to sleep. Quietly his mother glided from the room. Returning to steal a look at him five minutes afterwards, to her infinite horror she found him with his eyes fixed, his teeth clenched in mortal agony, and froth oozing fast from each corner of his mouth. He was evidently dying. Rushing down-stairs, she ran to the stable where William Frost, the coachman, was waiting

with the horses ready for her morning ride with the captain to the Wells.

"William, William!" she called.

"My lady!" was the answer.

"You must go to Mr. Powell, and fetch him as fast as possible. My son is dangerously ill!"

"There is only your horse in the stable, my lady," said William.

"That will not go fast enough. You must get the mare."

But Captain Donnellan had the mare, and had ridden off to the Wells.

"Go and meet him and take the mare!" was the frantic order.

But just then the captain appeared inside the gate, and the coachman told him he had to take the mare and ride off to Rugby for Mr. Powell. His answer the coachman did not in his excitement mark, but leaped on the mare and dashed off. In less than five minutes from the seizure, the captain was up in Sir The.'s room, where two of the female servants and the mother were standing, petrified with horror, by the dying boy, whose lips a maid was wiping. Donnellan asked coolly what she wanted; at that moment the boy was dying fast.

"I wanted," said Lady Boughton, "to tell you what a terrible thing has happened; what an unaccountable thing in a doctor to send such a medicine, for if a dog had taken it it would have killed him. I don't think my son will live."

The captain asked in what way Sir The. had been taken. Lady Boughton told him. His first question naturally was:

"Where is the physic bottle?"

She pointed to the two bottles. The fatal one recently emptied, and the one emptied on the Saturday. Donnellan took up the last bottle, and being told that was it, instantly poured into it some water out of the water-bottle, shook it carefully, did not taste it, but emptied the contents into a wash-hand basin full of dirty water.

Lady Boughton, struck by this odd proceeding, cried out:

"You ought not to do that. What are you at? You should not meddle with the bottles."

In spite of this the captain at once snatched up the other bottle—the draught bottle of Saturday—poured in water, shook it, then put his finger to taste the liquid, and said it was nauseous.

She again said, with some slight distrust and alarm, "What are you about? You ought not to meddle with the bottles."

He replied, "I did it to taste it."

But he never proposed to taste the con-

tents of the fatal bottle, and that fact struck root in the mother's mind. Another thing, that escaped her observation at the time, soon after still more excited her suspicions. The captain desired Sarah Blundell, one of the housemaids, to remove the basin, the dirty things, and the medicine bottles. Now all this was very decorous and gentleman-like, but was perhaps more befitting an orderly business-like undertaker than a brother-in-law of the poor boy who lay yet scarce cold in the very room where he (the captain) then stood. And yet so anxious was the captain for the neatness of the room that the coroner's jury would soon have to visit, that he actually snatched the medicine bottles together and thrust them himself into the housemaid's shaking hand. But Lady Boughton's vigilance was aroused. She turned, angrily took the bottles out of the girl's hand, and bade her set them down, and let them alone. Donnellan, still anxious for the proprieties, then desired that the place might be cleaned, and the clothes thrown into the inner room. This diverted Lady Boughton's attention, and as she unlocked the door of the inner room, and while her back was turned for the moment, as she was afterwards told, the captain again thrust the bottles into Sarah Blundell's hand, and bade her take them down-stairs, chiding her for not doing what he had at first told her. As the linen was being thrown into the inner room, the captain said to the maid:

"Here, take his stockings. They have been wet, he has caught cold be sure, and that might occasion his death."

Lady Boughton said nothing, but presently felt and examined the stockings. They were neither wet, nor had they been wet. That, too, was singular.

The captain presently went into the garden, and searching out Francis Amos, the gardener, said to him:

"Gardener, you must go and take a couple of pigeons directly" (to kill and put to the feet of the dying boy).

The gardener replied there were none fit to eat.

Donnellan said: "It will make no odds if they are not, for they are for Sir The.; we must have them ready against the doctor comes. Poor fellow (Sir The.), he lies in a sad agony now with his disease—it will be the death of him."

The remedy was, however, a little too late. As the gardener entered the house with the pigeons, Lady Boughton and Mrs. Donnellan, wringing their hands, met him at the door, and cried:

"It is too late now—he is dead!"

He was then sent for two women from the village to lay out the corpse.

The captain remained cool and ever attentive to the proprieties. That class of man is not ruffled by mere vulgar events like death. An hour or two after that scene of agony up-stairs, he was seated with the two weeping women in the parlour. All at once he broke out angrily and strangely to his wife:

"Your mother," he said, "has been pleased to take notice of my washing the bottle out, and I don't know what I should have done if I had not thought of saying I put the water into it to taste it with my finger."

This revived in Lady Boughton the horrible thought of the morning. She said nothing, but turned away from him to the window. He repeated what he had said to his astonished wife. Lady Boughton still stood there, dark against the light, and made no reply. Then he desired his wife to ring the bell and call up a servant. A servant came, and he ordered Will, the coachman, to be sent for. Will came. Donnellan then said:

"Will, don't you remember that I set out of those iron gates this morning about seven o'clock? You remember that, don't you?"

The coachman said, "Yes, sir."

"And that was the first time of my going out. I have never been on the other side of the house this morning. You remember that I set out there at seven o'clock this morning, and asked for a horse to go to the Wells?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then you are my evidence?"

"Yes, sir."

That same evening the captain went into the garden to Amos, who used to gather roses and lavender for him to distil, and said to him in the genial way of a probable legatee, and with all the exultation of a future baronet working in him:

"Now, gardener, you shall live at your ease, and work at your ease; it shall not be as it was in Sir The.'s day. I wanted before to be master, but I have got master now, and shall be master."

A few days after, the captain brought Amos a still to clean. It was full of lime, and the lime was wet. The lime-water, he said, had been used to kill fleas, not a common remedy for such intruders; but then the captain was a chemist, and a clever man, and knew what was what better than your Warwickshire gardeners.

And now it was that a rumour began to flit about the house as a bat flutters half visible in the dark. It passed from the harness-room to the still-room, from the servants' hall to the housekeeper's room, from the gardener's shed to the butler's pantry. These dim fears and suspicions, condensed into words, amounted to this, that Sir The. had in some way or other, either by carelessness or intention, been poisoned. Sarah Blundell described how anxious Captain Donnellan had been to remove the medicine bottles from the dead lad's room. Catherine Amos, the cook, then remembered and told the open-mouthed, pale servants gathered round the fire, how a quarter of an hour after Sir The. was seized, just as she had left the dying lad, the captain had met her in the passage and said, "Sir Theodosius was out very late last night a-fishing, and it was very silly of him, such physic as he had been taking." Then Sarah Blundell would mention how her lady had observed that Sir The.'s stockings were not wet, though the captain, who had been with him, had regretted his being out so late in the wet grass. "The captain with him?" said Sam Frost, Lady Boughton's boy, at one of these parliaments in the kitchen; "not he. I and Sir The. were alone the whole time." That was odd, too, and some shook their heads. Moreover, said Sam, "Sir The. was never off his horse the whole time, so how could his feet get wet, mark you." It would not be forgotten either by the servants how the captain had instantly rinsed the bottles, and the gardener would be sure to tell how Mr. Donnellan came somewhat late for the two pigeons, and in the evening how he had exulted at becoming lord of Lawford Hall.

An hour after Sir The.'s death, Mr. Powell, the Rugby surgeon, arrived, and went gravely and with long, solemn steps up-stairs to the room where the corpse lay. He took up the cold waxen hand, and putting it instantly down, said, "He is dead." He then turned to the captain, who with decorous gravity stood watchful at his elbow, and asked how the boy had died.

Donnellan replied, "In convulsions;" he had been out the night before and caught cold. Two bottles were shown Mr. Powell, but no allusion was made to them. Lady Boughton merely told him that soon after the lad took the medicine sent, he had been seized with convulsions.

The same morning that Sir The. died, the captain, ever decorous and business-like, wrote a very calm communication of

the death to Sir William Wheeler, Sir The.'s guardian, who lived ten miles off. It ran thus, and the captain had evidently braced himself to be philosophic and cool under great sorrow :

Lawford Hall, August 31st, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—I am sorry to be the communicator of Sir Theodosius's death to you, which happened this morning; he has been for some time past under the care of Mr. Powell, of Rugby, for the complaint which he had at Eton. Lady Boughton and my wife are inconsolable; they join me in best respects to Lady Wheeler and yourself.

I am, dear sir, with the greatest esteem,
Your most obedient servant,

JOHN DONNELLAN.

To Sir William Wheeler, Bart.

On Sunday the body of Sir The. was quietly soldered up in a leaden coffin, and the funeral was fixed for the next day. The men in the black cloaks, and the tenants swathed in crape, were already assembled, when Mr. Powell rode over with a very important communication from Sir William Wheeler, and Mr. Powell observed that the captain's hands trembled as he read it, decorous as he ever was.

The calm but serious letter began :

Leamington, September 4th, 1780.

DEAR SIR,—Since I wrote to you last, I have been applied to, as the guardian of the late Sir Theodosius Boughton, to inquire into the cause of his sudden death; report says that he was better the morning of his death, and before he took the physic, than he had been for many weeks, and that he was taken ill in less than half an hour, and died two hours after he had swallowed the physic; and it will be a great satisfaction to Mr. Powell to have his body opened, and I am sure it must be to you, Lady Boughton, and Mrs. Donnellan, when I assure you that it is reported all over the county that he was killed either by medicine or poison. The county will never be convinced to the contrary unless the body is opened, and I beg of you to lay this matter before Lady Boughton in as tender a manner as possible, and to point out to her the real necessity of complying with my request, and to say that it is expected by the county, &c.

The captain at once wrote in the most cordial manner to Sir William, saying: "We most cheerfully wish to have the body opened for the general satisfaction,

and the sooner it is done the better. Come yourself." He also wrote off to Doctor Rattray and Mr. Wilmer, of Coventry, to come that very evening if possible.

It was dark when the two doctors arrived at Lawford Hall on their dismal errand. Captain Donnellan, in his grandest manner, received them in the hall with a candle in his hand; he lighted them into the parlour, and they had refreshment while the coffin was being unsoldered. As they came into the hall, Mr. Powell stood at a table reading a letter which had been lying there, and which he had opened by mistake. Captain Donnellan turned the letter up and read the direction. It was a second letter from Sir William Wheeler, suggesting that no one but the faculty should be present at the examination, "which was not to satisfy his curiosity, but to prevent the world from blaming any of us that had anything to do with poor Sir Theodosius." The letter was very polite, the captain said, and the first letter he had received was much the same. Here he was hardly candid, as the first letter had expressed strong suspicion of poison. He fumbled in his deep-flapped waistcoat-pocket for the first letter, but only pulled out a cover, which Mr. Powell, with only one quick glance, thought he saw was in Sir William's handwriting. At the bottom of the stairs the captain said, "Gentlemen, you will excuse me;" so the three doctors and an assistant went up alone to the room where the corpse lay. It was too late to examine the body, and they came down and told Donnellan so, asking especially for what purpose it was to be opened. Here, again, the polished man of the world was not frank, for he replied, merely for the satisfaction of the family. That being the only motive, they declined to perform an examination now useless, and recommended the immediate burial. The four gentlemen then stayed supper, and refusing to remain all night, though the captain, always polite, pressed it strongly, they left, Donnellan giving them six guineas apiece, and the assistant two. All was most pleasantly arranged.

The next morning the funeral was again organised; and once more the tenants in black gathered round the churchyard. Early that day Captain Donnellan wrote a brief and ambiguous letter to Sir William, saying that the doctors had attended to his wish, and satisfied them all at Lawford. The funeral was to be at three o'clock that day, unless Sir William wrote to the contrary. But before that hour an officious surgeon of

Rugby, named Bucknill, came and offered to open the body. The captain seemed angry, and said it would not be fair to the eminent gentlemen who had declined to make the examination. Nevertheless, if Sir William wished it, he might do so on showing his order. The next day a letter came from Sir William, wondering he had not seen Doctor Rattray or Mr. Wilmer, and requesting that Mr. Bucknill and Mr. Snow, of Southam, might open the body. At three o'clock that day Mr. Bucknill came, but, before Mr. Snow arrived, was called away by a patient. On his return, in an hour, Mr. Snow had refused to open the body, the funeral was proceeding, and Mr. Snow had left. Mr. Bucknill, vexed and suspicious, rode off in an angry canter, and that night at seven the young baronet was buried in the family vault at Newbold.

But even now the poor lad was not to rest in peace. The Reverend Mr. Newsom, and Lord Denbigh, a neighbour, roused Sir William to action by repeating fresh rumours. On the Saturday, three days after the funeral, an inquest was held at Newbold, and Mr. Bucknill, with Doctor Rattray and Wilmer, examined the body. It was too late for useful examination, but Doctor Rattray observed at the time a biting acrid taste on his tongue, such as he had felt in subsequent experiments with laurel-water. The inquest was then adjourned. On the 14th, the day the inquest was resumed, the captain wrote a letter to the coroner, in his bland way, to "give him any information he could collect."

"During the time," he said, in his rather confused way, "Sir Theodosius was here, great part of it was spent in procuring things to kill rats, with which this house swarms remarkably; he used to have arsenic by the pound-weight at a time, and laid the same in and about the house in various places, and in many forms. We often expostulated with him about the extreme careless manner in which he acted. His answer to us was, that the men-servants knew where he had laid the arsenic, and it was no business to us. At table we have not knowingly eaten anything for many months past which we perceived him to touch." The captain also mentioned that Sir The. was in the habit of making up horse medicines and goulard-water, and when he was fishing, attending his rabbits, or at carpenter's work, he would split fish, and lay arsenic in them, for the rats, herons, and otters, and also that he used *cocculus indicus* for stupefying fish.

In spite of this letter the jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against the decorous captain, who, to his extreme surprise, and with all the fortitude of innocence, was at once removed to Rugby, from there to Coventry, and from thence to Warwick, where he was heavily chained, and kept in the closest confinement.

The polished criminal, still astonished at his arrest, was tried at the Warwick Assizes, March 30th, 1781, before Mr. Justice Buller. All the doctors examined, except the celebrated John Hunter, were of opinion that Sir Theodosius had been poisoned by laurel-water, mixed with the last bottle of Mr. Powell's medicine. A case was quoted where a young girl had drank only two spoonfuls of laurel-water, half a minute after which she was convulsed, foamed at the mouth, and shortly after died. Animals that took the same poison, it was proved, were instantly convulsed and paralysed. Two bottles were produced in court, one of plain rhubarb and lavender, such as Mr. Powell had prescribed, the other mixed with laurel-water, and the bitter almond smell Lady Boughton recognised as the odour she had noticed on the fatal August morning. John Hunter, called for the defence, deposed that he had, in thirty-three years' practice, dissected some thousands of bodies, and had poisoned some thousands of animals. With no proof that the bottle contained poison, he should consider the symptoms mentioned at the death of Sir Theodosius as quite as likely to have been caused by apoplexy or epilepsy. Poisons generally had the same effect on animals as on men, but there were things that instantaneously killed animals yet did not hurt men; for instance, a little brandy would always kill a cat, for through the animal's struggling the spirit got into the lungs, and so produced death.

The prisoner, in his defence, turned and doubled with the cunning of a wounded hare. He was especially anxious to frankly account for every moment of his time on the Tuesday evening and the fatal Wednesday morning. As to the evening, his story varied entirely from Lady Boughton's evidence. According to his own account, at half-past five, when Sam Frost returned with the medicine, he was walking in a field near the house with his child. He then went to the front garden, when presently Lady Boughton came out of the house with a basket in her hand, and called to him to help her gather some fruit. While they were gathering the fruit Sir Theodosius rode by the garden

wall, and told them he was going fishing. Some of the fruit being out of his (Donnellan's) reach, Lady Boughton asked him to go and call Sam Frost to bring a ladder. He went into the house, and called "Sam" several times, but no one answering, he went to the kitchen, and found the three maids, Sarah, the housemaid, Susannah, Mrs. Donnellan's maid, and Catherine, the cook, busy washing. They not knowing where Sam was, he returned to Lady Boughton, having been absent only three minutes. Soon after Sam Frost came with the ladder, and while they were gathering the fruit, Sarah Blundell, the housemaid, came and told Lady Boughton that a Mr. Dand and one Matthews, a carpenter, wanted her, upon which he (Donnellan) and Lady Boughton returned to the house. It was then about six. They talked to Dand and Matthews in the hall for some ten minutes; then the two men left by the door leading into the inner court-yard, and Donnellan returned to the garden. There were large iron gates opening from the garden into the court-yard, and as he reached those gates he observed Dand and Matthews passing along the yard into the stables. Remembering he had something more to say to them, he opened the iron gates, and called them. After some chat Dand left, and Donnellan and the carpenter walked to Hewitt's Mill, near the Hall, to talk over some alterations. From there he went along the river-side to look at some flood-gates. At length, finding the dew heavy and his feet wet, at past nine he returned to the Hall, through the iron gates, into the garden, and from thence through the hall and passage into the parlour, where Lady Boughton was sitting alone. As he passed through the garden, he looked in at the parlour window, and saw his mother-in-law. She was angry at her son's being out so late, as she would be obliged to light candles. Just then Mrs. Donnellan entered, and begged him to take off his wet shoes and stockings. He refused, saying he was tired, and drinking a basin of milk, his usual supper, wished his mother-in-law good night, and went to bed. In five minutes after his wife followed him. The room they slept in was directly over the parlour, and the staircase leading to it adjoined the parlour door. Had he stolen up to Sir The.'s room he must have passed the parlour door, which was open the whole evening, and have gone eighty yards through the house, to the opposite side, where he must have been seen by the servants.

The next morning he rose at six to ride with Lady Boughton (as had been agreed upon the evening before) some miles from Lawford Hall, to inquire about a servant. After waiting in the porch till he was tired, he went below her chamber window, and called her several times. She at last answered him from a window at the stair-head, between her son's room and her own, and said she should not be ready for a quarter of an hour. He then thought he would ride to Newnham Wells, three quarters of a mile off, to drink the waters before she was ready. As for rinsing the bottle, he did it merely to taste the contents better. The bottle was not destroyed, but taken down by Sarah Blundell and put in a place in the kitchen used for storing. When asked for by Mr. Caldecott, the solicitor for the prosecution, he (Donnellan) found, as he believed, the very bottle, and brought it out of the kitchen and placed it in the parlour, on the harpsichord, ready to be produced. As to gaining by the death of Sir Theodosius any part of his two thousand pounds a year, Donnellan declared that he had debarred himself from all control in his wife's fortune, and had been for two years preparing for holy orders, Sir Theodosius having promised him, on coming of age, the living of Great Harborough, as well as that of Newbold-upon-Avon. This would have been a maintenance for life. As to the still, he had used it only for lavender and roses. It was true he often gathered laurel leaves, but he used them only for making an aromatic bath for the gout. He had taken the receipt from a book called the Tribe of Flora, and he had recommended the laurel-water bath to Lady Boughton.

But after all these evasions, how tremendous was the evidence that fell on the gentle spoken, soft-handed man! Let us briefly review it. It was proved that he had begged Sir Theodosius not to keep his medicines in the locked-up inner room, but in the outer room, where he would not forget them, as the boy had once nearly taken poison by mistake. It was shown that he knew the medicine had been sent for. He told a deliberate lie about being out fishing with Sir Theodosius, and about the lad's feet being wet. The next day, although informed by the coachman that Sir Theodosius is dangerously ill, he goes to Lady Boughton and asks what is the matter. He again talks of the wet feet, and attributes the illness to the cold. His first aim is to wash out the fatal bottle, the contents of which he never tastes, and he is nervously anxious,

in spite of Lady Boughton, to send away and mix the medicine bottles.

It was shown, moreover, that at the inquest, he pulled Lady Boughton's sleeve when she began to mention that he had rinsed the bottles. Then, although the lad is dying fast, Donnellan goes and orders pigeons for his feet two hours later. The same night he boasts to the gardener that he is now lord of Lawford Hall, as he had long wished to be. Next, about the still, it is shown he kept a still in a locked-up room, and upon Sir The.'s death had filled it with lime, and given it to the gardener to clean, and after that to the cook to dry in the oven. Then again how he shuffles about the examination of the body, and conceals the letter of Sir William Wheeler, announcing grave suspicions of poison having been used. How easily he yields to the doctors' wishes to escape the painful task, and how dexterously, in the absence of the energetic and scrutinising Bucknill, he talks over Mr. Snow, and hurriedly buries the body. How artfully, too, he passes from the notion of death from cold to the suspicion of poisoning by a mistaken medicine. It is true the laurel-water is not found in the body, but the odour of the medicine and the symptoms of death indicate with certainty the special poison given. Can we doubt that this white-handed, soft-footed scoundrel, between six and seven o'clock that bright, warm August evening, when Sir Theodosius rode away gaily to the river, when the servants were busy washing, and most of the men-servants away fishing, stole into the silent bedroom, poured away part of the rhubarb, and filled up the bottle with the fatal laurel-water, long ago brewed behind locked doors for that purpose? Then with one glance round (perhaps starting at his own pale face, reflected in the mute looking-glass) he would glide down, and demurely rubbing his little innocent hands, pass decorously into the garden between the laurels, to smile and chat, and pay compliments to the mother-in-law he secretly detested. Another day, if all went well, that still might be fed with more laurel leaves, and another painful, sudden death might follow.

Donnellan's final remarks to the jury were plausible as ever. He alluded regretfully to the many false, malevolent, and cruel reports circulated since his confinement, tending to prejudice the minds of the people in an opinion injurious to his honour, and dangerous to his life; but he still (thank God!) had confidence that nothing could mislead their justice and humanity,

in depending, as he did, entirely on the conscience of his judge, and the unprejudiced impartiality of his jury, and so on. The judge, however, we hardly regret to state, summed up with death in every word, and the jury, after nine minutes' consultation, found him guilty. In Warwick Jail Donnellan behaved, as might have been expected, smoothly, wickedly, and grasping like a lying coward at any means of escape. He wrote to his wife to remove at once from a roof where she was likely to undergo the fate of those who had gone already by sudden means. He accused Lady Boughton of having poisoned her husband, who had died suddenly, and insisted that she had poisoned her son. His last crime was to sign and depose to the entire truth of a defence of himself (partly printed from the brief), and published by his solicitors, Messrs. Inge and Webb, after he was hung. It was signed Sunday, April the 1st, 1781, and begins: "This case has been read over to me this day, being the last day of my life, and it contains nothing but real facts as far as my knowledge goes; and I solemnly request, and firmly desire, that it may be published, as a firm vindication of my honour and character to the world." Two keepers slept in the condemned cell, and they, seeing the captain did not plan suicide, dozed. When he thought them asleep, the murderer threw himself upon his knees, and prayed fervently for a considerable time. Who may say he did not repent? But he made no confession. He was hung the next day, and his body given to the surgeons.

Lawford Hall, the scene of this murder, was sold in 1790 to the Caldecote family, who pulled it down as a place with a curse upon it; part of the stables still remains built into a farm-house.

GEOFFREY LUTTRELL'S NARRATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "IN THAT STATE OF LIFE," &c.

IN ELEVEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

A FEW weeks since we followed to his last resting-place in Kensal Green our old friend Geoffrey Luttrell. There were but four of us: but four persons in the world, I believe, who knew his real worth, and heartily felt the dear old fellow's loss. Of these, three were brother artists, the fourth was the landlady of the lodging between Notting-hill and Shepherd's Bush, which Luttrell had inhabited for upwards of thirty years. It had stood on the edge of green fields when he went to live there; it is now

almost choked up with pert little streets, and very small pretentious villas. But he would not abandon it, perhaps for old habit's sake, perhaps for the yet worthier sake of Mrs. Brace. She was a good, warm-hearted woman and an observant. She had waited on him all these years, and knew more of the recluse's ways than any of us. His shyness with his fellow-men, and his passionate love of nature—a love which bore him fruits in the tender, faithful work, which, with the faltering hand of upwards of threescore years, he yet produced—his pure-mindedness, his unflinching charity and sympathy with all suffering, these features in our friend's character were well known to us, who saw him as often as the busy wheel of London life would allow. But who could tell the daily round of his silent, solitary hours like Mrs. Brace? In a long talk we had together, that dreary November afternoon in the sad little parlour, where we all sat after I had read our friend's brief will, the good woman said:

"It's my belief, sir, as he'd had some heavy sorrow in his early life. Other people's troubles seemed to come so nat'ral to him. When my Betty went away, Lord! how good he was to me! He was just like a child, you see; his books and his watering-colours, them was all his life. Everythink was a pictur' to him—the little childer in the gutters, the sunset over the chimneys yonder, that layloc tree when it was a-comin' into bloom, it was all a pictur' to him. He'd no visitors but you three gents: it was drawin' or readin' from morning to night. Bless you, there's enough of the dear man's sketches to paper the house from top to bottom. Talk of eatin'!" (no one had talked of eating, I am sure) "it was as much as I could do sometimes to get him to take a snack of anythink. If I didn't look sharp, he'd be a-givin' it to one of them orgin-grinders, for it was nothin' but givin', givin', with some excuse or other, to every blessed soul as come to the house. He'd a' give the coat off his back if I hadn't stopped him. Ah, I shall never see his like again—never!"

The deceased left no relations. What little money he had, had been made by himself; and this he desired might be divided among us four. The only legacies were fifty pounds to the Foundling Hospital; certain specified sketches to G. and W. (the friends now present with me), and the bequest of the remainder, together with all books and papers, to myself, as residuary legatee. The books, which were not numerous, comprised most of the old

poets; some of them in scarce editions, picked up, I doubt not, at bookstalls in the course of nearly forty years' wanderings through London streets, a fine black-letter copy of Chaucer, another of the *Morte d'Arthur*, and a great collection of ancient ballads. The sketches were all of the most ordinary scenes, bits of wind-blown common, with a rusty donkey, and a drove of orange-billed geese, fluttering along open-mouthed: ends of summer evening in some green lane near Hampstead, with a golden twilight melting into purple vapour, through which the dim shadow of two lovers was just discernible. No great Alpine glories, or marvels of southern glow; simple English nature, but touched by a poet's hand, albeit that hand lacked perhaps the boldness of positive genius. Tenderness and refinement were its characteristics; it touched, too tremulously it may be, these common things, but it elevated them at once, nevertheless, into the region of the uncommon. As to the papers, besides a bundle of letters from persons long since dead, which my old friend had carefully docketed, "To be burned when I am no more," the only packet of any bulk was sealed and addressed to me. Within was a manuscript of some length, the portrait of a lady, and a slip of note-paper, on which were these lines:

August 4th, 1869.

MY FRIEND,—If it shall seem good to you to make known the facts herein told, in whatsoever form you please, do so. The actors in this drama have long since played out their parts. I, who was little more than chorus, am the last to quit the scene. The reading of this sad play, then, can wound no soul alive: since all whom it concerns are beyond the reach of such hurts. But, it may be, some poor heart, in the sore strait of like temptation, may herein find warning or comfort. Therefore, not without some pain, my friend, have I writ it all down; and to you do I confide these passages of my youth: to give, or to withhold, as you deem wise, when I am gone.

Your friend, G. L.

P.S.—No eye but mine has seen this portrait for more than forty years. Why I have valued it more than anything I possess (poor daub as it is!) you will understand on reading these pages. Keep it, or burn it, my friend. Its sweet eyes can grieve no one any more on earth now.

The portrait was that of a dark young

woman in a mediæval dress, and resembled in its general character a head by Masaccio. Much of positive beauty in the brow and finely cut nostril, and yet more of an elevated, thoughtful power in the deep-set eyes, overruling the passionate persuasion of the mouth. Whatever might be the history of the person to whom it belonged, the head could not fail to interest any one for whom a strong individual human type has any attraction. I have had that little drawing framed, and it will henceforward hang in my bedroom.

And now, without further preamble, I give Geoffrey Luttrell's narrative, having come to the conclusion that no disasters can arise from the publication thereof.

CHAPTER II.

I WAS a Westminster boy, my father living in the precincts, so that I boarded at home, and my schooling cost him little. He was a poor man, and worked hard to give me that best of privileges—a good education. I was here from the age of seven until seventeen, and all the learning I ever had was then acquired. Four years before I left Westminster, a sturdy little lad named Harry Walbrooke arrived, and became my fag. I never was a bully, and from a fag he grew to be my friend. Why, it would be hard to say. What he can have found to attract him in me I cannot tell. No two boys could be more dissimilar, but he attached himself to me, and from that time forward our friendship never suffered a decline. He was all for athletics—a first-rate runner and jumper, and, though three years my junior, could knock me down like a nine-pin. He had good abilities, but he was incorrigibly idle. On the other hand, I, who never had brilliant parts, worked steadily, and to this plodding capacity I attribute my having carried off so many prizes. But then I had not Harry's temptations. I was weakly, and averse to games. The only amusement I pursued with ardour was drawing. While Harry was at foot-ball I was scrawling likenesses on the backs of my old copy-books; and proud enough was I if they were recognised. Our social positions were as wide apart as our characters and inclinations. The Walbrookes are a very old Lincolnshire family; and Harry's uncle, Mr. Walbrooke of the Grange, was possessed of very large estates. He had been married twenty years, and was childless. Harry's father, a dissipated younger brother of Mr. Walbrooke's, had died abroad utterly penniless, leaving two children, Harry and Lena;

and these children Mr. Walbrooke had, apparently, adopted. The Grange had been their home ever since their father's death; and though Mr. Walbrooke had other nephews and nieces, there seemed to be no doubt that he meant to make Harry his heir. He was fond and proud of the lad; proud of his riding so well to hounds; proud of the bag he brought home to his own gun when he went out rabbit shooting; and very proud of his manly address and handsome face. Nothing was too good for Master Harry; he brought back to school more pocket-money, and received more hampers every "half," than any other boy at Westminster. But no one ever grudged him these; for a more generous fellow never lived. He was for sharing everything with those he liked. As to me, knowing I had nothing to give in return, I used to feel ashamed to take all the good things he thrust upon me. The utmost I could do was to help him in his Latin verses, and to tender such wholesome counsel at times as saved him, I believe, from more than one flogging.

I have said the contrast between our social positions was great; but it is not my intention to say more about myself than is absolutely necessary. In undertaking to write this narrative I had other objects in view than to record my own career. This much must be told, however: my father was very poor, I was his only child, and his hope was to have seen me in one of the learned professions. But my taste for art was so pronounced, that, with his usual kindness, he allowed me to follow the bent of my inclinations. I became a student of the Royal Academy, on leaving Westminster; my friendship with Harry Walbrooke, however, was not snapped asunder, as such intimacies generally are in like cases. On Saturday afternoons I often paid him a visit; and once or twice my father obtained leave to take him to the pit of Drury Lane, where he witnessed Miss O'Neill's acting in *Venice Preserved*, as I well remember. Harry wept plentifully, while I appeared to be unmoved. My father could not understand what seemed to him a contradiction in our characters. But it was not so. Harry's feelings were always demonstrative and uncontrolled; mine, by a tacit understanding with myself, had been used to restraint from a very early age.

The year after I left Westminster, I went for the first time, on Mr. Walbrooke's invitation, to stay at the Grange. It was

a fine stately place; and the manner of life there realised all that I had pictured of the grand old English style. There was hospitality without stint and without ostentation; a sense of abundance without extravagance, which, I have since observed, is not as common in the dwellings of the rich as one might expect. This was Mr. Walbrooke's chief virtue. He had no vices; but his excellence, and the world considered him excellent, was of a negative kind. He went to church; he was a Tory; he never quarrelled openly with any of his neighbours, nor exercised any harsh tyranny at home. But then everybody gave way to him, and had given way all his life. He was the most obstinate man I ever knew. When he took up an idea—and one often failed to see what possible object he proposed to himself—he would sacrifice everything to carrying it out. He never lost his temper, but he had a persistent way which bore down all opposition. Mrs. Walbrooke was her husband's chief slave. There is little further to be said of her. In person she resembled one of Sir Thomas Lawrence's most affected portraits, but like them she represented a gentlewoman. She played on the harp indifferently, and worked in floss silks. She sat at the head of her table gracefully; and had a very pleasant cordial manner, which attracted, until one came to perceive that it meant nothing. She had taken to Harry and Lena, as if they had been her own children, and the girl was fond of her aunt. But neither Mr. nor Mrs. Walbrooke had qualities which obtain a lasting influence over children. Harry's way and his uncle's had not hitherto clashed. In all ordinary matters, the boy had a great ascendancy over his uncle, but the time would come when that obedience which is begotten of admiration and respect for character would not be forthcoming: and I foresaw that the strain upon affection and gratitude would be more than it could stand. For Harry knew his uncle's foibles, and talked of them more openly than I liked, though he loved him, and was fully sensible that all he had he owed to Mr. Walbrooke.

Shortly before my first visit to the Grange a new inmate had come there. She was but a very young girl, yet she had a history. It was this. A curate named Fleming, living near London, had found at his gate one September evening, sixteen years before this, a bundle, which, upon examination, proved to contain a female infant, some few weeks old. Upon her

was pinned a paper, with the name "Assunta," written in what was apparently a foreign hand. The child's eyes and complexion seemed to indicate that she came of Italian parents; but no clue to them could be obtained. The presumption was (taking the infant's age into consideration) that she had been born on the Festival of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, in honour of which she had been named; and that, driven by some dire necessity, the parents now sought a home for their poor baby at the door of a benevolent man, whose character was well known. It may be well to state here, lest the lovers of sensation should expect a romance upon this head, that nothing was ever known of Assunta's parentage. She may have been the offspring of an organ-grinder. But she had that noble inheritance which is not of this earth, which nothing can give, or take away. Mr. Fleming had been married some few years, but had no children at this time. He was a young man of æsthetic tastes, who indulged far more than his means justified in rare editions, old engravings, and the like. He had made an imprudent marriage in every sense of the word, having taken unto himself, at the age of twenty, a girl possessed of nothing but a pretty face. She had grieved and fretted at having no children of her own, and jumped at the idea of adopting this little Italian baby. Her kind husband weakly yielded to her importunity. She told him it was "Christian-like," which it might be, but it was not politic, Christianity and policy not being identical; and the young couple took upon themselves a burden which, as time went on, weighed heavily upon them. In course of years it came to pass that four children were born, and then, what to do with Assunta became a serious question. She was remarkably clever; Mr. Fleming taught her himself, and, being a good modern linguist, as well as a classical scholar, her education was far more thorough than most women's. How Mr. Walbrooke heard of Mr. Fleming, and of Assunta, I forget now; but the idea occurred to him that Lena might learn more with a teacher who was at the same time a companion, than she had done with two governesses of mature experience, who had found the task of instructing her beyond them. It was an experiment, taking such a mere child as Assunta was in years to control a somewhat unruly little lady like Lena; but Miss Fleming came, ostensibly on a visit to the Grange, and once there it became very soon

apparent that her "visit" would be a permanent one. All hearts, more or less, were laid at the feet of the slight, dark-eyed girl, whose voice and whose smile had a subtle charm, which no other voice and smile I have ever known possessed. What was it about her which was so unlike any other woman? I ask myself now. She always reminded me of one of Francia's or Gian Bellini's Madonnas, in her sweet gravity and girlish dignity; but the mystery of those deep eyes was, at moments, lighted up by passionate flashes, which belonged not to that type of divine calm, the "peace which passeth understanding." With her passionate nature, she had a tendency to melancholy, which, reading her character by the light of subsequent events, I have no doubt was entirely beyond her control, and sprang from causes dating from her birth itself. She could be joyous enough at times, however, and her intense power of sympathy made her a delightful companion for Lena, who soon grew as docile as a lamb in her hands.

I had not been two days at the Grange before I saw how it would be. She and Harry were nearly of an age (I believe she was a few months older), how could they do otherwise than fall in love with each other? God knows, I suffered enough after that first visit, for many a long year, on her account; yet I was thankful to have had my eyes open to the truth at once. I never had any delusion, never was buoyed up by false hope. I knew she was beyond my reach, and I was loyal to my friend. He possessed everything in the world to make a girl love him; I possessed nothing. It would have been useless to try and enter into rivalry with him, had I been so minded. Though Assunta was more reserved in her manner with Harry than with me, numberless little indications told me that already the girl thought of him with a deep and particular interest; and being given to observe closely, even at that age, I felt certain that if she really gave her heart, it would be until death.

It was summer time, and while Harry was fishing, I used to wander into a beech wood, at the back of the house, ostensibly to sketch. The stream wound its way through this wood, now brawling over pebbles, with the loud voice of shallowness, now stealing over pools in the quiet strength of depth. Gravelly banks, hollowed out by the action of the stream when swollen, and crowned with feathery grasses, overhung the water, leaving scarce soil enough in places to sustain the roots of

some slanting beech, whose silvery arms stretched far across the stream. It was of such a spot as this that I was making a study which required much care and more skill than I could then master. I returned to my work several days, and was generally alone; but on one occasion, about mid-day, Harry joined me. He was wading slowly up the stream, his trousers tucked above his knees, his bare brown legs gleaming like a Triton's through the silvery water, which he flogged with a pertinacity which had been but ill-repaid, judging by the empty basket slung upon his back. While he stood grumbling at his ill-luck, inveighing against the sun that would shine, and the fish that wouldn't bite, a merry shout, which we both recognised as Lena's, broke from a pathway in the wood hard by. A moment later she came in sight, dragging Miss Fleming along by a scarf she had wound round her waist.

"Oh! here's Harry and Mr. Luttrell," cried the child. "That is capital. I want to get to the other side of the river, to where the foxgloves are, and the bridge is such a long, long way round. You can carry us both over, can't you, Harry? Assunta is not at all heavy."

"I shall be delighted," said the young fisherman, laying his rod on the bank, and slipping off his basket with agility.

"No," said Miss Fleming, quietly, "we can go no further, Lena. We must turn back, now."

"Come, that's very hard," cried Harry. "Sit down, at all events, for a minute, won't you? I've had no luck. I've not caught a thing to-day."

"And so you want to catch us?" laughed his little sister, who was too sharp not to be dangerous company sometimes; "but you won't catch us—you won't—you won't!" she cried, dancing in and out among the thickets, in provocation of pursuit. "We are not to be caught any more than the fish, are we, Assunta?"

"It is time to be going home," said Miss Fleming. "Come, Lena." But the child was by no means disposed to leave us.

"I am thirsty. I want to drink some of that clear cold water, Harry. I wish I was a fish, I'd come up and look at you, and say, 'Don't you wish you may catch me?' and then dart away, and lie in the shadow of that bank there all day long. Oh, Harry! do give me some water in your hands."

"That's just the way with all impudent

little fishes," said her brother, as he stooped and made a cup of his two hands. "They are as cheeky as anything one minute, whisk their tails in one's very face, and the next, they come up and ask to be hooked quite demurely."

But, whether in retaliation for this speech or not, Lena, after a noisy effort to imbibe something from the impromptu goblet, declared it to be a miserable failure—she could not get a drop. Then she stood at the edge of the stream, and tried herself, and the water ran through her fingers, and all down the front of her frock. After which nothing would serve her but that Assunta should make the experiment. The girl's small brown hands hollowed themselves like two close-fitting shells, and reaching down she filled and lifted them to the child's mouth, who clapped her hands with delight, shouting:

"Assunta's done it! Assunta's done it! She didn't spill a drop. And oh! you don't know how good it is! You can't do it, you great clumsy Harry—ask Assunta to give you some."

Then Harry, after sundry efforts, in which I believe he purposely failed, humbly begged Miss Fleming to give him some water in her hands. I think, for one moment, she hesitated; but to decline was to attach too much importance to an act of child's play. With a faint blush she stooped, and once more filled the cup made by her fingers in the stream. As they stood there, she on the strip of shore, her arms lifted towards him, he in the water, a little below her, his fine profile buried in the girl's hands, it was a group ready made for any sculptor. And I seemed to fore-read the history of those two lives in the momentary action. She will always be a little above him; but he may drink, an' he list, the pure water of a noble life at her hands.

She dropped them ere he had quite done, and some of the water was spilt. The blood flushed up to her very brow as she turned away. And I knew that he had kissed her hands.

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CASTAWAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN PORT," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER VII. PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.

AN hour before the revelation made to Gerald Hardinge by Mrs. Entwistle, Doctor Asprey stood in his own hall watching Mr. Delabole, who was taking his hat and light over-coat from the servant.

"What has become of Vane?" asked the great capitalist.

"He has gone back to the dining-room to look for a pencil with which he had been making some memoranda, and which he has left behind him. By the way, Mr. Delabole," continued the doctor, "our friend has, to say the least of it, a certain infirmity of temper. His manner just now, when I was compelled, according to my invariable practice, to refuse him permission to smoke, was almost offensive."

"You took it remarkably well, I must say, my dear doctor; but the fact is, our friend, as you know perfectly, has taken a little too much of your very excellent claret, and is scarcely responsible for his sayings and doings."

"Perhaps so," said Doctor Asprey, "but that doesn't better his conduct in my eyes. I don't pretend, at all events to you, to be squeamish about such matters, but I have a contempt for a man who takes too much wine, and a special contempt for one who is quarrelsome in his cups. In vino veritas is a perfectly trustworthy saying; and a man whom good wine turns into a savage is, depend upon it, both undesirable and unreliable as a friend."

"What you say applies generally without doubt," said Mr. Delabole, "though I

think you are a little mistaken in the present instance. This conquest of Mrs. Bendixen is a great triumph for Vane, and he is just a thought tête montée over it."

"The expression is clever and refined," said the doctor; "but the English equivalent strikes me as being much more applicable in the present instance. Of such a man, they say in the vernacular, that he 'cannot stand beans,' and that appears to me graphically descriptive of Mr. Vane's condition. Success has made him insolent, even to those who helped him on his upward path."

"It still lies within the resources of science to double him up, as the Chicken remarked of Mr. Dombey," said Mr. Delabole, with a pleasant smile. "Until that necessity arrives, and so long as he is useful, we will treat him well. Here he is. Now, Philip, the night air, even mild as it is at present, not being particularly beneficial to the health of three hundred guinea brougham horses, perhaps you won't mind hurrying yourself a bit."

"I have been after my pencil-case," said Vane; "it had rolled under the table, and I had an awful bother to get at it."

"It would have been perfectly safe," said the doctor, who seemed to find it impossible to get over his annoyance, "and the servants would have been certain to find it in the morning."

"I wouldn't have let it spend a night under this roof for anything," said Vane, with a thick laugh; "its habit of truth would have deteriorated, and it would have written nothing but humbugging prescriptions, or—"

"There now, come along," said Mr. Delabole, seizing his friend's arm, and hurrying him past the grave servant in black, who stood by the street-door.

"Good-night, doctor. I shall be glad to learn how matters progress in the Palace Gardens district, if you will take an opportunity of calling upon me in the City."

Whatever sobering influence the calm night air had upon Philip Vane, its effect in sweetening his temper was very small indeed. He puffed angrily and in silence at the cigar which he had lit immediately on entering his friend's brougham, and when he addressed himself to speech, it was only to reiterate the complaints to which Mr. Delabole had already referred.

"What infernal affectation that is in Asprey," he growled, "not letting people smoke in his place; might as well be at one's maiden aunt's in the country, where one has to go into the kitchen after the servants are gone to bed, and puff up the chimney."

"It's because there are so many people of the maiden aunt class, who of necessity visit his house, that the doctor is compelled to be strict. He couldn't possibly have delicate patients coming into a place reeking of tobacco."

"Oh, of course," said Philip Vane, sullenly, "that is always the way now. It is only necessary for me to object to anything that a fellow says or does, for you to become his warmest supporter and most enthusiastic admirer. Now I tell you——"

"Now I tell you," said Mr. Delabole, as the carriage stopped, "that here we are. Will you come in and have a drink, or shall the brougham take you home?"

"I will come in and have a talk," said Philip Vane, ungraciously; "there are one or two business matters upon which I particularly wish to speak to you."

"All right; in with you," said Mr. Delabole, and with a half-smile and a half-shrug he opened the street-door with his latch-key, and gave his companion admittance.

Mr. Delabole lived in Piccadilly, on the first floor of a large house, the whole of which was let out as chambers. His rooms, handsome in themselves, were handsomely fitted and furnished in what was perhaps a somewhat florid style, but that was the taste of the upholsterer rather than of Mr. Delabole, who, however, found no fault with it. There was a drop of Hebraic blood in Mr. Delabole's veins (the maiden name of his mother, Mrs. Munker, long since deceased, was Rachael Hart, and her residence before marriage Cutler-street, Houndsditch, where her father kept the Net of Lemons), which made him delight in bright colours of rich and gaudy patterns. Everything

was just a little overdone: the antique furniture was too old; you waded up to your ankles in the soft velvet pile carpet, and the tall lamps, standing here and there, were so shaded, that all those portions of the room not immediately within their focus were in perfect darkness.

There was plenty of light, however, on a small table laid out with the materials for a choice cold supper, and bearing a handsome stand of spirit decanters. Mr. Vane, entering the room before his host, advanced to this table, smiled contemptuously as he glanced at it, and threw himself into an easy-chair by its side.

"Quite right, my dear Philip," said Mr. Delabole, bustling into the room; "glad to see you seated at the table; no sensible man goes to bed without something to act as a stay in case he should happen to have one of those confounded fits of waking in the night, no matter how good a dinner he may have eaten. You are going to try a spoonful of that mayonnaise, a morsel of that Roquefort?"

"Not I," said Philip; "it is not every one who can afford to play with his digestion, or his figure, as you can."

"Ah! I forgot," said Mr. Delabole, pleasantly, "I am not going to be married to a rich and handsome widow, and to the ladies I adore a spoonful of salad or a crumb of cheese will not make much difference. But you will drink something, I suppose?"

"Yes; what's become of your man, the foreigner?"

"Fritz? He's gone to bed—why?"

"Oh, nothing; I only thought I should like a glass of beer; I suppose, though, he would have been too much of a fine gentleman to fetch it."

"My dear fellow, I am not too much of a fine gentleman, at all events. I would run round to the public-house and fetch it myself."

"Don't be an ass, Delabole. It would have been a grand thing though to have seen the great millionaire with a pewter pot in his hand, in the middle of Piccadilly. No, I'll have some brandy; it will be better for me."

He rose as he spoke, and pouring out more than half a tumbler of raw spirit, swallowed a large portion of it, and then filled up the tumbler with iced water.

"I wanted that to pull me together," he said, smacking his lips; "not that I failed in doing justice to the doctor's wine; but when one is a little out of sorts, wine

somehow doesn't seem enough, and one wants the grip which brandy gives."

"You can't be out of sorts, surely," said Delabole.

"Nothing really the matter, only a little upset, that is all." His voice was growing a little thick, and he sat glaring before him in a half-stolid, half-defiant manner.

"By the way, what did you think of Gerald Hardinge?" said Delabole, turning upon him suddenly, and closely observing the effect of his question.

Philip Vane's bloodshot eyes gleamed savagely, as he said:

"I hate him!"

"That's a strong sentiment to be roused by a man whom you have never seen before, isn't it? Particularly in you, who are generally such a remarkably cool customer. I suppose, however, that there is hate, as well as love, 'at first sight,' though I confess I don't see what there is to call forth any such feeling toward Mr. Hardinge."

"He's a bumptious, swaggering young idiot," said Vane, sullenly.

"No, not quite all that," said Mr. Delabole. "He is bumptious, and swaggering, and young, I admit; but the two first simply result from the last. It is the tendency of youth to swagger. I was very objectionable in that way myself, as a boy, and I can fancy that even you, my dear Philip, were not the most retiring lad in your school."

"Well, I am not going to chop words with you," said Vane. "I repeat what I said, I hate this fellow!"

"Do you know, I begin to think, Philip, that you are jealous of Mr. Hardinge."

"Jealous!" cried Vane, springing forward from his chair. "What do you mean by that? how could I be jealous of him?"

"What an excitable party it is to-night!" said Mr. Delabole, quietly. "Don't you recollect Asprey's telling us about this young fellow whispering to Mrs. Bendixen, and paying her great court one evening when you were not present?"

"Oh!" said Vane, lying back with an air of relief, "I remember, now you mention it, but I had forgotten all about it. No," he added, with a scornful laugh, "I'm not jealous; I stand too well in that quarter to fear any rival." And his fingers began playing with the locket on his watch-guard.

Mr. Delabole had never removed his eyes from his companion during this little colloquy. At its conclusion he said:

"Well, whatever cause your dislike springs from, you must not let it influence

your manner toward this young man. It was to his guardian, or godmother, or whoever the old woman is that he lives with, that Asprey was sent for during dinner. He told me so in the hall, and said that the old lady had had a very narrow squeak for it this time, and that unquestionably her ticket is taken for the down line. When she starts on that journey, our young friend comes into all the money."

"And a nice use he'll make of it," sneered Philip Vane.

"A nice use *we* shall make of it, my dear Philip," said Mr. Delabole, with a light laugh. "For if I can carry out my idea, most of that worthy old person's savings will come to the Terra del Fuegos, or some of our other ventures. Therefore, as I was just saying, there is every reason why you should not permit the feelings with which you say you regard this young man to influence your manner towards him. He is by no means an idiot, as you suppose, and was quite sharp enough to perceive the unpleasant impression which he had created in you."

"All right," said Vane, sullenly. "I'll take care of that. You never saw me blunder in business, and if this is put to me as a matter of business, I shall, of course, not import my private feelings into it. Now I think I'll go home."

"Stay one minute," said Mr. Delabole, who perceived that the effects of the drink had gone off; "I find I must get a few days' change of air, and there are two or three things which I want to say to you before I go."

"Oh! you are going at once, are you?" said Vane. "All right; as we cannot both be conveniently away at the same time, it will suit me better that you should go now than later."

"I'm glad of that," said Mr. Delabole.

"I didn't mean anything," said Vane, reddening at the sarcastic inflection of his friend's voice. "I'm not a swaggerer like young Hardinge. Only Mrs. Bendixen is going down next week to stop with some friends in the Isle of Wight, and I have an invitation to the same house. That's all."

"I shall be back by that time, and you shall go and do your courtship at your leisure, my dear Philip. By the way, when is the marriage to come off?"

"About the beginning of September, I suppose; that will be my first chance of a clear fortnight. She talks about a month, but I couldn't stand that."

"No, of course not. And where are you going to live?"

"There is a house of hers in Curzon-street, which will be vacant at Christmas, and upon which she seems to have set her mind. We shall stay at an hotel, I suppose, until the place is done up and re-furnished, and that kind of thing."

"Curzon-street will be handy for Harding, who lives close by. We must not, however, commence operations in that quarter until we see what is going to become of the old woman, who, by Asprey's account, is marvellously sharp, and might put the young fellow on his guard. Now let me talk to you about Irving's matter."

"Irving? Oh, the Indian man."

"Exactly, the Indian man! Gillman has been making some particular inquiries about Irving. It appears that he was a struggling man in Calcutta, junior partner in a merchant's house, adding very slowly to the capital which he had embarked in the firm, and almost tempted to withdraw his money and return to England. One day a man came to him, bearing a letter of introduction from a common acquaintance, a lieutenant in a native regiment, with a proposition for some wild speculation in indigo or cotton—I don't know which—which required capital to float it. This capital the visitor asked Irving to supply, pointing out to him at the same time fairly enough, that though the risk was very great, the profits, if successful, would be in proportion. Young Irving was almost at desperation point then, and after a little deliberation he agreed to find the money, and the speculation was launched. By this single coup Irving became a rich man, and then, as is nearly always the case, luck seemed to stick to him. But in a strange superstitious kind of way—he is a Scotchman—he always connected the young lieutenant, who introduced the speculator to him, with his good luck, and took care to connect him with all the schemes in which he himself embarked in the future."

"Not a bad thing for the lieutenant."

"A very good thing, for Irving looked upon him as a kind of guardian angel, and more than once refused to be mixed up with operations which his soldier-friend regarded suspiciously. Nor was it a bad thing for Irving, for the lieutenant was naturally a keen, clear-headed fellow, and owed his advance in life much more to his own brains than to Irving's assistance."

"And are they both alive? and does the alliance still continue?"

"Yes, to both questions. They are both alive; but young Irving, who adventured his few hundreds, is old Mr. Irving, of Combe Park, Surrey, and Marine Villa, Torquay, bank director, and one of the richest commoners in England. While the lieutenant is Sir Geoffry Heriot, K.C.B., retired general officer."

"And you are telling me this story," said Philip, yawning, "apropos of—"

"Apropos of our getting Irving to join us in the direction of the Terra del Fuegos. Gillman seems convinced that it can only be managed with Sir Geoffry Heriot's sanction and concurrence."

"And how is that to be obtained?"

"By representing to Sir Geoffry himself the stability of the concern and the desirability of his taking shares in it."

"It is worth while throwing out a sprat for the sake of hooking such a fine salmon as this Mr. Irving. Why not tell Sir Geoffry that so many shares, now at such and such a premium, have been placed at his private disposal?"

"Simply because that would be the exact way to defeat our object! When I was a young man, many years ago, a friend told me a story which I have never forgotten. His father was a banker at Athens. At the principal hotel there arrived a Frenchman, a magnifico, a duke with an historical name. He lived splendidly; his retinue was most numerous; he gave superb entertainments. After he had been at the hotel about a month, he one day called upon my friend's father, asking if the firm would cash a bill, which he would draw on his bankers in Paris. My friend's father had heard of the duke's pomp and magnificence, had seen some of the outward signs of his luxury in the number and splendour of his servants. But in business he was a cautious man. Why did not the duke bring an introduction to him from the French ambassador? The duke laughed scornfully. Was it likely that he, a descendant of Clovis, would condescend to enter into any relations with such canaille as an ambassador sent from the Republic, then existing in France? The banker did not reply. He was just turning round to instruct his head-cashier to discount the bill at the current rate when the duke said: 'Give me twenty thousand piastres now, and I will give you my bill for twenty-five thousand payable in a fortnight.' In an instant the banker saw the style of man he had to deal with. In an instant he closed his desk, put the keys in his pocket, and

saying, 'That is not our method of doing business,' bowed his visitor out. The next day the duke was arrested as a swindling impostor. Memo: never offer too much, lest your motives be suspected."

"You're right," said Philip Vane, "and I can't conceive why I made the suggestion, except that I am dropping with sleep, and very weak-minded in consequence."

"I will release you in two minutes. All you have to do is this. During my absence you will receive a further report from Gillman. If in it he says that Sir Geoffry Heriot's influence over Mr. Irving still continues, and that the old gentleman declines to move in our matter without consulting his friend, you must find out Sir Geoffry's address, and——"

"And let you know?"

"That will be impossible, dear boy, I shall be out of town."

"But you will leave your address?"

"Not exactly," said Mr. Delabole, playfully. "I don't want to be worried with business matters while I'm away. Other people want a little quiet as well as you, Master Philip. No, what you have to do is to find out Sir Geoffry's address, and tell Gillman, whom, as far as regards that matter, I will place entirely at your disposal, to make himself acquainted with the old general's friends, mode of life, &c. He knows exactly what to do. Thus, all the preparation will be made and ready for me to work upon when I return to town."

"And if there is a necessity for seeing this old Sir What-you-call-him, who may live at the extremity of England, or on the Continent, or anywhere else, who will have to do that?"

"You, undoubtedly, my dear Philip. That appertains to the general manager's department, and I believe you receive the general manager's salary and perquisites."

"As at present arranged, certainly, but—but, however, we need not discuss the matter further, just now. You may depend upon my doing all that is necessary. Now, good-night and good-bye."

"Stay, let me see you to the door; the lock is awkward for those unaccustomed to it."

So saying, Mr. Delabole followed his guest down the staircase, and saw him safely into the street.

Returning to his room, the luxurious proprietor mixed himself a little cold brandy-and-water, lit a final cigarette, and commenced to moralise.

"Wonderfully clever man of the world, Asprey! What he said of our dear friend, who has just vacated that chair, that he 'could not stand beans,' is exactly and mathematically correct! Curzon-street and Mrs. Bendixen, and her sixty thousand pounds, have been too much for him! He means to kick over the traces, and he shows signs of it already. That was what he meant by his recent hesitation. When he has secured that prize, he thinks that he will be independent of me and of the Terra del Fuegos, and can hold or leave his position with us as it may happen to please him. Not so fast, Mr. Philip Vane, not quite so fast, if you please! There are such things as slips between cups and lips, and with those who have the opportunity of putting spokes in wheels rests the amount of progress to be achieved. Let me see what I can do in that capacity."

As he spoke he rose from his seat, flung the butt-end of his cigarette into the empty fireplace, and crossing the room, seated himself at a large old-fashioned writing-table. Opening one of the drawers, he took from it a memorandum-book, bound in leather, and secured with a lock. Opening this again with a gold key, hanging amidst a bunch of charms on his watch-chain, he turned over the leaves rapidly until he stopped at a certain page.

"There it is," he said, "my first and only essay in the detective profession, which, for an amateur, was decidedly successful. How wise I was not to trust to my memory for the detail, and how grateful I ought to be to old Wuff, that the casual reference to him and his travelling company, that morning at the club, should have been the means of giving me a tight hold over one of the most slippery but most useful tools ever yet fashioned for my hand! 'Miss Madge Pierrepont, leading lady, Wexeter Theatre, Dobson, manager. Ultra-respectable, not a breath heard. Lodges with younger sister at Miss Cave's, box book-keeper in Crescent. Supposed to be spooned on by Gerald Harding, scene-painter at theatre. N.B. Nothing known of him, supposed to be swell out of luck. Tall woman, brown hair, large eyes, walks well.' Walks well! Lord, ah! I shall never forget the day that I walked after her and her sister from the theatre, when I wanted to take stock of her in the daylight, and how she looked me up and down when she found I was following them as though she were a princess! I didn't like that, I recollect; I found the

detective lay wasn't in my line, and left the rest of the clearing of it up to Gillman. Here is his report. 'Miss Madge Pierrepont, leading lady at the Chepstow Theatre, manager, W. Mew. Extract from the visitor's book of the Chepstow Castle Hotel: Arrivals, May the 17th, — Mund, Esquire, Mrs. and Mast., London; Wugg, Major, Southsea; Crumpsall, Mrs., Manchester; Vane, Captain, London. Extract from marriage-register in Chepstow parish church: July the 3rd. This is to certify, &c. Margaret Pierrepont, spinster; Philip Vane, bachelor. Witnesses, Thomas Black, fisherman; Helen Black, pew-opener.' That will do for my dear Philip, I think! That will prove a curb even for his restive temper. Not merely shall he do exactly what I require him, but through this 'information which I have received,' I shall be enabled to show him the best way of investing Mrs. Bendixen's sixty thousand pounds!"

MAIL DAY IN THE WEST.

BANG! It is a dull sound as of a cannon which wakes us out of our sleep on four bear-skins, under a blue blanket and an old coat, in our shanty, in Victoria, Vancouver's Island. We are as yet new to the ways of the place, and rub our eyes wondering what it can all mean. While we are cogitating we hear the scuttling of many feet along the wooden side-walk, and the companion who for the time being shares our mansion rushes in, dressing as he makes for the door, and tells us to "hurry up," for the mail is in. "Hurrying up" means in this case jumping into some clothes and a pair of boots, and joining the people who are now running from hither and thither down the quiet streets towards the harbour. It is yet early morning, but half the population seem to be up, and all running one way. The hotels, and many private and business houses, are flying flags. You also notice that though this is nominally a British town, fully one half of the colours are American. Our Transatlantic cousins are "great on bunting," and on high days, holidays, and on steamer day, are in no way backward to display the "goose and gridiron" to the breeze. There is the mail steamer from San Francisco lying alongside the wooden wharf, blowing off steam, and already surrounded by draymen, black and white, all shouting, most of them swearing, and not a few of them with gold

watches in their sleeved-waistcoat pockets. Remember that we are in El Dorado. The chief citizens are also down deep in conference—three deep—with the purser, who, cigar in mouth, is busy with invoices and bills of lading, while here is paterfamilias, much excited and very hot, seeing to the landing of his wife and family, whom at last, having prepared a new home for them, he has brought away from struggling, overstocked England. They look very happy, but wondrously bewildered, at the new scenes around. And yonder is a sweet English girl, who has come all the way from fair Devon to pine-clad Vancouver, to wed the Bideford lad who has been toiling in the mines all these years for her; and as we see that brave lass escorted by the happy lover, and the brother who has come out with her, to the Hôtel de France, and thence to the little wooden church upon the hill, we feel certain that all the world looks bright to them, and all the mean-looking board houses gilded palaces.

There are also idlers like ourselves, seeing if any acquaintances have come, and what new girls have arrived for our colonial society. Here seems to be a popular man, who has just come out of the steamer. Half a dozen young fellows are round him, and he is laughing and shaking hands. He seems an old colonist, who has been away on a visit, and has returned again.

"Glad to see you, boys," we hear him saying, "mighty glad! Tell you what, the old country's not what we thought it, and I'm glad to be back from their small two-penny-halfpenny-wheelbarrow ways. I'm going to stick here, I tell you, and I guess you'd better all do the same!"

The incredulous, sad-looking smile on some of these young English faces, show that they don't half believe the enthusiastic returned colonist, and then we hear one say to the other, "Ah! it's all very well for Stephens, with his town lots and Cariboo claim; but I guess if I'd got his chance, you'd soon see the last of this child!" Nevertheless, they all go up and take a drink with the jubilant Stephens in old Ben Griffin's, at the Boomerang. There is already quite a brisk business going in that same way. "Ben's" seems to be the English house, and there the newly arrived Briton may, while quenching his thirst, indulge in the new arrival's amusement of cursing the "Yankees" to his heart's content, without any fear of ulterior consequences. It seems apparently

etiquette for the new arrivals and the old hands to go and "take a drink" before starting into the serious work of breakfast. Nobody has, however, much time for breakfast to-day. Even the lazy, the serenely lazy, Indians are now too excited to sit on the side-walks lazily watching the busy multitude of pale-faced strangers. Even they are down at the wharf acting as porters to the different hotels, for omnibuses and cabs are as yet unknown to Victoria. We get clear of the drags and trunk-laden Indians, and go up to the post-office, a little wooden building, which also does duty for the harbour-master's office; for the postmaster-general, being an old sea skipper, is made, by an economical legislature, to do duty also for captain of the port. The calls of the postmen, so familiar to us at home, are quite unknown on the Pacific. There everybody goes to the post-office for his own letters. Accordingly, by the time we have reached that building, merchants and merchants' clerks, or those who have boxes in the office, for which they pay a round sum per annum, are rushing for their "mail matter," as it is called. The general public has, however, the advantage of no such aristocratic luxury, and are now forming in line to wait their turn at the post-office window. The arrangement, from long custom, has become quite familiar to the heterogeneous mob who are waiting outside. Noiselessly, and without any nonsense, each new comer takes his turn at the end of the single file, until they stretch in a long tail up Wharf-street, or away towards the Hudson's Bay Company's warehouse. Now and then, indeed, some bumptious individual will attempt to step into the line out of his order, but he speedily becomes convinced of the little mistake he has made, as he is politely but simply handed back until, to his astonishment, he lands at the end of the line. If the mail arrives when the town is full of gold-diggers, it will sometimes be hours before the last of the tail can reach the head of the line, and though he need never attempt to go out of his place, it lies quite within his purpose to effect this either by love or money. It is not often that he attempts to do so by the former means; the latter comes more within the bounds of possibility. Accordingly, you will be sure to see in the line now and then some tall, gaunt, grey-shirted fellow who, you are perfectly certain, expects no letter, and who is in no great hurry. At a wink the

individual to whom a letter may be of importance, buys him off, and takes his place in the rank out of which he has stepped. In San Francisco, in the old roystering, money-scattering days, ten dollars have been often paid for this favour. At last we near the head of the line. There are still two before us, and we take our cue from them. Number one presents his head at the opening in the boarded window. "Bock, Hiram T.," this in a nasal accent. There is no mistaking his nationality, The postmaster-general is assisted by the deputy postmaster-general (we are fond of titles in the colonies), and both rapidly turn over the piles of letters arranged in the pigeon-holes, under the different letters of the alphabet. "Nothing!" and Hiram T. Bock, late of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, turns away, and cuts a chew of tobacco to console him for his disappointment. Number two is absorbed in some passing object, and requires a peremptory shout of "Next man!" to remind him that "the honourable gentleman" at the window requests his order. He darts forward and shouts, not in the half-whispering tone of some modest individuals, but after the manner of a freeborn Briton, "Smith!" "What Smith?" "John Smith!" A laugh comes from the inside, as the postmaster takes a peep out at his man, and asks, "What John Smith?" A little altercation ensues, which seems settled to their mutual satisfaction, for John Smith lays down three bits, about eighteenpence, for some partially paid letters, and moves off with "his mail." We come next, and so the line goes on. The newspapers are not distributed to-day. There is no time for that. The newspaper men are, however, in the room behind, looking over the pile on the floor for their "exchanges," and are, I dare say, not over particular in making use of any tempting periodical, even though their name should not be inscribed on it. People who so conscientiously send papers every mail to their colonial friends, may probably be interested to know that very few of them are ever received. I don't know what it may be in other colonies, but in Vancouver, when I knew it in the early days of the country, I never received one-half of those sent to me.

Perhaps it is only in the United States and in the British colony on the Pacific, that private individuals are allowed to compete with the government in carrying letters. These are called "express companies," and one or other has an office in

every place of any consequence all over the country. These express companies usually conduct a banking business, commission agency, and are also carriers of parcels—in fact, general factotums. The chief of these is Wells, Fargo, and Company, or, as they are familiar called, "Wells Fargo." In every large town Wells Fargo's office is one of the best situated and most substantial buildings. If anybody is in difficulty about getting anything to or from any place, he goes to Wells Fargo. Nobody, so far as I am aware, ever saw either of the gentlemen so called; indeed, some profane individuals will not hesitate to hint that they are of the nature of two Mrs. Harrises, but, at all events, everybody knows their representatives. Many people, Americans especially, have a most enduring belief in them, and prefer to send all their letters by them rather than through the post-office, even though the former mode of conveyance is more expensive. All you have to do is to go to their office, buy one of their envelopes, put your letter in it, and then hand it over to them. You may be certain that it will be handed over to your correspondent as safely and, probably, more quickly than it would be if committed to the hands of the postal authorities. The agents of these express companies travel far and near, and often to places where there are no postal arrangements. Through the wildest part of the country you will meet their agents in canoes, on horseback, in stages, all bound on the same errand, carrying treasure, parcels, and letters. The mining population could scarcely exist without them, and have a most unwavering faith in them—I believe in every case well founded, for I have known very few things committed to their hands go astray. Though, perhaps, the mail coming to Victoria from England by Wells Fargo will be small compared with that by the legitimate channels, that leaving by them will be nearly as large, and to San Francisco probably larger. We step up accordingly to Wells Fargo's office in Yates-street to see if there are any letters for us there. The large room is full of people. The agent is standing upon the counter with a pile of letters, alphabetically arranged, in his hands, shouting out the different names, and tossing them hither and thither with an adroit spin, learned by long practice, in the direction of the applicant. The only person at all idle there on this busy day seems to be the captain of the steamer, who is sitting quietly in the sanctum of Wells Fargo

reading the colonial paper, and now and then nodding to his friends.

To-day you need never attempt to speak to any man on private business. Under ordinary circumstances anybody in Victoria must be terribly busy if he has not time to "take a drink," but to-day, unless it is in the way of business, nobody can spare time even for that, or do anything but read his letters, and write hasty answers to his correspondents. The colonial legislature by silent consent never think of meeting on mail day, and the Honourable John Jones must perforce postpone that great attempt to overthrow the government on the momentous subject of the Hog and Goat Bill, until he has written a smart note to Gingham, Cheatem, and Co., of Manchester, about the quality of that last invoice of long shirtings. Even Her Majesty's Courts of Justice must put off the trial of that Indian for murder until the mail is gone. The chief justice is, beside, too busy signing various legal papers to-day to attend to his ordinary judicial functions. The sheriff—and the functions of a colonial sheriff are more useful than ornamental—is very busy, for he knows, by long experience, that every mail day a number of gentlemen who may be in pecuniary trouble are apt to give their creditors the slip, and bid farewell for ever to an ungrateful colony. This intention comes to the sharp ears of their anxious friends in the way of business, and instantly these gentlemen rush over to the chief justice, and swear that to their certain knowledge such is the intention of the individual aforesaid. A *capias*, or, as it is familiarly known among those accustomed to it, "cap'us," is then issued, ordering and commanding the sheriff to see that *So-and-so* ne exeat regno—does not, in a word, skeddaddle to the loss of his mourning creditors. In the course of the afternoon the sheriff and his myrmidons may be seen hanging about the steamer armed with these bits of paper, and then between wanted and wanted there is a fine trial of skill, and not unfrequently, by a display of careless nonchalance, the victim slips from under the watchful fingers of the legal functionary. On mail day bills become due, and as everybody has his bills to meet on that day, everybody expects everybody else to pay what he is due. But of course, as always happens in this case, he very often reckons without his host. Accordingly, the steamer gun is often the signal for gentlemen who "have something out" to have a particular engagement in the country until the mail

has gone. In San Francisco, before the steamer day was superseded by the Pacific Railroad, this necessity of making up bills against steamer day gave rise to a peculiar set of men, who made a business of lending money "from steamer day to steamer day," the rate for the ten days or a fortnight being from one to two per cent, almost invariably, too, with "collateral security," that is, a deposit receipt of merchandise in a warehouse, or some such easily made over document. This was rather exorbitant, even in a country where the ordinary interest on money, with the best security, is eighteen per cent per annum. But then at no time in California has it been looked upon as a disgrace either to lend or to borrow money at the highest rates of interest, and the "from steamer day to steamer day" money lenders grew rich.

The newspaper offices are full, for the different local prints issue a special edition for steamer day, containing a summary of the last ten days' or two weeks' news, and people are busily buying these at one shilling apiece, in the sanguine hope, not destroyed by many failures, that they will reach the consignees. As we pass down by the post-office again, most of the town people have received their letters, but the settlers from the immediately outlying districts have begun to come in in waggons, on horseback, or on foot. You notice that nearly all of these people, though roughly dressed, are yet of quite a different style from our familiar agricultural labourer. Most of them have an air of intelligence, and several are quite refined in appearance, manners, and language. For months these men have been shut out from all news from home. Some have just come down from the mines, and you can see by the look of them have been unsuccessful. Others are "pulling through the winter" as best they can, hunting, working on farms, or living from hand to mouth until the snow clears off the mountains, and they can start off to try their luck in the gold-fields once more. Some, as they receive their letters, cram them into their pockets, and move away to some quiet place to read them, while others, all careless of the throng, move along Wharf-street and up Bastion-street, diligently perusing the long-expected letter. Another will comfortably sit down on the edge of the wooden side-walk with his feet in the gutter, and, heedless of passers-by, peruse his correspondence from beginning to end. A nervously excited man will open his letter, peep into it, and

then rush off to devour it in the quiet corner of some neighbouring saloon, and now and then you will see an anxious face, and notice often a tearful eye glancing at a deep black-edged envelope, which tells that for the far-off colonist one more link which bound him to the mother country has been severed.

As the hour for the mail sailing approaches, the whole town gets into a fever of excitement; and when the whistle begins to blow in a spasmodically shrieking manner, and the black clouds of smoke, which tell that steam is getting up, darken the air, you would suppose that the end of the world (colonial) was approaching. Here a returning colonist, surrounded by a knot of envious friends, and with an air of pity on his face for us who are remaining, is rushing down to the steamer, or hastily taking a farewell drink before shaking the colonial dust off his colonial highlows, while every other man seems to be rushing with a letter for somebody to post in San Francisco, having been too late for the mail. At last the steamer begins to ease off, then the crowd give a cheer or two, which is returned with interest from the crowded deck of the steamer. Steady! and she is round the arbutus-covered point by the Indian village, the crowd turn off, and once more we Vancouverites are left to ourselves, and mail day is over for the next fortnight. The weary postmaster goes home to dinner, the merchant and the merchants' clerks wend their way home, and everybody retires early to bed, to sleep or not to sleep, as the fortunes of the day may have brought him good or bad news. Only the day's work is not over for the newspaper men. A hasty dinner over, the colonial sub-editors, after paying a visit to the "Occidental Bar," grind up the editorial scissors, and set to work to get up the summary of European news, while perhaps an idle friend may look over the exchanges and make up their foreign correspondence in Vienna, Paris, and St. Petersburg, with a tolerable amount of local colouring derived from experience or Murray's Guide Book. Next day the night's work will appear pretty well put together, with lists of the passengers, the imports and exports, the amount of gold-dust despatched by each banking-house, and a variety of notices headed "Personal." These note that "we are glad to see" that such and such a distinguished citizen "has again arrived home, and looking well after his visit to Europe," or that such and such another citizen, also distinguished after a fashion,

had, to the regret of his numerous creditors, managed to elude the active and vigilant sheriff. Then follow a list of acknowledgments: "To the gentlemanly and obliging purser of the steamer Brother Jonathan for late San Francisco papers," or to "our eminent citizen, Honourable Donald Macdonald, who has just arrived from a prolonged visit to Canada, for late Dominion exchanges." In a few days things settle down to their ordinary dead level. The gentlemen "wanted" get at their ease again, while the citizens who had "something out" return again to town, of course terribly shocked to hear that the mail has been in and gone. Until the great mail day arrives again the even tenour of the mercantile ways is undisturbed except by the arrival of a few local mails up river, or 'long coast local steamers, smacks, and trading schooners, or by the more primitive method of an Indian canoe. I can remember when this latter method was the only postal convenience in the country, but that was when the Honourable the Hudson's Bay Company reigned supreme over these territories. At that time the only civilised spots through this immense tract of country were the forts of the great fur traders. When the officer in charge of one of these lonely outposts wished to send a letter to another fort, he merely sought out an Indian, wrapped the letter well up in a piece of oil-cloth, and despatched him. There was a stated rate of remuneration, according to the season of the year, for this service, and this every Indian knew. Accordingly, the aboriginal courier might go the whole way and receive the whole reward, or—what was much more likely—he might not have his way all clear before him, and prudently stop as long as his skin was whole. In that case he sold the letter to another Indian for a proportion of the reward, according to the distance yet to be gone over. To the company it was quite the same, for eventually the letter reached its destination in perfect safety, when the full payment was claimed by the contractor for the last division of the route traversed. In those days the one annual ship to Fort Vancouver took about twelve months on the passage from England. It halted to take in wine at Madeira, spices at Rio, cattle at the Falklands, at Valparaiso to water, at the Sandwich Islands to trade tortoise-shell, at San Francisco to do business with Don Castro—all before the gun from Astoria reported that she had passed the bar of the Columbia River.

Then she went to Canton and sold her sea otters to the mandarins, and bought nankeens, teas, and silks, and so made the round voyage. Accordingly, the company adopted another method to get their letters home and the rarer furs quicker to England. Every year the fur brigade crossed the whole breadth of the American continent on foot, on horseback, in birch-bark canoes, and in batteaus to York Factory, in Hudson's Bay. The accountant of the company then soldered up the papers in a shining tin box, which he strapped on his back, and so Fort York or Moose Factory, as the case might be, on the shores of the frozen sea, was reached in about five months. These were the primitive days of the postal system in the Far West. We thought we had got an immense advance when the pony express carried the letters by relays of fearless riders over the plains to the furthest west railway station, and from there returning to Sacramento, in California.

I can well remember the steamer lying puffing at the wharf at Sacramento until clatter! clatter! the last pony rider, a rough, hardy, wiry fellow, armed cap-à-pie, galloped on board with the mails from "St. Joe's" (Saint Joseph), in Missouri, apologising to the little knot that gathered round him by the funnel for keeping them waiting, by relating (as he lit a cigar) that "a mile or a mile and a half on this side of Brown's Hole, down by the sulphur spring, Joram Hicks, the pony rider, had got his har lifted by Pah-utes, and it was 'nation time, boys, afore the stock could be got up, and the bags ketched from the critters and sent on!" And the speaker goes off as unconcerned as if he was relating the most trivial incident in the world. But it was a very trivial incident in those days, for one who did business on the great prairies to lose his scalp between sunrise and sunset. Then came the stage-coaches, and everybody thought the end of the world could not be far off, when you could, by travelling day and night, and getting the life almost shaken out of you amid a cloud of dust, go from Virginia City to Omaha in seven or eight days. Now you can go from New York to Sacramento, in luxurious carriages, in less than that time. Still the stage-coach is, and will long be, an institution in many parts of the West, both for passengers and mails. There is one such going between Portland, in Oregon, and Marysville, in California. In the winter it has to be ferried over swollen rivers on rafts, and

often, when crossing prairies which are flooded until they look like some great lake, the passenger is suddenly aware that the coach is floating, and that if he doesn't look sharp he'll be drowned like a rat in its hole. How long it takes I would be afraid to risk even a conjecture. Rumours are extant of a too confiding person having died of old age on the road! Even after the coach began to run, mail day was still an institution in San Francisco, only a limited mail being conveyed across the plains. Then, among other things, the Eastern (U.S.) papers always sold for a shilling (twenty-five cents, or two bits) apiece. Somehow or other the mail used to manage nine times out of ten to come in after dark, and often at very unseasonable hours. Often when coming home from a most jovial party at an early hour in the morning, the quiet streets would resound with the yells of the newsboy (and a California newsboy is the sharpest of his race), "Pa—nama st'm'r in. Noo Yor—k Herald, Tri—bune, World. Here you are, sir! two bits!" and he was off again to intercept some other reveller on the opposite side of the street. You hurried home, lit your lamp, and prepared to enjoy your New York Herald, when, as you unfolded it, a sort of suspicion began to steal over you that there must be some mistake. The paper was a year old! Then as you dashed it aside, you recollected that this was the 1st of April, and that you were—sold!

In addition to all these methods, a good number of letters in the most out-of-the-way places in the Far West are carried by private hands. There are localities so remote, that even the stage-coach is not heard of, and the express-man does not find it worth his while to reach them. Letters from such places are few and far between. There is a far trading post in the northern part of British Columbia which is only communicated with once in two years. There are also distant knots of gold-diggers in some secluded mountain valley, washing the sands of a nameless stream, who might quietly slip out of men's memories, did they depend upon government reaching them with their letters. Luckily, however, the digger of the auriferous soil is not much addicted to epistolary correspondence, and what he does find it necessary to indite he manages to get conveyed to the coast somehow or other. If you have anything like an extensive acquaintance in one of these gold-digging regions, you may be astonished some autumn day to find your

door in Victoria opened in a free-and-easy way, and to see a booted, grey-shirted individual walk into the nearest apartment. Then, as he begins to search his pockets for something, he introduces himself: "Name o' Smith, Mister? Guessed so. Mine's Job. 'Job,' sez he to me, 'Job, I cal'late I'll put off a line to Mister Smith down to Victory,' sez he to me. 'Easy know him,' sez he. 'Ain't much to look at, but a good un to go'—darn't ef I ain't lost it!" With this the honest miner stands open-mouthed, until, finally, a brilliant idea strikes him, and with a self-satisfied slap he throws down on the table a greasy document, which he produces from the lining of his hat, and which you find has been about five months on the way, while the amateur post-man has been "prospecting" in and about the Rocky Mountains enough to merit the Geographical Society's fellowship.

And so by drops and dribbles "mail matter" trickles in to moisten our letter-thirsty souls in the Far West, until—too quick for the man whose bill is then due, too slow for everybody else—the days roll round, and with a hurry and a scurry, a running hither and thither, mail day again comes round to your brothers in the West.

FIRE AND RAIN.

AFTER reading aloud at the breakfast table the first telegraphic announcements of the terrific fire at Chicago, I turned to my wife and said: "There will be heavy rains at Chicago after this. Just look into the papers to-morrow or next day, and you will see that I have been a true prophet."

"Prophecy! bah!" replied my wife, with an absence of that reverence for my high pretensions which neither wives nor valets de chambre feel for the genius, the greatness, or the wisdom of their lords or masters. "No one can prophecy now-a-days, not even Zadkiel, or the author of Moore's Almanack. Modern prophets are all impostors and humbugs."

"You are right, though you use strong language," I replied; "but if we cannot prophecy, we can predict and calculate. We can tell to a minute when there will be an eclipse of the sun or moon, next year or ten years hence; and we know to a certainty when a comet will re-appear on the horizon: so I do not prophecy. I predict, or rather I calculate, that this terrible fire will be followed by a heavy down-pour of rain upon Chicago."

I had not to wait long for the verification of my forecast, for in the morning papers of the next day, the 11th of October, Reuter's telegrams from New York, dated the previous evening, contained the following: "Advices from Chicago, dated midnight, state that the fire continued raging. The wind is violent and changing, and spreads the flames in all directions. Two-thirds of the city have been destroyed. One hundred thousand of the inhabitants are houseless and starving. The conflagration raged until an early hour this morning, when a heavy rain fell and extinguished the flames."

There was a slight, a very slight degree of triumph in my looks and in the tone of my voice as I read this aloud. My wife, with something of the spirit of St. Thomas, or Bishop Colenso, about her, was not content to accept my reading as proof positive that I had not invented the passage to hoax and mystify her, and requested me to hand her the paper. I did so, and she read the passage for herself. She straightway began to question me, for she has an inquiring as well as an incredulous mind, on the how, the why, and the wherefore of great rains after great fires. The information I gave her may be interesting to those who, as the late Lord Derby said of himself, "were born in a pre-scientific age," or who, having been born in a scientific period, have been too busy, too careless, or too unprovided with opportunity, to study the great phenomena of nature.

The atmosphere surrounding the earth contains, as everybody knows, a certain quantity of humidity or watery vapour, supplied by evaporation from the ocean; which is either held in invisible solution in the upper air, or collected visibly in clouds, when it descends in cold weather in the shape of hail and snow, or in warmer weather as rain. When a wide column of air (such for instance as a column of air coextensive with the circumference of a large city) is from any cause more greatly heated than the circumambient atmosphere, it begins, in consequence of the diminution of its specific gravity, to ascend into space. The colder air immediately rushes in from all points of the compass to fill up the vacuum, and coming in contact with the heat below, precipitates in rain the moisture which it previously held in solution. Thus the winds that blew so furiously over the unhappy city of Chicago, and the rain that fell in such copious torrents, were alike produced by the immensity of the conflagration. It has often been remarked

by historians and philosophers that great battles by sea and land are invariably followed or interrupted by heavy rains. It was not so in ancient times when men fought hand to hand with sword and spear, and armies discharged their arrows at each other; but when vast quantities of gunpowder are exploded, either at sea or on shore, and great heat generated over a large space occupied by the combatants, the rain descends with the certainty of cause and effect.

In like manner, and for a similar reason, rain in such great and populous cities as London, Manchester, and Glasgow, is always more frequent and more copious than in the rural districts twenty or thirty miles beyond. The thousands and tens of thousands of chimneys of dwelling-houses—and the taller chimneys of factories—that pour not only smoke but heat into the atmosphere, produce the rain, from which the more sparsely peopled villages and towns, beyond the reach of the too abundant caloric, are comparatively free. The tall chimneys of cotton-mills, foundries, and other factories with which most of our largest cities abound, act on a smaller scale the part played by mountains in the economy of nature. The mountain tops receive and discharge electricity, and the electricity precipitates from the clouds the moisture which they contain.

It has sometimes been asserted that the ancients were imperfectly, or not at all, acquainted with the constitution of the atmosphere, and that Descartes was the first natural philosopher who threw any real light upon the subject. The moderns, however much they may have distanced the ancients in their study of nature, are apt to overvalue their own achievements, and undervalue those of the early fathers of the world. The difference between ancient and modern knowledge may not be so great as we in our vain-gloriousness imagine. One difference, however, there assuredly is. In our day knowledge is freely communicated to the whole people. In the ancient day knowledge was jealously confined within the circle of the priesthood. The priests of Assyria and Egypt, and of nations that were great and highly civilised before the birth of Abraham, were by no means ignorant. They may have been impostors, but they were not fools, and used their knowledge to deceive the people, and keep them in subjection. They wrought apparent miracles by scientific means, and rigidly excluded laymen, even though they might be

kings and conquerors, from participating in their secrets. And this brings me to the ancient story of Nimrod—the mighty hunter and king of Babel—who built a tower upon the plains of Shinar.

The literal truth of this ancient myth is no longer insisted upon by theologians; but like all myths it must have a meaning, if we could but discover it. The learned Eichhorn is of opinion that the story expresses, in a mythical form, the fact that originally the human race formed one family or nation; that they began to build a city and a tower; that in the progress of the work they quarrelled among each other; that they then separated, and that from their separation proceeded in course of time all the languages of the earth. But another interpretation suggests itself, which may or may not be correct, but which at all events seems to be worthy of discussion, if the literal truth of the legend as a portion of authentic history be no longer insisted upon.

The nature of the climate in Shinar is such, the heat is so great, the drought so excessive, that its soil is unproductive without the aid of artificial irrigation. So Herodotus told the world in his day. Bearing this in mind, as well as the obviously mythological character of a story that represents the Almighty as being afraid that man could really build an edifice to reach to heaven, unless extraordinary means were taken to frustrate the daring design, may we not ask whether Nimrod may not have been a philosopher as well as a king and a hunter? May he not have intended to build a mighty tower—not up to heaven—but high above the clouds? And may not his purpose have been to maintain enormous fires upon the top, night and day, during certain seasons of the year? And if he had succeeded in this purpose would not the fire upon the top of the tall tower have brought down the fruitful rain upon the barren plain of Shinar? And if Nimrod was a learned layman, would not the priesthood be jealous of his interference in a matter of science, which the priests of the early ages considered to belong exclusively to them? And if being jealous and indignant at his sacrilegious conduct, would they not endeavour to stir up the anger of the people against him, by expatiating on the horrible impiety of his design? And if they succeeded in exciting tumults and insurrections amongst the workpeople, and a consequent abandonment of the work, would not this result be properly enough described as a confusion of tongues? In

those days an offence against the priesthood was an offence against God, as may be seen not only in this supposititious story of Nimrod, but in the cognate story of Prometheus, who stole the fire from heaven, and incurred the relentless enmity of the gods for the benefits he conferred upon man.

All these considerations, and speculations, and surmises having been duly communicated to the fair partner of my joys and sorrows, she expressed her opinion on the matter by informing me that they were like the shake of Lord Burleigh's head in the play, and that there might, for all she knew to the contrary, be something in them.

SHE AND I.

WHY do I love my love so well?

Why is she all in all to me?

I try to tell, I cannot tell,

It still remains a mystery:

And why to her I am so dear

I cannot tell although I try,

Unless I find both answers here:

She is herself and I am I.

Her face is very sweet to me,

Her eyes beam tenderly on mine;

But can I say I never see

Face fairer, eyes that brighter shine?

This thing I surely cannot say

If I speak truth and do not lie;

Yet here I am in love to-day,

For she's herself and I am I.

It cannot be that I fulfil

Completely all her girlish dreams,

For far beyond my real still

Her old ideal surely gleams;

And yet I know her love is mine,

A flowing spring that cannot dry,

What explanation? This in fine:

She is herself and I am I.

Mid all the cords by which fond hearts

Are drawn together into one,

This is a cord which never parts,

But strengthens as the years roll on;

And though, as seasons hurry past,

Grace, beauty, wit, and genius die,

Till the last hour this charm will last:

She is herself and I am I.

She is herself and I am I,

Now, henceforth, ever more the same,

Till the dark angel draweth nigh

And calleth her and me by name.

Yea, after Death has done his worst,

Each risen soul will straightway fly

To meet the other. As at first

She'll be herself, I shall be I.

CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

BLACKFRIARS.

On the river-side between St. Paul's and Whitefriars there stood, in the Middle Ages, three Norman fortresses. Castle Baynard and the old Tower of Mountfiquet, now Bridewell, were two of these. Baynard Castle, granted to the Earls of Clare, and afterwards rebuilt by Humphrey, Duke of

Gloucester, was the palace in which the Duke of Buckingham offered the crown to his wily confederate, Richard the Crookback. In Elizabeth's time it was granted to the Earls of Pembroke, who lived there in splendour till the Great Fire melted their gold, calcined their jewels, and drove them in the fashionable flood that was already moving westward. Mountfiquet Castle was pulled down in 1276, when Hubert de Bergh, Earl of Kent, transplanted a colony of Black Dominican Friars from Holborn, near Lincoln's Inn, to the river-side south of Ludgate-hill. Yet so conservative is even Time in England, that a recent correspondent of Notes and Queries points out a piece of mediæval walling, and the fragment of a buttress, still standing, at the foot of the Times office in Printing House-square, which seem to have formed part of the stronghold of the Mountfiquets. This interesting relic is on the left hand of Queen Victoria-street, going up from the bridge, just where there formerly was a picturesque but dangerous descent by a flight of break-neck stone steps. At the right-hand side of the same street stands an old rubble chalk wall, even older. It is just past the new house of the Bible Society, and seems to have been part of the old City wall which at first ended at Baynard Castle. The rampart advanced to Mountfiquet, and lastly, to please and protect the Dominicans, was pushed forward outside Ludgate to the Fleet, which served as a moat, the Old Bailey being an advanced work.

King Edward the First and Queen Eleanor heaped many gifts on the sable friars. Charles the Fifth was lodged at their monastery when he visited England, and his nobles resided in Henry's new-built palace of Bridewell, a gallery being thrown over the Fleet and driven through the City wall to serve as a communication between the two mansions. Henry held the "Black Parliament" in this monastery, and here Cardinal Campeggio presided at the trial which ended with the tyrant's divorce from the ill-used Katherine of Arragon. In the same house the parliament also sat that condemned Wolsey, and sent him to beg "a little earth for charity" of the monks of Leicester. The rapacious king laid his rough hand on the treasures of the house in 1538, and Edward the Sixth sold the Hall and Prior's Lodgings to Sir Francis Bryan, a courtier, afterwards granting Sir Francis Cawarden, master of the revels, the whole house and precincts of the

Preacher Friars, the yearly value being then reckoned at nineteen pounds. The holy brothers were dispersed to beg or thieve, and the church was pulled down, but the mischievous right of sanctuary continued.

And now we come to the event that connects the old monastic ground with the name of the great genius of England. James Burbage, Shakespeare's friend and fellow-actor, and other servants of the Earl of Leicester, tormented out of the City by the angry edicts of over-scrupulous lord mayors, took shelter in the precinct, and there, in 1578, erected a play-house (Play-house-yard). Every attempt was in vain made to crush the intruders. About the year 1586, according to the best authorities, the young Shakespeare came to London and joined the company at the Blackfriars Theatre. Only three years later we find the new arrival (and this is one of the unsolvable mysteries of Shakespeare's life) one of sixteen sharers in the prosperous though persecuted theatre. It is true that Mr. Halliwell has lately discovered that he was not exactly a proprietor, but only an actor receiving a share of the profits of the house, exclusive of the galleries (the boxes and dress circle of those days), but this is after all only a lessening of the difficulty, and it is almost as remarkable that a young unknown Warwickshire poet should receive such profits, as it is that he should have held a sixteenth of the whole property. Without the generous patronage of some such patron as the Earl of Southampton or Lord Brooke, how could the young actor have moved? He was twenty-six, and may have written *Venus and Adonis* or *Lucrece*, yet the first of these poems was not published till 1593. He may have already adapted one or two tolerably successful historical plays, and, as Mr. Collier thinks, might have written the *Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labour Lost*, or the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. One thing is certain, that in 1587 five companies of players, including the Blackfriars company, performed at Stratford, and in his native town Mr. Collier thinks Shakespeare first proved himself useful to his new comrades.

In 1589 the lord mayor closed two theatres for ridiculing the Puritans. Burbage and his friends, alarmed at this, petitioned the privy council, and pleaded that they had never introduced into their plays matters of state or religion. The Blackfriars company, in 1593, began to build a summer theatre, the Globe, in Southwark; and Mr. Collier, remembering that this was the very

year Venus and Adonis was published, attributes some great gift of the earl to Shakespeare to have immediately followed this poem, which was dedicated to Southampton. That money may have gone to build the Globe. By 1594, the poet had written Richard the Second and Richard the Third, and must have been recognised as a great writer. In 1596, we find Shakespeare and his partners (only eight now) petitioning the privy council to allow them to repair and enlarge their theatre, which the Puritans of Blackfriars wanted to close. The council allowed the repairs, but forbade the enlargement. At this time Shakespeare was living near the Bear Garden, Southwark, to be close to the Globe. He was now evidently a thriving, "warm" man, for, in 1597, he bought for sixty pounds New Place, one of the best houses in Stratford. In 1613, we find Shakespeare purchasing a plot of ground not far from Blackfriars Theatre, and abutting upon a street leading down to PuddleWharf, "right against the king's majesty's wardrobe;" but he had retired to Stratford, and given up London and the stage before this. The deed of this sale was sold in 1841 for one hundred and sixty-two pounds five shillings.

In 1608, the lord mayor and aldermen of London made a final attempt to crush the Blackfriars players, but failing to prove to the Lord Chancellor that the City had ever exercised any authority within the precinct and liberty of Blackfriars, their cause fell to the ground. The corporation then opened a negotiation for purchase with Burbage, Shakespeare, and the other (now nine) shareholders. The players asked about seven thousand pounds, Shakespeare's four shares being valued at one thousand four hundred and thirty-three pounds six shillings and eightpence, including the wardrobe and properties, estimated at five hundred pounds. His income at this time Mr. Collier estimates at four hundred a year. The Blackfriars Theatre was pulled down in Cromwell's time, 1655, and houses built in its room.

Randolph, the dramatist, a pupil of Ben Jonson's, ridicules in the *Muses' Looking-Glass*, that strange "morality" play of his, the Puritan feather-sellers of Blackfriars, whom Ben Jonson also taunts, and Randolph's pretty Puritan, Mrs. Flowerdew, says of the ungodly of Blackfriars:

Indeed, it sometimes pricks my conscience,
I come to sell 'em pins and looking-glasses.

To which her friend, Mr. Bird, replies with the sly sanctity of *Tartuffe*:

I have this custom, too, for my feathers,
'Tis fit that we which are sincere professors
Should gain by infidels.

Ben Jonson, that smiter at all such hypocrites, wrote *Volpone* at his house in Blackfriars, and here he laid the scene of the Alchemist. The Friars were fashionable, in spite of the players, for Vandyck lived in the precinct for nine years, till his death in 1641, and the wicked Earl and Countess of Somerset resided in the same locality when they poisoned their former favourite, Sir Thomas Overbury; as late as 1735, Mr. Peter Cunningham says, there was an attempt to assert precinct privileges, but years before sheriffs arrested in the Friars.

In 1623, Blackfriars was the scene of a most fatal and extraordinary accident. It occurred in the chief house of the Friary, then a district declining fast in respectability. Hunsdon House derived its name from Queen Elizabeth's favourite cousin, the Lord Chamberlain, Henry Carey, Baron Hunsdon, and was at the time occupied by Count de Tillier, the French ambassador. About three o'clock on Sunday, October the 26th, a large Roman Catholic congregation of about three hundred persons, worshipping to a certain degree in stealth, and not without fear from the Puritan feather makers of the theatrical neighbourhood, had assembled in a long garret in the third and uppermost story. Master Drury, a Jesuit prelate of celebrity, had drawn together this crowd of timid people. The garret looking over the gatehouse was approached by a passage with a door opening into the street, and also by a passage from the ambassador's withdrawing-room. The garret was about seventeen feet wide and forty feet long, with a vestry for a priest partitioned off at one end. In the middle of the garret and near the wall stood a raised table and chair for the preacher. The gentry sat on chairs and stools facing the pulpit, the rest stood behind, crowding as far as the head of the stairs. At the appointed hour Master Drury, the priest, came from the inner room in white robe and scarlet stole, an attendant carrying a book and the hour-glass by which to measure his sermon. He knelt down at the chair for about an Ave Maria, but uttered no audible prayer. He then took the Jesuit's Testament, and read for the text the Gospel for the day, which was, according to the Gregorian calendar, the twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost: "Therefore is the kingdom of heaven like unto a man being a king that

would make an account of his servants. And when he began to make account there was one presented unto him that owed him ten thousand talents." Having read the text the Jesuit preacher sat down, and putting on his head a red quilt cap with a white linen one beneath it, commenced his sermon. He had spoken for about half an hour, when the calamity happened. The great weight of the crowd in the old room suddenly snapped the main dormer beam of the floor, which instantly crashed in and fell into the room below. The main beams there also snapped and broke through to the ambassador's drawing-room over the gatehouse, a distance of two-and-twenty feet. Only a part, however, of the gallery floor, immediately over Father Rudgate's chamber, a small room used for secret mass, gave way. The rest of the floor being less crowded, stood firm, and the people on it having no other means of escape, drew their knives and cut a way through a plaster wall into a neighbouring room.

A contemporary pamphleteer, who visited the ruins and wrote fresh from the first outburst of sympathy, says: "What ear without tingling can bear the doleful and confused cries of such a troop of men, women, and children all falling suddenly in the same pit, and apprehending with one horror the same ruin? What eye can behold without inundation of tears such a spectacle of men overwhelmed with breaches of weighty timber, buried in rubbish and smothered with dust? What heart without evaporating in sighs can ponder the burden of deepest sorrows and lamentations of parents, children, husbands, wives, kinsmen, friends, for their dearest pledges and chiefest comforts? This world all bereft and swept away with one blast of the same dismal tempest."

The news of the accident fast echoing through London, Serjeant Finch, the recorder, and the lord mayor and aldermen, at once provided for the safety of the ambassador's family, who were naturally shaking in their shoes, and shutting up the gates to keep off the curious and thievish crowd, set guards at all the Blackfriars passages. Workmen were instantly employed in gangs to remove the débris and rescue the sufferers, who were still alive.

The pamphleteer, again rousing himself to the occasion, and turning on his tears, says: "At the opening hereof what a chaos! what fearful objects! what lamentable representations! Here some

buried, some dismembered, some only parts of men; here some wounded, and weltering in their own and other's blood; others putting forth their fainting hands, and crying out for help. Here some gasping and panting for breath; others stifled for want of air. So the most of them being thus covered with dust, their death was a kind of burial." All that night and part of the next day the workmen spent in removing the bodies, and the inquest was then held. It was found that the main beams were only ten inches square, and had two mortise holes, where the girders were inserted, facing each other, so that only three inches of solid timber were left. The main beam of the lower room, about thirteen inches square, without mortise holes, broke obliquely near the end. No wall gave way, and the roof and ceiling of the garret remained entire. Father Drury perished, as also did Father Rudgate, who was in his own room below. Lady Webb, of Southwark, Lady Blackstone's daughter from Scroope's-court, Mr. Fowell, a Warwickshire gentleman, and many tradesmen, servants, and artisans—ninety-five in all—perished. Some of the escapes seemed almost miraculous. Mistress Lucie Penruddock fell between Lady Webb and a servant, who were both killed, yet was saved by her chair falling over her head. Lady Webb's daughter was found alive near her dead mother; and a girl named Elizabeth Sanders was also saved by the dead who fell and covered her. A Protestant scholar, though one of the very undermost, escaped by the timbers arching over him, and some of them slanting against the wall. He tore a way out through the laths of the ceiling by main strength, then crept between two joists to a hole where he saw light, and was drawn through a door by one of the ambassador's family. He at once returned to rescue others. There was a girl of ten who cried to him, "Oh, my mother! oh, my sister! They are down under the timber." He told her to be patient, and by God's grace they would be quickly got forth. The child replied, "This will be a great scandal to our religion." One of the men that fell said to a fellow-sufferer, "Oh, what advantage our adversaries will take at this!" The other replied, "If it be God's will this should befall us, what can we say to it?" One gentleman was saved by keeping near the stairs, while his friend, who had pushed near the pulpit, perished.

Many of those who were saved died in a

few hours after their extrication. The bodies of Lady Webb, Mistress Udale, and Lady Blackstone's daughter were carried to Ely House, Holborn, and there buried in the back court-yard. In the fore court-yard, by the French ambassador's house, a huge grave, eighteen feet long and twelve feet broad, was dug, and four-and-forty corpses piled within it. In another pit, twelve feet long and eight feet broad, in the ambassador's garden, they buried fifteen more. Others were interred in St. Andrew's, St. Bride's, and Blackfriars churches. The list of the killed and wounded is curious, from its topographical allusions. Amongst other entries we find John Halifax, a water-bearer (in the old times of street conduits the London water-bearer was an important person), a son of Mr. Flood, the scrivener, in Holborn, a man of Sir Ives Pemberton, Thomas Brisket, his wife, son, and maid, in Montague Close, Richard Fitzgarret, of Gray's Inn, gentleman, Davie, an Irishman, in Angell-alley, Gray's Inn, gentleman, Sarah Watson, daughter of Master Watson, chirurgion, Master Grimes, near the Horse Shoe tavern, in Drury-lane, John Bevans, at the Seven Stars, in Drury-lane, Francis Man, Thieving-lane, Westminster, &c. As might have been expected, the fanatics of both parties had much to say about this terrible accident. The Catholics declared that the Protestants, knowing this to be a chief place of meeting for men of their faith, had secretly drawn out the pins or sawn the supporting timbers partly asunder. The Protestants, on the other hand, lustily declared that the planks would not bear such a weight of Romanish sin, and that God was displeased with their pulpits and altars, their doctrine and sacrifice; one zealot remembered that at the return of Prince Charles from the madcap expedition to Spain, a Catholic had lamented, or was said to have lamented, the street bonfires, as there would be never a fagot left to burn the heretics. If it had been a Protestant chapel, the Puritans cried, the Jesuits would have called the calamity an omen of the speedy downfall of heresy. A Catholic writer replied "with a word of comfort," and pronounced the accident to be a presage of good fortune to Catholics, and of the overthrow of error and heresy. This zealous, but not well-informed writer compared Father Drury's death to that of Zuinglius, who fell in battle, and with that of Calvin, "who, being in despair, and calling upon the devil, gave up his wicked

soul, swearing, cursing, and blaspheming." So intolerance, we see, is neither specially Protestant nor Catholic, but of every party. "The fatal vespers," as that terrible day at Blackfriars was afterwards called, were long remembered with a shudder by Catholic England.

The Blackfriars Bridge, pulled down a few years since, was begun in 1760, made passable as a bridle-way in 1768, and first opened on Sunday, November the 19th, 1769. It was built from the design of Robert Mylne, a clever young Scotch engineer, whose family had been master-masons to the kings of Scotland for five hundred years. Mylne had just returned from a professional tour in Italy, where he had followed the footsteps of Vitruvius, and gained the first prize at the Academy of St. Luke, when he arrived in London friendless and unknown, and entered into competition with twenty other architects for the new bridge. Among these rivals was Smeaton, the great engineer, a protégé of Lord Bute's, and Doctor Johnson's friend Gwynn, well known for his admirable work on London improvements. The committee were, however, just enough to be unanimous in favouring the unknown young Scotchman, and he carried off the prize. Directly it was known that Mylne's arches were to be elliptical, every one unacquainted with the subject began to write in favour of the semicircular arch. Among the champions, Doctor Johnson was, if not the most ignorant, certainly the most rash. He wrote three letters to the printer of the *Gazetteer*, praising Gwynn's plans, and denouncing the Scotch conqueror. Gwynn had "coached" the learned doctor in a very unsatisfactory way. In his early days the giant of Bolt-court had been accustomed to get up subjects rapidly, but the science of architecture was not so easily digested. The doctor contended "that the first excellence of a bridge built for commerce over a large river is strength." So far so good, but he then went on to try and show that the pointed arch is necessarily weak; and here he himself broke down. He allowed that there was an elliptical bridge at Florence, but he said carts were not allowed to go over it, which proved its fragility. He also condemned a proposed cast-iron parapet, in imitation of one at Rome, as too poor and trifling for a great design. He allowed that a certain arch of Perrault's was elliptical, but then he contended that it had to be held together by iron clamps. He allowed that Mr. Mylne

had gained the prize at Rome, but the competitors, the arrogant despot of London clubs asserted, were only boys, and, moreover, architecture had sunk so low at Rome that even the Pantheon had been deformed by petty decorations. In his third letter the doctor grew more scientific, and even more confused. He was very angry with Mr. Mylne's friends for asserting that, though a semi-ellipsis might be weaker than a semicircle, it had quite strength enough to support a bridge. "I again venture to declare," he wrote—"I again venture to declare, in defiance of all this contemptuous superiority" (how arrogant men hate other people's arrogance!), "that a straight line will bear no weight; not even the science of Vasari can make that form strong which the laws of nature have condemned to weakness. By the position that a straight line will bear nothing is meant that it receives no strength from straightness; for that many bodies laid in straight lines will support weight by the cohesion of their parts every one has found who has seen dishes on a shelf, or a thief upon the gallows. It is not denied that stones may be so crushed together by enormous pressure on each side that a heavy mass may be safely laid upon them; but the strength must be derived merely from the lateral resistance, and the line so loaded will be itself part of the load. The semi-elliptical arch has one recommendation yet unexamined. We are told that it is difficult of execution."

In the face of this noisy newspaper thunder Mylne went on and produced one of the most beautiful bridges in England for one hundred and fifty-two thousand eight hundred and forty pounds, three shillings and tenpence, actually one hundred and sixty-three pounds less than the original estimate, an admirable example for all architects present and to come. The bridge, which had nine arches, and was nine hundred and ninety-five yards from wharf to wharf, was erected in ten years and three-quarters. Mylne received five hundred a year, and five per cent on the expenditure. His claims, however, were disputed, and not allowed by the grateful City till 1776. The bridge tolls were bought by government in 1785, and the passage then became free. It was afterwards lowered, and the open parapet condemned by Johnson removed. It was supposed that Mylne's mode of centering was a secret, but in contempt of all quackery he deposited exact models of his system in the British Museum. He

was afterwards made surveyor of St. Paul's Cathedral, and in 1811 was interred near the tomb of Wren. He was a despot among his workmen, and ruled them with a rod of iron. However, the foundations of this bridge were never safely built, and latterly the piers began visibly to subside. The semicircular arch, after all, would have been the stronger. So far the doctor was right.

The old monastic ground seems to have been beloved by painters, for, as we have seen, Vandyck lived luxuriously here, and was frequently visited by Charles the First and his court. Cornelius Jansen, the great portrait painter of James's court, arranged his black draperies, and ground his fine carnations in the same locality, and at the same time Isaac Oliver, the exquisite court miniature painter, dwelt in the same place. It was to him Lady Ayres, to the rage of her jealous husband, came for a portrait of Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, an imprudence that very nearly led to the assassination of the poet lord, who believed himself so specially favoured of Heaven.

Apothecaries' Hall, that grave brick and stone building in Water-lane, is too good a text to be dismissed in a paragraph, and we reserve it for special notice. The king's printing-office for proclamations, &c., used to be in Printing House-square, but was removed in 1770; and we must not forget that where a Norman fortress once rose to oppress the weak, to guard the spoils of robbers, and to protect the oppressor, the Times printing-office now stands, to diffuse its ceaseless floods of knowledge, to spread its resistless ægis over the poor and the oppressed, and ever to use its vast power to extend liberty and crush injustice, whatever shape the Proteus assumes, whether it sit upon a throne or lurks in a swindler's office.

GEOFFREY LUTTRELL'S NARRATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "IN THAT STATE OF LIFE," &c.

IN ELEVEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER III.

Two years passed. I was often at the Grange in Harry's holidays, and watched, with a keen interest, in which sorrow and bitterness were blent—sorrow which was prophetic for them, bitterness which was the selfish cry of my heart for joy that could never be mine—the progress of the old story. Harry, as he approached manhood, became more and more devoted to Assunta, and she, after her first struggle,

gave up her whole heart and soul to him. Of me she made a friend. She little guessed all I suffered; and spoke to me, more unreservedly than she did to any one else, as Harry's mentor, as one whom she implicitly trusted. She saw that her idol was but human: with brilliant gifts that might lead to his undoing, and set in the midst of many and great temptations. It is possible that had he been more godlike, she might have loved him less—such are the strange inconsistencies of the human heart. For of all the positions in which a high-souled girl can stand towards a man, that of his good angel is the one which attracts her most.

I have often wondered since that this growing love upon both sides, to which it seemed to me impossible that any one could be blind, should have created no alarm in the minds of Mr. and Mrs. Walbrooke. I can only account for it by supposing that natures, sunk in the slough of a cold conventionality, never dream of the force of a first real passion. It is called "a flirtation among the young people," and is regarded as the measles, or any other evil incident to youth, to be "got over" far better when young, than if the epidemic should be taken late in life. Moreover, Harry was at home but for a few weeks, twice a year, and as his comeliness, his prowess in all field sports, and his joviality, made him friends wherever he went, he had plenty of counter-attraction—or what might be supposed to be counter-attraction—in the county, to neutralise the effect of a pair of dark eyes at the Grange. It was thus, I doubt not, that Mr. Walbrooke thought upon the matter, if he troubled his mind at all about it. When Harry was about eighteen, however—he had then left Westminster a year, and was with a private tutor in Sussex—something must have aroused Mr. Walbrooke's long-slumbering prudence. He resolved that Harry, before going to Oxford, should travel for a year, and during that time I did not go to the Grange.

When I next visited it, some few months after the heir's return, and also after his first term at Oxford, I found Harry much changed, and not for the better, in all ways. He was, indeed, as affectionate towards me as ever, and Assunta's influence, far from having diminished by the year's absence, seemed to have increased. He had also grown into a very handsome man. But he was now impatient of his uncle's control—indeed, of any control but hers; and there was a recklessness, a dare-devilry about

him, at times, which made me apprehensive for the future. Still, whenever she was present, he rarely said or did anything which I regretted; but over our wine after dinner—and he often took more than was wise—he sometimes conducted himself in a way which annoyed Mr. Walbrooke extremely. Harry had imbibed abroad, or at Oxford, liberal opinions, which he more than once took this occasion to announce. It was in vain that his uncle coughed a stern Tory cough, and that I kicked him under the table; nothing would stop him. Then the presence of certain guests always disturbed his equanimity; notably that of one Mr. Ridgway, who was a constant visitor at the Grange during this period. I had seen this person before, but had never noticed him much. It is necessary, now, that I should describe him.

Theophilus Ridgway, of Hapsbury, was a man of mark in the county, I might almost say in England. He was pre-eminently "the man of taste" of his day; and Hapsbury was the culminating proof of it, which people who care for such things came long journeys to see. It was more like an Italian palace than an English country house, and was open to the charge of incongruity, with its statues, and fountains, and marble balustrades, in the midst of a bleak Lincolnshire park, where the sun seemed never to shine, if it could possibly avoid it. But the interior possessed miracles of art, collected by Mr. Ridgway in his travels, and the furniture and decorations were all faultless, each room in its particular style, no hopeless jumble of epochs, such as the dwellings of most bric-à-brac hunters exhibit: all that you saw here was genuine, and all (you were told) was in perfect harmony and "keeping;" only, somehow or other, the general effect left upon the mind was disastrously cold and comfortless. Hapsbury was more than twenty miles from the Grange, but we made an expedition there once, in a coach and four, when a party was staying with Mr. Walbrooke. There were Latin inscriptions, I remember, over doorways, upon marble slabs on the terrace, on summer-houses, and sun-dials—in every possible spot where they could entrap and confound the unlettered, and testify to the elegant classicality of the master of the place. He was, himself, not unlike one of those inscriptions: a marble man, highly polished, gilt-lettered, difficult to read. He had spent a great part of his life in Italy, as some averred, "under a cloud;" clouds,

however, being but intangible vapours drawn upwards from the earth, these were regarded by his partisans as the exhalations of a noxious calumny condensed in order to obscure an effulgent reputation. And among his partisans none was stronger than Mr. Walbrooke. That gentleman would never tolerate a word against his friend, and ceased to invite two neighbours who had let fall hints that there were passages in Ridgway's life which would not bear close examination.

All this I learnt upon the visit I am now describing. He was then a man of fifty, small, well-preserved, with a fine white skin, scarcely creased by age, delicate hands, and a mellifluous voice. His manner was as faultless as his dress, and everything else about him. It was the perfection of good-breeding. If I spoke, he paid as much attention to what the young artist said as to the words that fell from the greatest man at table. He listened with his eyes, he sympathised with his smile, he had always some apposite and graceful rejoinder. No doubt this flattered, and, in a measure, blinded me. Certain it is, that though there was something about the man which baffled me, something which made me doubt, I scarce know why, whether he had any heart, or any principle, I sided with those who thought him very agreeable. His conversation sparkled with anecdote, and occasionally with sarcasm, so sugared that the dull swallowed it unperceived. He indulged sometimes, it is true, in rather too many quotations and allusions to recondite matters which nine out of ten people could not understand; but, after all, it afforded an agreeable contrast to the eternal talk about hounds and horses which prevailed in that fox-hunting district. Mr. Ridgway, I fancy, had never been across a horse in his life. It will be understood that the sort of man I have described would be uncongenial to Harry. In point of fact, he never could tolerate what he termed "that d—d effeminate old prig," and his antipathy was now redoubled by a cause to which I shall come presently. Mr. Walbrooke, however, invited Mr. Ridgway none the less often to his house; indeed, it was remarked that "the man of taste" never had been so constantly at the Grange as during the last six months. And his extreme urbanity towards his friend's nephew made yet more apparent the younger man's rudeness to his uncle's guest.

Time had wrought only good upon

Assunta Fleming. In the world's eyes she was handsome: a tall, grand-looking creature. In mine, the development of her rare character was what I chiefly saw. Her influence in the household was great, and the love which all bore her was measured chiefly by their capacity for loving. Mr. Walbrooke's was circumscribed within certain reasonable limits; but, as far as his stiff nature would allow, he had a sincere regard for, and an earnest desire to befriend, the penniless foundling. Mrs. Walbrooke's was sentimental and shallow. Lena's was enthusiastic and thorough: she would have gone through fire and water for her friend; and yet Assunta, as I have reason to know, had the delicacy and true wisdom never to make a confidante of Harry's sister. She was fully conscious of her own position, and of his: she knew how unlikely it was that they could ever marry; but every hope of her life was bound up in him, and she could not cast it all from her. She was capable of any sacrifice; but she was scarcely twenty, and with an impassioned, devoted nature, it was asking much to expect in her the prudence to shun a peril which she was too clever not to foresee.

But the difficulties of her position were now complicated by what, to many young women, would have been a subject of triumph and unalloyed satisfaction. It had been confidently asserted that Mr. Ridgway, of Hapsbury, would never marry: that those great estates would pass away to some distant branch of the family: and that Mr. Ridgway himself had expressed perfect indifference as to who should succeed him. He had never been subjugated by the tender passion, and the requirements of the fastidious "man of taste" were such that no woman, it was supposed, could fulfil them. But it now became tolerably apparent to all of us that Miss Fleming had reached that hitherto unattainable eminence, whence it was just possible that she might be invited to step upon the throne of Hapsbury. Not that Mr. Ridgway could be said to be in love, or anything the least like it; but he admired the girl, as he would have admired any noble work of art, watched her, and listened to her, with all his critical faculties on the qui-vive, and smiled complacently, as though saying to himself: "There is no fault to be found. The picture is in keeping throughout. It is the only thing, the finishing touch, which Hapsbury wants to make it complete."

It was no less evident to me, when I heard our host pressing Mr. Ridgway to return to the Grange, and saw, by what contrivances Assunta was constantly thrown in his way, that Mr. Walbrooke was bent upon bringing this marriage about, if it were possible. Hitherto the girls had dined early; now, Lena being sixteen, it was decreed that, henceforward, she and Miss Fleming should appear at the late dinner; and it was generally contrived that Assunta's place should be next to Mr. Ridgway. On one occasion I remember Mrs. Walbrooke's asking Assunta to drive for her into the neighbouring town upon some errand, and then, after having disposed of Lena in another way, suggesting, at the last moment, as though the thought had just struck her, that Mr. Ridgway should accompany Miss Fleming in her drive, and then they "might go and see the old church together." Such little plots were of daily occurrence during his several visits. Was Assunta a dupe of them? or was she so entirely absorbed by Harry, that the thought of Mr. Ridgway, as a suitor, never crossed her mind? I could not tell. One thing, however, was certain; she gave her middle-aged admirer no encouragement. She did not dislike him; she heard his conversation with a certain acknowledgment of its merit; she was willing to be instructed about art, and she smiled at his polished witticisms; but it seemed to be very like reading a book, which, while one admits it to be replete with information, and in point of style admirable, lacks all strong power of interest.

It maddened Harry to look on all this. His animosity against Mr. Ridgway reached its culminating point one evening, when he lost his temper in the most unwarrantable manner. There were several guests in the house; and when we men entered the drawing-room after dinner, Assunta was sitting alone, at a distant table, looking over a portfolio of drawings which had arrived that day. Harry at once drew a chair before her, and sat down, so as completely to block the passage to and from the corner where she was. Mr. Ridgway, who had been separated from her during dinner, would have approached, I saw, but could not. I was standing, sipping my coffee, and, as he retired, I chanced to be in his way: he stopped.

"Your artist's eye must be struck by the effect of Miss Fleming's coiffure to-night. That coronet of hair is wonderfully becoming. I never saw her look so handsome."

"I have seen her dressed so, very often," said I, rather curtly; for I was unreasonable enough to dislike hearing him praise her.

"Well, I have not become blasé on it yet," he replied, with a smile; "and I confess I could hardly take my eyes off her at dinner, as she sat opposite me. Like Dante,

—gli occhi su levai,
E vidi lei che si faceva corona."

Here Mr. Walbrooke, who had been fidgetting about for some minutes, and glancing continually in Harry's direction, called out:

"Let us have a rubber. Harry, come and take a hand, sir. Here are Lord George and Mr. Wilmot ready, and Mrs. Wilmot or your aunt will make the fourth."

"They must excuse me, sir. I never play at whist now," said Harry, without rising.

"Never play at whist? Nonsense! Why, I was afraid you did very little else of an evening at Oxford."

"You said you disapproved of it, so I've given it up; at all events, during the long vacation."

"Nonsense! Come, get up at once. You know very well my advice did not apply to a quiet game at home."

"Mr. Henry Walbrooke's charming deference to his uncle's wishes is really touching," murmured Mr. Ridgway to me. "But even virtue may be carried to extreme—eh? You remember what Horace says?

Dum vitant stulti vitium, in contraria currunt."

"You don't think Harry a fool, Mr. Ridgway?" I asked.

He shrugged his shoulders with a bland smile. "Not more than other florid young Nimrods. They all become brutalised. They all get, more or less, like their horses and hounds. I dare say Nature gave this young gentleman some brains, but, you see, as Sir Guyon says in the Fairy Queen,

—now he chooseth, with vile difference,
To be a beast, and lacke intelligence."

In the mean time, uncle and nephew were still jangling.

"I'm not fit to play, sir. I'm not, indeed. I got a bad cropper to-day, and am horribly stiff."

"There is no more exertion in sitting before a whist-table than before a work-table," said Mr. Walbrooke, with some little asperity.

"My head feels bothered. I'm too dull to play to-night," rejoined Harry.

"Then you had better not inflict your dulness on Miss Fleming."

"That he will not do, Mr. Walbrooke," said Assunta, with a smile, which I saw covered some uneasiness. "If Harry is too tired to play, I will take a hand—that is, if any one will accept so bad a partner."

This, of course, had its desired effect. Harry rose, with a bad grace, and limped across the room to where the whist-table stood. While they cut in for partners, Mr. Ridgway, with that perfect breeding which venerated all his actions, waited a minute or two, and then, without indecorous hurry, glided towards the seat left vacant by Harry, and slid into it. The latter looked as if he would have liked to kick the performer of this very simple act; and I am sure no amount of stiffness would have prevented him, had he had a fair excuse.

"You will certainly break your neck some day, if you ride in this desperate way," said his uncle, whose serenity being now restored had leisure to think of his nephew's limbs. "I wish you would be more careful."

"Perhaps you would like me to walk round the garden in galoshes and a fur coat?" retorted Harry. The allusion was too pointed to be missed by any one who heard the words, and I felt confident that Mr. Ridgway's sharp ears caught them. But Harry was in that state of irritation which made him perfectly callous to the effect his intemperate speech might produce, and he continued: "Every fellow who rides runs some risks. I'd rather live the life of a man, and die like one, than be dried up into a whitened fungus—something that is not a man, nor a woman either."

Mr. Walbrooke frowned, and his lips twitched angrily: he turned away. Assunta coloured up to the roots of her hair. Mr. Ridgway, without betraying that he had heard a word, leaned across the table and said, with a bland smile:

"So you are a card-player, Miss Fleming? Do you know that I possess the first pack of cards, said to have been invented to amuse poor Charles the Sixth? If it is true, the world is under a heavy debt of gratitude to that despised monarch for having contributed to relieve its ennui for upwards of four hundred years."

"Have they not always done more to destroy happiness than to increase it?" suggested Assunta, who, from her uneasy glances towards the whist-table, I saw was

lending but a divided attention to the "man of taste's" remarks.

"A fool who is bent on self-destruction will not require cards, Miss Fleming," was his reply. "He will do so by his tongue, by his palate, no matter how—*tous les chemins mènent à Rome.*"

The covert sarcasm, contrasting with Harry's violent breach of good manners, told with double effect. I saw Assunta wince. Like a clever tactician as he was, Mr. Ridgway pursued his advantage no further. He ignored his youthful rival from that moment, and began discussing the drawings that lay on the table before him. There was not a place of which he had not some anecdote, some apt quotation in connexion with the scene, or some little-known piece of information, gathered in the by-paths of literature, which he had scoured, and the herbarium of which was carefully dried in his memory. Assunta felt much impressed by his cleverness, though she did not hear above one-half of what he said.

The evening at last came to an end. She had no opportunity of speaking privately to Harry (the whist only broke up after the ladies had left the room); but, as I handed her a candle, she whispered:

"Will you talk to him, Mr. Luttrell? He is so intemperate, I dread what he may say or do next. Tell him how miserable he has made me this evening, will you?"

The squire, it was evident, had not got over Harry's last speech. I was not surprised to hear him tell his nephew that he wished to speak to him in Mr. Walbrooke's dressing-room.

"Come to me afterwards, Harry," I said.

And three-quarters of an hour later he entered my room. I saw that something was seriously amiss. He was very pale; and his mouth had a hard-clenched look, which I had rarely seen it wear. He said nothing, but took out his pipe and lit it. I waited for him to begin, but in vain. At last I broke the ground with, "Well, Harry, what passed between you and your uncle? He has been blowing you up, for behaving as you did to-night, I suppose? And really, I must say, your conduct——"

"Now, dear old boy, don't you begin, for I can't stand it. I'm down enough in the mouth as it is. Confound my tongue! I believe it would have been all square if I hadn't spoken."

"Why, what did you say? What has happened?"

"I've had a row—and the long and short of it is, I'm off to-morrow morning."

"Off to-morrow! Where to? I thought the Oxford term didn't begin for another ten days?"

"It does not; but I'm to go to my aunt, Lady Horton's. My uncle says that as I choose to insult old Ridgway, who is to be here a week more, I must go."

I was amazed. I knew that Mr. Walbrooke's obstinacy was capable of making him sacrifice much to the furtherance of any scheme he had taken up; but I had never conceived it possible that it would carry him the length of turning Harry out of doors. I had not taken into account that two ends were to be gained by so doing. After a pause, Harry went on, as he drew a long puff at his pipe, and stared gloomily at the fire.

"But that isn't all—that isn't the worst, Geoff."

"What do you mean? I wish you would tell me distinctly what passed from the beginning, instead of letting it out in dribblets."

"Well, then, this is how it was. He began by saying that my manner had been most offensive to Ridgway ever since he came into the house—that he was a friend of his, and a most distinguished man; and as he hoped to see him very often here, I was to understand that he insisted on his guest being treated with proper respect. I replied that I couldn't respect a fellow like that; but owned I had been wrong in saying what I had, and I promised not to repeat the offence. Then my uncle went on to say that the way in which I tried to monopolise Assunta's society had given rise to remarks, and he could tolerate it no longer. It was all very well when I was a boy—this hanging about her—but now, if continued, it would occasion all sorts of slanderous surmises, and would do her a great injury. Fancy that, Geoff! I think I could have restrained my tongue, if he hadn't said that. I had vowed to myself that her name shouldn't pass my lips; but when I heard those words the blood rushed to my brain—and I didn't know what I was doing—I was mad for the minute, or I shouldn't have said what I did. I told him the world would soon know the truth; I loved her better than anything on earth, and only waited to be of age to ask her to share whatever I had. 'And that is simply *nothing*,' said my uncle. 'Of course,' I replied, 'I am aware that if you refuse to let us marry, we must wait—and we *will* wait.' He grew very red, and walked up and

down the room. 'You will wait?' he repeated. 'What for, pray? For my death, to inherit this property? Don't make so sure of that; I have hitherto treated you as my heir, but I need not leave you one farthing, if I do not choose; and I certainly should not do so, if I thought it was likely you would marry in direct opposition to my wishes.' I asked him what fault he could find in Assunta? 'Haven't I heard you say constantly you didn't know another girl to compare with her?' 'That's very true,' he said, 'and I have the greatest regard for Miss Fleming, but I don't choose my heir to marry a foundling; and I should cut you off if you did so.' 'Then you may keep your confounded money,' I cried; 'for I'd sooner never touch a farthing of it than give her up!' I know what she and you will say, Geoff. I was a fool, and I knew it, as soon as the words were out of my mouth; but I couldn't help it. My uncle turned coldly away, and for a few minutes he remained silent. At last he said, 'You are a very foolish boy, and ungrateful, too, after all I have done for you. However, I am not going to quarrel with you for a few hasty words; only, I think, after the way in which you have chosen to conduct yourself towards my guest, and now towards me, your remaining here just at present is undesirable. Lady Horton has often asked you to go there when you like. You had better go to-morrow, for the few days before you have to be at Oxford.' I felt stunned, Geoff. Turned out of the house! having to leave Assunta in this way! I couldn't speak for a bit. My blood was cool by this time, and I saw what I had done. There was nothing for it but to beg my uncle to forgive me, and not to send me away. I told him, what was very true, that I was ashamed of having spoken to him as I had done; that I was not ungrateful—that I loved him for all his kindness to me ever since I was a child, and not for the sake of his money; but that, unfortunately, I hadn't always command over my tongue, and said things, when irritated, which I deeply regretted after. But I promised faithfully that this should not occur again, either as regarded Ridgway or himself, if he would not send me away. But he was inexorable. He kept repeating, with that quiet obstinacy of his, that he thought it much better I should go—and, in short, go I must, Geoff!"

"I am very sorry, dear old fellow, but, after all, it might be worse. Though your uncle is obstinate, he has behaved with great forbearance, in treating you

speech as an ebullition of boyish folly. But do take the lesson to heart. You aggrieved Assunta beyond measure to-night. You are proud of your physical prowess, Harry, but what is a man worth who has no self-control?"

"Nothing! I know it," he sighed. "But somehow or other that fellow Ridgway acts upon me as a red rag does on a bull—his white hands, and his quotations, and his confounded civility! And now, you see, Geoff, the brute is making up to Assunta! Suppose"—he stopped and knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and looked at me straight in the face—"suppose, when I'm gone, that the fellow's cleverness gets round her? Suppose she draws comparisons between us?"

"You need fear no comparisons," said I; and the pang that shot through me was audible in a sigh. "Nothing can ever displace you in Assunta's heart. Your only anxiety now, Harry, should be to cause her no pain, to make yourself more worthy of her. Patience and courage, and all will come right. Only remember, the last way to mollify your uncle is to take the tone with him you have done to-night."

"What am I to do, Geoff? Pretend to give in to my uncle? Not go near my darling when I'm here? I can't do that. I can't be a humbug. She shall be my wife, or no other woman shall. Nothing shall make me go back from that. God knows I love her better than anything on earth, Geoff, and I'll die before I give her up."

He leaned his head between his hands, and by the movement of his shoulders I knew he was more agitated than he liked me to see. The old butler had brought to my room a tray with brandy and seltzer-water, by Harry's orders. Presently he raised his head, and, pouring out nearly half a tumbler of brandy, drank it off pure.

"Old boy," I said, gently, "don't get into the habit of having recourse to that whenever you are in trouble. You won't find the bottle a good friend, but a terribly extortionate one, who demands more and more for every drop of temporary comfort he administers."

I believe he scarcely heard me. All words that were not on one subject were wasted at that moment. The stimulant seemed to have no other effect than that of calming him. He said, in a minute or two, "I must see her alone, Geoff, to-morrow,

before I go. Give me a pen and ink, and I'll slip a piece of paper under her door as I pass."

I pushed the blotting-book across the table to him, and he wrote a few lines.

"You'll write to me, Geoff?" he said, as he wished me good-night. "You'll tell me truly all that goes on, won't you?"

"I will; but when you are gone, perhaps Mr. Walbrooke may not care for me to remain."

The next morning, at breakfast, I knew at once, by Assunta's marble stillness, that she and Harry had met, and that she knew all. There was no uneasiness, no anxiety, such as she had evinced the night before; it was the calmness of misery, that has little or no hope. Mr. Walbrooke announced, in a little set formula, that his nephew had received a letter which called him suddenly to his aunt, Lady Horton's. Harry himself said little. Mrs. Walbrooke sent a message to Lady Horton about a particular shop where to get floss silks. Whereupon Mr. Ridgway, who was in unusually brilliant spirits, entered into a dissertation upon embroidery from the earliest ages, described what the "vesture of gold, wrought about with divers colours" was probably like, which the king's daughter of Scripture wore, and thence, by a natural progression, got to that royal piece of work, the Bayeux tapestry. Harry bore it all with exemplary fortitude; perhaps because he was too down-hearted, poor fellow, to be irritable. Then, after breakfast, the dog-cart, with his portmanteau in it, came round to the door, and he bade us good-bye. To take leave of what one loves best, when it is necessary to repress any exhibition of feeling, must always be trying, doubly so at Harry's age, and to one of his temperament. But both he and Assunta went through it bravely. I saw it cost him an effort to shake Ridgway's hand, but he did it; and then, embracing Lena and his aunt, he jumped into the cart, and drove off to meet the "stage," which passed some six miles from the Grange.

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CASTAWAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN PORT," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER VIII. THE NEWSPAPER PARAGRAPH.

THE discovery which Madge Pierrepont had made—that Gerald Hardinge, who had been so madly in love with her, and George Heriot, Sir Geoffrey's discarded son, were one and the same man—not merely rendered her more than ever desirous of effecting a reconciliation between parent and child, but sent her thoughts wandering back to those old times, from dwelling on which she had hitherto successfully tried to preserve them.

In her reminiscences of the time passed at Wexeter Philip Vane played no conspicuous part. On her first arrival at Springside, Madge had been accustomed to think of her husband with feelings of horror for his misdeeds, and of affright lest he should again appear before her. As time wore on she made acquaintances in the new place of her sojourn, and busied herself in their society and in her employment, so that her opportunities for self-communion were few, and when her mind turned upon Philip Vane she found herself thinking of him as of a nightmare under which she had once suffered, and the influence of which had not entirely passed away.

But now, when any such leisure moments as she could steal for herself (and they were but few, for with her return Sir Geoffrey had resumed his old habits, and was eager as ever for her companionship), she sat musing over her life in Miss Cave's lodgings. Only one thought in connexion with Philip Vane crossed her mind, and that was one of pity for any woman whom

he might have married. For he must have married again; she had little doubt of that; he had hinted as much in their last interview. Well, what was that to her? The idea did not cause her the smallest emotion of any kind. So that Philip Vane kept clear of her, nothing that he did could have the slightest influence upon her, and she dismissed him from her thoughts as though he had never been.

But Gerald? The sight of the sketch, and its association with the scene which he had painted, had brought about a recurrence of those feelings with which she used to regard him, softened and purified, perhaps, although, in good truth, there was little need for it, by time. She loved to think of him, bright and high-spirited, taking his work as though it were a pleasure, and ever ready to break off to do her some slight service, to give a drawing lesson to Rose. Gerald's honour had been a constant subject of laudatory talk, not unmixed with astonishment, to his impecunious and somewhat shifty companions. Poor as he was, he had never been known to borrow a farthing, and generally managed to help those whose need was greater than his own. So tenacious was he of his self-respect, that it was with great difficulty he was ever induced to enter a public-house. Clever, brave—Madge remembered how, on the occasion of a picnic, he had jumped into a lock on the Wex, and saved the life of a child which had fallen overboard from the boat—handsome and energetic, he had all the qualities which parents were usually so proud to see in their children. What could have caused this severance between Sir Geoffrey and his son? It must have been a bitter quarrel, and one which Madge thought, as she scrutinised the old man's features, and marked the hard look in his

eyes and the severe lines round his mouth, one which would be hard to heal.

When she at first heard of the state of affairs from the sufficiently reticent Captain Cleethorpe, she had determined upon doing her best to effect this reconciliation, but she hesitated now. Would it not be thought, when it came to be discovered—as it would, as it must—that she and Sir Geoffrey's son were old acquaintances, that her motives were more than open to a suspicion of selfishness, and that her exertions had really been made for the purpose of bringing her old lover back to her feet? Would Gerald not think so himself? He was generous, she knew, but she also knew that he was rash and impulsive, and, from the glimpse of his behaviour at the mention of her name, which Bess's letter had afforded her, she imagined that he still remembered her abrupt desertion of him with bitterness. Moreover, the mere fact of there having been any previous acquaintance between them would render it doubly hard to deal with Sir Geoffrey, who, notwithstanding his undoubted regard for her, was as wrong-headed and as likely to jump at false conclusions as any of his neighbours.

It seemed as though she were destined to be self-reliant and self-contained through life. At each crisis of her career (and there had been times when, on the steps then taken, her whole future rested), she had always had to depend upon her own judgment, and in this last strait there was no one to whom she could apply for counsel.

Captain Cleethorpe, always kind, always gentlemanly, and desirous of advancing her interests, was nevertheless unpractical and rather slow of comprehension. Mr. Drege, with the influence he had recently acquired over Sir Geoffrey, would be the best man to aid her in her purpose, but he would then think that on the former occasion of her confidence with him, she had only told him half her story; nor did she believe that he, good man though he was, would be particularly anxious to aid in introducing into the family circle at Wheatoft a young man, who had once been passionately devoted to the lady then acting as housekeeper there.

And that comprised her list of trustworthy friends; she had numerous acquaintances, pleasant people enough in their way, wishing her well, kind and neighbourly in their behaviour towards her, but not people whom she could consult in any

matter of business, much less intrust with an important secret such as this. Madge felt that, in any other matter, Sir Geoffrey himself would have been the best person to appeal to, and, indeed, at one time she had made up her mind to speak out and tell him frankly of the discovery which she had made by means of the sketch, and of the circumstances under which in earlier life she had met with his discarded son. Who but she could bear witness to Gerald's honour and uprightness, to his industry and kindness, to the patient long-suffering with which he kept the secret of his altered position, and the cheerfulness with which he earned his hard living in the comparatively humble sphere to which, by the quarrel with his father, he had been relegated? But, on further thought, Madge determined to alter her plan of action, and resolved to sound Sir Geoffrey before taking any definite steps.

An opportunity for so doing came unexpectedly. One morning Captain Cleethorpe arrived at Wheatoft earlier than his wont. There were few days on which the captain failed to put in an appearance for a chat with Sir Geoffrey, generally bringing with him the latest gossip from the club, or some Indian journal with news of persons or places known to the old general. But on this occasion, the breakfast things were still on the table when the captain was seen cantering up the avenue. Ordinarily, if his first inquiry were not for Mrs. Pickering, he invariably took an opportunity of seeing her on his way to Sir Geoffrey's sanctum; but on this particular morning, though the door of her room was open, Captain Cleethorpe merely nodded to her kindly but hurriedly, and passed on to the library. In the passing glance which she thus had of him, Madge noticed that there was a worn and anxious look in his face, and that his manner was preoccupied. Sir Geoffrey speedily joined the captain, and they were closeted together for about an hour. In the conversation carried on between them, their voices ran high, and although no words could be distinguished, it was evident that some matter of moment was under discussion. Madge, who had been rather frightened at these outward signs of a storm, was pleased, when the discussion was at an end, and the two gentlemen emerged from the study, to see them shake hands in their usual friendly way at the hall-door; but Captain Cleethorpe's countenance still wore a distressed look, while Sir Geoffrey was flushed and agitated.

When the door was closed, and Captain Cleethorpe had ridden away, the general turned back into the house, and asked Madge to send him a glass of wine. There was something in her look which caused him to say:

"You are surprised at such a request from me, Mrs. Pickering, and with good reason, seeing how utterly unused I am to touch anything before tiffin? But the fact is, I have been rather upset by the news which Cleethorpe brought me, and the conversation which it led up to."

"No bad news concerning yourself, I hope, Sir Geoffry?" asked Madge, who was burning with curiosity to know what had occurred; having a faint idea that Captain Cleethorpe's visit might have had some connexion with Gerald.

"No, not in the least, neither concerning me nor you, Mrs. Pickering; so for the matter of that I don't see why I need have taken any interest in it. The fact is, that Captain Cleethorpe, who is the best-hearted fellow in the world, has come to me about his servant Cooke, whom you may recollect."

"I have seen him, I think. He has been with Captain Cleethorpe some time?"

"Certainly; came with him out of the regiment; tall, red-haired, well set-up man, most respectable in his position of life. This Cooke has a son, who is an office-lad with Drew and Dean, solicitors in the town, and it appears that of late he has fallen into bad company, neglected his duties, and was yesterday detected in some petty embezzlement."

"How dreadful for his father!" said Madge, involuntarily.

"Exactly," said Sir Geoffry, bitterly; "that's just what I said to Captain Cleethorpe. He came here in a highly nervous state, as you must have noticed, to try and enlist my sympathies for the youth. Drew and Dean are, it appears, agents for my London solicitor, and Captain Cleethorpe had a notion that, if I were to plead with them for the boy, they might be induced to forego the prosecution upon which at present they have decided."

"And did you consent to plead for the boy, Sir Geoffry?"

"Most positively and decidedly not," said the old man, promptly. "The youth has committed a crime, let him take the consequence of it. Yes. I see you look horrified; I have no doubt it is very wrong, and I feel certain that if Mr. Drage were here, that he would endeavour to show

me, &c. &c. But in matters of this kind, there is a touch of the pagan in me, and I hold to my text."

"But for the sake of the poor father?"

"Ah, there your woman's wit divines what Cleethorpe had not the sharpness to perceive; for the sake of the father many persons might be induced to act as Cleethorpe asked, which is no more nor less than of 'doing evil that good may come of it,' but I say no. This man's life has been for the last dozen years a hard struggle, during which he has had to deny himself not merely the comforts, but almost the necessaries of life, for the sake of rearing in respectability this boy, in the vain hope that he should find a comfort in him in his age. This hope is now blighted, but at the same time the fallacy is put an end to; the boy must expiate his crime; the man must cauterise the wound which has been made in his heart, and must place his affections on something else."

"Are you quite able to judge in such a matter, Sir Geoffry?" asked Madge, looking at him earnestly. "Recollect the relations between the two; recollect that you are recommending a father to sit in judgment on his son. If you were in that poor man's place, could you—would you, do the same?"

"If I were in that man's place, I could, and I would," said Sir Geoffry, firmly.

And Madge knew her employer sufficiently well to be certain that any attempt to plead Gerald Hardinge's cause, or any proposition for a reconciliation between him and his father, would be at that time ineffectual. Moreover, within a very short time of Captain Cleethorpe's memorable visit to Wheatcroft, an event occurred which gave Madge but little time to devote to other people's troubles, and induced her to concentrate all her thoughts and energies on a subject with which, as she imagined, her happiness was intimately concerned.

As has previously been stated, it was Madge's practice to read aloud to Sir Geoffry on such evenings as he did not go to the club, or entertain friends at dinner, passages from books and journals with which Wheatcroft was always liberally supplied. The old general had had little time for reading in his youth, and the works of those authors who had come into vogue while he was in India were perfectly fresh to him, and from many of them he received great delight. For home politics, for what was passing in the great world of London, he cared very little; but he was always

keenly alive to anything bearing on the service in which his life had been passed, and to all news from India. Sir Geoffrey had very little sense of humour, and his favourite journals were remarkable for the copiousness of their information rather than for their wit; but probably nothing in the world had ever caused the general so much amusement, as to listen to Madge's reckless pronouncement of the Hindostanee words and Indian proper names with which her reading was studded. A hearty laugh during the whole course of his life had been almost unknown to him, and he was far too well-bred to let any woman, whatever might be her position, have an idea that she was exposing herself to ridicule; but he suffered a martyrdom in repressing his smiles, more especially when Madge, trying, in order to please him, to get up a fictitious interest in the budget through which she was wading, would ask the meaning of some of the words which she had so abominably mispronounced.

One evening, Sir Geoffrey, who had experienced rather an extra amount of enjoyment from Madge's mistakes, hearing her voice suddenly break and stop, looked up, and was surprised to find that she had fallen back in her chair while still tightly clutching the newspaper which she had been reading. The old general jumped to his feet and hurried across the room, intending to summon assistance; but before he could reach the bell, Mrs. Pickering had sufficiently recovered to sit up, and to beg him in a low tone to take no further notice of her indisposition, which had almost passed away.

"Passed away!" echoed the general, taking Mrs. Pickering's hand kindly between his own; "an attack like that, under which you completely collapsed for a moment, does not pass away so quickly. I am afraid you have been over-exerting yourself, my dear Mrs. Pickering, and that I have been over-exacting in my demands on your strength."

She said, "No," that it was nothing beyond a little faintness, which might have been caused by the heat of the room. She had not been well for the last few days; but she was perfectly ready to go on reading.

This, however, Sir Geoffrey would not hear of. He strongly recommended Mrs. Pickering to take a pint of champagne before going to bed; she was a little low, and wanted picking up, and for that, in his experience both in England and in India,

there was nothing like champagne. She would not? Well, she knew best, but that was his prescription, at all events. She should certainly knock off reading for the night, and he would advise her to get to bed as soon as possible. He wished her good-night, and trusted she would not attempt to rise unless she felt herself perfectly recovered the next morning.

"Very extraordinary woman that," said the old general, as he closed the door behind her; "never seems to me to eat anything, and drinks as little as though she were a Scotch griff, determined to outlast all his colleagues. It is perfectly plain to me that she wants more nourishment. I must get Budd to prescribe stimulants for her; perhaps if they are ordered by him, she may be induced to take them. By the way, what was that very interesting paragraph she was reading when she was taken ill?" pursued Sir Geoffrey, picking up the fallen newspaper, and looking at it through his double glass. "Something about exchanges, I think—no, no, this was it," and he read the following paragraph:

"We understand that Mrs. Bendixen, widow of Andreas Bendixen, Esq., late senior partner in the well-known firm of Bendixen, Bishchoffsheim, and Kaulbach, of Calcutta and Shanghai, is about to be married to Philip Vane, Esq., formerly in the army, but well known of late in the City in connexion with several successful financiering operations. The marriage will take place at the beginning of next month. Our Indian readers will not need to be reminded of the vast wealth amassed by Mr. Bendixen, a large portion of which was bequeathed to his widow."

"Bendixen," muttered the general to himself; "I recollect him in Calcutta: a man of my own age, I should think. I didn't know his wife; I suppose he married after he came home. Vane, Vane? Can't be the little man with red hair that was in the Twenty-sixth? No, his name was Tom, and he died of sunstroke. Philip Vane, known in the City? I wonder if old Sam Irving knows anything about him?" Then the general sat down and tried to continue the perusal of the papers, but he soon found himself dropping to sleep; and after a good deal of nodding and starting, he yielded the point and went off to bed.

About an hour afterwards, when perfect quiet reigned throughout the house, Madge Pierrepont opened the door of her bedroom, stole quietly down the staircase into

the library, and possessed herself of the newspaper, with which she returned in the same stealthy manner. Once in her own room again, she lighted a candle, threw a heavy cloak on the floor along the door, so that no chance rays might penetrate to the landing, and, wrapping her dressing-gown around her, sat down to read.

So she was right in her supposition that her sudden illness had not deceived her, but had itself been caused by what she had read. There it was plainly visible before her burning eyes. "Philip Vane, formerly of the army;" there could be no doubt about it. He must have either a high opinion of her powers of endurance, or an utter contempt for her, when he could sanction the insertion of such a paragraph! She could understand the announcement well enough when the ceremony had been performed, and the whole thing settled; but to have it bruited about beforehand, when there was a chance of interference, was very unlike Philip Vane's usual discretion. Ah, she had forgotten—she, the only one woman, except the bride, interested in the intended marriage, was also the only person acquainted with the fact—a revelation of which would render the marriage impossible, and her antagonism was apparently despised. Let Philip Vane have a care; for if he were about to take this step reliant on her tolerance, or defiant of her opposition, most assuredly he had miscalculated the depths of her resentment. "Well known for his success in the City," the newspaper said; he was prosperous then in every way; she did not grudge him that kind of success, but was he to marry again, glorying in his crime and announcing the value of the conquest he had made in a vulgar, vaunting paragraph, while she was to lead a solitary, celibate life, supported by her own labour, and denying herself the rest, support, and devotion which in two instances at least had been proffered to her?

He should not be suffered to carry on matters thus, with a high hand, without her making some attempt to check him, that she was determined. Accustomed as she had been for a long time to think she had schooled herself to disregard anything appertaining to Philip Vane, she was astonished to find how much and how strongly this intelligence had affected her. The old defiant spirit which at one time had been in the habit of obtaining occasional dominion over her, seemed once more aroused, and she felt that it would be impossible for her to

submit herself quietly to the insult thus brought under her notice. Moreover, it was her duty to prevent this woman, whoever she might be, from being thus sacrificed. Not that there was much fear that Philip Vane would desert a wife who brought to him riches and position, but she at least ought to be warned of what manner of man it was that sought her hand, and of the impossibility of his legally fulfilling his contract. Yes, she would act, and act at once. The thought of the calm, contemptuous manner in which her existence had been ignored by Philip Vane rendered her far more incensed against him than she was at the time of his heartless desertion of her, and nerved her to the resolution of showing him that, though up to a certain point she had accepted the terms imposed upon her, by supporting herself quietly, and leading uncomplainingly a solitary life, there was yet a measure of outrage which she would not brook.

What steps should she take? She must have advice on this point, and fortunately she was enabled to command it. Mr. Drage was acquainted with the fact of her former marriage, and to him she would appeal, telling him what news she had so strangely heard, and asking his advice as to what would be the best course for her to pursue. Thinking it over further, she admitted to herself that Mr. Drage's counsel was only required on a lesser point. That she would make some move in the matter, that she would assert herself, and not merely threaten, but carry out her vengeance if this marriage were proceeded with, she had determined. Anything that Mr. Drage might say in opposition to this decision, and she had some idea that he might be opposed to it, would be in vain; all she wanted of him was advice as to the best steps for her to take. Thus firmly resolved, Madge fell asleep and dreamed a pleasant dream, in which Philip Vane, who had gone into the church, was painting a large picture, the central figures in which were Gerald Hardinge and an Indian lady, quite black, whom he had recently married.

The next morning Mr. Drage was in his study, looking through some notes for a sermon which he intended to write, when Mrs. Pickering was announced. It was not unusual for Madge to call at the rectory to spend an hour with little Bertha, when her duties took her into the town; but Mr. Drage never saw her unexpectedly, or even heard her name mentioned, without

signs of painful embarrassment. Accordingly, he advanced with flushing cheeks to greet his visitor.

"This is very kind of you, Mrs. Pickering," said he, with outstretched hand; "you never forget your old charge; I am sure she will be delighted to see you."

"I have not come to see her this morning, Mr. Drage; my visit is entirely to you."

"To me?"

"Yes, you, and you alone of all people in the world, can give me the advice which I require."

This exordium was anything but calculated to allay the rector's perturbation.

"You recollect a conversation which we had some time since, Mr. Drage, a confession which I made to you?"

Mr. Drage bowed in acquiescence.

"Last night I received information by the merest accident, through the medium of a newspaper paragraph, that my husband——"

"Was dead!" cried Mr. Drage, bending cagerly forward.

"Was going to be married again!" said Madge Pierrepont.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

A COLONEL OF PANDOURS.

To accurately compare the Prussian officers of Frederick the Great's time with their more polished, but equally brave descendants, we must turn to those wild days of fighting when Turkish sabres were always flashing over the Bosnian frontier, and when the irregular bands which Austria sent against the turbaned infidels included men of such chivalrous and desperate hardihood as the colonel of Pandours, a hero of the Seven Years' War, whose life-size portrait we shall here attempt to place before our readers' eyes.

Francis Trenck (a cousin of the celebrated prison breaker), born at Reggio, in Calabria, in 1711, was the son of a Prussian gentleman, whose ancestors had been for ages lords of the great and little Scharlaken and Schahanlaken. His mother was of the Kettern family, and descended from the ducal house of Courland. Trenck began early to display that fearlessness and gasconading courage that ever afterwards distinguished him, for at four years old he wounded himself with one of his father's pistols, and at five robbed some market women, whom he had at first frightened by flourishing a hanger. At seven he

accompanied his father through a whole campaign, which ended with the battle of Peterwardin, where his sire received two dangerous wounds from the Turkish sabrea. Not long after, the young fire-eater was present at the battle of Milazzo, in Sicily, where his father was twice shot through the calf of the leg. Swords having been the young soldier's playthings, it was not unnatural that, in that same year, young Trenck fought his two brothers, who were jealous of his progress in Latin syntax, and wounding one, put the other to flight.

In the year 1725, soon after the appointment of the elder Trenck to the governorship of the castle of Brodt, a fortress on the river Save, the border line of Slavonia, Trenck's brother was thrown from a coach and killed, and he himself was all but lost in the ice while duck-shooting. In 1727, the young Prussian launched into life, the Hungarian Palatine, Count Nicholas Palf, presenting him with a pair of colours in his own regiment, but, after a time, the young man retired to Pastorat, a Slavonian estate, bought for him by his father, and lived there tolerably tranquilly as a country squire till the year 1734. In July of that year, Trenck set out with a retinue of twenty dashing Pandour tenants (the roads being infested with highwaymen), to go and buy hunters at a fair at Nassiza. Here, two of his tenants having their horses stolen, Trenck in a fury started two of his hard-spurring, rough-and-ready followers to overtake the thieves. The Pandours seized the rascal, and, in an attempt at rescue, shot a ringleader of the robber village. The magistrate of Nassiza, instead of punishing the horse-stealer, angrily demanded the surrender of the Pandour who had killed the robber. Trenck refusing, the magistrate immediately ordered forty of his own Pandours to carry him off by force, a command which Trenck promptly met, by enjoining his twenty troopers not to let the rogue out of their hands alive. The forty Pandours were rough people, and they instantly fired at ten paces, killing Trenck's harambascha, or captain, dead on the spot, and grazing Trenck's ear. Trenck and his nineteen men instantly darted off to Esceck and demanded satisfaction. But the staff auditor there being Trenck's bitter enemy, at once put him into arrest, and condemned him to pay seventeen hundred florins for fine and law charges, his Pandour who killed the refractory countryman being condemned to seven years' hard labour

at the fortifications. The vexation of this brought on the yellow jaundice, and Trenck would have died had not Count Kevenhuller, the commandant of Esseck, soon released him from his imprisonment. Disgusted with Slavonia, the young officer then went to live with his father at Leitschau, where he was commandant, and in this place, Trenck's temper being rather ruffled with recent vexations, he cut off an Hungarian's arm in a sabre duel. Here, also, he fell desperately in love with the wife of a count, and was challenged by the indignant husband to fight with pistols. While they were making ready, the ramrod of one of Trenck's pistols broke, at which he at once flung away the weapon, and advanced to meet the furious count with one pistol only. The count stepped forward eleven quick paces, fired, and missed; Trenck then blazed off, and shot him through the breast, at which, in his memoirs, the baron rejoices, with not the slightest compunction in the world. Another scrape, which led to Trenck the incorrigible being put in arrest for six weeks, compelled his father to send him back again to his rough Slavonian estate.

But the wild young soldier was not long to rust in rustic solitude. In 1737, the Turkish war broke out like the rush of a rocket, and down, with clash of cymbals and roll of kettle-drums, came the Moslems on the Danubian frontier. Trenck's blood fired at this, and off he rode to Count Seckendorff, offering to raise four thousand Pandours, and to carry them into Bosnia at his own expense. Mortified at his offer being refused, Trenck instantly entered the Russian service, and engaged as second captain in Cuming's newly raised regiment of Russian hussars, which were sent through Poland to Kieff. Now Trenck met with the most perilous adventures of his life.

In April, 1738, the Russian army, three hundred thousand strong, set out across the river Dnieper for Bender, a fortress on the Turkish frontier. Trenck, sent galloping off with despatches to the Don Cossacks and Calmucks, and, after that, as far as Astracan, did not rejoin the army till it had reached a wild desert country on the other side of the river Bug. The day after his return, a loud screeching and firing announced the attack of a fierce horde of one hundred thousand Crim Tartars, who came rushing on, howling like wild beasts. A hot cannonade followed, which ended in the slaughter of fourteen

thousand Tartars. "During the whole action," says Trenck, with more even than his usual modesty, "I was exposed to the very hottest of the enemy's fire, and behaved throughout with so much undauntedness, as to merit the special commendation of General Munich, who was an eye-witness of my conduct." A true Gascon was this rough hussar, a little wolfish in his rage, a little sharkish in his love of plunder, but fearless as a grizzly bear, and brave as his own sword.

Not far from the river Dniester the Tartars were at it again. In the dusk of the evening Trenck's hussar regiment was surrounded by clouds of the enemy. His colonel, major, captain, and lieutenant-colonel rode off at once to the army half a league distant, and forgot to return, but Trenck stood firm as a wall, with fourteen men, till his scattered regiment could halt and form. But for this they would have been all mince-meat in a quarter of an hour. The Tartars halted a moment, then came on with an hurrah. Six of the fourteen hussars were instantly speared, the rest wounded. Trenck's bullets were soon all gone, and he had only his sabre to guard his head. The first rascal that came at him he slashed across the body, then grappled with him, but while he was trying to drag the rogue off his horse a second Tartar came, "and ran his spear through my backbone and spleen," as the gallant hussar expresses it. Leaving his sabre sticking in the first Tartar's carcass, Trenck felt it was time to save himself; so spurring his horse he rode off to the army with the Tartar spear still sticking in his back. The surgeon instantly pulled it out, and placed him in a litter, and the brave Quixote, strong as an ox, recovered after four weeks' bandaging. This unlucky campaign, in which the Russians lost twenty thousand horses and oxen, and buried fifty thousand brave men, ended in the Muscovites burying their bombs and cannon under a heap of corpses, and retreating to the frontier.

Trenck had now been so long without a duel, that he grew quite hungry for a single combat. Having words, therefore, at Baron Lowenthal's table, he called out the offender, a Russian officer, who wounded him on the thumb joint. Getting cured in about fourteen days, Trenck again challenged the Russian with sword and pistols. And this time he meant mischief. Having fired both his pistols and missed, the Russian drew his sword to leap on Trenck, who, however,

being on his guard, fired steadily, and shot the rash Muscovite just on the top of the forehead, and but for the man's hood would have killed him on the spot. Fresh troubles soon broke like a storm on this lion of a man. A colonel of Orloff's dragoons, abusing and striking him for some military movement which did not please him, Trenck boxed his ear and drew his sword on him. The colonel at once carried his complaints to General Romanzoff, who, hating all Germans, put Trenck under arrest, loaded with irons of twenty-eight pounds weight, which brought on a violent fever. After languishing for three weeks, Colonel Orten, a Prussian friend, came to tell him that he had been condemned to be shot, but that six of his friends had sworn together to rescue him from prison, and conduct him to Poland. Trenck answered resolutely that his honour would not permit him to run from so unjust a sentence; therefore, although equally obliged to the colonel and his other friends, he could not accept their kind offer. During his illness Trenck was robbed, as he says pathetically, of everything but his two litter horses, three shirts, a furred night-gown, and two hundred ducats, which he had secretly sewn in the waistband of his breeches.

At length came the 10th of January, which the baron, as proud of his misfortunes as of his exploits, says justly, "was one of the gloomiest days of his whole life." Before daybreak General Hickman's adjutant came into the room where Trenck lay in bed, racked by fever, and guarded by an officer and two sentinels, to drag him to the place of execution. Half dead, and very feeble, Trenck supplicated the adjutant to send the grenadiers to shoot him in bed, as he was too ill to move. On this one of the sentinels brutally dragged the sick man out of his bed, and hauled him barefooted, and in his night-gown, through ice and snow, to a ring surrounded by soldiers, where his sentence of death was publicly read to him as he knelt there, too weak to stand. A sergeant then came, and, according to Russian custom, pinned a white paper heart to the left breast of the doomed man. They were going to blindfold him, but this disgrace he stoutly resisted, declaring that no one should prevent him staring death boldly in the face. While he was still struggling, an ensign came running up, crying "A pardon." Trenck's life was spared, but only on the shameful conditions that he should work six months at the fortifications, and at the end of that time

leave Russia for ever. "I was prodigiously shocked," says the unconquerable Trenck, "at so ignominious a forgiveness, and loudly exclaiming against it, I insisted on being put immediately to death." But no one heeding his entreaties, Trenck was carried off in his anger, and sent to the fortress of Pezier, near Kieff. There was there a dungeon in the ramparts, crowded with four hundred wretches condemned to Siberia. On giving six ducats to the captain of his escort, Trenck obtained leave to live in one of five tents built under the outer walls. For another six ducats to the officer who summoned him the first morning to his slavish toil, the prisoner obtained exemption from that disgrace. "The Russians," he writes, with an anger one can hardly be surprised at, "are a pack of greedy wretches, and for a glass of brandy any one of them will cut his brother's throat." Living on wretched soldiers' food, and deprived of all society, Trenck, during his second relapse of fever, was the most miserable of men. A Neapolitan missionary, however, soon interceded for his removal to the guard-house, and some snow, with white vitriol and raspberry juice, at last cured his lingering ailment. One day that Count Munich passed the guard-house, Trenck started out, flung himself on his knees, besought him to remember the vicissitudes of fortune, and entreated permission to return to his own country. The request was granted. "I made the promise never to return to Russia," says Trenck, bitterly, "with infinite pleasure, and would have engraved it on steel, to have it in perpetual memory, had that also been required."

On February 8th, 1740, Trenck set out for Germany, with two servants, seven horses, and an escort of nine soldiers, who had to conduct him to the frontier of Poland. After twice escaping from Polish banditti, Trenck arrived safe at his father's house at Leitschau. The old man shed tears of joy at the sight of the long-lost son; Trenck, embracing him, told him his sufferings and adventures in many lands; then they both joined in offering thanks to God for so wonderfully preserving the soldier in the midst of many perils. But the old nature soon broke out; Trenck's wife was dead, and his father importuned him to marry again; but Trenck's experience of matrimony had not been favourable, so he resolved to go and visit again his estate in Sclavonia. To his rage he found the country overrun by robbers, who plundered, beat, and murdered the peasants.

Instantly, with a soldier's promptitude, Trenck sent out thirty Pandours to scour the country. These men brought in a boor, who, after six hundred and forty-six lashes, confessed who the thieves were. Trenck instantly beat the forest; meeting a gang of robbers he made nine prisoners, and brought home the heads of all the rest. As for the nine thieves, they were either hung or broken on the wheel. Three only now were left, and one of the worst of these had crossed into the Turkish frontier. This rascal, named Vidach, Trenck determined to secure. Dressing, therefore, as a Pandour peasant, he crossed the Save with one servant, under pretence of buying horses. Entering Vidach's house, he seized his father, an old man, and rifled a great chest full of plunder. He carried off the old man, and at night made him ford a branch of the Save. The son pursued them. Trenck reforcing the river with only his sword, stunned Vidach before he could draw his pistols. The robber refusing Trenck's order to follow him, a struggle ensued," which is vigorously described by the baron. "On his refusing," says Trenck, "I laid hold of his right arm with my whole might, and though he was one of the strongest and stoutest fellows in the whole country" (having killed seven Turks with his own hand, in an action near Cothaw, in Turkey), "nevertheless, I squeezed and pressed him to me till I made his very clothes crack on his body. In the struggle he laid hold of one of his pistols, which was ready primed, and would have fired it through my body, had I not been quick enough to slip my right hand between the pan and flint, whereby I cut myself severely. I then laid hold of my sword with my left hand, and stuck it cleverly into his body till the blood spurted into my face. Thereupon I flung him from me, and as he fell I cut his head from the body at one blow. This done, I took hold of the head by the hair, and carrying it over the river with me, I flung it before the father, who was somewhat, though not very much, shocked at the spectacle." This rough justice brought an old enemy, the auditor of Esseck, down upon Trenck, and General Gnadagni, the governor of the district, ordered his arrest. He took refuge in a Franciscan convent, but finding even that not safe, loaded a pack-horse with eight thousand florins and some baggage, and with one servant made straight for the Croatian frontier. As the plague was then in Sclavonia, the guards at the cordon re-

fused to let him pass, upon which he dashed into the river Slava, and swam across. At Vienna, Trenck, however, fell on his feet, for Prince Charles of Lorraine introduced him to Queen Maria Theresa, against whom the King of Prussia had just declared war by invading Silesia. Trenck's offer to raise a body of one thousand Pandours was accepted, and in three weeks the one thousand men were ready to march.

But these were petty adventures; the greatest danger of Trenck's troublous life occurred in attacking the castle of Diesenstein, where, during the great Seven Years' War, some Bavarian jägers had fortified themselves, after plundering the country and massacring their prisoners.

Investing the place closely, and taking post in a new house close to the ditch of the castle, Trenck broke down the back walls of the house, and loopholing the front, opened fire with two pieces of cannon on the obnoxious fortress. Two more cannon he placed on an adjoining eminence, and two mortars behind some covered rising ground, one hundred and fifty paces from the wall. Four of the first bombs killing three of the Bavarian jägers, twenty-three horses, and some cattle, the enemy made a savage sally, but being hurled back by the resolute Pandours, retreated, and hung out the white flag. The garrison of one hundred and ninety-three men Trenck condemned to work on the fortifications in Hungary. The conqueror then went with Baron Schrenck, the governor, the two captive commandants, and the chaplain, to take stock of his new possessions. They arrived on their rounds at a cellar (in the very centre of the castle, and near one of the towers), built of massive square stones, the door hung with padded matting. Whilst Trenck was sitting here drinking a glass of beer, he asked to where the door led. Baron Schrenck, in a kind of terror, replied that it was merely a prison. Trenck, suspecting that some Pandour or Austrian prisoners might be stowed away there, went and looked in. About forty paces in under the tower there were five large casks lying in a kind of hollow, and near them several cartridges strewn about. He asked Schrenck what the cask contained, and said he hoped it was not gunpowder concealed there. Schrenck swore and protested that he would forfeit his life if he had not given in a faithful inventory of everything. Trenck, suspicious as old soldiers should ever be, called for a light to make sure, and on their bringing a lighted

torch, found, sure enough, that the casks were full of powder. We must tell the awful results in his own rough, vigorous words: "I was not too far gone," he says, "to escape the danger, for just as I said, 'Why the tower is full of powder!' the casks flew immediately up into the air with such a horrid noise, as if the whole castle had blown up, and tumbled on my head; which it would, indeed, inevitably have done, had not the powder made a way for itself through the roof, carrying the whole tower straight into the sky. The smoke and fire of the powder flung me, with my face and hands prodigiously burnt, out into the cellar flat on my face, and if I had not instantly, upon my getting up, staggered towards the opposite door and escaped, I must have been suffocated with the smoke. To add to my misfortune, two horns full of gunpowder in my pocket took fire, and scorched me in a most frightful manner. Baron Schrenck, who was with me, was in a more wretched condition even than myself, for having no boots on, both his shin-bones were sadly burnt. It is not difficult for me now to conceive the pain that people must go through who are drowned, shot, burnt, or hanged. This is certain, that my misery was past all imagination or power of pen to describe. I leaped directly out of the castle, half burnt as I was, without a bit of hair left on my head, and called out to my people to come quickly, and pull off my clothes, which were all in a flame. But they being afraid that the enemy had contrived to spring some more mines, would not come near me. Meanwhile I flung away the cartouches I had about me, which, as soon as they fell to the ground, blew up with a blaze. I then took off my belt, but in so doing my nails and skin stuck to the buckle. After that I pulled off my coat, which came off the left arm tolerably well, but in trying the right arm it peeled the skin completely off. The excess of pain overcame me at last, and being carried to a brewhouse near, I fell into a swoon. After our surgeon had dressed me as well as he could, I was carried back eight miles to the city of Passau. In this whole expedition I had but one man killed, who was a bombardier, and three Pandours and myself wounded."

Trenck's public entrance into Passau was characteristic. He lay bandaged in a chaise, half dead, but proud of having been more blown up than any man that ever survived, followed by his Pandours and their one hundred and ninety-three pri-

soners. Behind his chaise came Baron Schrenck, bundled up till he looked like a sack, and roaring with pain. For ten days Trenck lay in unabated pain, and was despaired of by five doctors. He neither ate, drank, nor slept for these ten days; but eventually his kind landlady saved him by homely, natural remedies and careful nursing. He had the constitution of a Polar bear; the eleventh day the pain abated; his face and left hand began to dry up, and a tender new skin appeared. The fifteenth day, covered with plaisters, the brave Pandour visited Count Kevenhuller, and received from the queen a colonel's commission. The count, asking him to name a partisan leader who would try and burn the enemy's magazines at the castle of Au, near Weissenstein, only two leagues from the hostile camp, Trenck, though scarcely able to grasp a bridle, offered at once to go, and, after great dangers, actually penetrated as far as Au, and there set fire to fifteen thousand waggons full of hay, straw, and oats.

In 1748, Trenck stole time to ride to Leitschan, to see his aged father, who was fast dying of gout, jaundice, and dropsy. When Trenck entered the room the old man was sitting in a passive way, leaning his elbows on the table, and thinking alternately of the dangers his son was undergoing, and of "the fame he was acquiring throughout Europe." Trenck embraced him tenderly, and cried for joy at seeing him. His father told him that the doctor had only given him three weeks to live, but he should now die contented. "It was my hard fate," says Trenck, "that I could stay no longer than fourteen days with him, during which time I gave him a long and complete history of all my adventures." Nine days after Trenck's departure the old man died, and was buried with great state in his parish church.

From his dying father Trenck was summoned to put down a revolt in Slavonia, where four thousand rebels had gathered threateningly. The mere terror of Trenck's name led to an armistice. The thirty-six rebel deputies Trenck rather treacherously arrested, beheading the ring-leader, hanging the second, shooting a third, and sending the remaining thirty-three to the galleys. The stern officer then levied in five weeks seven hundred Pandours and one hundred hussars, led them off to the war in Bavaria, and immediately volunteers with some Croats to storm a tête de pont on the river Lech, to

the great delight of Prince Charles, who invited him that night to supper.

And here these wild adventures suddenly close with these valedictory words: "Thus ended this campaign—a campaign most glorious for the arms of my sovereign—a campaign wherein Heaven has given evident proofs of having espoused her injured cause, by defeating the many iniquitous schemes of her perfidious enemies. At this remarkable period I finish this relation, where I have laid open, methinks, a scene of as great diversity of incident, interwoven with as surprising escapes amidst the greatest of perils, as have ever, perhaps, happened to any single adventurer. I still continue to act on this grand stage, busied in the execution of a very difficult and laborious scheme; but how the plot will be unravelled, or what further hardships or blessings are prepared for me in the womb of time, is beyond my discovery. Should it please God to preserve my life some years longer for the further services and interests of my sovereign, I shall endeavour to embrace another opportunity of amusing myself, and some few perhaps who may chance to read these papers, with a sequel to this narrative."

But that opportunity never came. This lawless hero of the Seven Years' War soon after fell into disgrace with Maria Theresa. The priests accused him of constant sacrilegious robberies; the finance ministers of not remitting to Vienna the full sums of contribution money levied in Bavaria; his old and untiring enemies of ruthless cruelty in Bavaria, and of having captured the King of Prussia at the battle of Sohr, and then treacherously setting him at liberty. For his tardiness at Sohr, in 1748, Trenck was fined one hundred and twenty thousand florins; still defiant, he was thrown into the arsenal at Vienna, but from thence he escaped by a daring stratagem. Bribing the officer on guard, he feigned death, and was taken to the cemetery; there escaping from his coffin, he flew to Holland with the Baroness de Lestock, who had aided him with gold, and whom he married. Captured again and brought back to Vienna, he was condemned to end his days in Spielberg. There the indomitable and fiery soldier died at only thirty-eight, of poison, administered it is supposed by himself. He left by his will his fortune of two million florins to his cousin, the prison-breaker, but the lawyers gnawed it away till they left but little to inherit.

Trenck was a man of extraordinary strength, and is said to have once cut off a bull's head with a single blow of his sabre. In one of his early campaigns in Hungary, being condemned to death for striking his colonel, he obtained pardon on condition he cut off three Turkish heads, and presently returned from the charge with four heads slung to his saddle-bow. This indomitable man was a good engineer and a fine military theorist, and he spoke almost all the European languages.

WAITING.

Now since we two have counted up the cost
And pain of waiting till our chance is found
(Some broader chance than any we have lost
Must come to meet us as the years go round);
And since we know each heart will stand the test
Of absence and of waiting; since we know
That all love's whirl of passion and unrest,
Was calmed for us by duty long ago.
And since we know the past is past beyond recal,
We must accept the fruit of its mistake;
And trust the dim "to come," to give us all
We dare not covet now for honour's sake.
And till that sure time comes, dear love, we must
In God, in love, and in each other trust.
And it will dawn for us, that happy day,
When love shall overleap whatever lies
Between our lives, and we shall find our way
To joys repaying every sacrifice.
We have so little in the present now,
We have so much to hope from time to come,
We can afford to wait; our true love vow
Binds us for ever, though our lips be dumb.
We take our stand upon each other's faith,
We know each other to be true as steel,
We hold each other's future; life or death
Can neither mar nor alter aught we feel.
We work apart, till love, our harvest's lord,
To reap our fruit together gives the word.

IN THE PIT.

THERE is something to be written about the rise and fall of the pit: its original humility, its possession for awhile of great authority, and its forfeiture, of late years, of power in the theatre. We all know Shakespeare's opinion of "the groundlings," and how he held them to be, "for the most part, capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows and noise." The great dramatist's contemporaries entertained similar views on this head. They are to be found speaking with supreme contempt of the audience occupying the *yard*; describing them as "fools," and "scarecrows," and "under-standing, grounded men."

Our old theatres were of two classes: public and private. The companies of the private theatres were more especially under the protection of some royal or noble personage. The audiences they attracted were usually of a superior class, and certain

of these were entitled to sit upon the stage during the representation. The buildings, although of smaller dimensions than the public theatres boasted, were arranged with more regard for the comfort of the spectators. The boxes were enclosed and locked. There were *pits* furnished with seats, in place of the *yards*, as they were called, of the public theatres, in which the "groundlings" were compelled to stand throughout the performance. And the whole house was roofed in from the weather; whereas the public theatres were open to the sky, excepting over the stage and boxes. Moreover, the performances at the private theatres were presented by candle or torchlight. Probably it was held that the effects of the stage were enhanced by their being artificially illuminated, for in these times, at both public and private theatres, the entertainments commenced early in the afternoon, and generally concluded before sunset, or, at any rate, before dark.

As patience and endurance are more easy to the man who sits than to the standing spectator, it came to be understood that a livelier kind of entertainment must be provided for the "groundlings" of the public theatres, than there was need to present to the seated pit of the private playhouse. The "fools of the yard" were charged with requiring "the horrid noise of target-fight," "cutler's work," and vulgar and boisterous exhibitions generally. These early patrons of the more practical parts of the drama are entitled to be forbearingly judged, however. Their comfort was little studied, and it is not surprising, then, under the circumstances, that they should have favoured a brisk and vivacious class of representations. The tedious playwright did not merely oppress their minds; he made them remember how weary were their legs.

But it is probable that the tastes thus generated were maintained long after the necessity for their existence had departed, and that, even when seats were permitted them, the "groundlings" still held by their old forms of amusement, demanding dramas of liveliness, incident, and action, and greatly preferring spectacle to speeches. From the philosophical point of view the pit had acquired a bad name and couldn't or wouldn't get quit of it. Still it is by no means clear that the sentiments ascribed to the pit were not those of the audience generally. The cry of "the decline of the stage" began to be heard almost as soon as the smallest pains were taken with

the accessories of theatrical exhibitions. "The introduction of scenery," writes Mr. Payne Collier, "gives the date to the commencement of the decline of our dramatic poetry." The imagination was no longer appealed to. To the absence of painted canvases we owe many of the finest descriptive passages of Shakespeare, his contemporaries, and followers. But this impeachment of the scene-painter affects also the costumier, and indeed stage illusions of all kinds. The difficulty of defining exactly how much to leave to the imagination, and how far to gratify the eye, is very great indeed, and would seem to be no more soluble now than ever it was.

But the pit was a convenient scapegoat. It was long charged with being a foe to wit and poetry; with preferring sound to sense, and especially with delighting in pageantry and scenic magnificence. Thus Pope, in his *Imitations of Horace*, discourses of the subject:

There still remains to mortify a wit
The many-headed monster of the pit,
A senseless, worthless, and unhonoured crowd,
Who, to disturb their betters mighty proud,
Clattering their sticks before ten lines are spoke
Call for the farce, the bear, or the black joke.

The play stands still; d--n action and discourse,
Back fly the scenes and enter foot and horse.
Pageants on pageants in long order drawn,
Peers, heralds, bishops, ermine, gold, and lawn.
The champion too, and to complete the jest,
Old Edward's armour gleams on Cibber's breast.

It seems that Henry the Eighth had lately been represented, and the play-houses had vied with each other in portraying the pomp and splendour of a coronation. The armour of one of the kings of England had even been borrowed from the Tower to clothe the champion, an important figure in the ceremonial. It is noteworthy that Pope's attack upon spectacle makes no mention of the scenery of the stage. He is too much occupied with the costumes, with "Quin's high plume," the remnant of the "forest of feathers," to which Hamlet refers as the fitting gear of the players, and "Oldfield's petticoat:"

Loud as the wolves on Orcus' stormy steep
Howl to the roarings of the northern deep.
Such is the shout, the long applauding note
At Quin's high plume or Oldfield's petticoat.
Or when from court a birthday suit bestowed
Sinks the lost actor in the tawdry load.
Booth enters—hark! the universal peal!
"But has he spoken?" Not a syllable.
"What shook the stage and made the people stare?"
Cato's long wig, flower'd gown, and lacquer'd chair.

We hear numerous complaints now-a-days of the extravagant garniture of the modern stage, and these may be just and

reasonable enough very likely. It is as well, however, to remember sometimes their ancient date and the prolonged existence they have enjoyed. The first spangle that glittered on the boards probably brought with it the cry against spectacle, and the prediction that the utter ruin of the theatre was of a certainty impending.

But, Pope's diatribe notwithstanding, the pit was improving in character. It could now boast a strong critical leaven; it was becoming the recognised resort of the more enlightened play-goers. Dryden in his prologues and epilogues often addresses the pit, as containing notably the judges of plays and the more learned of the audience. "The pit," says Swift in the introduction to his *Tale of a Tub*, "is sunk below the stage, that whatever of weighty matter shall be delivered thence, whether it be lead or gold, may fall plump into the jaws of certain critics, as I think they are called, which stand ready open to devour them." "Your bucks of the pit," says an old occasional address of later date, ascribed to Garrick, but on insufficient evidence—

Your bucks of the pit are miracles of learning,
Who point out faults to show their own discerning;
And critic-like bestriding martyred sense,
Proclaim their genius and vast consequence.

There were now critics by profession, who duly printed and published their criticisms. The awful Churchill's favourite seat was in the front row of the pit next the orchestra. "In this place he thought he could best discern the real workings of the passions in the actors, or what they substituted in the stead of them," says poor Tom Davies, whose dread of the critic was extreme. "During the run of *Cymbeline*," he wrote apologetically to Garrick, his manager, "I had the misfortune to disconcert you in one scene, for which I did immediately beg your pardon; and did attribute it to my accidentally seeing Mr. Churchill in the pit, with great truth, it rendering me confused and unmindful of my business." Garrick had himself felt oppressed by the gloomy presence of Churchill, and learnt to read discontent in the critic's lowering brows. "My love to Churchill," he writes to Colman; "his being sick of Richard was perceived about the house."

That Churchill was a critic of formidable aspect, the portrait he limned of himself in his *Independence* amply demonstrates:

Vast were his bones, his muscles twisted strong,
His face was short, but broader than 'twas long,
His features though by nature they were large,
Contentment had contrived to overcharge

And bury meaning, save that we might spy
Sense low'ring on the pent-house of his eye;
His arms were two twin oaks, his legs so stout
That they might bear a mansion-house about;
Nor were they, look but at his body there,
Designed by fate a much less weight to bear.
O'er a brown cassock which had once been black,
Which hung in tatters on his brawny back,
A sight most strange and awkward to behold,
He threw a covering of blue and gold, &c. &c.

This was not the kind of man to be contemptuously regarded or indiscreetly attacked. Foote ventured to designate him "the clumsy curate of Clapham," but prudently suppressed a more elaborate lampoon he had prepared. Murphy launched an ode more vehement than decent in its terms. Churchill good-humouredly acknowledged the justice of the satire; he had said, perhaps, all he cared to say to the detriment of Murphy, and was content with this proof that his shafts had reached their mark. Murphy confirms Davies's account of Churchill's seat in the theatre:

No more your bard shall sit
In foremost row before the astonished pit,
And grin dislike, and kiss the spike,
And twist his mouth and roll his head awry,
The arch-absurd quick glancing from his eye.

Charles Lamb was a faithful patron of the pit. In his early days there had been such things as "pit orders." "Beshrew the uncomfortable manager who abolished them!" he exclaims. It was from the front row of the pit that Lamb, seated by the side of his dearly loved sister, applauded the first and hissed the second act of his own farce, *Mr. H—*, an unlucky little play, failing mainly from an inherent weakness of constitution, and yet containing much that is witty and comical.

Hazlitt greatly preferred the pit to the boxes. Not simply because the fierceness of his democratic sentiments induced in him a scorn of the visitors to the boxes, as wrapped up in themselves, fortified against impressions, weaned from all superstitious belief in dramatic illusions, taking so little interest in all that is interesting, disinclined to discompose their cravats or their muscles, "except when some gesticulation of Mr. Kean, or some expression of an author two hundred years old, violated the decorum of fashionable indifference." These were good reasons for his objection to the boxes. But he preferred the pit, in truth, because he could there see and hear so very much better. "We saw Mr. Kean's Sir Giles Overreach on Friday night from the boxes," he writes in 1816, "and are not surprised at the incredulity as to this great actor's powers entertained by those persons who have only

seen him from that elevated sphere. We do not hesitate to say that those who have only seen him at that distance have not seen him at all. The expression of his face is quite lost, and only the harsh and grating tones of his voice produce their full effect on the ear. The same recurring sounds, by dint of repetition, fasten on the attention, while the varieties and finer modulations are lost in their passage over the pit. All you discover is an abstraction of his defects both of person, voice, and manner. He appears to be a little man in a great passion," &c.

But the pit was not famous merely as the resort of critics. The "groundlings" had given place to people of fashion and social distinction. Mr. Leigh Hunt notes that the pit even of Charles the Second's time, although now and then the scene of violent scuffles and brawls, due in great part to the general wearing of swords, was wont to contain as good company as the pit of the Opera House five and twenty years ago. A reference to Pepys's *Diary* justifies this opinion. "Among the rest here was the Duke of Buckingham to-day openly sat in the pit," records Pepys, "and there I found him with my Lord Buckhurst, and Sedley, and Etheridge the poet." Yet it would seem that already the visitors to the pit had declined somewhat in quality. Concerning a visit to the "Duke of York's Play-House," Pepys writes: "Here a mighty company of citizens' prentices and others; and it makes me observe that when I begun first to be able to bestow a play on myself, I do not remember that I saw so many by half of the ordinary prentices and mean people in the pit at two shillings and sixpence apiece as now; I going for several years no higher than the shilling, and then the eighteen-penny places, though I strained hard to go in them when I did; so much the vanity and prodigality of the age is to be observed in this particular." Pepys, like John Gilpin's spouse, had a frugal mind, however bent on pleasure. He relates, with some sense of injury, how once, there being no room in the pit, he was forced to pay four shillings and go into one of the upper boxes, "which is the first time I ever sat in a box in my life. And this pleasure I had, that from this place the scenes do appear very fine indeed, and much better than in the pit."

One does not now look to find members of the administration or cabinet ministers occupying seats in the pit. Yet the Journals of the Right Honourable William Windham, some time chief secretary to the

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and afterwards colonial secretary, tell of his frequent visits to the pit of Covent Garden. Nor does he "drop into" the theatre, after dining at his club, as even a bachelor of fashion might do without exciting surprise. Play-going is not an idle matter to him. And he is accompanied by ladies of distinction, his relatives and others. "Went about half-past five to the pit," he records; "sat by Miss Kemble, Steevens, Mrs. Burke, and Miss Palmer," the lady last named being the niece of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who afterwards married Lord Inchiquin. "Went in the evening to the pit with Mrs. Lukin" (the wife of his half-brother). "After the play, went with Miss Kemble to Mrs. Siddons's dressing-room: met Sheridan there, with whom I sat in the waiting-room, and who pressed me to sup at his house with Fox and G. North." Assuredly "the play," not less than the pit, was more highly regarded in Windham's time than now-a-days.

Though apart from our present topic, it is worth noting that Windham may claim to have anticipated Monsieur Gambetta as a statesman voyaging in a balloon. Ballooning was a hobby of Windham's. He was a regular attendant of ascents, and inspected curiously the early aerial machines of Blanchard and Lunardi. Something surprised at his own temerity, he travelled the air himself, rose in a balloon, probably from Vauxhall, crossed the river at Tilbury, and descended in safety after losing his hat. He regretted that the wind had not been favourable for his crossing the Channel. "Certainly," he writes, "the experiences I have had on this occasion will warrant a degree of confidence more than I have ever hitherto indulged. I would not wish a degree of confidence more than I enjoyed at every moment of the time."

To return to the pit for a concluding note or two. Audiences had come to agree with Hazlitt, that "it was unpleasant to see a play from the boxes," that the pit was far preferable. Gradually the managers—sound sleepers as a rule—awakened to this view of the situation, and proceeded accordingly. They seized upon the best seats in the pit, and converted them into stalls, charging for admission to these a higher price than they had ever levied in regard to the boxes. Stalls were first introduced at the Opera House in the Haymarket in the year 1829. Dissatisfaction was openly expressed, but, although the overture was hissed—the opera being Rossini's *La Donna del Lago*—no serious

disturbance arose. There had been a decline in the public spirit of play-goers. The generation that delighted in the great O. P. riot had pretty well passed away. Such another excitement was not possible; energy and enthusiasm on such a subject seemed to have been exhausted for ever by that supreme effort. So the audience paid the increased price or stayed away from the theatre. For staying away from the theatre could now be calmly viewed as a reasonable alternative. "The play" was no more what once it had been, a sort of necessary of life. The example of the Opera manager was presently followed by all other theatrical establishments, and high-priced stalls became the rule everywhere. The pit lost its old influence, was, so to say, disfranchised. It was as one of the old Cinque Ports which the departing sea and the ever indrifting sand have left high and dry, unapproachable by water, a port only in name. It was divided and conquered. The most applauded toast at the public banquet of the O. P. rioters—"The ancient and indisputable rights of the pit"—will never more be proposed.

A Churchill sitting in a modern stall is not a conceivable figure. A new Roscjad would hardly find a publisher or a public. Satire, to make a stir, must lash something that is loved or hated; it is but wasting words, time, and trouble to employ it on a subject the world views with indifference. The spirit of criticism has departed from the theatre. The pit of to-day, penned back beneath the shadow of the boxes, is content to applaud any and everything. The stalls, languid and apathetic, are much what Hazlitt described the boxes of his time to be. They sit apart in the high-priced places, solemn, still, and not too comfortable. For it is the managers' plan—a short-sighted plan, but managers are short-sighted—to deal hardly by their patrons, to wring from them as much as possible, and risk their withdrawing altogether from the scene. Yet there is a fable about killing the goose that lays the golden eggs, and there is a homely proverb, which says, "Once bit, twice shy." The stalls of our theatres are so closely wedged and jammed together, that they can scarcely be reached without a most unseemly and almost painful struggle. The Britannic figure is apt to be substantial, and needs room to move in. Some creature of genius invented a plan of adding a hinge to the seats of the stall-chairs, so that they might be raised upon occasion, and, forming a kind of bay, give more standing room to

the occupant of the stall. The managers forthwith made this scheme an excuse for encroaching on the passage room between the rows of stalls, and crowding in additional seats. It is now required of the occupants of stalls that they should rise up, lift the seats of their chairs, and retire into the recess thus formed in order that others may pass them. The holder of stall number ten, let us say, comes to the theatre a little late. It is incumbent upon the sitters in stalls numbered one to nine to go through this severe drill with their chairs, so that number ten may duly reach his seat. This is simply outrageous. Protests generally are of little avail, but we venture a protest on this head. The most prosperous manager in the end will assuredly be he who, even at some seeming sacrifice of his own interests, does most to make his audience comfortable. The rude, plain, hard benches of the old-fashioned pit are preferable to this modern system. They did not, at any rate, pretend to be luxurious and exclusive, and they were certainly less costly.

A CHINESE FAIRY TALE.

It is a generally admitted fact that people delight chiefly in those arts in which they most excel; and it is also the universal opinion that the reverse of those general laws which apply to the rest of mankind obtain in China. Whether this latter be or be not a "myth of observation," we are not here about to inquire; it will be sufficient for our purpose to say that any one who may expect to find among the Chinese a capacity for story-telling in ratio to their love of stories, will be much disappointed. The same fatality which follows them in many of their arts, seems to brood over their folk-lore. The original want existing, the art reaches a certain point of excellence, and then stops short. Time brings no improvement, and genius produces no further invention. So it is with their stories, they possess a certain and limited stock of incidents, which have become venerable from age, and which every storyteller reproduces over and over again without either addition or improvement, under slightly varying disguises.

Their fairy tales are far more interesting, owing to the large admixture of Aryan legends to be found amongst them; but it cannot be denied that the unalloyed Chinese story of common life is strangely insipid. The plot of nine out of ten such stories repre-

sents the hero as a man of surpassing talent and superhuman strength, who, generally on a journey, meets with a damsel in sore distress at the prospect of a marriage with a rich man whom she hates, but who has placed her father under such obligations as effectually to prevent his refusing to give his sanction to the alliance. The beauty and mental distress of the maiden deeply affect the hero, who proposes the well-worn scheme that on the wedding-day he should play the part of the young lady, and in the recesses of the bridal chamber murder the bridegroom, and any of the groomsmen who might oppose the proceeding. The bride and her parents eagerly enter into the plot. On the wedding-day the exchange of dresses is effected, and when her rich lover, with passionate embraces, attempts to remove the veil from his supposed bride, the hero draws his sword and with one blow severs his head from his body. The noise attracts the servants and friends to the room, all of whom the hero slays without receiving a wound, and he returns to the house of the rescued damsel, with the noses of his victims tied up in his pocket-handkerchief as proofs of his prowess. In exchange for these trophies the heroine writes him a copy of verses of such undoubtedly Confucian complexion, that he instantly proposes marriage, is accepted, and they live happily ever after. Such is the favourite plot of a native story; of course it admits of variations: the would-be bridegroom is an oppressive mandarin who uses all kind of official artifices to gain his object, or he is a bandit chieftain who has made himself the terror of his neighbourhood. But whatever else may change, the valour of the hero and the beauty of the heroine, and the lofty poetic talent of both, are never made to vary either in kind or degree.

Having, then, once read a story of this description, none but Chinamen would wish to listen to any more. To them, however, the typical hero is a never-failing object of admiration and delight. His bombastic folly sends a thrill through the frame of every listener, and the twaddling prolixity of the narrative is viewed as a triumph of eloquence. But in their fairy tales there is much more that is worthy of attention. Being for the most part borrowed from the folk-lore of more western nations, they become objects of interest to students of comparative mythology, and the stories themselves have much in them to attract the general reader. In many of them, however, there is observable that

want, on the part of their adapters, of perceptive power to catch the real points of the stories. They are told, in too many cases, just as a child might be supposed to repeat a tale he has heard for the first time. The leading incidents stand out in isolated prominence, and there is a total absence of the finer traits and more artistic touches which are essential to a good story.

Having said this much, we invite our readers' attention to the following narrative. Without attempting to supply any deficiencies, or to round off any corners, we give the story as it was penned by the Chinese writer some seven hundred years ago, and will only add that it is supposed to refer to the period when Charlemagne sat on the throne of France.

Many years ago, during the Tang dynasty, there lived in the town of Peen-chow an old maid, named San. No one knew where she came from. All that her neighbours could say about her was, that for the last thirty years she had kept the cake shop on the wooden bridge, and that during the whole of that time she had lived quite by herself, employing neither man-servant nor maid-servant, nor had any relative been known to visit her. But notwithstanding this, report pronounced her to be rich. Her house was a large one, and she had mules in abundance. In order to save her guests part of the local carriage-tax, she made it a practice not to receive their equipages, a proceeding which was highly approved of by them, and in consequence, of those who had once put up at her hostelry, many repeated their visits. Now it happened that, about this time, the Emperor "Great Harmony" sent General Chaou, surnamed the "Slender and Kind One," on an expedition to the eastern capital, and the general, passing through Peen-chow with his six or seven servants, put up for the night at the shop on the wooden bridge. The servants were soon accommodated in a common room, and the "Slender and Kind One" was lodged in a separate apartment adjoining the dwelling-rooms of San. San paid the greatest attention to her guests, and when night came on, served them with wine and helped them to drink it, making merry with all. The "Slender and Kind One" alone abstained from tasting the wine, but joined in the talking and laughing. When the watchman announced the second watch, and when most of her guests were sleeping the sleep of drunkards, San betook herself to her domicile, barred the door, and put out the light. In the middle of the night,

as the "Slender and Kind One" lay tossing from this side to that side, unable to sleep, he heard a noise in San's room as though she were moving things about. His curiosity being excited, he peeped through a crevice and saw her light a candle and take out from a cloth-bound box a plough, a little wooden man, and a little wooden ox, each about six or seven inches high, and put them down in front of the fireplace. She then poured water on them, and they instantly began to move and live. The little man harnessed the little ox to the plough, and set to work ploughing up the part of the room in front of the bed. When he had prepared enough ground, San gave him a sackful of wheat, which he sowed. In a very few minutes it sprouted through the ground and grew up until it flowered, brought forth fruit, and ripened. The man then set to work to reap and thrash it, and presented to his mistress a crop of seven or eight pints of grain. This done, he was made to grind the corn in a small mill, and was then thrown, with his ox and his plough, into the box again. San now began her share of the work, and having well kneaded the flour, transformed it into baked cakes. At cock-crow the soldiers began to bestir themselves, but San was up before them, and had lighted their lamp and laid out the hot cakes in tempting array on the table. The "Slender and Kind One" was not very comfortable after what he had seen and heard, so he went outside the house, but, determined to see the end, he peeped through a crevice in the door. Suddenly, while he was watching his soldiers seated in a circle, in the act of devouring the nice hot cakes, he heard a sound as of neighing, and to his horror he saw them in an instant all transformed into mules. The change was no sooner effected than San drove them into the yard at the back of the shop.

The "Slender and Kind One" told no one what he had seen, but pondered much over the adventure in secret, and when at the end of a month he was returning by the same road, he again put up at the shop on the wooden bridge. But before entering the inn he provided himself with a number of cakes, in size and form exactly like those he had seen so miraculously made. San professed herself delighted to see him, and, as he was the solitary guest, lavished attentions on him. When night came she diligently inquired his wishes. "I have business before me," said the "Slender and Kind One," "therefore call me at day-break." "Without fail," said San; "but

please to sleep soundly." About midnight the "Slender and Kind One" arose, and witnessed a repetition of what he had seen on the previous occasion. In the morning San was up early, and having laid out her guest's breakfast, she set before him the hot cakes he knew so well. While, however, she was away getting other things, the "Slender and Kind One" managed to exchange one of the cakes he had brought with him for one of San's, and apologising to her, said he had supplied himself with cakes of his own, and therefore should not want any of hers. San waited attentively on her guest, and when he had finished eating, brought him his tea. The "Slender and Kind One," then addressing her, said, "Let me beg my hostess to try one of my cakes," at the same time handing the one he had taken in exchange for his own. San accepted it with thanks, but had hardly tasted it when she fell down to the ground neighing, and was instantly transformed into a fine strong mule. The "Slender and Kind One" saddled her, and then went to search for the little wooden man and ox. He found them, but not knowing the spell, could do nothing with them. So he mounted the mule and returned home. His new acquisition carried him remarkably well, and made nothing of going one hundred miles a day. Four years after these events, the "Slender and Kind One" was riding on his mule to the Hwa yo Templo; he passed an old man at the side of the road, who, on seeing him, clapped his hands and laughing, said, "Why San of the wooden bridge, how is it that you have come to this?" Then taking hold of the mule he said to the "Slender and Kind One," "Although she was originally very much to blame, she has since done you good service, have pity on her, and allow me to set her free." With that he opened the mule's cheek, and out jumped the old maid, looking the same as ever. Then turning to the old man, she made him a grateful curtsy and walked off. What became of her I don't know.

GEOFFREY LUTTRELL'S NARRATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "IN THAT STATE OF LIFE," &c.

IN ELEVEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER IV.

"LUTTRELL," said the squire, turning to me as soon as the dog-cart was out of sight, "I hope that Harry's sudden departure will make no difference in the length of your visit to us. Remember that the longer you can remain with us the better pleased we shall be."

I thanked him, and said it would give me great pleasure to stay on a little longer at the Grange.

In the course of the morning I saw Assunta walking alone in the garden. I joined her. "This is an unfortunate affair," I began. "Harry's imprudence last night did more mischief than we were aware of."

"My poor Harry! my poor boy!" she sighed. "Ah! Mr. Luttrell, but that was not the real cause of his being sent away. If it had not been for me he would have been scolded for his impertinence to Mr. Ridgway, and there would have been an end of it. It is I who have driven him away."

"No, it is his speaking as he did to his uncle. The most ordinary caution and a sense of what was due to Mr. Walbrooke would have obviated it. But there is no use in crying over spilt milk. You must not be too cast down by what has occurred. If Harry can only be got to restrain himself for the future, all will be well in time, I have no doubt. That he will remain faithful to you I am very sure; and I believe in the accomplishment of almost anything on earth with time and perseverance."

"Time? Ah! but youth so soon flies, and life itself is very short. Will he care for me when I am old and withered? Then perhaps he may be free to marry me."

"But fond of you as all are here," I said, "and with the influence you have in the family, Mr. Walbrooke will certainly yield, sooner or later, when he finds that Harry's whole happiness depends on it."

She shook her head. "You do not know him, nor does Harry, as I do. Look at Beauty there in the park, Mr. Luttrell. She is Mr. Walbrooke's favourite mare. He goes to her stall every morning, and feeds her with carrots. She may run where she likes, provided she does not jump this fence, and get into the garden. Oh! then she would be very quickly driven out. Harry's heart is their garden. I may do what I like except enter there. But they can't keep me out—they can't!" she repeated with a triumphant energy, at variance with the despondency with which she had hitherto spoken.

"Then you ought to be happy," I said, with an involuntary sigh. "All the rest is, comparatively, of no importance."

She looked up with her dark earnest face into mine. "But I must not be his ruin. He must not sacrifice everything to me. Oh! Mr. Luttrell, no one will ever

know how I fought against this love at first, seeing what it must come to! And now, what am I to do? I ask myself, what am I to do?"

"Nothing. Just wait, and trust to time. To you, dear Miss Fleming, and to Harry also, this is my first word and my last."

Two days went by. Mr. Ridgway's assiduities, uninterrupted now by the jealousy of Harry, seemed to increase. Assunta was a little graver, but otherwise appeared in company much as usual. The third morning a card of invitation appeared on the breakfast table, which gave rise to an animated discussion. There had for some time past been a talk of a fancy ball at Hevoir Castle. It was now something more than rumour; the day fixed was just three weeks distant. Lena, who was of course not yet "out," had been promised by her uncle that she should go to this exceptional entertainment, which, being given in a fine old baronial building, promised to be a spectacle of great brilliancy. Mr. Ridgway and I were referred to, to suggest dresses; but as he knew far more about the correct costume of various epochs than I did, my help was limited to a few arrangements of colour, and to making a sketch from recollection of a female portrait by some Italian of the fifteenth century, the head-gear of which, it occurred to me, would suit Assunta. Mr. Ridgway at once supplied every deficient detail; he had a Giorgione at Hapsbury with a similar costume, which he sent for, together with a great variety of old Venetian and Genoese stuffs, which he begged Miss Fleming to make use of. Nor did his generosity stop short here, in which case it would no doubt have been declined. Among his treasures was a dress in rare preservation, which had belonged to Marie-Antoinette when a girl. It was a sort of Dresden-china-shepherdess attire, with wreaths of delicately embroidered roses on a blue ground. It fitted Lena's narrow little body as if it had been made for her; and the commode and sacque became her slender dimensions vastly. As for myself, money was a great consideration to me at that time, as he possibly guessed; and when Mr. Walbrooke insisted upon my remaining over the ball, Ridgway good-naturedly bethought him of a suitor's dress which he had brought from Spain, and which he begged me to wear. Of infinite resource, helpful, ever kind, why was it I could not like this man?

Shortly after this he went home, but he

was to return for the ball, Hevoir Castle being only four miles from the Grange. He had, I think, by this time, almost, if not definitely, made up his mind to propose to Assunta; but a little delay could do no harm. And at this moment the important subject of his costume demanded a good deal of attention. The night before his departure a slight incident occurred which I remember made an impression on me, and which may have influenced the destinies of those about whom I am writing more than was apparent.

In addition to the guests in the house, Mr. Walbrooke had invited some distant neighbours to dinner. There was a large party; in all, five-and-twenty. Among them was a Sir Robert Something and his daughters, who had lately returned from Italy, where he had lived many years for the education of his children. He was a poor but very proud man, whose character stood high in the county, but whose manners were not pleasing. Mr. Walbrooke was not intimate with him. He lived too near the Grange to be invited to stay there, and yet a long hill and bleak moor interfered with constant intercourse. Indeed, this was the first time he had ever dined at the Grange, I believe, having, when his daughters were children, declined all such doubtful pleasures as an eight-mile drive to a country dinner-party. I should add that his house lay in precisely the opposite direction to Hapsbury.

I was standing behind the outer circle of chairs and ottomans, as awkward young Englishmen do before dinner, near to no one I knew, and consequently at liberty to watch my neighbours' movements. Not far off sat Mr. Ridgway, next to Assunta, but less talkative than usual, it appeared to me. I should almost have said that he was not perfectly at his ease, if that had been possible of a man whom, it was proverbial, nothing ever put out. At all events, I knew, by the rapid movement of his cold blue eye from time to time, that he was on the alert to listen to all that went on around him. The guests were now all arrived; several introductions took place. Presently Mr. Walbrooke, taking Sir Robert's arm, drew him out of the circle, and, as he believed, no doubt, out of ear-shot.

"I don't think you know Ridgway, of Hapsbury, do you?" I heard him ask. "The other side of the county, you know."

"Who?" said Sir Robert, with a surprise which, if assumed, did credit to his acting.

"Ridgway, the great man of taste, one of the cleverest fellows you ever met, who——"

"So I have heard. No, I don't know him, *and I had rather not.*"

The emphasis is not mine, but his. He spoke those words so distinctly that I have not a doubt but that the subject of this colloquy heard them. Sir Robert throughout the evening avoided even the side of the room where Mr. Ridgway was. And Mr. Walbrooke's obstinacy was wounded even more than his friendship. I doubt if the baronet was ever asked to the Grange again. But those words left their mark.

I wrote to Harry very fully of all that happened. He was now at Oxford, and, having passed a dreary time of it with his old aunt, was in a condition to appreciate his return to college and to the society of his friends. Certainly his spirits rose. When I wrote to him touching the ball at Hevoir, instead of replying in the despondent strain he had assumed of late, he answered, with gay impudence, that he hoped Assunta would look her very best, and take as much pains with her appearance as if he were to be present.

"What a coxcomb he is getting," said I, laughing.

She smiled rather sadly. "Is it coxcomby to speak the truth? He knows it is as he says. I should only care to look well to be seen by him."

His letters to her, of course, I never saw. He wrote constantly, and she fed upon his words in secret, quoting a passage to me now and then, but that she was not at ease concerning him I well knew. The love that enters into the heart of a woman like Assunta is not blind; it is a mistake to paint him so.

CHAPTER V.

THE night of the ball arrived at last. When Assunta appeared in the drawing-room before our departure, there was a universal exclamation. She had never looked so handsome before. She certainly never looked so handsome again. She wore the dress in which I made the sketch of her, my friend, which you possess. Some persons gain by rare clothes, carrying any unusual garments with a natural grace, as if accustomed to them. Assunta was of this number, and so was Mr. Ridgway. In its way his was, perhaps, the greatest triumph of the evening. As Louis the Fifteenth, in a dress of lemon-coloured satin and silver, with the legitimate aids of powder, rouge, and patches, he might have

passed for a man of thirty. His light figure and well-turned leg showed to great advantage in the courtly costume of that epoch of frippery, and he carried his three-cornered hat, his snuff-box, and his jewelled cane with an ease which contrasted pleasantly with the crowd of awkward cavaliers, disconsolate, and apparently much ashamed of themselves, under curly wigs, broad hats and plumes, and whose swords were always coming into disastrous propinquity with their legs.

As we entered the ball-room I heard one old lady say to another:

"That is the girl, that handsome one in the odd dress."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed the other. "How sad! How can her friends sacrifice her thus? She is very handsome."

"Yes; but her birth, you see. And she is quite dependent upon the Walbrookes. It is a very great marriage for a girl in her position to make. I know more than one who tried for it. After all, he is a charming man; there's no denying it; so much taste. And I dare say all those horrid stories are false. Depend upon it, when he is once married they will be forgotten."

I heard no more. The crowd closed between us, and I passed on. It was a brilliant pageant, the first and last sight of the kind I have ever seen. It is all before me very distinctly now. Of what use to describe it? such scenes are familiar to you; and if I had the magic power to make it rise up before your eyes it would not impress you as it did the raw youth to whom it seemed the embodiment of a hundred brilliant pictures, the figures standing out upon a rich subdued background of tapestry, carved oak, and stone.

Assunta did not dance much. She attracted a good deal of attention, as much by the rumours that were afloat as by her beauty, I doubt not. And Mr. Ridgway justified these rumours by scarcely leaving her side. If he had hesitated hitherto he did so no longer. She had been submitted to the test of public opinion, and that many-tongued voice was almost unanimous in deciding her to be not only very handsome, but unusually distinguished in carriage and manner. The fastidious "man of taste" was satisfied. I thought I read all this in the open proclamation of his devotion which he made; there could be no doubt, for there was no disguise, about the fact. Others were to be warned off these premises. Assunta was, I am sure, unconscious that her name was coupled with Mr. Ridgway's, and listened, as she always did, to him

with attention, replying sometimes with a smile, sometimes with a word, sometimes a little wearily perhaps. By-and-bye a fat, gossiping woman came up, and whispered a word or two in her ear, accompanied by shrewd nods and becks. Assunta coloured crimson, and from that moment I saw that she was ill at ease, and made an effort to get away from her admirer. She changed her seat, she consented to dance, she asked me to take her into the refreshment-room; but whenever she returned to the neighbourhood of Mrs. Walbrooke, there was Ridgway. I stood exactly opposite, where I could watch every movement of her countenance, and between us was the entrance door of the ball-room.

It was past twelve o'clock, and the revel was at its height, when, looking at Assunta, I saw her eyes fastened upon this door, through which a great crowd was streaming, with an expression of wonderment, joy, and terror, such as I could not account for. At that moment the crowd gave way a little, and I beheld Harry! Harry, whom we all believed to be a hundred miles away, and hoped was imbibing wisdom from the breast of Alma Mater. It took away my breath; but I pushed my way to him as fast as I could. Before I could reach him, however, he had joined the little group, where Assunta sat near Mrs. Walbrooke, and Mr. Walbrooke and Lena were standing. As to Mr. Ridgway, he had sauntered down the room with the cautious carelessness of a man who knows how to extricate himself from an awkward position. The reception Harry met with was characteristic of the various members of his uncle's family.

"Dear me!" cried Mrs. Walbrooke. "How very odd! Where did you spring from, Harry? And such a beautiful dress. Very becoming, too. What is it? Oh, a hunting-dress of George the First. Charming! So very nice. You didn't come in it all the way from Oxford, did you?"

"Oh, you darling duck!" exclaimed the Dresden shepherdess, jumping up, and standing on tip-toe, in an ineffectual effort to reach his cheek with her pretty lips. "How glad I am. It seems an age since we saw you. You look just like an angel in powder, going out hunting; doesn't he Assunta? How good of you to come. What fun! This is the one thing that was wanting to make the ball perfect."

Assunta said nothing. I thought he looked disappointed; yet her eyes were more eloquent than any words.

"What mad freak has brought you here,

Harry?" asked his uncle, with knit brows. "Have you got leave? If not, you will be rusticated, or get into a terrible scrape, at all events."

"No," replied Harry; "certain little circumstances prevented my getting leave, so I came off without it. I shall be able to say with truth that I did not sleep out of Oxford. You see I only miss to-morrow's prayers. I was present this morning, and set off in my tandem as soon as they were over, took the stage after five-and-twenty miles, which brought me a good part of the way. The remainder of the journey I performed in any rattletrap I could pick up from one village to another, until I found myself at the King's Head, close to this, an hour ago. I return in the same way, as soon as the ball is over. I calculated all the costs," added Harry, laughing, "and I thought it was worth it."

"H'm!" grunted Mr. Walbrooke; "I don't know what your calculations are like. It will cost you, or rather me, fifty pounds, if it costs a penny."

"Well, Uncle Jack, we'll set that down in the place of my whist, which you complained of. At all events, this is a harmless amusement, and will entail no worse consequences than a wiggling."

"I don't know that. I am not so sure of its being harmless," muttered the squire, but in so low a tone, that Harry, who had turned to Assunta, did not hear him. Harry bent a little over her, so that his words were inaudible; then presently he stood erect, and I heard him ask her to give him the dance which was just beginning. Mr. Walbrooke fidgeted, and looked round the room, and at the same moment Mr. Ridgway came up.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Fleming; I think this is our quadrille."

She had risen, and had actually taken Harry's arm. Mr. Ridgway smiled at Harry with a polite bow. Harry repaid it with a freezing nod. She coloured, and was sorely perplexed.

"You will excuse Miss Fleming. She has just promised me this dance," said Harry.

"She forgot that she was engaged," interrupted Mr. Walbrooke, quickly. "She cannot, of course, give up a prior engagement."

Harry, glaring and fuming on one side, Mr. Ridgway, bland but inexorable on the other, resolved not to relinquish his rights, nor yield an inch of his ground; between them Assunta looked sadly distressed. Justice was so manifestly on the one side, that

she felt she must yield, or mortally offend Mr. Walbrooke, and harm both Harry and herself perhaps irreparably. With a look of supplication up at him, she at last disengaged her arm, and placed it in Mr. Ridgway's. They walked away, and Harry's face, so beaming five minutes before, was now black as thunder. He said nothing, but his eyes followed them as they took their places in the quadrille, and his nostrils dilated as he watched the very ostentatious devotion of Assunta's partner. Now Mr. Ridgway bent down, and whispered something witty—about their vis-à-vis, perhaps—for Assunta, in spite of her annoyance, could not help smiling; now he was examining her bouquet, and telling some very long story, in that confidential manner which in itself looks like an avowal to the spectators.

Just then ill-luck brought one of Harry's numerous friends, a coarse, tactless fellow, past where we were standing. Seeing the direction in which Harry's gloomy face was turned, the man stopped, and catching hold of Harry's arm, with a laugh, cried in a hoarse whisper, which pierced through violins and clarionets, "So your nose is put out of joint in that quarter, eh, Walbrooke? I hear it's all settled. I don't envy the girl. However, that's her look out. Ha! ha!"

Harry made no reply; one would have said that he had not heard the words, but for the way in which he changed colour, and turned away sharply. The man passed on, and Harry's bitterness at last found vent in words.

"So it's a settled thing is it, Geoff? Well, it was worth coming from Oxford to know this. What a fool a man is ever to trust a woman!"

"What a fool you are, Harry, to let your jealousy blind you in this way, and to listen to the gossip of an idiot like that! There is not a word of truth in what he, or any one else, says about this."

"How do you know? She is not likely to tell you. Look at them there. No one can say there isn't some ground for the report! Why did she dance with him if she doesn't encourage him?"

"How could she help it when she was engaged? And if she had refused him at first, of course she could have danced with no one all the night."

"She should have thrown him over. If she had cared for me she would."

"And have made your uncle furious, and have done you both incalculable mischief! How foolish you are, Harry, not to

see that all your endeavour now should be to conciliate him."

"I can't say I feel much inclined to try," said Harry, between his teeth, "when I see him doing all he can to ruin my happiness. But there's no use standing here. Let us come into the supper-room, Geoff. I've had nothing to drink, and I'm as thirsty as the devil."

There was a knot of young fellows there drinking champagne, who greeted Harry very warmly (as, indeed, did every one we met). Those were the days when men did drink at country balls; I know not what they may do now; and soon, to my vexation, he was trying to drown his troubles in the bottle, and assuming a gaiety which I knew was far from real. I dreaded, and with good reason, the effect of much wine on him in his present excited state; and as I watched the wild recklessness with which he tossed off tumbler after tumbler, I hesitated whether it would not be well to fetch Mr. Walbrooke, whose remonstrances might have more weight than mine. The fear of doing more harm than good—if Harry should forget himself in speaking, as he had once done, to his uncle—deterred me; but I would not leave him, and urged him, whenever I could make myself heard, to return with me to the ball-room. A long half-hour passed thus, and it became evident to me that the wine was beginning to take effect; the dull glitter of the eye told its tale; the hand that raised the glass was less steady.

"Why were you not out with us, yesterday, Walbrooke?" said a man who had just come in. "A glorious run of five-and-forty minutes without a check."

"He wasn't here. He was having an inglorious run—away from Oxford," laughed another.

"Oh! Ah! by-the-bye, I heard Ridgway say just now——"

"What did you hear him say?" asked Harry, fiercely.

"Oh! he was only chaffing, in that sarcastic way of his, about your being packed off to school, a month ago, for getting screwed—and that, now you had run away, your uncle was going to send the naughty little boy back to get a whipping."

"He said that, did he?" Harry ground his teeth. "Some one else will get a d—d good whipping, I can tell him, if he doesn't look out."

"Oh! he was only joking, my dear fellow."

"I will teach Mr. Ridgway not to joke

about me," cried Harry, filling his glass again.

"Take care, Walbrooke. Though he's such an effeminate-looking fellow, I'm told he is not to be trifled with. They say that he really killed a man in Italy."

"If he did, it was behind his back!" and Harry gave a contemptuous laugh. "He has not pluck to stand up in a fair fight, or I'd have a round with him in the court-yard. A sneaking scoundrel, who palavers one to one's face, and stabs one with his tongue when one isn't present to give him the lie!"

It was at this moment that Assunta entered the room upon Ridgway's arm. The quadrille had been long since over, and Assunta, who, during the dance, had caught sight of Harry's lowering face from time to time in the crowd, and had then suddenly missed it, had sat down, as I afterwards learnt from her, a prey to serious anxiety about him. Where was he? Why did he not come to her? Surely he was not so unreasonable as not to forgive her for leaving him? And where was Mr. Walbrooke? She prayed to Heaven that he and Harry might be having no altercation! This nervous terror at last got the better of every other consideration. She would sooner have asked any one in the room to give her an arm than Mr. Ridgway; but no one else was near, and she could bear this suspense no longer. Under the pretext that she wanted a glass of water, she asked him to take her through the rooms. No doubt Mr. Ridgway divined the cause of this sudden thirst; and perhaps a shrewd suspicion of where and how they would find Harry made him nothing loth to assist in the search.

"Ah! here is our young friend," he whispered, as they entered the supper-room. "Very jovial, I see, wine-cup in hand. He should have come as Bacchus; only wants the thyrsus and ivy-wreath. And such an abundant flow of words, too! He might have played the part of his own magpie. The magpie, you know, Miss Fleming, was dedicated to the god of wine."

"Mr. Ridgway," said Harry, advancing with no very steady gait, and with a flaming face, "will you be good enough to repeat before me what you have been saying of me behind my back?"

"Harry, Harry! for Heaven's sake!" murmured Assunta.

"Perhaps you will reconduct Miss Fle-

ming to the ball-room, and then meet me in the court-yard to give me this explanation," continued Harry.

Mr. Ridgway shrugged his shoulders, with a smile.

"I have none to give, my dear young gentleman. I paid you a pretty compliment just now, in saying you were god-like, with that wine-cup in your hand. Bacchus was a gentleman—it was only his satyrs who were boisterous and vulgar," added Mr. Ridgway, with a little drawl.

"You have been turning me into ridicule, then, for Miss Fleming's amusement, also, have you?" roared Harry, who was now fairly beside himself.

"Harry, dear Harry! pray——" supplicated Assunta, taking his arm; but it seemed as if her voice, on this occasion, only maddened him the more.

"I am like Bacchus—am I? There shall be one point of resemblance the less very quickly. The wine shall no longer be in my hand. I'll make you a present of it."

And so saying, he raised his arm, and would have dashed the champagne full in Mr. Ridgway's face, but that the glass was struck from his hand at the same moment, and shivered on the floor. A few drops only did, in their transit, reach the sleeve of Mr. Ridgway's yellow satin coat. It was Mr. Walbrooke, who, in the very nick of time, had arrived on the scene to avert what must have led to a terrible catastrophe. Alas! would it not have been better to have let Fate work her will then, instead of holding her hand for a time? We, in our short-sightedness, regarded it then as a mercy: I cannot do so now.

That scene is before me still; Harry, like some wild animal held at bay, between Assunta and Mr. Walbrooke; Ridgway, with admirable coolness, wiping the splashes from his sleeve with a laced handkerchief, the circle of silent spectators—I see it all. The mad boy was at length dragged away by his uncle and Assunta; vociferating loudly, and calling upon Mr. Ridgway to fight him, when and where he liked. I thought it better to stay, and plead what extenuation I could for Harry.

"Our young friend," said Mr. Ridgway, with a light laugh, in reply to my excuse that a little wine quite turned Harry's head, and rendered him unaccountable for his actions, "our young friend has not studied drinking as a fine art. Do you remember what Rabelais says? 'Boyre simplement et ab-

solument . . . aussy bien boyvent les bestes.' This young gentleman may be said to drink 'absolument,' eh? much as the carps do. 'Twere vain to expect much more self-control in him than in them."

"I hope you will forgive him, Mr. Ridgway," I said.

"Oh, dear, yes;" but though he smiled, there was an expression in his eye which struck me unpleasantly, and which I thought of long after. "Not that he will apologise, Mr. Luttrell. A man needs to be a gentleman to own himself in the wrong. But I am glad he did not throw the wine in my face, because I suppose the conventional laws of society would have obliged me to call him out, which I had rather not do. As it is—suppose we have some of this *aspic de volaille*? I declare I am quite hungry."

In the course of time Mr. Walbrooke rejoined us.

"Ridgway," he began, "I am more grieved and ashamed of my nephew's conduct than I can express to you. I believe I have brought him to some sense of shame, himself. At all events, when he is really sober (which he will not be for some time), I feel sure that he will deplore his behaviour this evening. If I did not know you to be one of the kindest and most forbearing of men, I should not know how to ask you to return with us to the Grange. Our scapegrace, however, will not be there—he returns to Oxford at once."

"He will not shake hands with me, I suppose?" Mr. Ridgway smiled sweetly. "He will not afford me the gratification of forgiving him? Well, well, my dear Walbrooke, he is right. He knows the bitter farce of that inducement to forgive a man, 'by so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.' Though scriptural, not quite charitable, eh? Who can be expected to empty the coal-box on his own head? No, the least said in this matter the soonest mended; and when Master Harry and I next meet, it will be quite forgotten."

The squire said little more on the subject, but began to talk of going home: it was two o'clock, and Lena was amused to late hours, and Mrs. Walbrooke was tired, and it was a cold night—and—in short, a number of transparent prettexts for avoiding the possibility of another collision between the belligerents. The poor little shepherdess, who was ignorant of all that had been going on, was in despair at the summons, being engaged for the next two dances; but no one ever attempted to

appeal against a fiat of Mr. Walbrooke's. I volunteered to look for Miss Fleming, while the squire sent his servant to the stables for the carriage; but I had not proceeded far on my search, before Harry's uncle overtook me.

"Mr. Luttrell, I cannot trust myself to speak to that boy again to-night. His conduct has exasperated me beyond endurance. Over and above his insolence to Mr. Ridgway, he has thought fit to question *my* conduct in a way I will not stand. He chooses to fancy himself in love with Miss Fleming, and to resent the fact of any one else's paying her any attention. Now I wish you to convey this message to him from me. Until he promises me that this absurd folly shall cease, I do not mean him to return to the Grange. I will not be subject to a recurrence of such scenes as to-night's—or such insolence as obliged me to send him from the Grange. When he can behave himself properly, and will express some contrition for his conduct, I will receive him, and not before. He has his allowance, and can spend the vacation where he pleases. Be good enough to tell him that from me."

I found them together in a deserted room at the end of the suite, standing by an open window. It was a clear frosty night, which, under ordinary circumstances, would not have invited the admission of more air than necessary. But Assunta, regardless of herself, had opened the window; for Harry's head was burning, and she believed that the keen sharpness of the night would restore him sooner than anything. What had passed between them, I knew not, but that he had forgotten all his jealous suspicions of her, was clear. Their hands were linked together, and they stood there like two sorrowful children, silent, with the traces of tears upon their cheeks, looking out into the deep peaceful sky, lit by its myriad stars.

"You are summoned, Miss Fleming," I said, "and you and Harry had better say good-bye here, for the squire does not wish to see him again to-night. If you remain here, Harry, I will return to you, and find my way back to the Grange somehow."

Poor young hearts! Had either of them a foreboding of the future when they bade each other that farewell? I only know that Assunta's face was white and rigid as

the face of death when she joined me in the next room—for I had sauntered away from them. She said not a word. We found Mrs. Walbrooke in the bustle of cloaking. Ten minutes afterwards they drove off, and I returned to Harry. We had a long conversation, which it is needless to repeat here. I told him, as gently as I could, the substance of his uncle's words, and implored him to exercise a little discretion in his communications with Mr. Walbrooke. The squire was greatly incensed, I said, and infinite tact would be required to adjust matters; one false step, one hasty letter, might prove irreparable.

He was sober enough now, and seemed heartily ashamed, less of his behaviour to Ridgway than of having unjustly suspected Assunta, and of having allowed himself to be drunk in her presence. "I suppose," he said sadly, "the doors of the old house will be shut against me now for a time. I will write nothing, if I can help it, to offend my uncle: I promise you, Geoff, to be discreet, and on paper I think I can be, better than in talking. But if he expects," he added, with a rekindling of the old fiery pride, "if he expects that I am going to truckle to him for his money, if he expects to get any promise out of me about Assunta, he is mistaken. I will never say or do anything to lead him to suppose that I give her up. It's as much as I shall be able to do to keep silent, knowing that that scoundrel is constantly near her, and that it is my uncle's doing."

I walked with him, under the star-lit sky, to the King's Head; I helped him to stuff his fine clothes into a valise, and don something more suitable to a journey through England in this nineteenth century. Then a dog-cart came round to the indoor: Harry wrung my hand, jumped on the seat, and drove away in the frosty night; the lamps sending weird lights upon the hedge, on either side, which were visible for half a mile along the straight and level road.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN PORT," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER IX. SPRETEZ INJURIA FORMÆ.

THE revelation which Mrs. Entwistle made to Gerald Hardinge of the relationship in which she stood towards him, was as gratifying as it was unexpected. For not merely was he fond of the woman to whom he owed his pleasant position in life, with that real affection which springing from gratitude is one of the purest of human passions, but, worldly philosopher as he was, he found in the announcement a balm for certain stings of conscience which had occasionally pricked him.

The fact was, that of late there had risen in Gerald Hardinge's mind a doubt whether the easy and luxurious life he was then leading, provided for by the kindness of one upon whom he had no claim of kinship, was either an honourable or a desirable one. It was all very well at first, when the circumstances of the position were widely different. Then, smarting under a sense of degradation at his treatment by Madge Pierrepont, he had cared little what became of him; and when he found that the patron by whom his earliest pictures were bought, and to whom the London agent introduced him immediately on his arrival, was an old lady instead of an old gentleman, as he had been led to believe, he felt it mattered but little for whom he worked, so long as he obtained adequate remuneration. The use to which the money thus acquired was to be put, varied according to his temperament. At one time he determined to spend it in searching for Madge and inducing her to reconsider her

cruel determination; at another he would decide to finally abandon any further thought of his quondam sweetheart, and only hope that some day, seeing him in his glory, she might be able to form some idea of what she had lost by her treacherous conduct.

Then came the time when taking up his abode in Mrs. Entwistle's house (temporarily, as it was understood, for the purpose of elaborating some drawings under her personal superintendence), he gradually suffered Madge to fade out of his thoughts, and becoming by degrees accustomed to his new life, taught himself the facile creed, that Art is a coy goddess, declining to appear whenever she may be invoked, and only rendering herself visible at certain times and seasons, not to be calculated upon beforehand. This meant, of course, nothing more nor less than that being brought into constant contact with nothing-doing people, with time and money at their disposal, Gerald had become inoculated with the charm of the lives they led, and that he only resorted to his canvas and brushes in default of more pleasant pastime. In this idleness he was encouraged by Mrs. Entwistle, who gradually inducted him into the position of her representative during her lifetime, her heir after her death, and by the examples of his companions, who could not understand any other mode of life than that which they led.

Nevertheless, from time to time a feeling of shame crept over him as he remembered how actively he had been engaged at his outset in life, when his very existence depended on his own exertions, and when he contrasted the hard-won independence of those days with the purposeless and easy life which he now led. And so far had those

feelings wrought upon him, that he had come to a resolution, the first-fruits of which were visible in his remonstrance with Mrs. Entwistle, against her declared intention of leaving him all her property.

A naturally indolent young man, who has for some time been accustomed to have all his wishes fulfilled without any cost or trouble to himself, is, however, a bad subject for self-reform, and it is probable that Gerald Hardinge would have salved his conscience with the fact of his kinship to his benefactor being sufficient excuse for his position in her house, had not his mind been entirely taken up with another subject springing out of the same revelation. His mother! Here at last was an opportunity for which he had sought so often when first driven from his father's roof, but which of late years he had completely forgotten, of endeavouring to learn the history of his mother's early married life, and of ridding her memory of the stigma attached to it by his father. That, if it could be carried out, would be something, indeed, to live for, and Gerald determined on learning how far Mrs. Entwistle could help him in his research on the first available opportunity.

On the morning of the day after that on which he dined with Doctor Asprey, Gerald went for his usual ride, and asking on his return after Mrs. Entwistle, was surprised to learn that she had risen, and had been wheeled into the boudoir, according to her usual custom.

"She had been perfectly quiet through the night," Willis observed, and declared "that she felt no worse than usual from the sharp attack on the previous evening." In her boudoir, at the window overlooking the park, Gerald found her. Her back was towards the door, but she recognised his footstep at once, and there was a smile on her face as he stooped down to kiss her forehead.

"You are none the worse for last night's attack, Willis tells me," said Gerald, tenderly.

"By some extraordinary and inexplicable accident, Willis is right," said Mrs. Entwistle; "either my system is becoming so accustomed to attacks that I am beginning to thrive upon them, as some persons are said to do upon poisons, or what would have been the ill effects of the shock last night were counteracted by the excessive amount of amusement which I experienced."

"Amusement?"

"Amusement, and created by you, or rather by the conversation which we had. I cannot imagine anything more utterly ridiculous, except upon the stage, than our talk last evening and its climax, though I am afraid I spoiled the effect of that by my unfortunate want of strength! I ought to have risen from the sofa, and flinging my arms open for you to rush into, exclaimed, 'Behold your long lost aunt!' But there is something in the very name and character of 'aunt,' which would render any attempt at romance impossible in the most determined heroine, to say nothing of such a very matter-of-fact person as myself."

"I am glad you were amused," said Gerald, quietly. "You had the advantage, you see, of being acquainted with all the hidden mystery, and of enjoying my surprise at its announcement. For my own part my feelings were not entirely of an amused character."

"You surely did not find anything to be sentimental over in the discovery of your aunt?" said Mrs. Entwistle, looking at him maliciously.

"No," replied Gerald, "but my aunt, if you recollect, spoke of my mother."

"Ah, you were fond of your mother, I believe?"

"Fond of her," echoed Gerald; "she was your sister, you say? Were you not fond of her?"

"No," said Mrs. Entwistle, quietly. "At one time, yes; but for many years before her death, certainly not. Fondness for people is a mistake which one grows out of in years; the last person I was fond of was myself, but that delusion died away long since."

"And yet you are fond of me?" said Gerald.

"A weakness of old age, my dear," said Mrs. Entwistle, "and one which, having so few, I can afford to encourage."

Gerald noticed and appreciated the tones in which these words were uttered.

"It seems to me so strange that any one could have disliked my mother," said he, half unconsciously.

"I didn't positively dislike her," said Mrs. Entwistle. "My feelings towards her were of a negative character. I didn't like her, and I had my reasons!"

"From what you said last night, you must also have had your reasons for disliking my father!"

"I had my reasons for hating your father!" said Mrs. Entwistle, with sudden energy, "and I have them still. There

was never much of the angel in my composition, but what little there was, he obliterated. What I might have been had I not met Geoffrey Heriot, I know not; but that I am as I am, cynical, hard, unforgiving, and unbelieving, is his work?"

"You still continue to make me half-confidences," said Gerald; "to speak to me of results without explaining the causes. Why not tell me about my father and yourself in early life, and the story of what he did to make you hate him so cordially?"

"You are afflicted with an insatiable curiosity, my dear Gerald, and, after my announcement to you of last evening, seem to look upon me as a kind of mystery-monger, with constantly startling surprises in store. As you are pleased to ask for a story, I do not know that mine would satisfy you: it would be merely the narration of a sufficiently ordinary set of incidents, with perhaps a somewhat uncommon dénouement (that I think is the correct word), and I must again apologise for my weakness, which prevents my pulling my chair and sitting down close by you in the true dramatic manner."

"If the story, or whatever you choose to call it, concerns my mother, it is sure to have interest for me," said Gerald, earnestly, purposely ignoring the latter portion of Mrs. Entwistle's speech.

"It concerns your father more than your mother," said Mrs. Entwistle; "but I think you will find that, like most persons who get an opportunity of narration, I make myself the principal heroine of the adventures. Why I permitted any further reference to the subject at all," she added, after a pause, "I cannot understand, except it is that you seem interested, and it may be as well to let the real facts of the case be known while I am capable of stating them; but please let it be perfectly understood, that this is nothing in the light of a death-bed confession, or, indeed, of a repentance of any kind. What I did was done with my eyes open, and I am not sure that it would not be repeated exactly in the same way, under similar circumstances."

Gerald marked her rising colour and flashing eyes.

"Will not the excitement of talking be too much for you?" he said, bending over her, and taking her hand.

"No," she replied, with a half-laugh; "you have brought it upon yourself, and must now go through with it. Only I should like my hand to remain in yours while you listen to me."

"You were too young during your mother's lifetime to have understood anything about this, even if she had chosen to tell you; so I will begin at the beginning. She and I were the only children of a man high up in one of the government offices. Our mother died when we were quite little tots (there was but a year's difference between my sister and myself), and my only recollection of her is in connexion with a big oil-painting, where she was represented looking on in simpering delight at her children gambolling with a big black retriever dog, while her husband loaded a gun in the background. All this, with the exception of the black dog, was the result of pure imagination on the part of the artist. Our mother never had health enough to look after us in our play-time, and our father certainly never loaded or fired a gun in his life. He was a small, studious man of a scientific turn, who cordially hated his official work, save for the money which it brought to him, and who passed all his leisure in making chemical experiments.

"Nor do I remember that there was ever the amount of affection between your mother and myself, indicated by the entwined arms and loving glances in the family portrait. At the time of the execution of that wonderful work of art, we were both plain children, though of a different plainness. Your mother's hair was light, her features heavy, her figure squab and clumsy, whereas my hair was black, my complexion sallow, and my limbs thin and ungainly. We had but little in common even then; she was sluggish and apathetic, I impulsive and intolerant. As we grew up together, our characters remained pretty much as they had been, but as regards outward appearance, not merely did each improve wonderfully, but there was found to be a great amount of similarity between us. We were exactly of the same height; my figure had filled out until it closely resembled your mother's; our walk, our mode of carrying ourselves, our accustomed gestures, were exactly the same; we usually dressed alike, and the general resemblance, even to the voices, was so great, that to tell which was Miss Emma and which Miss Florence, was pronounced impossible, unless our faces were plainly visible.

"When we were respectively seventeen and eighteen years old our father died, leaving just enough to keep us and no more, and recommending us to the tender

mercy of his sister, a maiden lady, who lived at Stonechester. She was a pleasant, kindly old woman, and accepted the charge thus bequeathed to her in the most affectionate spirit, although the addition of two young women to her modest little household must have greatly deranged her comfort. Miss Hastings was highly thought of in the cathedral society to which her nieces were at first voted a charming addition. I am bound to say that your mother always retained the good opinion of these humdrum folk, which, for my part, I speedily lost; I used to quiz the canons, and curates, and all the rest of them, and flirted unmercifully with the military men who occasionally drifted into our midst from Chatham and Brompton barracks.

"One night, I recollect it as well as if it were yesterday, there was a little musical party at the Deanery. At first I did not intend to go, thinking it would be dull and prosy; but I was over-persuaded, and I went. We were a little late, and on our arrival found that the singing had already commenced. A man's voice, strange to me then, but from that hour never forgotten, was sighing forth the last notes of Edgar Ravenswood's farewell to his lost love. We stood spell-bound. I have heard this air sung by all the great tenors of my time, better and more accurately sung, doubtless, but never with the same effect. The voice we listened to then was low and clear, but its speciality was the wonderfully sympathetic quality of its tones; the heart-broken despair trembling in every note of the lover's wail. When the air was concluded there was a burst of applause, unusually loud for that decorous assemblage; and as we entered the room I saw the hostess warmly congratulating a gentleman, whom I rightly imagined to be the singer.

"There was nothing particularly remarkable in his appearance, save that he wore a moustache, or, as it was then called, "a pair of moustachios," an ornament rarely cultivated by Englishmen. He was of average height, with dark eyes and flowing dark hair; a trim figure and dainty hands and feet. His age must have been about eight-and-thirty, for though considerably younger than the dean, of whom he was some distant connexion, he had been for a short time contemporary with him both at Harrow and Cambridge. Since his university days Mr. Yeldham, that was his name, had principally resided abroad, having an independence of his own, and being devoted

to music and painting, both of which arts he practised as an amateur. After a little time he was asked to sing again, and I was introduced to him to act as his accompanist. This time choosing a simple English ballad—one of Dibdin's I remember—he created even a greater amount of enthusiasm, and when he bent down to thank me for my assistance, I felt that a new era in my life had begun.

"How absurd it must seem to you to hear me, an old woman, talking in this strain! I myself see the absurdity of it, and yet I can perfectly recollect the glamour which possessed me, the beatific state in which I lived when in that man's company! You must try and picture me to yourself as I was, not as I am, if you would realise all I have to say. He seemed pleased with me, and sat by me for some time. When we left the piano, he inquired who 'the pretty fair girl was,' at the same time indicating my sister, and I introduced him to her, and they chatted; she being sufficiently roused by him to put some animation into her countenance during their conversation. Meanwhile, I sat by, fascinated, enraptured, drinking in every word that he said. He asked permission to call, and came the next day; and when he took his leave, my aunt, who usually had a holy horror of strangers, declared him to be the most delightful man she had ever seen. He came again and again, practised music with us, gave us drawing lessons, showed us sketches of his own, and seemed never so happy, never so much at his ease, as when with us. I say with 'us' advisedly, for he scarcely spoke more to one than to the other, though I saw, or fancied I saw, that if he had a preference, it was for my sister.

"The mere notion of that made me mad, for I loved him already; and she had not heart enough, or energy enough, to love anything but her fine clothes and her bed. She seemed surprised when I asked her if she had no special liking for him, and answered 'No' with exemplary frankness.

"After a fortnight of this kind of life, Mr. Yeldham went away, to stay with some friends to whom he had promised himself, before coming to Stonechester. He said 'Good-bye' to us, and declared that he would soon return; but the pleasure which I felt at this intimation was checked by observing the deep earnest glance with which he regarded my sister as he spoke; depth and earnestness to which she certainly did not respond, even if, as I very much doubt, she perceived them.

"Edward Yeldham went, and took my heart away with him. Two well-known dashing regiments had come into barracks at Chatham, and that was the liveliest winter that Stonechester had known for years; but I seemed to have lost all my old zest for flirtation, and was actually pining after a man who had never spoken words of more than ordinary friendship to me! I sat out dances, and gave idiotic answers when addressed, and was so dull and distraite that people began to say that Emma and Florence Hastings had changed characters. There was some truth in this, for my sister, who had listened unmoved to the dulcet tones of Edward Yeldham, and been not merely untouched by them, but unconscious of the fervent looks of admiration in his great dreamy eyes, was in love at last! In love with a thin little man, with the figure of a ramrod, and the voice of a drill-sergeant!

"This was Major Heriot, who came over to one of our county balls from Brompton barracks, where he was staying with some Indian military friends, and who, in his dry, bamboo kind of manner, seemed taken with Emma. 'He was a mighty warrior,' they told her, and had killed many black men; and on the strength of this, she fell down and worshipped him at once. He had money, which made the courtship very smooth; he was not a man to do anything hurriedly, but in due course of time he proposed, and was accepted. Between his proposal and their marriage, Mr. Yeldham came back to Stonechester. He came to Stonechester, and to our house, at a time when I was the only one at home. I saw him: had I had any doubt of his love for Emma—and I had none—I should have known it by the expression of his face, by the tone of his voice, when he asked me if the news he had heard was true, and if he had to congratulate me upon my sister's engagement. When I told him 'Yes,' he muttered some vague politeness, and speedily changed the subject. 'He had only looked in at Stonechester,' he said, 'on his way to Dover; he was going abroad again for some little time. He should not be back until long after my sister's marriage. Would I remember him very kindly to her,' and—he was gone.

"With such proofs of Mr. Yeldham's love for my sister, my pride should, of course, have taught me to give up the worship with which I had regarded him, and to cast out his image from the place which it occupied in my thoughts. Did

I do this? Not the least in the world. I had seen him. I had listened to him once again, and I was more madly in love with him than ever; besides, I had little fear of rivalry. I was innocent in those days, and I thought that by my sister's marriage, she, my only obstacle, would be removed from my path, and that Edward Yeldham, with his eyes open to my devotion to him, would ask me to become his wife.

"Emma was married. On her wedding-day came, as a present, a set of handsome coral ornaments, with Mr. Yeldham's card, bearing some address in Palermo pencilled on it, inside the case. That was all that was heard of him until some three months after, when, one spring afternoon, he called at the house which the Heriots were then occupying in London. I was staying with them at the time, and carefully marked his manner; I had opportunities of doing so, for he was asked to dinner, and became a frequent visitor at the house. On a subsequent occasion of his being in Mrs. Heriot's company, I saw the fatal mistake which I had made in imagining that her marriage would cure him of his infatuation. Nothing could be more respectful than his manner to her. I firmly believe from the hour of his first introduction to her at the Deanery, to the day of his death, he never addressed to her one word of what the world calls gallantry; but neither his eyes nor the tones of his voice were under his control, and I knew that his worship of Emma was as devoted as ever.

"Major Heriot saw it also; he chafed under this man's constant presence and evident admiration of Mrs. Heriot. He spoke to Emma about it, and she, who thought that the sun shone out of her husband's small grey eyes (you have better eyes than your father, Gerald), came to me full of incredulous laughter, declaring that the whole thing was a mistake, and that Mr. Yeldham's visits were entirely on my account, as she had told the major! I did not contradict her; all I cared for was to see him, to be thrown into his society, to soothe myself in the light of his eyes and with the music of his voice. After all, I was in one sense safe from my rival now. I knew Edward Yeldham's sense of honour, knew that whatever he might feel, the fact of her marriage was sufficient to prevent him ever making love to her, and felt sure that I should one day gain him for myself.

"Very shortly after that affair came a

crisis, unexpected, and far different from anything I had believed or hoped. One evening after a small dinner-party at my sister's, Mr. Yeldham and I were seated in the conservatory; he was talking hypothetically and of a third person, as it afterwards transpired, in a way which led me, maddened as I was by my love for him, to believe that he was pleading his own cause; and on his pausing for a moment, I said something equivalent to an acceptance of his suit. That was the most painful moment of my life, but it was more painful almost for him than for me. I shall never forget how gently and yet how completely he showed me my error, leaving me no straw of hope to cling to. 'I was young,' he said, 'and had my life before me; he was doomed to celibacy and solitude, but while there could never be anything between us stronger than friendship, there was no reason why that friendship should not be most deep and most lasting!' I agreed to this. I gave him my hand upon the bargain, and, as I gave it him, I wished that it had been dagger-armed that I might have slain him where I stood, for I hated him from the bottom of my heart!

"I avoided Mr. Yeldham when he called at the house after that episode, and I suppose four or five months elapsed before I saw him again. He reappeared in September at Baden, where I was staying with the Heriots, and my quick eyes soon showed me that his devotion to Emma had undergone no change. To me his manner was more attentive, more cordial, than it had ever been before. He seemed to feel that we understood each other, and that no misconstruction could be placed upon our relations. My cordiality was seemingly as great as his, but in my heart I hated him, and my one longing was for revenge upon him. This revenge I soon found means to gratify!

"Two days after Mr. Yeldham's appearance, Emma told me that Major Heriot's jealousy was again aroused, and I took care that it should have enough to feed on— Shall I go on? You loved your mother, Gerald, and you will hate me when you hear the rest."

"Go on if you please; it is for my mother's sake that I ask you to proceed."

"As you will," said Mrs. Entwistle, with a slight shrug of her shoulders. "As I said before, I have no feeling of repentance for my actions then. Major Heriot was jealous, and I fed the flame of his jealousy by anonymous letters, and by a device which I could carry

out unsuspected. My sister would suffer, it is true, but I had little sisterly feeling for her. I do not think I ever thought of her in the matter; all I thought of was revenge upon the man who had slighted me in my love. Mixed up with this was a feeling that if I could make myself useful to him, make him thoroughly depend on me, I might win him again! You cannot understand the coexistence of two such feelings, but you are not a woman!

"At last I thought I saw my way to carrying out this idea. A grand ball was to be given at a French banker's, to which no one was to be admitted except in mask and domino, the supper hour being named for the period of identification, when disguise was to be laid aside. Invitations were sent to the Heriots and myself, and accepted by all; but, acting on the advice of an anonymous letter, written by me in the same hand and style as those previously sent to him, Major Heriot pleaded illness just before the time of starting, and begged us to go alone. The anonymous letter told him that he would that night have an opportunity of observing Mr. Yeldham's conduct towards his wife. Mr. Yeldham's dress he knew, as he had had a hand in its selection; Mrs. Heriot and Miss Hastings would be dressed in similar dominoes, black with rose edgings. And as the ladies were exactly alike in height and figure, he must, if he would keep an eye of observation on his wife, be careful to remember the sole distinguishing mark; which was, that she would wear a small lavender colored bow sewn on the hood of her domino, whereas her sister's would be perfectly plain.

"When the carriage, containing only my sister and myself, drove up to the door of the hotel where the ball was given, she alighted first; and as she was getting out, I securely pinned to the hood of my own domino the lavender bow which I had provided for the purpose. We were both masked, as was every one else, but we were soon joined by Mr. Yeldham, whose dress we recognised at once, and by other friends. I managed to draw Mr. Yeldham apart from the others, and quickly perceived that our movements were watched by a small active figure in a black domino. I danced two consecutive dances with my companion, and afterwards, under the pretext of suffering from heat, asked him to take me into the conservatory, where we seated ourselves in a position where our every movement could be seen by the frequent loungers in the passage at the end, whither, however, the sound of our voices could not reach. No

sooner were we seated, than I marked the slight figure in the black domino intently regarding us. I talked with great animation, though, purposely, in a low tone, and seemed to inspire my companion. I reminded him of some story of private theatricals, with which he had amused me when in London, and asked him to repeat it. He acted the scene which he described, and in so doing, he took my hand and bent over me as though addressing me in the most fervent manner. At that moment, with one upward glance, I saw the man in the domino turn away and disappear; then I knew that my revenge on the man that had slighted me was about to be accomplished."

"Good God!" cried Gerald, "I see it all now!"

"Stay and hear me out. I was about to meet some friends in Switzerland, and had arranged to start at a very early hour that morning. On our arrival at home, Mrs. Heriot was surprised to find that her husband had just gone out. He did not return until he had shot Edward Yeldham, in the full belief that he was Mrs. Heriot's lover."

"But could not my mother prove—"

"What? and to whom could she appeal? To me, you will say, to prove that I, and not she, was the person addressed in the conservatory? I was far away by that time, and the letter which she wrote failed to reach me."

"But the domino—Sir Geoffry—my father—knew that the woman who was in the conservatory wore a lavender bow in her domino hood?"

"That lavender bow was in the hood of Mrs. Heriot's domino when she produced it to convince her husband of his error! I myself pinned it there as she rested on my shoulder on our way back from the ball."

Mrs. Entwistle paused, and looked up at Gerald, expecting an outburst of wrath.

But the tears were in his eyes as he muttered in a broken voice:

"My poor darling! my poor darling! how she must have suffered! Thank God, her innocence can now be proved!"

AN OLD HAMPSHIRE FAMILY.

If their claims of long descent be well founded, the Tichbornes of Tichborne lorded it in Hampshire long before the advent of William the Norman, and were masters of the manor bearing their name when Alfred ruled the land. Trussel says the name is a contraction of De Itchen-

bourne, another writer that it is a corrupt form of Ticeburn. Be this as it may, a Sir Roger de Tichborne built the northern aisle of the village church in the reign of Henry the First. In that of the second king of the name, there lived another Sir Roger, a daring, valiant knight, but an illiberal one withal. When his wife, Mabell, lay upon her death-bed, she was seized with a desire to keep her memory green by bequeathing a dole of bread for yearly distribution to the poor upon the feast of the Annunciation. The master of Tichborne did not care to cross his dying wife, but in the same churlish spirit as actuated Godiva's lord, took all grace from his consent by the condition he imposed. In order to limit his liability, Sir Roger stipulated his lady's bequest should be confined to the annual proceeds of so much of his land as she could travel round unaided, while a certain billet of wood was burning. The infirm dame was carried to a corner of a field and laid upon the ground until the brand was fairly kindled; then she rose and started upon her race against time, crawling at such a pace, and displaying such staying qualities, that her dismayed husband wondered when she would cry, "Hold!—enough!" Stop she did at last, but not before she had won some goodly acres for her death-bed fancy, and performed a feat of pedestrianship so extraordinary, that the scene of it has ever since been known as "The Crawls." This achieved, Lady Mabell was carried back to her chamber, and all the family summoned to hear her last words of prophetic warning. So long as the terms of her hardly-won bequest were strictly carried out would the Tichbornes prosper, but should any of the race attempt to discontinue or divert Lady Mabell's benefaction, his covetousness would entail the extinction of his house; an event to be foreshadowed by a generation of seven sons being succeeded by a generation of seven daughters and no son. So the Lady Day distribution of twenty-six ounce loaves to all comers was founded, and the Tichborne Dole became a Hampshire institution.

County honours were not unknown to the earlier Tichbornes. In three several years in the reign of Edward the Second, Sir John Tichborne served as sheriff of the county of Southampton: besides being a member of parliament, a justice-itinerant, and castellan of the king's castle of Old Sarum. In 1487, the shrievalty was again filled by a John Tichborne. In 1522, Nicholas Tichborne acted as one of the commissioners for collecting the subsidy in aid of

the Duke of Suffolk's army in France, and thirty years afterwards we find a Nicholas Tichborne in the office of sheriff. When England became a Protestant country, the Tichbornes held fast to the old faith, and some of them got into trouble thereby. In 1583, a Mr. Tichborne was subjected to an examination, touching his having departed beyond seas and returned home with certain Popish relics. In 1585, a Nicholas Tichborne, of Hampshire, excused himself for not doing his part in raising light horse for her majesty's service—a penalty attached to nonconformity—on the ground of lack of means, he being a younger brother, and the son of a younger brother, and already in custody for recusancy. The following year saw a member of the old family in custody for a much more grievous offence; nothing less than the conspiring with other "wicked and devilish youths" to murder Elizabeth, bring in foreign invasion, deliver the Queen of Scots, sack the City of London, rob and destroy all the wealthy subjects of the realm, set fire to all the queen's ships, cloy all the great ordnance, to kill the Lord Treasurer, Secretary Walsingham, Sir Ralph Sadler, and Sir Amias Paulett, and to subvert religion and the whole state of government.

Young, handsome, gifted, eager to enjoy life, and rich enough to do so, it was an unlucky hour for Chidiok Tichborne when Jesuit Ballard persuaded his friend Babington to turn conspirator. "Before this thing chanced," said the victim of ill-placed friendship, "we lived together in the most flourishing estate; of whom went report in the Strand, in Fleet-street, and elsewhere about London, but of Babington and Tichborne? No threshold was of force to brave our entry. Thus we lived and wanted nothing we could wish for, and God knows what less in my head than matters of state affairs!" Babington confided his mad plans to Tichborne, and he, while refusing to be a dealer in the affair, kept his friend's counsel, and "so consented." While Babington and his fellows, wise in their own conceit, fancied the crown of England lay at their disposing, wily Walsingham had thrown his net around them, ready to haul them to death when the fitting moment came. Arraigned for high treason, Chidiok Tichborne at first pleaded not guilty, but afterwards admitted his complicity in the plots, and was condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered; a sentence executed in all its horrid details in Lincoln's-inn-fields. Before paying the penalty of his

crime, the unhappy conspirator addressed his "dear countrymen," warning them not to be led away by a too generous friendship as he had been, and asking their pity. "My sorrows may be your joy, yet mix your smiles with tears, and pity my case. I am descended from a house from two hundred years before the Conquest, never stained till this my misfortune. I have a wife, and one child—my wife, Agnes, my dear wife, and there's my grief; and my sisters left in my hand; my poor servants, their master being taken, are dispersed, for all which I do most heartily grieve!" In his *Curiosities of Literature*, D'Israeli quotes a pathetic letter of leave-taking written by Tichborne to his young wife, and some verses composed by him in the Tower the night before he "perished with all the blossoms of life and genius about him, in the May-time of his existence." What this prison poem was like may be seen from the following stanzas:

My prime of youth is but a frost of cares,

My feast of joy is but a dish of pain,

My crop of corn is but a field of tares,

And all my goods is but vain hope of gain.

The day is fled, and yet I saw no sun,

And now I live, and now my life is done!

My spring is past, and yet it hath not sprung,

The fruit is dead, and yet the leaves are green,

My youth is past, and yet I am but young,

I saw the world, and yet I was not seen.

My thread is cut, and yet it is not spun,

And now I live, and now my life is done!

Among the prisoners in the Fleet in 1594 was one Benjamin Beard, who sought to ingratiate himself with the powers that were by betraying his co-religionists. Writing to Morgan Jones, of Gray's Inn, this precious rascal tells him that Jerome Heath, of Winchester, himself neither a recusant nor suspected for religion, was wont, in times of disturbance, to harbour such persons, and when the writer's grandmother, Mrs. Tichborne, lived, two priests, who were continually in her house, used, upon search being made, to hide at Heath's three or four days together. Beard offered to go to Winchester Castle, where his uncle, Gilbert Tichborne, and other friends remained for their convenience, and deliver them into the hands of the Lord Keeper, providing his lordship would so manage his release that his traitorous doings should not be suspected; but the shameful offer does not seem to have been accepted. In 1597, a Nicholas Tichborne was examined before Attorney-General Coke and Solicitor-General Fleming, and denied that Roger Tichborne, who kept him, ever heard any sermon in his own or

his mother's house, but he confessed his brother Thomas, a seminary priest, had said mass twice in one day in Roger's absence, for the pleasure of Mrs. Tichborne.

Although the Tichbornes, like other Catholic gentry, suffered in purse and person for their attachment to their religion, Camden goes too far in asserting that the family languished in obscurity in consequence of their Catholicism. Recusant as he was, Benjamin Tichborne, Esquire, was one of the batch of ten knights dubbed by Elizabeth at Basing in 1601. Sixteen hundred and three saw him sheriff of the county, very happily for his interests, since it afforded that opportunity which, duly seized, leads on to fortune. This opportunity was the death of the great queen. As soon as the news reached the Hampshire knight's ears, he stayed not for orders from London, but, hurrying to Winchester, at once proclaimed the accession of James the First. His ready zeal was not thrown away upon the new monarch. James gave Sir Benjamin the keepership of Winchester Castle, a post he coveted, in fee farm, with a pension of a hundred a year, for the lives of himself and his eldest son. The latter was shortly afterwards knighted at the Charterhouse, figuring among the guests at a grand entertainment given to the king there. The following year the plague drove the king from London, and he held his court of justice at Winchester, to which city officials, lawyers, peers, and courtiers soon flocked; for upon the 12th of November fifty of the county light horse, under Sir Richard Tichborne's command, rode over to Bagshot, and brought thence Sir Walter Raleigh and other gentlemen concerned in "Raleigh's Plot," who were handed over to the custody of Sir Benjamin Tichborne. The sheriff, of course, officiated at the ensuing trial, and played his part in the farce of the execution, when Cobham, Grey, and Markham were made to taste the bitterness of death before being respited. James was a frequent visitor at Tichborne. Laud records that upon the 29th of August, 1611, the king himself sat at Tichborne to hear his cause respecting the presidency of St. John's, and that day was a favourite one with James for honouring Sir Benjamin with his company; he was at Tichborne on that date in 1615, 1618, and 1623. Upon the last occasion he knighted the host's fourth son, Henry, having previously done the same office for his two other sons—the second, Walter, having been knighted

at Whitehall in 1604, and the third, Benjamin, at Tichborne, 1618, while in 1620 the head of the family had been elevated to the hundred and forty-eighth English baronetcy. Sir Benjamin enjoyed his new title nine years, dying in 1629. In the old church at Tichborne may still be seen the monument raised to his memory and to that of his wife, Amphilis, with whom he lived in inviolate affection for forty years.

Sir Benjamin's sons contrived to retain the royal favour their sire had won for the Tichbornes. His successor, Sir Richard, was sent by Charles the First on an embassy to the Queen of Bohemia, and appointed ranger of the forest of West Beare. Sir Walter married an heiress, but nevertheless was not able to keep out of monetary difficulties. In conjunction with the baronet he did a deal of business in the way of borrowing, but when the time came for paying, the brothers laughed at their creditors, being protected against all legal processes as sworn servants of the crown. In 1626, Mary Pulteney petitioned against the renewal of this protection, complaining that the Tichbornes would neither pay her nine hundred pounds they owed her, nor give reasonable security for an extension of time. They were ordered to satisfy the lady upon pain of losing their privileges, and apparently obeyed orders, for in 1637 a host of creditors prayed the king's council to stay protection until their long-standing claims were settled. One of them, John Button, sheriff of Hants, setting forth how "out of his affection for Sir Richard and Sir Walter Tichborne, he not only furnished their occasions with ready money, but stood engaged for them for other moneys amounting to five hundred pounds," which had been due five years, but they stood upon their protection, notwithstanding they had sufficient to make good their debts, and yet live like themselves. Hard pressed upon all sides, the Tichbornes became petitioners in turn; assuring the king that in the space of two years they had paid or secured thirteen thousand pounds' worth of their own and other men's debts, but in the face of the clamours of so many importunate creditors, they would not ask for a renewal of their protection, but besought his majesty to summon their creditors before the council, that a reasonable composition might be agreed upon. This was done, but we can find no record of the result.

Impecuniosity was the badge of the Tichbornes at this time. Sir William Calley, writing to Richard Harvey, says: "The

sheriff of Hants has laid a kind of extent on the Tichborne's lands, which is likely to be worth nothing, and so I am in good possibility of being cheated out of my five pounds. Being John Tichborne is the king's servant, advise me how I might obtain leave to arrest him." This Tichborne tried to get a lease from the crown of all the quarries and mines "of chalk, limestone, and sand" about Milford Haven, but was hauled by the officials, to whom the matter was referred, reporting that the people there depended upon those things for their means of tillage, and that it was not fitting they should be forced to obtain licenses from any private person. Probably this was John Tichborne, D.D., whose wife, Priscilla, besought Laud's help, complaining that when she married the doctor, he promised not to meddle with the property left her by her first husband, but as soon as the knot was tied, in defiance of his promise, he mortgaged a house of hers for the benefit of one of his sons, and afterwards made a deed of gift of the whole of her estate to his other son, who, in virtue thereof, had seized upon everything, even to her wearing apparel. While the D.D. was robbing his wife and dreaming of enriching himself at the expense of the folks of Milford Haven, Sir Richard Tichborne hit upon a scheme to put money in his purse. He discovered that, by a law passed in Elizabeth's reign, it was enacted that no servant should leave his service without a testimonial that he was free to do so. No officer having been appointed to issue such documents, the act had never been put in force. Sir Richard asked for the appointment, with liberty to charge twopence for every testimonial he issued. King Charles, anxious to confer a mark of favour upon the baronet, commanded certain officials to see to the affair, and settle what rent Sir Richard should pay to the crown for such privilege. We fancy Sir Richard was disappointed of his twopence, matters of greater moment soon occupying the minds of the king and his advisers, for the great conflict was at hand. When it came, of the four brothers, Walter was dead and Henry busy in Ireland; Benjamin, disgusted with the idea of civil war, retired to the Continent; and Sir Richard cast in his fortunes with those of his patron, contented to hold a subordinate command under his brother-in-law, Lord Ogle, whose troops he admitted to garrison Winchester Castle for the king.

Sir Richard Tichborne died soon after the commencement of the war, and was

succeeded by his third son, Henry, who, like him, did duty under Ogle, fighting at the battle of Cheridown, and holding the castle obstinately against the attacks of the parliamentarians, under his own brother-in-law, Sir William Waller, until nothing was left to fight for, his loyalty being punished by the sequestration of his estates, until the whirligig of time brought its revenges. In 1666, we find Sir Henry Tichborne obtaining a passport to visit Flanders and the Spa waters for his health's sake. Returning to England in 1668, he was, much to his astonishment, arrested and committed to Winchester, shortly afterwards being transferred to the Tower, to remain a close prisoner there for a year and a half, without having the slightest notion of what he was accused. All he knew was that his house at Tichborne had been ransacked from top to bottom, and the wainscotings and ceilings pulled down, to find some evidence against him. He was one of Bedloe's victims, and was released, untried, at the end of three years. The only compensation Sir Henry received for his ill-deserved imprisonment was the lieutenantancy of the New Forest, and the promise of being paid for certain land appropriated by the king for his new palace at Winchester; but neither he nor any of his kin ever touched the money.

While the Tichbornes were thus under a cloud at home, one of the race was skilfully and gallantly carving his own fortune in Ireland. This was Sir Henry, the youngest son of Sir Benjamin, who, after an apprenticeship to the art of war in the Low Countries, received from James the First the command of a regiment, and the governorship of Lifford Castle. When the rebellion broke out in Ireland in 1641, Sir Henry Tichborne was appointed governor of Drogheda, and with his own thousand mer and Sir Thomas Lucas's horse set out for his post. Catholic as he was, the new governor waited two hours in the streets of Drogheda before he could obtain a lodging, and then had to take forcible possession. The only defences the town could boast were an old wall and an ordinary ditch, and in three weeks' time the place was invested by a rebel army fourteen thousand strong. For three months the siege went on, until the garrison was reduced to feed upon horses, dogs, and cats; but the governor never thought of giving in, and so galled the besiegers by vigorous sallies that they were glad to decamp before the Duke of Ormond's army

of relief appeared on the scene. When he received reinforcements, Sir Henry followed his foes up until he had driven them into Ulster. For this he was made privy councillor, and in 1642 one of the two lords justices of Ireland, in the place of Sir W. Parsons, "being a man of so excellent a fame," writes Clarendon, "that though the parliament was heartily angry at the removal of the other, and knew this would never be brought to serve their turn, yet they had nothing to object against him." While holding this office, Tichborne helped the distressed Protestants so heartily, that when parliament became supreme, it kept his regiment in the service, and retained Sir Henry in his Drogheda governorship. The execution of the king, however, was too much for the brave veteran; he threw up his appointment and retired into private life, "till such times as the confusions among those who had usurped the government had given opportunity to the well-wishers of the royal family to show themselves," and when that time came the old captain had a chief hand in forwarding the cause in Ireland. Charles the Second made him field-marshal of the forces in that country, an appointment he held until his death in 1667, at the age of eighty-six. His eldest son had died before him in battle; his second son was knighted by Charles the Second; this Sir William Tichborne lost two sons on the battle-field and one at sea; his successor was knighted by William the Third, created baronet in 1697, and upon the accession of George the First elevated to the peerage; but the heir to the family honours being cast away in the bay of Liverpool, the Irish barony of Ferrard became extinct upon the death of the first baron.

Tired of court and camp the Tichbornes henceforward remained satisfied with maintaining their position among the squirearchy of Hampshire. In 1786, the old house was represented by Sir Henry Tichborne, who, in consequence of the complaints of the magistracy of the rioting attending the gathering together of rogues and vagabonds from all quarters upon the coming round of Lady Day, resolved to dare the ancient prophecy and abolish the Tichborne Dole. Singularly enough, he was blessed with a family of seven sons and one daughter; more singular still, his successor had seven daughters and never a son, and at his death the property passed to his brother Edward, who had changed his name to that of Doughty, and was known as Sir Edward Tichborne-Doughty, so that Lady Mabell's

prediction was, after a fashion, fulfilled; but in 1853 the two names changed places by royal license, and the Tichbornes were Tichbornes once again. The doom threatened seven centuries ago seemed near a more precise fulfilment when the once prolific family was represented in the Baronetage by a posthumous infant and his uncle, "Roger Charles, supposed to have been lost at sea in 1854."

SQUARE AT LAST.

THE Englishman at large is nothing if not a sportsman, and the New World affords him singular advantages for the indulgence of his pet proclivities. He who in the lightness of his heart says to himself, "Let me get up and kill something," is in America seldom at a loss for something to kill, and can please himself as to the size of his game, from the dainty quail to tough old Ebenezer, the renowned "grizzly" himself.

A few years ago I was much embarrassed by the difficulty of choice. Florida held out many attractions, but, on the other hand, I was strongly tempted to try the hunting-grounds about two hundred miles west of Omaha, where, an energetic Western friend wrote me, all kinds of game were to be had in plenty, especially, he informed me, in a fine burst of enthusiasm, "big game," deer, buffaloes, bears, and— and—Indians. With many a sigh I turned from this alluring prospect, as involving the sacrifice of too much time, and betook myself to the St. John river, Florida, and, engaging the services of one Lafayette K. Wallop, better known in that part of the country as Chunky Lefe, in allusion to his thick-set muscular conformation, as huntsman, boatman, and general factotum, I set out in his canoe, in quest of deer, Lefe paddling away at a great pace. Chunky Lefe was a silent man, sparing in his speech, but prodigal of his thews and sinews. His powerful strokes sent the light craft flying rapidly past the marshy banks, wooded to the water's edge, till, just as I was beginning to enjoy the enforced repose of the passive tenant of a canoe, a sudden shout from the hunter startled me out of my semi-somnolent condition.

"Say, boss," said the Chunky one, "guess you'd best lay down in the canoe."

"Why on earth should I lie down? I do not see any reason for hiding."

"Wal, fact is Hefty Bill Slocum is coming up stream."

"And what have I to do with Mr. Slocum?" I snapped out rather impatiently.

"Wal yer see, Bill and me is on shooting terms, and every time we meet we air kinder bound to have a crack at each other; so as I guess you, c'yurnel, ain't in this deal, you ought not to put up any stakes; this here muss ain't none of your funeral, but it might soon be if you kep' settin' up thar."

Here was a delightful situation! Two Southern desperadoes burning to engage in an aquatic duel, all remonstrance or interference absolutely useless, and worse than useless; the agreeable prospect of the canoe being upset in a broad rapid river thickly tenanted by alligators being coupled with the probability of being accidentally picked off by the rifle of Mr. Slocum.

However, as the exposure of my upper works to Hefty Bill's fire could serve no useful purpose, I followed the advice of Lafe and lay down tolerably well under cover, breathing many a prayer for the success of our side. Peering over the edge I saw that our opponent was waiting, rifle in hand, for us to come within range, a feat we were accomplishing with detestable rapidity, while my gondolier's rifle was at hand ready cocked, so that he could drop the paddle and seize his weapon at the slightest movement of his adversary. Nearer and nearer we came, not a sound breaking the deathlike silence but the light plash of the paddle, as Lafe, by a few last vigorous strokes, shot within range of the enemy. Dropping his paddle with lightning speed the hunter seized his rifle. The report of the two weapons rang out together as accurately as if the combatants had fired by signal. The plash and ricochet of Slocum's bullet told me my man was unhurt, when Chunky Lafe, lifting his fox-skin cap, said slowly and solemnly:

"Square at last, Bill Slocum! Poor Sal!"

A canoe floating lazily down the river was all that remained to tell that Hefty Bill Slocum had ever existed.

The mention of a woman's name by my usually taciturn guide naturally awakened my curiosity, but the moment did not seem favourable for investigating the mystery, so I discreetly held my tongue, but I suppose looked inquiringly enough, as, after paddling swiftly and silently for nearly an hour, Lafe deigned to open his lips.

"Beg pardon, c'yurnel, for bustin' up your day's sport with my private biz', but guess you'll excuse me when I tell you the

story. Thar's a good friend of mine lives around the creek here, and if you don't mind we'll lay over at his shanty, and after supper I'll tell you the rights of the muss 'twixt me and Bill."

I consented gladly enough, feeling that after the scene just enacted all hunting would be utterly tame and spiritless. Paddling a short distance up a narrow tributary stream (always called a creek in these countries) we came upon a large and cheerful-looking homestead. Lafe's friend received us with true American hospitality; his house, his meat, his drink, his horses, and his dogs were all at our service in a moment. After a stiff horn of Monongahela to whet (very unnecessarily) our appetites, we fell pell-mell on a savoury meal of oysters, fish, and bear-meat, not forgetting hog and hominy. At the conclusion of a repast worthy of full-grown bo-constrictors, our host produced a demi-john of old Santa Cruz, and pipes being lighted Chunky Lafe pulled himself together, and expectorating freely, began.

"Yer see, c'yurnel and friend Wash" (Lafe's friend rejoiced in the name of Washington K. Pegrim), "this was a kinder old score as I rubbed off to-day. In the good old times afore the war, Bill Slocum and me was fast friends, like brothers I was agoin' to say, but I've generally found brothers love each other in a slack-baked sorter way; anyhow me and Bill was allus around together, and barrin' a kinder likin' for huntin', fishin', playin' poker, drinkin', and fightin', was two as likely young boys as any in Augustine. I can't say as we was particlerly heavy on work—no Southern gentleman was in them days—but with a bit of land for cotton, a tidy corn-patch, a drove of hogs, and a few niggers, we managed to scratch along pretty well. All my relations had passed in their checks long ago, except sister Sal, and I guess a prettier, smarter, and more stylish gal wasn't to be found in the State of Floridy."

Here Lafe seemed to suffer from a slight huskiness, but imbibing a huge draught of Santa Cruz, went on, visibly refreshed:

"Wal, poor Sal was run after pretty much by the boys, but I kept a sharp eye on 'em, I did, for though not very rich, we was high-toned, no high-toneder family lived in them parts, and my sister was all in all to me, more nor anybody will ever be agin. Then come the war, and you gentlemen know what that misunderstandin' brought about. We Southerners rose like one man, and me and Bill weren't behind-

hand, you bet. Many a hard day's march and hard day's fightin' we had together, with nary shoe to our feet, and nothin' but a pocketful of parched corn to live on for days and days together. At last came the bad day of Gettysburg, and me and Bill was in the thick of it. Four times we charged up to the muzzles of their everlastin' guns, and four times we got druv back. Yer see we had to cross a kinder open space right under their fire, and were so eternally whipped before we reached the tarnation skunks, that our regiments shrivelled up to mere skeletons afore we got within arm's length. Wal, we come on agin and agin yellin' like devils, but it warn't no good; they druv us back, and at last I missed Bill.

"Wal, I ain't the man to brag o' that, but I went out into the hottest fire I ever seen, and 'brought in Bill hit pretty hard. We had a bad time that day, but I brought off Bill, and somehow he pulled through, and was sent home down South to recuperate. To make a long story short, I went through the whole war, and when our side bust up, went down home with a sore heart, a ragged suit, and a derned empty pocket.

"Through all the cussed affair I had looked forward to seein' sister Sal and Hefty Bill, with the kinder feelin' I dessay you can understand, but when I got one evening to Augustine, I found the old shanty shet up, and, wonderin' what was the matter, made tracks for the corner grocery. There I found the folks glad enough to see me, but seemin' to look queer, and act silent and dummy, as if they was to a funeral. So I says right out, 'What in thunder's the matter with you all, and what's come o' Sal?' Wal, yer see, the whole thing come out at last. Bill Slocum had come home invalided and dead broke, and Sal, of course, took him in, and nussed him as if he'd been her brother, and, after the manner of wimmen folks, fell in love with her patient. Sal, I guess, warn't the first fool of her sex, and won't be the last by a long shot.

"Now comes the worst part of the story. One mornin' they was both missed, and there was no doubt that that scoundrel Bill had run off with her to one of the cities North, without leaving letter or line to track 'em by. My mind was soon made up. I sold the old place and what little stuff was in it for what I could get, and made tracks for the North to find Sal, and mayhap get square with Bill.

"I went through the North, city by city,

in my weary search, and at last found my poor little sister, but, gentlemen, I would rather have found her headstone in the cemetery than have found her as I found her. I took good care of the poor girl, but it was no use; she pined away, and I buried her in Chicago, and then looked around for the trail of Hefty Bill.

"Nary soul could tell a word about him, and poor Sal, God bless her, never would. She was true to him, bad as he had used her. Wal, I could not find Bill anywheres, and as I had to do somethin' to live, came down here huntin' around a little and drinkin' a great deal, when one day, at Tim Mulligan's bar, who should I see but Hefty Bill Slocum himself. Gentlemen, I have been all through a big war, and in many a dashing charge, but I never felt as I did at that moment. My head swam round like a young gal's in her first waltz, a fog came over my eyes, my hand was on my Derringer when I saw a flash acrost my eyes, felt a warm splash, heard a shot, and all was dark. They told me afterwards that Bill fired a little too quick for me, and that the shot brought on quite a pretty free fight. There was a roughish lot around Mulligan's, and they weren't the boys to let a muss go past without taking a hand. So Bill scored the first trick in our small game, but I'd got to get square with him, and I tried more nor once, but his everlastin' luck helped him till to-day. But to-day," and here Lafe dropped his head on his chest and stared into the fire, "I guess we've got square at last!"

SUMMER IN FRANCE, 1871.

The summer has come back again, I feel
The sunshine cover me from brow to feet;
The bee goes searching for his honeyed meal,
The rose is crimson-dyed and smells full sweet.

The lily looks as stately and serene
As in the day ere I began to grieve;
The stream is musical, the forest green;
The faithless nightingales sing loud at eve.

Why now should flowrets deck the blood-stained
ground?
O blooming rose! O cruel flaunting thing,
That wear'at the colour of my love's death wound!
O birds that know him dead and yet will sing!

The plum is hanging on the southern wall,
It waxeth ripe beneath the sun's warm ray;
Last year we did not wait for it to fall,
But plucked its sweetness as we went our way.

Now let it roll and wither into mould,
Like that dear hand that dropped away from mine;
Since so much life is silenced and grown cold,
'Tis good to rot while star and sunbeam shine.

For o'er our sun there came a cloud of gloom,
When shout of war came blown across the sea:
To thee my love it was the trump of doom:
It was the trump of doom to thee and me.

Now all return that shared our joy before,
Of flower and sunshine, bough and singing bird;
Only thy footstep cometh back no more,
Only thy voice shall not again be heard.

The summer has come back, but not for me.
I do not even know thy place of rest,
Or useless flowers might win some sanctity,
By shedding bloom above so brave a breast.

Somewhere the grass is springing o'er thy head,
And so I'll love the grass and hold it sweet,
And when content at last I too am dead,
I'll have no other covering for my feet.

Upon my heart shall lie no sculptured stone,
No idle wreath above my brow shall twine;
The tender grass shall wave o'er me alone:
Only the breeze shall know thy grave and mine.

CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

GREY FRIARS (THE BLUECOAT SCHOOL).

Of the old Friary the cloisters and but-tery alone remain. Five priests and four laymen of the mendicant order of Grey Minorite Friars came over from Italy, early in the reign of Henry the Third, and at first lodged with their religious kinsmen, the Black Friars, in "Oldborne." John Travers, a sheriff, then charitably gave them a house in Cornhill, and after a time John Ewin, a worthy mercer, let them build their cells on a void spot of ground near St. Nicholas's shambles (now Christ's Hospital).

Gifts from the pious and the penitent were laid upon gifts, till the Friary became a vast fortress of religion, and wealth slowly sapped the piety poverty had fostered. But Henry the Eighth knocked one black November Monday at the Friary gate, and, sturdier mendicant than the monks themselves, swept all their shining church-plate into his waggons. The annual valuation of the Friary was put down at thirty-two pounds, nineteen shillings, and tenpence. The church then became a mere profane warehouse for the spoils harried by our archers and men-at-arms from Calais and Boulogne, and these rude spoilers defaced, as worthy Stow mentions with true antiquarian regret, all the splendid emblazoned monuments of the royal and pious benefactors. Nine railed in stately tombs of alabaster and marble were split and defaced, and seven score marble gravestones were sold for a paltry eighty pounds, by Sir Martin Bowes, an irreverent and greedy goldsmith, then alderman of London. It was at this ruthless and irreligious time that brutal feet trampled to dust or ruin the monuments of four queens. First of these was Margaret, the second wife of Edward the First; secondly, that "she-wolf of France," Isabella, who dethroned her weak husband, Edward the

Second, and ended her life miserably in prison after twenty-eight years of purgatorial agony; thirdly, Joan of the Tower, Queen of Scots, the daughter of this wicked woman; fourthly, Isabel Fitzwarin, Queen of the little Isle of Man. Where the merry blue boys now race and scamper also slept Beatrice, Duchess of Bretagne, a daughter of Henry the Third, and many brave and stalwart noblemen, knights, and squires, whose bones were dust and whose swords were rust dreary ages ago.

The dissolution of the monasteries sent thousands of lazy monks abroad to beg and rob. The herds of peasants who had lived on monastery doles began to cry aloud for famine, and the poor grew up without religion and without education. The want became a crying one, and one of the few good acts of Henry the Eighth's reign was a gift, a fortnight before his miserable death, of the Grey Friars, St. Bartholomew, and Bethlehem Hospitals to the City for charitable uses, together with lands worth five hundred marks yearly. This great gift was announced to the citizens by excellent Bishop Ridley, in a sermon at St. Paul's Cross. On the accession of the young king, that "royal imp of grace," Bishop Ridley, in a sermon at Westminster, urged him, before his court, to comfort and relieve the poor. After the sermon the king sent for Ridley, and in the great gallery at Westminster gave him a private interview, insisting on the bishop remaining covered. The royal boy, with much earnestness, for the appeal had touched his good heart, requested Ridley to tell him how he could best perform the duty inculcated in the sermon. Ridley, surprised at the immediate springing up of the good seed, could hardly recover himself sufficiently to urge the king to beg the lord mayor and aldermen to consult on the subject. Edward, however, would not let Ridley leave till the letter was signed and sealed, and given to the worthy bishop to deliver to Sir Richard Dobbs, the lord mayor. The result of this letter was the founding of Christ's Hospital at the Grey Friars, for the education of poor and fatherless children, who were "to be trained up in the knowledge of God, and some virtuous exercises, to the overthrow of beggary." For the idle and vicious poor, Bridewell Palace was turned into a prison, and for the sick poor the Hospitals of St. Thomas in Southwark, and St. Bartholomew in West Smithfield, were charitably founded. When the charter was drawn up, the wise young

king wrote, with his own hand, in the blank space the scribes had left for the amount of annual endowment, "four thousand marks by the year," and then said, in the hearing of all the privy council, "Lord, I yield thee most hearty thanks that thou hast given me life thus long to finish this work, to the glory of thy name." Not long after, this boy of infinite promise died. King Edward also left to the four great charities six hundred pounds yearly, from the property of the decayed hospital of the Savoy. The citizens pressed forward the good work, and that same year admitted three hundred and sixty children. On Christmas Day, 1552, when the lord mayor and aldermen rode to St. Paul's in the afternoon, the ruddy children, in livery of russet cotton, stood in line from St. Lawrence-lane, towards St. Paul's; but the next Easter they were clothed in blue, and have ever since affected that goodly colour. The boys' dress is a corruption of the old monastic garb. The loose-skirted dark blue coat is the monk's tunic; the under coat, or yellow, is the sleeveless under-frock of the friar; the narrow belt is the monkish cord changed to leather; and the neck-bands are the clerical adornments of the Carolan times. The yellow breeches smack of the Georgian epoch, and the little muffin cap, now justly abandoned, is also of great antiquity.

The Hospital school soon found benefactors. Sir William Chester, and John Calthorpe, a rich draper, built the walls adjoining St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and vaulted over the City ditch from Aldersgate to Newgate, which before had been a great source of annoyance and illness to the boys. The playground, still called by Blues the "Ditch," marks the line of the old City moat. Another worthy donor was Richard Castle, an industrious shoemaker, generally known as the "Cock of Westminster," from his untiring hammer calling up all the neighbours, summer and winter, before four o'clock in the morning. His steady thrift won him lands and tenements near the old abbey, of the yearly value of four-and-forty pounds, and, as honest Stow says approvingly, "having no children, with the consent of his wife (who survived him, and was a virtuous good woman), he gave the same lands wholly to Christ's Hospital, to the relief of the innocent and fatherless children."

The Great Fire, raging up eastward from Pudding-lane, did not forget to look in at Christ's Hospital, injuring the south

front, and burning the church in Newgate-street. In 1672, Charles the Second, roused by Sir Robert Clayton, ordered the Exchequer to pay an annuity of three hundred and seventy pounds ten shillings to the Hospital, and also a seven years' donation of one thousand pounds, an old debt due to the Hospital from the crown, and with much difficulty wrung from it. This same worthy Sir Robert Clayton and Sir Patience Ward took good care this gold went to found a mathematical school, where forty of the Bluecoat boys could study navigation, five of them being examined every six months by the Brethren of the Trinity House, and ten of them being yearly sent to sea. The King's Boys, as they are called, though Sir Robert was the real benefactor, used to be presented to the reigning king on New Year's Day, and afterwards on the queen's birthday, but the quaint custom (duly recorded in a large dull picture by Verro in the great hall) was discontinued during the insanity of George the Third. The boys on the king's foundation wear on their left shoulders a badge, with allegorical figures upon it representing arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy, to distinguish them from the Twelves, or lower mathematical school, who wear their badges on the right shoulder. The Twos form another class, originated by a bequest of a Mr. Stock, in 1780, who left three thousand pounds to maintain four boys (those bearing the name of Stock preferred), two to be taught navigation, and two to be brought up to trades.

The rebuilding of the south front, in 1675, was attended with interesting circumstances, and proves to us what good, charitable, and wise men some of those old London merchants were. That same worthy Sir Robert Clayton, governor of the Hospital, who extorted the money from Charles the Second, was seized with a severe illness, from which, in spite of many doctors, he recovered. There was faith even in those evil days, and he arose from his sick-bed impressed with the desire to make some acknowledgment to God for his merciful goodness. Consulting his partner, Mr. Morice, and his best friend, Mr. Firmin, he resolved to rebuild the south front of Christ's Hospital, still in ruins from the Great Fire. He kept his name concealed, and spent seven thousand pounds on the good work. When Charles the Second sold himself to France, and, trusting to our enemies, grew more lawless and despotic than ever, he deprived the City of its charter, and removed Sir Robert

from the government of the Hospital. Then it was that Mr. Firmin spoke out, and told the time-serving governors what a benefactor they had displaced. In 1680, Sir John Frederick, another City man, gave five thousand pounds to rebuild the great hall at his sole expense. Three years later the governors founded the juvenile school at Hertford, where forty girls are still taught to knit yellow stockings, and four hundred boys learn to wear them. Generosity is contagious, and the old City merchants had large souls. In 1694, Sir John Moore, whose grave statue still smiles benignantly on generation after generation of yellow stockings, founded the writing school at an expense of five thousand pounds. In 1705, Sir Francis Child, the banker at Temple Bar, and a friend of Pope, rebuilt, at his own expense, the ward over the east cloister, as a worn inscription still testifies; and in 1724, Mr. Travers, another generous benefactor, arose, who gave a nautical turn to the school for ever by leaving money enough to educate forty or fifty sons of naval lieutenants. A century after the writing school a new grammar school was built on the north side of the ditch. An infirmary was erected in 1722, and in 1824 the Duke of York laid the first stone of the new hall, which was designed by Mr. Shaw, the architect of St. Dunstan's, and was opened in 1829. This huge chamber, of rather flimsy Tudor, one hundred and eighty-seven feet long, and eighty-one feet wide, stands on the site of the old City wall, and of the refectory of the Grey Friars. At five tables the Blues, whether Grecians, King's Boys, Twelves, or Twos, dine daily. The dietary of the boys is still somewhat monastic; the breakfast, till 1824, was plain bread and beer, and the dinner three times a week consisted only of milk-porridge, rice-milk, and pea-soup. The old school rhyme, imperishable as the Iliad, runs:

Sunday, all saints;
Monday, all souls;
Tuesday, all trenchers;
Wednesday, all bowls;
Thursday, tough jack;
Friday, no better;
Saturday, pea-soup with bread
and butter.

The boys, like the friars in the old refectory, still eat their meat off wooden trenchers, and ladle their soup with wooden spoons from wooden bowls. The beer is brought up in leather jacks, and retailed in small piggins. Charles Lamb does not speak highly of the food. The small beer was of the smallest, and tasted of its leather re-

ceptacle. The milk-porridge was blue and tasteless, the pea-soup coarse and choking. The mutton was roasted to shreds. The boiled beef was poisoned with marigolds. Worst of all, the nurses used to carry away boldly, for their own table, one of every two joints scrupulously weighed out by the matrons for the boys' dinners. There was a curious custom at Christ's Hospital in Lamb's time never to touch "gags" (the fat of fresh boiled beef), and a Blue would have blushed, as at the exposure of some heinous immorality, to have been detected eating that forbidden portion of his allowance of animal food, the whole of which, while he was in health, was little more than sufficient to allay his hunger. The same, or even greater refinement, was shown in the rejection of certain kinds of sweet cake. What gave rise to these supererogatory penances, these self-denying ordinances? The gag-eater was held as equivalent to a ghoul, loathed, shunned, and insulted. Of a certain juvenile monster of this kind Lamb tells us one of his most charming anecdotes, droll and tender as his own exquisite humour. A gag-eater was observed to carefully gather the fat left on the table, and to secretly stow away the disreputable morsels in the settle at his bedside. A dreadful rumour ran that he secretly devoured them at midnight; but he was watched again and again, and it was not so. At last, on a leave-day, he was marked carrying out of bounds a large blue check handkerchief. That, then, was the accursed thing. It was suggested that he sold it to beggars. Henceforward he moped alone. No one spoke to him. No one played with him. Still he persevered. At last two boys traced him to a large worn-out house inhabited by the very poor, such as then stood in Chancery-lane with open doors and common staircases. The gag-eater stole up four flights of stairs, and the wicket was opened by an old woman meanly clad. Suspicion being now certainty, the spies returned with cruel triumph to tell the steward. He investigated the matter with a kind and patient sagacity, and the result was, that the supposed mendicants turned out to be really the honest parents of the brave gag-eater. "This young stork, at the expense of his good name, had all this while only been feeding the old birds." "The governors on this occasion," says Lamb, "much to their honour, voted a present relief to the family, and presented the boy with a silver medal. The lesson which the steward read upon rash judgment,

on the occasion of publicly delivering the medal, I believe would not be lost upon his auditory. I had left school then, but I well remember the tall shambling youth, with a cast in his eye, not at all calculated to conciliate hostile prejudices. I have since seen him carrying a baker's basket. I think I heard he did not do quite so well by himself as he had done by the old folks."

In Lamb's time the punishments at Christ's Hospital were extremely severe. Absconders wore fetters for the first offence. There were regular dungeons then, and runaways and other offenders for the second time were treated as if in Newgate. The cells were little square bins, where a boy could just lie at his length upon straw and a blanket (mattresses were afterwards substituted), and the peep of light, let in askance from prison-like orifices, was barely enough to read by. Here poor children, just torn from their mothers' apron-strings, were locked in alone all day, only seeing the porter who brought the bread and water, but who was not allowed to speak, or the still less agreeable beadle, who came twice a week to call out the pale and scared culprit for his periodical chastisement. At night the poor little wretch was left alone to his terror. One or two instances of lunacy or attempted suicide at length convinced the governors of the impolicy of this part of the sentence, and the midnight torture was dispensed with. This fancy of dungeons for children sprang from Howard's brain, "for which," says Lamb, "(saving the reverence due to holy Paul), methinks I could willingly spit upon his statue." For the third offence the incorrigible offender was exposed in a sort of san-benito, like a lamplighter's cap and jacket. In the hall, in the presence of all his comrades, he received his final punishment. The beadle, in complete uniform, was the executioner. The steward was also present, and two governors attended to see that no stripes fell short. If the beadle turned pale, a glass of brandy was administered to him. The scourging was after the old Roman fashion, long and stately. The lictors accompanied the criminal quite round the hall. The boys were generally too faint to note much, but report went that the victim's naked back grew slashed and livid. The disgraced boy was then handed over in his san-benito to his angry friends, or, if an orphan and friendless, to his parish officer, who always

waited for such criminals at the hall-gate, to cuff him clear out of Eden. These punishments, monastic in their severity and ruthless in their execution, were evidently founded on the tradition of the school being a charity. When it ceased to be so, such punishments became a mere disgraceful anomaly.

But let us get back into the sunshine, the true atmosphere of happy boyhood. Those were merry days with the Blues when, on long summer afternoons, they would sally out to the New River, and, in the fields near Newington, "wanton like young dace," or troutlets in the pool, living for hours in the water, never caring for dressing when they had once stripped. Then there were the ever-repeated visits to the lions in the Tower, where, known to every warder, the Blues, by ancient privilege and courtesy immemorial, had a prescriptive right to admission—not to mention the favourite games of leap-frog and bait the bear, in which the school excelled. There were, too, the solemn, old-fashioned processions through the City at Easter, with the lord mayor's pleasant largess of buns, wine, and sixpence, "with the festive questions and civic pleasantries of the dispensing aldermen, which were more to us than all the rest of the banquet." Nor does the delightful chronicler forget the stately suppers in public, "when the well-lighted hall, and the confluence of well-dressed company who came to see us, made the whole look more like a concert or assembly than a scene of a plain bread-and-butter collation." Then there was the grave annual Latin oration upon Saint Matthew's Day (now altered), when the senior Grecian, in quaint Erasmanian dress, perched on a table, dilates to mayor and aldermen, who wisely pretend to understand the ancient language spoken in the fine fluent continental manner, the praises of those patriarch Blues: the learned Camden and pious Stillingfleet, or oftener Joshua Barnes, the editor of Euripides in Queen Anne's time, and perennial Markland, a later and equally eminent Greek critic. The hymns and anthems and the well-toned organ fitly heralded the festive joys of Christmas, "when," as Lamb says, "the richest of us would club our stock to have a gaudy day, sitting round the fire, replenished with logs, and the penniless and he that could contribute nothing partook in all the mirth, and in some of the substantialities, of the feasting." Nor does the immortaliser of the fine old school

forget the nightly Advent carols sung at ten P.M., and for which Lamb, when he was sent to bed at seven, used to lie awake to hear the fresh young voices of the Grecians and monitors, till he felt transported to the fields of Bethlehem, and the song sung by angels' voices to the shepherds.

But again to tune our harps, as the bigger wigg'd poets say, to graver strains. The school in the old times was, like the discipline, Spartan enough. The King's Boys, roughly nurtured by William Wales, a stern, north country sailor, who had sailed with Captain Cook, grew up hardy, brutal, graceless, often wicked, and were the ceaseless terror of the younger boys, who ran shuddering from the cloisters whenever the cry was raised, "The first order is coming." These janizaries of the school were the athletes of the Hospital; they never moved out of the way for any one, and many a Cheapside apprentice and greasy butcher-boy of Newgate Market felt the impetus of their fists, and had ocular demonstration of their stubborn valour. The system of fagging, in its very worst form, prevailed, or rather raged, in Christ's Hospital at the end of the last century. The young brutes, as Lamb justly calls them, used to wake the last eleven lads in the dormitory in the coldest winter nights (time after time), to thrash them with leather thongs because there had been talking heard after they were gone to bed. The same tyranny drove the younger lads away from the fires in snow time, and, under the heaviest penalties, forbade them to drink water during the summer nights. One monitor (afterwards naturally enough seen on the hulks) actually branded, with a red-hot iron, a small boy who had offended him, and nearly starved forty minor lads by exacting from them, daily, half their bread to pamper a young ass, whom, with the connivance of his flame, the nurse's daughter, he had contrived to smuggle in and stable on the leads of the ward.

Of course Christ's Hospital had ghosts. How could an old friary, where wicked Queen Isabella, the tormentor of her husband, lay, be without them? Yet were they of a lowly kind. In one of the cloisters was a hollow in a stone, which used in Leigh Hunt's time to be attributed by some to the angry stamping of the ghost of a beadle's wife. There was also a traditional horror in the school of a mysterious being only seen at night, and called the "Fazzer." Like the African Mumbo Jumbo, the fazzer was

perfectly known to be only one of the big boys disguised, yet an epidemical fear invested him with somewhat of a supernatural character. The fazzer's amiable habit was to pull small boys out of bed, or to fazz (pull) their hair in a goblin way. The fazzer always disguised his face, and sometimes appeared in his white shirt, dumb and motionless, in the moonlight. "One time," says Leigh Hunt, in his agreeable way, "I saw this phenomenon under circumstances more than usually unearthly. It was a fine moonlight night. I was then in a ward the casement of which looked on the churchyard. My bed was under the second window from the east, not far from the statue of Edward the Sixth. Happening to wake in the middle of the night, and cast up my eyes, I saw on a bedstead near me, and in one of the casements, a figure in its shirt, which I took for the fazzer. The room was silent, the figure motionless. I fancied that half the boys in the ward were glaring at it without daring to speak. It was poor C—— (who afterwards went mad) gazing at that lunar orb, which might afterwards be supposed to have malignantly fascinated him."

The upper grammar master in the great times of Coleridge, Lamb, and Leigh Hunt, was a cruel pedant named Boyer. He was a good verbal scholar, and a conscientious teacher, but of a hard, passionate nature, ruling by terror, and disdaining love. In one of the many pictures left us of this school in its old days, he is sketched as a short punchy man, with large face and hands, long plebeian upper lip, close cruel piggish eyes, veiled by spectacles, and an aquiline nose. He dressed in black, and wore a powdered wig; his sleeves were short, as if to leave his strong hands more play for flogging, and he wore very tight grey worsted stockings over what Leigh Hunt playfully calls "little balustrade legs." His weak side was carpentering; he generally carried a carpenter's rule in an express side-pocket. His favourite oath of vengeance was, "Odd's my life, sirrah."

"He had two wigs," Lamb says, "both pedantic, but of different shades. The one serene and smiling, fresh powdered, betokening a mild day; the other, an old, discoloured, unkempt, angry caxon, denoting frequent and bloody execution. I have known him double his knotty fist at a poor, trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips), with a 'Sirrah, do you presume to set your wits at me?'"

In gentler moments, when satiated by heavy doses of Latin and much flogging, he was known to whip a boy and read the parliamentary debates at the same time, a paragraph and a lash alternately. When you were out in your lessons, he turned upon you a round, staring, blank eye, like that of a fish, and he had a spiteful way of pinching under the chin, and lifting boys off the ground by the lobes of their ears. Coleridge describes Boyer coming up to him as he was crying, the first day of his return after the holidays, and saying:

"Boy! the school is your father. Boy! the school is your mother. Boy! the school is your brother. The school is your sister. The school is your first cousin, and your second cousin, and all the rest of your relations. Boy! let's have no more crying."

Boyer used to send to Field, the quiet, idle, gentleman-like under-master, to borrow a birch; then remark, with a sardonic grin, to one of his satellites, "How meat and fresh the twigs look." When the tyrant was on his death-bed, Coleridge said of him with droll pity, "May all his faults be forgiven, and may he be wafted to bliss by little cherub boys, all head and wings, that there may be no foundation for future reproach as to his sublunary infirmities." As for the second master, Field, his boys, of whom Lamb was, were happy as birds, and spent their time (for they never got beyond Phædrus) in making paper sundials, weaving cat's-cradles, playing at French and English, or making peas dance on the end of a tin pipe.

The funerals in the cloisters in Lamb's time must have been very impressive; and Lamb specially mentions the interment of the portly steward Perry, when nearly every one of the five hundred boys wore a black ribbon, or something to denote respect.

Of the greatest of the three great modern worthies of Christ's Hospital, Coleridge, Lamb, and Leigh Hunt, we have a fine Vandyck sketch from the hand of the second. "Come back into memory," says Elia, in one of his noblest and highest moods, "as thou wert in the spring-time of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee, the dark pillar not yet turned—Samuel Taylor Coleridge—logician, metaphysician, bard! How have I seen the casual passer through the cloisters stand still entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the speech and the garb of the young *Mirandola*), to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mys-

teries of *Jamblichus* or *Plotinus* (for even in those years that waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting *Homer* in his Greek, or *Pindar*; while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the inspired charity boy! Many were the 'wit combats' (to dally awhile with the words of old Fuller) between him and C. V. Le Grice, which, too, I beheld, like a great Spanish galleon and an English man-of-war." Master Coleridge, like the former, was built far higher in learning, solid but slow in his performance. C. V. L., like the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention.

Lamb himself, who had left just before Leigh Hunt entered the school, is described by the latter, as seen by him when revisiting the school. His walk was sidling and peculiar, and the boys, susceptible of his quaintness of manner and costume, called him "Guy." Lamb has left two splendid essays on his old school. In one he takes the rose-coloured side, and writes as a rich man's son; in the second, bantering himself, he writes as if poor, and touches on some faults and unhappineses of the place.

Like Lamb, Leigh Hunt, from having a slight stammer, never rose to be one of the supreme Grecians, and did not, therefore, pass on to the university. He was at Christ's Hospital just the loving, impressionable creature that he afterwards continued—sturdy for the right, devoted in his friendship, and full of sensitive impulses.

Among the contemporaries of Lamb were Thomas Fanshaw Middleton, afterwards the scholarly Bishop of Calcutta; Richards, author of a spirited Oxford prize poem, the *Aboriginal Britons*; Barnes, afterwards editor for so long of the *Times*, a man who, but for dreaming over Fielding, and chatting over his glass, might have done greater things.

Nor can we close the list of Leigh Hunt's contemporaries without mentioning that most clever and ingenious scholar, Mitchell, the translator of *Aristophanes*.

There is a curious history attached to the portrait of a Mr. St. Arnaud, the grandfather of a benefactor to the Hospital, which hangs in the treasury. By the terms of St. Arnaud's will, all the money he left passes to the University of Oxford from the Bluecoat School if this picture is ever lost or given away, and the same deprivation occurs if this picture is not produced

once a year at the general court, and also shown, on requisition, to the vice-chancellor of Oxford or his deputy. As the St. Arnands had intermarried in the Middle Ages with the luckless Stuarts, there is a tradition in the school that this picture is the portrait of the Pretender, but this is an unfounded notion.

GEOFFREY LUTTRELL'S NARRATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "IN THAT STATE OF LIFE," &c.

IN ELEVEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER VI.

WHAT I had long foreseen came to pass the next day. Mr. Ridgway formally proposed to Assunta; and was rejected. That a man of his acute perceptions should not have been prepared for this result to his wooing seemed difficult to believe. Had Miss Fleming been a different sort of person, it might have been looked for that the disgrace and banishment of Mr. Walbrooke's heir should have inclined her to view with favour a marriage which presented so many solid advantages as the one now offered to her. But Mr. Ridgway was too keen-sighted to misjudge, though he was incapable of valuing at its true worth, the character of the woman whom he now desired to raise to the throne of Hapsbury. She had had a girlish fancy for the "good-looking young calf," who had so signally disgraced himself last night, and she must feel heartily ashamed of him. On the other hand, she had often shown a certain amount of pleasure in his, Mr. Ridgway's, society; it required no uncommon vanity in a man who had cultivated the arts of pleasing for nearly fifty years, to believe that the contrast between coarseness and refinement must make itself felt by Assunta at this moment, very much to the advantage of the latter. As to love, he would probably have smiled sarcastically at the question of its existence, on one side or the other. She was a charming young woman; agreeable and distinguished in person, and sufficiently intelligent to be receptive of his instruction, at such times as he might feel disposed to converse—for your brilliant men of society are apt to be taciturn in strict domesticity. And as to himself, why, he was—what he was; he had never indulged in illusions as to girls falling in love with him, or he might have been captured, ere this, by one of the numerous young ladies who, at various periods of his career, had desired to reign at Hapsbury. Fortunately he did not believe in *les grandes passions*; in his own

case, at least. No; love was an entirely unnecessary ingredient in the marriage-mixture: liking was a solvent of sufficient strength to melt the harsher quantities of that mixture into a cool and not unpalatable beverage.

Thus, only, could I account for the blunder Mr. Ridgway committed, in believing that he had only to propose to be accepted. He regarded Assunta as too sensible to waste her life on a vain shadow; her eyes had been open to the futility of any expectations she might have formed with regard to Harry: and now that the substantial reality of independence, coupled with an agreeable companion, was offered her, how could she refuse? But she did refuse; much to his surprise, something to his annoyance, and more to his contempt. She had not a philosophic soul; she was no better than other women, then, in this respect, that she allowed an idiotic fancy to usurp the place of some more rational feeling, which was all that philosophy needed to enable two human beings to live placidly together.

He returned to Hapsbury that afternoon, and Assunta was left to the mercy of Mr. Walbrooke. What that mercy was may be gathered from the fact that he was closeted with her for upwards of an hour; after which I was unable to get speech of her, for she pleaded fatigue to retire to her bed. The next morning I received news of my father's serious illness, which called me suddenly to London; but I managed to have a few minutes' conversation alone with Assunta in the library before my departure. She looked sallow and worn, poor child, that morning—the world and Mr. Ridgway would have said almost plain. To me she never seemed more lovable and interesting. She sat down wearily on one of the great leather chairs, and leaned her head on her hand. Then she told me something of what had passed between the master of the house and herself, and of what she felt to be the peculiar and terrible difficulty of her present position.

"He is so kind in his own way—he has been more like a relation to me than a master—that when he tells me how fatal it would be to all his views for Harry that we should marry, I feel as if I were a monster of ingratitude to oppose him. If I could be persuaded that it was really for Harry's benefit to give me up, I would show him the example—cost me what it might, Mr. Luttrell. It is this breaks my heart. I have not slept all night, thinking what I ought to do. Mr. Walbrooke says

I am mistaken in fancying I have much influence over Harry; and, alas! I almost feel as if he were right. I am afraid it cannot be very great, since he can be swept hither and thither by every impulse of the moment. I ask myself, 'Shall I not be as a millstone round his neck? Will the day not come when he will regret having married the penniless foundling?'"

"Never; unless he do so precipitately," I replied at once. "And this I am sure you will not consent to. You have but one course, both of you: to try and wear out the squire's patience. It is a case of two to one; for all this family are so attached to you that I am sure they will not hear of your leaving them."

She coloured, and with a sad little smile said, "Unless it is, as the maids say, 'to better myself,' or what Mr. Walbrooke considers is to better me. For that he is urgent—nay, positively angry at my rejection of wealth and social position. What are they all to me without Harry?"

"Is it final," I asked, "this rejection?"

"Final," she replied; and no more passed between us on the subject. We returned again to Harry. She bitterly deplored his having by this fresh outrage yet further incensed his uncle. "Mr. Walbrooke says that until I marry, or that Harry consents to give me up, he must not return here. That is hard, is it not, Mr. Luttrell?—to separate Harry and his uncle, who has been like a father to him? My darling boy will never give me up, I know that, but I cannot be his ruin—I, who hoped to save him; for it will be ruin if this quarrel between him and his uncle continues. Mr. Walbrooke candidly told me that he would never forgive Harry's marrying against his consent. He said, 'My nephew must marry a woman of some social weight, to lift him up, instead of dragging him down.' It sounds worldly and heartless to me, Mr. Luttrell, but perhaps it is true, for all that. If I only knew what was right. If I only knew what was best for my darling!"

The sad eyes were full of tears, but they did not fall.

"Will you write to me, dear Miss Fleming?" I asked, with as steady a voice as I could command. "I think you know that I am your true friend, as I am Harry's, and that I shall always give you such advice as I should to a dear sister. My last word is, 'Do nothing rashly.'"

She promised to write, and thanked me warmly; then we parted. Nothing could be kinder than Mr. Walbrooke's farewell.

"You must come to us again in June, Luttrell, whether Harry is here or not—whether he is here or *not*," he repeated, doggedly. "The young man's obstinacy is such that unless circumstances occur—which I am hopeful they may—to force him into submission, it is very probable he may continue to put himself into opposition to me. And as long as he does so, he will not come to the Grange. But, remember, we shall be very glad to see you. There is that Sir Joshua, you know, which you have begun to copy—you must return to finish it."

But the copy of Sir Joshua remains unfinished to this day; and, possibly, still adorns some attic at the Grange. I have never seen it or the Grange since that January morning in 1827.

CHAPTER VII.

My poor father's was a long illness, and I was constantly in attendance on him for many weeks. He died in March, and about the same time I learnt, indirectly, that Mr. Fleming was dead, leaving a widow and four children in very poor circumstances. I had received one or two letters from Assunta, giving a sad account of her tormented state of mind, Harry's name being now tabooed in the family circle, all communications between him and the squire being of the briefest and driest character, and Mr. Ridgway being now a more constant guest than ever. Then came an interval when I heard nothing from the Grange, being myself too busily and painfully occupied to write more than the brief announcement of my father's death. I had only one letter from Harry, and that was not very satisfactory. It was, indeed, fuller than ever of his passionate attachment to Assunta; but of this I needed no assurance. I should have been better pleased to learn that it was producing some permanent effect on his life and character; but as to the one he was silent, and that the reckless impetuosity of the other was uncontrolled as ever was clear from the violent terms in which he wrote of his uncle. I had, moreover, the opportunity of learning through a friend, whose brother was at Oxford, that young Walbrooke's efforts at steadiness were spasmodic at best. He belonged to a fast set, and though he sometimes absented himself from their "wines" for a few days, the least vexation, or, it might be, the devil within him, unaided by any circumstance from without, drove him to those festive boards, from which he was

too often seen reeling home in the early morning light.

All this was painful enough to me, and doubly so, as I did not see any hopeful termination to the existing state of things. In April I wrote to Assunta, but of course abstained from any allusion to what I had heard of Harry. I wrote but a few lines, asking for news of her; and some days later I received the following reply.

April 20th, 1827.

DEAR MR. LUTTRELL,—Thank you for your kind letter. We have both had a heavy sorrow since I last wrote to you; added to which I have suffered much in other ways. You ask me to tell you everything about myself, or I should not think of intruding my own troubles upon you so soon. Dear Mr. Luttrell, there are griefs far worse than the death of those we love. Henry's conduct is driving me to despair. He has been sent away from Oxford—"rusticated" I think they call it—for a time, in consequence of some wild outbreaks. What will become of him? The doors of this house, his natural home, are shut against him; he will not go to Lady Arden's, who, it seems, spoke disparagingly of me when he was there in the winter. Alas! you see, on every side, I am the barrier between him and his relations; and Mr. Walbrooke's great kindness to me makes it all the worse. He has given me fifty pounds to send to poor dear Mrs. Fleming, and has promised to pay for little Charlie's schooling. Why cannot he rest satisfied with these acts of true benevolence, without trying to force me into a marriage with one man, while my heart is another's? Dear Mr. Luttrell, I have been so torn asunder by conflicting feelings during the past week, that I scarcely know how I have arrived at the resolution I have formed to leave the Grange, which has been my home for the last five years; to bid it good-bye, probably for ever! A simple stratagem will enable me to do this without proclaiming my real motive. Mrs. Fleming is left in so forlorn and piteous a condition, with her four little children, that it appears natural I should go to her; though I fear that, in point of fact, I shall be more of a burden than a help, and must soon seek another situation. But I shall be no longer in the way here; I know they would never send me from them; but when I am gone, dear Harry can return, and all will then be well, I hope, between him and the squire. I will not tell you what it has cost me to come to this resolve. I know it is *right*,

and that is my only consolation. The alternative was one I could not bring myself to accept. I have said nothing as yet about my plan; I dread all discussion so much, I must speak and act almost simultaneously, for I feel that Mr. Walbrooke will strenuously oppose my going. I cannot bring myself yet to think that all must be at an end between Harry and me; but oh! Mr. Luttrell, if my love should be doing him harm, instead of good! That thought haunts me. I was arrogant enough to hope that I stood between him and much evil. Alas! it is not so, I can deceive myself no longer; God knows what I ought to do; and yet, when I pray for guidance, I seem to get no answer to my prayers. Forgive this.

From yours,
Ever sincerely and gratefully,
ASSUNTA FLEMING.

As I pondered over this letter, I could not but feel that she was right. That her presence at the Grange should prevent Harry's return there, was clearly not defensible, not even politic. When she was really gone, when they had lost the charm of her gracious presence, they would, perhaps, understand her true worth better, and feel how inexpressibly lucky Harry was to have gained the heart of such a woman. They, or rather the squire, for Mrs. Walbrooke was of no account in this calculation, might gradually be brought to see that Harry's real welfare was dependent on this marriage. It was of importance that he should be at the Grange now, out of the reach of temptations to which he was constantly falling a prey, in his present condition of passionate, irritable, unsatisfied love. I believed that, on the whole, Assunta's resolution was wise, with a view to the ultimate happiness of both.

That same afternoon, as I was painting, and wondering what had become of Harry, he walked in, looking, to my surprise, in better spirits than I could have expected; but such was the quicksilver of his nature; to rise—and fall as rapidly—with the varying temperature of his hopes. I saw at once that he did not know of Assunta's leaving the Grange.

"I have been too down in the mouth, lately, to write to you, Geoff; but you'll forgive me, eh? I am sent from Oxford for the remainder of this term, for being in a row; but we won't talk about disagreeable things. Don't look so grave—I couldn't help it—I couldn't, indeed. And good comes out of evil sometimes. I have got a

stroke of luck which will make me independent of the squire, I hope, and then I can marry Assunta to-morrow."

He rubbed his hands with a boyish glee, and his whole face beamed.

"Independent of your uncle!" I repeated. "What do you mean? How on earth can good come of the evil of disgracing yourself at Oxford?"

"Well, in this way, Geoff. The fellow with whom I got into this row—indeed, I might say, who got me into this row, and who was leaving Oxford this term, so he didn't care for himself—is the son of a Scotch wine merchant in the City. He is a thundering good fellow, and when he heard say that I couldn't go to the Grange, he insisted on my coming to stay at his father's here in London. On our way up I told him something of my position, and said I would do anything in the world that would give me a small, certain independence. He came to me last night, and said he had been talking to his father, who offered to take me into the house, and give me three hundred a year. My work would be chiefly to *tout*—to go among my friends, and try to get orders. I was a little staggered at first. It isn't the kind of thing I've been used to, but——"

"I should think not! And for a wine merchant, too! the last trade of all others, Harry, you should have anything to do with. You are ill-fitted in every way for this kind of life. I hope you will not think of it."

"Indeed, but I do, though. I have made up my mind to accept Mr. Strahan's offer. There's no disgrace in 'touting,' Geoff?"

"I don't say that there is any disgrace, but I know that your uncle would never forgive you. It would be the most suicidal step you could take; and when I say that, Harry, I mean something more than as regards your worldly prospects. You know your own fatal tendency—you will be constantly exposed to the temptation of 'tasting' wines, and not even Assunta's influence, I fear, will counterbalance this."

"I know myself better than you do, Geoff," he said, colouring. "I don't drink when I am happy. I drink when I am dispirited—I drink from a craving for excitement—to drown thought. When I have my darling for my own, when no one can separate us, I shall want nothing else, neither drink nor any other excitement."

I brought forward every argument I could to move him from his purpose; and a great many had ones among the number: to wit, that Mr. Strahan only wanted

Harry's name to widen, and, it might be, to raise the Strahan connexion: that this was not honest work, which I always respected, but the base letting out on hire of a social influence to advance the interests of a trade. To which, of course, the rejoinder was, that Mr. Strahan's motives were nothing to Harry; and that as long as he could honestly recommend the wine, he saw no reason why he should not do so as generally as possible. Then I pointed out that it was impossible he could support a wife upon three hundred a year.

"I have a hundred and fifty of my own," he replied, "if my uncle were to take from me every farthing; which, for Assunta's sake, I hardly think he would do."

In short, he was so full of the scheme that nothing I could say made the smallest impression. Poor boy! His exhilaration lasted but a few hours. The day but one after this he rushed into my room, early in the morning, with a letter in his hand. He was pale with excitement, his passionate nostrils dilated, his lips quivering. He neither shook my hand nor spoke a word of greeting; he only held out the letter, and said in a hoarse voice:

"Read that."

I saw at once that it was from Assunta; but I was far from guessing its contents. Here is the letter itself, which fell into my hands years after. The paper is yellow; the ink is faded, but the pure and noble spirit breathes through it fresh as when those words were written.

April 22nd, 1829.

MY OWN DEAREST HARRY,—I sit down with a sorrowful heart, knowing that what I have to write will give you great pain. Ever since we parted, Harry, nearly four months ago, there has been a conflict in me, between my own selfish love, and a growing fear—a growing belief, that it was best for you that all between us should be at an end. If I could think, as I once did, that by ever being your wife I should do you more good than I could bring you harm, nothing should have shaken me. But, alas! dearest Harry, I have been shaken. I do not reproach you; I would not willingly add one pang to your sorrow, dear. I know that women cannot judge of the men's temptations. All I mean is, that the existing state of things seems to be doing you injury in all ways, as regards your family, as regards your career, as regards your own self, which is far worse than all. I have not the power to guard you from this last evil, which would be my

only justification for severing you from your home, and for allowing you to sacrifice all your worldly prospects. Your uncle, whose character you scarcely understand as well as I do, in spite of all his great kindness to me, will *never* be reconciled to our marriage. Your youth would be wasted in pursuit of a dream, if you waited for his consent; if we married without it, Mr. Walbrooke would disinherit you at once. He has told me this himself. It would be mere sentimentality to pretend that such would not be a great misfortune to one bred up as you have been. But, as regards myself, there might be a yet worse misfortune. If you should not have strength to support poverty, Harry; if it should happen that, in order to drown your cares, you lowered morally, under my eyes, day by day; if the time ever came when I felt that you reproached me, in your heart, with being the cause of your degradation—I think I should kill myself. I could never survive the agony of such a thought as that. And therefore, dearest, I have been brought, with many bitter tears, to believe that everything between us had best be—I will not say *forgotten*, perhaps that is impossible, but, at an end. I am leaving this house, which has been my home for five years, to-morrow morning. You must not think I am driven away. Mr. Walbrooke has opposed my departure by every means in his power; but my eyes have been opened to see what is right. When I am gone, you will return to your natural home; for you must let no foolish resentment now prevent a reconciliation with your uncle. Oh! my darling, do not think too harshly of me for breaking my word; you would not, if you knew all I had suffered. This is the last time I shall ever write to you, and there is something still at my heart which I would add. It is this. Although we are parted for ever in this world, I shall be comparatively happy in my obscurity if I hear of you as beloved and respected. I shall glory in your honour, dearest Harry. I shall die in your shame.

ASSUNTA.

P.S. I am going to poor Mrs. Fleming. She has moved into the country.

I had walked to the window to read this letter, and I remained there, with my back

to Harry, unable to speak for some minutes after I had finished and refolded it. Noble heart! What would I not have given for such love! Was it all to be wasted? I felt more bitter towards Harry at that moment than I had ever done before.

It was he who broke silence at last.

"They have driven her to it, Geoff, and, by Heaven, I'll never forgive them."

"And you, Harry? Have you only reproaches for others and none for yourself?"

"Can't you see, man," he rejoined fiercely, "that I'm half mad with remorse without my saying so? But it isn't that. Though she thinks me such a reprobate, she would never have given me up (she hasn't now, in her heart) if they hadn't persuaded her it was for my good. But they will find themselves mistaken. She may write what she likes; I shall never give her up. And I'll be hanged if I go back to the Grange."

"What do you mean to do, then?"

"Go in for the wine business. I'm more determined than ever now. I shall cut Oxford, and am going to write to the squire to tell him so."

"You will only grieve Assunta by doing all this, Harry."

"I can't help it, Geoff; it is his doing. I'll be independent somehow, I'm resolved; and so my darling girl shall know. What do I care for his money compared with her? I shall tell her that nothing she can say makes any difference. She is mine, and I am hers, until she marries another man—and the squire may leave his property to whom he likes."

All argument was useless; I went over the old ground again and again, but to no purpose; he was resolutely set against "cringing" to the squire, as he called it, and declared that he couldn't sit at meat with him, feeling as he did at present. Had he known where to find Assunta, I believe he would have set off that night. As it was, he wrote to her, directing his letter to the Grange, to be forwarded; and he wrote likewise to his uncle.

On **MONDAY**, the 4th of **DECEMBER**,

WILL BE PUBLISHED THE

**EXTRA DOUBLE NUMBER
FOR CHRISTMAS,**

1871.

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS, JUN.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

CASTAWAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "WRECKED IN PORT," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER X. TRACKED.

THE startling news which Mrs. Pickering conveyed to Mr. Drage seemed literally to take away his breath. He pressed one hand on his heart and leaned his head on the other, which was supported by the writing-table at which he was seated. He remained in this position for a few moments, until the spasm had passed away. When he raised his head his voice was scarcely under his command as he said:

"This is very dreadful news! Is it perfectly to be relied on?"

"I have already given you my authority. I came upon it by the merest accident last night as I was reading aloud to Sir Geoffrey. I have taken a copy of the paragraph, and it is there." She laid the paper on the desk before him. He took it up and read it attentively. Then he said:

"It is frank enough, certainly, and prints the names plainly, and in full. If you have any doubt as to its authenticity, I think we can make ourselves certain on that point through my father."

"Your father, Mr. Drage?"

"Yes. He is, as you know, somewhat potential in the City, where"—pointing to the paper—"both the late husband of the lady and your—and Mr. Vane seem to have been engaged. If I were to write to my father he could doubtless make inquiries, and ascertain if the news herein contained is false or true."

"I have little doubt of its truth," said Madge, "but still less of the identity of the person spoken of with my husband. Accepting this, what am I to do?"

"You must take action of some kind, Mrs. Pickering," said Mr. Drage, nervously. "It would be impossible for you to remain quiet, now that you have been placed in possession of this information."

"I wish the wretched newspaper had never come into the place," cried Madge. "I was living quietly enough, and should have continued to do so, no matter what had happened in the outer world, so long as the knowledge of it was kept from me. What benefit has my learning this news been to me, or to any one? It has completely destroyed the peace of mind which I have been so long in acquiring; and, after all, what good can I do? what harm can I prevent?"

"You must, indeed, have been much upset," said the rector, gravely, "for I should scarcely recognise that remark as coming from one who, in general, thinks so little of herself, and so much of her opportunities of serving her fellow-creatures. Surely you must perceive that you may now be the means of saving this lady from an illegal marriage, and from a life of consequent misery."

"Does one necessarily follow the other?" asked Madge, bitterly. "Mine was a legal marriage, and yet it can scarcely be said to have been a happy one. This woman has been married before, and has had experience of the world. She will know how to humour her husband, and besides, too, she has wealth. I don't think that Philip Vane, having much of his own way, and plenty of money at his command, would be an ineligible companion for such a person. I am by no means prepared to allow that there must necessarily be even the usual amount of married misery in such a union."

The scarlet spot stood out brightly in the rector's cheeks, and he moved forward in

his chair as though about to speak. He managed, however, to check the threatened outburst of his wrath, and said, quietly;

"You are plainly not yourself this morning, Mrs. Pickering; you are the last person in whom I should have expected to find an apologist for outraging a law made both by God and man. I scarcely think we can discuss the matter while you are in this spirit; it would be better for you to allow me to call upon you in a day or two, when the effect of the news which you have thus suddenly learned has somewhat subsided."

There was nothing oral in this remark, but the words were the harshest which, since his acquaintance with Madge, the rector had ever used towards her; and his manner was marked by a sternness which she had never previously noticed in him.

"I was wrong," she said, frankly, "and you are right in thus reproving me; but I suppose even you will allow that my fate just now is somewhat hard? I have described to you what effect this announcement had upon me when I first saw it last night; I was stupefied. An hour afterwards, when I read it at my leisure, and pondered over it, I was mad, and could have killed Philip Vane had he crossed my path. At that moment I could have killed this woman who is to be his wife! Now, I wish to kill no one, except," she added, with a faint smile, "perhaps, the newspaper-man, whose paragraph has so upset me, and my real desire would be to leave things exactly as they are, to fall into such channels as chance may mark out for them, and to pursue the even tenour of my way."

"That is impossible now, Mrs. Pickering," said the rector, speaking in his usual soft tone and trustful manner. "It is not for us to inquire why you, the person most interested in hearing of this news, should—accidentally, apparently—have had it brought before you. That it was with some wise purpose, I do not doubt, though I cannot say positively; but this I can say positively, that being aware of it, it is your duty to prevent the commission of this crime."

"That can only be done effectually by my seeing this—this lady, and acquainting her with the exact position in which I stand towards the man she is about to marry."

"That I think should be your last resource," said Mr. Drage, after a pause. "Under the old rules of woodcraft, it was not considered a part of sport to give any law to the fox, who might be 'trapped and slain' whenever he could be caught; and no doubt the majority of the world would

class Mr. Vane in this category. But situated as you are with him, it is only fair that, even at this juncture, he should experience better treatment at your hands; and it will be right, I think, that in the first place you should let him know your acquaintance with his project, and your determination to thwart it."

"That would involve my seeing him?" asked Madge.

"Unquestionably," replied the rector; "it is not a matter that could be managed by deputy."

"I could not do that," said Madge, shuddering. "I could not possibly face him alone again."

"You need not be alone," said Mr. Drage; "I will accompany you very willingly if you wish it. As your parish priest and intimate friend, the repository of your confidence, I could go with you on this errand, and——"

"It would be impossible, under any circumstances," cried Madge; "I could not see him again—I will not do it."

"You must," said Mr. Drage, firmly. "It is a matter of duty, and when I have said that to you, I know I need say no more."

There must have been something in this tall, ungainly, fragile man—perhaps it was the earnestness of his manner, or the knowledge on the part of those who heard him, that, in all sincerity, he practised what he preached—which commanded obedience.

After his last words, Madge said, simply, "Very well, I will do as you suggest."

And he knew that his advice would be followed to the letter.

"I need not tell you that you are acting rightly," he said; "you have an intuitive knowledge of it."

"I will do as you advise me," she replied; "but there is one thing which we have not yet settled. How and where am I to find Mr. Philip Vane?"

"I do not imagine there will be much difficulty in tracing him," said the rector. "I will, with your permission, enclose a copy of that paragraph to my father, and, without giving him any reasons, will ask him to find out for me whether the news contained in it is true, and who and what are the persons whose affairs are therein freely discussed. I will ask him to find out what is Mr. Vane's City status, and what his private address."

"You are determined to leave me no loophole," said Madge, with another attempt at a smile.

"Determined," said Mr. Drage, taking her hand. "I have seen you under a great

many phases, and I want you to be successful in this as in all the others."

So the letter was written to the rector's father, and in the interval between its despatch and the receipt of the reply, Madge endeavoured to school herself for the task which she had undertaken to execute. It would be a difficult one she knew right well, but she knew also that her best chance of going through with it successfully was to cultivate the callousness with which for so long a time she had regarded Philip Vane and his affairs, and from which she had only been roused by the sudden shock of the news concerning him. The indignation roused by that news, the strange feeling of jealousy that any one should occupy what was her lawful position, the curious desire to claim that position, which she had long since calmly yielded up, directly she saw it about to be taken by another, all these disturbing sensations had passed away and left her calm and equal-minded as she had been for months, for years previously. Whether or not her equanimity would desert her when she saw her husband face to face, she could not say. She endeavoured to rehearse in her mind all that might probably take place on the occasion of their meeting; all the sneers and brutalities which he would hurl at her, when he heard the object of her visit, and after a certain amount of preparation, she conducted herself, so far as the rehearsal was concerned, to her entire satisfaction.

In about a week's time she received a letter from Mr. Drage, saying that his father's reply had arrived, and he would be glad to see her at the rectory on the first convenient opportunity.

That same day she took occasion to go into town, and found the rector expecting her. When the servant who announced her had retired, Mr. Drage said, with a grave smile:

"You will be more pleased than I am myself with a certain portion of the news which I have to announce to you. My father placed my letter in the hands of a confidential clerk who has been with him for years, and he it is who replies to my inquiries. I will read what he says."

The rector took up a letter lying on the desk before him, and read as follows:

"There would seem to be no doubt about the bona fides of the newspaper paragraph, copy of which was forwarded by you. Have traced paragraph from Anglo-Indian paper (where it was expanded by addition of last lines) to Fashionable Tatler,

where it originally appeared, and have seen receipt for three and six, signed by Rumbold, described as 'hall porter in nobleman's family,' as payment for it. Andreas Bendixen died 5th of June, 1858. Personal property sworn under one hundred and thirty thousand pounds; clear half to widow, other half divided among three brothers, but to remain in the business for ten years. Mrs. Bendixen resides 204, Harley-street. Sent there—out of town—servant declined to give address. Mr. Philip Vane, general manager, Terra del Fuegos Mining Company, and on various other boards of direction. Private residence, Z 20, the Albany. Sent to both places—said to be out of town. Messenger saw clerks in the City—valet at Albany. Both declined to give Mr. V.'s address, professing not to know it."

"Which portion of this communication is to please me more than it does you?" asked Madge, as he laid down the paper.

"That which states that Mr. Vane's present whereabouts cannot be ascertained," said the rector. "You seemed so averse to meeting him the last time we talked the matter over, that I imagined you would have been glad of the excuse thus afforded you."

"On the contrary," said Madge; "the more I have thought of the matter the more I have seen it from your point of view, and the more am I convinced of the necessity of my taking action in it."

"That necessity seems to me more than ever urgent," said the rector. "Neither of these people are to be found in London; both are simultaneously away from town, and the address of neither can be ascertained. Had not the insertion of that paragraph shown that they evidently courted publicity, I should imagine they had gone away to be married quietly from some friend's house in the country, and to escape from the usual fuss and worry of a fashionable wedding. Even as it is, if we want to prevent this man from carrying his atrocious scheme into operation, I do not think we have any time to lose."

"What more can we do?" asked Madge.

"I am afraid nothing," said the rector, shrugging his shoulders. "I have written to my father's head clerk to renew the inquiries at Mr. Vane's address from day to day, and to let it be known that an important communication awaits him."

So Madge returned home beaten, and dispirited at her failure. The next morning brought a letter from Rose. It ran thus:

DEAREST MADGE,—What they call the London season is over now, and the work at the office has become very much slacker, so the superintendent says I can have my fortnight's holiday now if I like, and I think I should like very much indeed, for the weather is dreadfully hot, and I have been working very hard all the summer, and begin to feel that I want a change. So I write to ask if you can get a holiday at the same time, Madge, and then we might go to some seaside place together, and enjoy ourselves. That would be nicest of all; but if you cannot manage to get away from your duties, I might come down to Springside and go into our old lodging, or one like it, and you could come to see me whenever you were disengaged. If you told Sir Geoffry Heriot your sister were coming down, I don't suppose that he would make any objection to your being a great deal with me, as he seems, from all you say of him, to be a very kind old man.

For I must see you somewhere, Madge, I must, indeed. I know that no amount of fresh air or change of scene would do me half as much good as a long talk with you, and I shall only fret and worry myself until I have it.

Can you imagine what it is all about, Madge? You are so quick and clever, that I dare say you have guessed already, and indeed I should not be surprised if my previous letters had been filled with no other subject, as I always write to you exactly what I think, and I have scarcely thought about anything else for months. Of course, Madge, I mean Mr. Gerald Hardinge! He has been very kind to me, and I have seen a great deal of him lately; he has lent me plenty of books, and some of his drawings to copy; and the other evening, when I incautiously said something about missing that old piano, which we used to thump and strum away on at Miss Cave's lodgings, Mr. Hardinge asked if I would permit him to hire another for me. I could not sanction this, of course, and said no; but he insisted so strongly, that I had to invent a little story, and tell him that Mrs. Bland would not allow any piano practice in her house. That seemed to satisfy him, for he said Mrs. Bland was a most respectable woman, and I was most happily placed under her charge; and he thought it would be highly inexpedient for me to go to any other lodging. "Highly inexpedient" were the words he used, looking as grave as a judge all the time; for he is awfully proper and decorous, though,

at the same time, he is awfully nice. I can see you raise your eyebrows in astonishment when you read what I am now going to tell you. That frequently during these long summer evenings I have walked with him in Kensington Gardens, and that we have talked for hours and hours together, and that he has never said one word of you. I cannot tell exactly what it is he talks about; I often try to think of it after we have parted, and I am at home again alone, but I never can recollect it exactly; I only know that he talks very cleverly and very charmingly, and I am only required to say a word here and there.

Oh, Madge, it is no use my beating about the bush any longer, and attempting to deceive you; I have read over what I have just written, and I might as well put in so many words what you already know, that I am madly in love with Gerald, and think there is no one like him in the world. Don't think this a sudden fit of frenzy, and that I have gone mad; it has been growing and growing ever so long, ever since we were at Wexeter together, and he used to give me drawing lessons.

Mind, Madge, he does not make love to me—at least, I mean to say, exactly make love; he is far too honourable to attempt to take the slightest advantage of my position, and he has never said anything to me which you might not have heard. I mean, of course, anything so far as honour is concerned; but his manner is so kind and gentle, and he is so patient with my ignorance and my folly; so careful to prevent its ever occurring to me that I am not moving in his sphere, or that there is any difference in our rank in life, and so handsome—you have no idea, Madge, what he is like now—that I cannot help loving him immensely.

I do not know that I should have taken even you into confidence, Madge, if it could have gone on in this way, but I am sufficiently sensible to know that it cannot. The summer evenings are at an end now, and there will be no more long walks, and then all my chances of seeing Gerald, save for a few moments at a time, are over; and then I sometimes think that if I were to give up seeing him it would kill me, and then I know I must give it up, and then I think I should go mad, only I find comfort in the remembrance of your strong, sound sense, and the certainty that you will advise me for the best; and remember, dear, whatever has to be done, and whatever is to be said to Gerald about it, you must say it for me, because I could never—but we

will talk this all over when I come down to see you.

Oh, by the way, you recollect my writing to you some time ago of Gerald telling me about an old lady whom he wished me to call upon, but she was ill at the time. She is always ill, it appears, and as Gerald wished her very much to see me I walked there with him the other evening. She lives in a fashionable part of the town, in a tiny little mite of a house, exquisitely furnished, and looking on to Hyde Park; she has been a handsome woman, and was so beautifully dressed, just in good taste, you know, for an invalid, who is always compelled to lie on a sofa. She tried to be very polite, but she is of the old C-A-T order, looking me up and down, and through and through, and "Miss Pierpointed" me whenever she addressed me. When I rose to go, I almost expected her to ring and order "the young person to be shown out." Gerald looked annoyed, and I rather think the introduction was a failure. He has not said much about it since, only that Mrs. Entwistle (that's her funny old name) was peculiar, and that allowances must be made for her as an invalid, &c.

Now, dearest Madge, write to me at once, and tell me what we shall do about meeting; and don't fret yourself about what I have told you, for it is all perfectly right, and I will be entirely guided by your advice.

Your loving

ROSE.

P.S.—I had almost forgotten to tell you a curious thing which happened yesterday. We have a new clerk at the counter, and it appears he refused to take a message because it was written in cipher; the person delivering it insisted on its being forwarded, and as he refused to go away, higher authority was appealed to, and I was sent for. Directly I set eyes upon the man, who wished the telegram forwarded, I recognised him at once. Don't you recollect, just a short time before the close of the season at Wexeter, I came one morning to fetch you after rehearsal, and, as we walked away from the theatre, we were followed for a long distance by a short stout man, whose hands we noticed were covered with blazing diamond rings, and who kept on dogging our footsteps, to my great amusement? But you were in a tremendous rage about it, and at last you stopped dead, and turning round, looked the man up and down as though you could have killed and eaten him on the spot, and then he, in a far more gentlemanly manner

than we either of us could have given him credit for, raised his hat and went away.

There stood the very man at our counter; I recognised him in an instant; saw the whole scene before me. Of course he didn't recognise, in the superintendent of the telegraph office, the sister and companion of the celebrated actress, Miss M. P. I inquired into the matter, told him that his message could be forwarded, and he retired, taking off his hat to me, exactly as he had taken it off to you on the before-named memorable occasion.

I wonder who he is; he looked very like a member of the profession, or perhaps more in the style of the manager of that American circus which came to one of the towns—I forget which—where you were acting when I was with you. His message was in cipher, and there is therefore nothing in it which led to his identification; it is a funny message, I enclose you a copy of it.

"I enclose you a copy of it," repeated Madge, turning over the paper, "and there is nothing enclosed; that's just like Rose. Ah, what is this?" and she stooped down to pick up a piece of paper lying on the ground at her feet. It was the usual printed form of a telegraph message. Madge noticed that it was headed "copy," that it was filled up in Rose's handwriting, and that it was lengthy, but she read nothing beyond the first two lines, which ran thus:

"D. L. B., London, to Philip Vane, Esq., care of P. Kaulbach, Esq., Hollycombe, Sandown, Isle of Wight."

Madge started, doubting whether she had read aright; she re-read the address carefully, placed the paper in her pocket, and started off at once for the rectory.

She found Mr. Drage at home, and read aloud to him the text of Rose's letter; she did not show him the copy of the telegram, but she repeated exactly the address it contained. There was no need for her to refer to the written document, every word of that address was burning in her memory, as though each had been emblazoned in letters of fire.

"This is, to say the least of it, very lucky," said Mr. Drage, "for I will use that phrase in preference to any more serious one, which might seem to imply especial interposition on our behalf. Have you thought of what you will do now?"

"I have," said Madge. "I will make my way at once to the place where Philip Vane is staying, and confront him. I am

sufficient woman of business to have consulted Bradshaw while waiting for you, and I have already arranged my route; I find that I can go across country to Yeovil, sleep there this evening, and proceed to-morrow to Southampton, whence I can cross to the Isle of Wight."

"May I not accompany you?" said Mr. Drage.

"No," said Madge, "I think it will be better that I should go alone: not that I think either of us need have the smallest fear of what the world might say about such a proceeding, but I am sure that my chance of—well, I suppose I may say, of escaping with my life from my husband, will be greater if he imagines I have acted entirely on my own promptings in this affair."

"The argument you have used is scarcely one which should induce me to give way to you," said Mr. Drage; "however, since you are determined, go, and God speed you! Sir Geoffrey will be perfectly prepared to hear you wish for a few days' change; I have taken care of that."

On the second evening after her leaving Wheatcroft, Madge Pierrepont rang the bell of a large and handsome one-storied villa, standing in a lovely garden, and overlooking Sandown Bay. The hall-door was open, and several servants were fitting about, busily engaged removing the dinner. One of these advanced towards her.

"Is Mr. Philip Vane within?"

The servant glanced first at her and then at the fly which had brought her from the hotel, then he was reassured.

"Mr. Vane is staying in the house, ma'am," he replied.

"I wish to speak with him."

"Certainly, ma'am," said the man, showing the way into a small room. "Will you walk into the study. Who shall I say wishes to see Mr. Vane?"

"Say Mrs. Vane, if you please," said Madge, firmly.

END OF BOOK THE SECOND.

A BILL OF THE PLAY.

ARE there, now-a-days, any collectors of playbills? In the catalogues of second-hand booksellers are occasionally to be found such entries as: "Playbills of the Theatre Royal Bath, 1807 to 1812;" or "Hull Theatre Royal—various bills of performances between 1815 and 1850;" or "Covent Garden Theatre—variety of old bills of the last century pasted in a

volume;" yet these evidences of the care and diligence of past collectors would not seem to obtain much appreciation in the present. The old treasures can generally be purchased at a very moderate outlay. Still if scarceness is an element of value, these things should be precious. It is in the nature of such ephemera of the printing press to live their short hour, and disappear with exceeding suddenness. They may be originally issued in hundreds or even in thousands; but once gone they are gone for ever. Relative to such matters there is an energy of destruction that keeps pace with the industry of production. The demands of "waste" must be met: fires must be lighted. So away go the loose papers—sheets and pamphlets of the minute. They have served their turn, and there is an end of them. Hence the difficulty of obtaining, when needed, a copy of a newspaper of old date, or the guide-book or programme of a departed entertainment, or the catalogue of a past auction of books or pictures. It has been noted that, notwithstanding the enormous circulation it enjoyed, the catalogue of our Great Exhibition of a score of years ago is already a somewhat rare volume. Complete sets of the catalogues of the Royal Academy's century of exhibitions are possessed by very few. And of playbills of the English stage from the Restoration down to the present time, although the British Museum can certainly boast a rich collection, yet this is disfigured here and there by gaps and deficiencies which cannot now possibly be supplied.

The playbill is an ancient thing. Mr. Payne Collier states that the practice of printing information as to the time, place, and nature of the performances to be presented by the players was certainly common prior to the year 1563. John Northbrooke, in his treatise against theatrical performers, published about 1579, says: "They use to set up their bills upon posts some certain days before to admonish people to make resort to their theatres." The old plays make frequent reference to this posting of the playbills. Thus in the induction to *A Warning for Fair Women*, 1599, Tragedy whips Comedy from the stage, crying:

'Tis you have kept the theatre so long
Painted in playbills upon every post,
While I am scorned of the multitude.

Taylor, the water poet, in his *Wit and Mirth*, records the story of Field the actor's riding rapidly up Fleet-street, and being stopped by a gentleman with an inquiry as to the

play that was to be played that night. Field, "being angry to be stayed upon so frivolous a demand, answered, that he might see what play was to be played upon every post. 'I cry you mercy,' said the gentleman. 'I took you for a post, you rode so fast.'"

It is strange to find that the right of printing playbills was originally monopolised by the Stationers' Company. At a later period, however, the privilege was assumed and exercised by the crown. In 1620, James the First granted a patent to Roger Wood and Thomas Symcooke for the sole printing, among other things, of "all bills for playes, pastimes, shewes, challenges, prizes, or sportes whatsoever." It was not until after the Restoration that the playbills contained a list of the dramatis personæ, or of the names of the actors. But it had been usual, apparently, with the title of the drama, to supply the name of its author and its description as a tragedy or comedy. Shirley, in the prologue to his *Cardinal*, apologises for calling it only a "play" in the bill:

Think what you please, we call it but a "play:"
Whether the comic muse, or lady's love,
Romance or direful tragedy it prove,
The bill determines not.

From a later passage in the same prologue Mr. Collier judges that the titles of tragedies were usually printed, for the sake of distinction, in red ink:

—and you would be
Persuaded I would have't a comedy
For all the purple in the name.

There is probably no playbill extant of an earlier date than 1663. About this time, in the case of a new play, it was usual to state in the bill that it had been "never acted before."

In the earliest days of the stage, before the invention of printing, the announcement that theatrical performances were about to be exhibited was made by sound of trumpet, much after the manner of modern strollers and showmen at fairs and street-corners. Indeed, long after playbills had become common, this musical advertisement was still requisite for the due information of the unlettered patrons of the stage. In certain towns the musicians were long looked upon as the indispensable heralds of the actors. Tate Wilkinson, writing in 1790, records that a custom obtained at Norwich, "and if abolished it has not been many years," of proclaiming in every street with drum and trumpet the performances to be presented at the theatre in the evening. A like practice also prevailed at Grantham. To the

Lincolnshire company of players, however, this musical preface to their efforts seemed objectionable and derogatory, and they determined, on one of their visits to the town, to dispense with the old-established sounds. But the reform resulted in empty benches. Thereupon the "revered, well-remembered, and beloved Marquis of Granby" sent for the manager of the troop, and thus addressed him: "Mr. Manager, I like a play. I like a player, and I shall be glad to serve you. But, my good friend, why are you all so offended at and averse to the noble sound of a drum? I like it, and all the inhabitants like it. Put my name on your playbill, provided you drum, but not otherwise. Try the effect on to-morrow night; if then you are as thinly attended as you have lately been, shut up your playhouse at once; but if it succeeds drum away!" The players withdrew their opposition and followed the counsels of the marquis. The musical prelude was again heard in the streets of Grantham, and crowded houses were obtained. The company enjoyed a prosperous season, and left the town in great credit. "And I am told," adds Wilkinson, "the custom is continued at Grantham to this day."

An early instance of the explanatory address, signed by the dramatist or manager, which so frequently accompanies the modern playbill, is to be found in the fly-sheet issued by Dryden in 1665. The poet thought it expedient in this way to inform the audience that his tragedy of the *Indian Emperor* was to be regarded as a sequel to a former work, the *Indian Queen*, which he had written in conjunction with his brother-in-law, Sir Robert Howard. The handbill excited some amusement, by reason of its novelty, for in itself it was but a simple and useful intimation. In ridicule of this proceeding, Bayes, the hero of the *Duke of Buckingham's* burlesque, the *Rehearsal*, is made to say: "I have printed above a hundred sheets of paper to insinuate the plot into the boxes."

Chetwood, who had been twenty years prompter at Drury Lane, and published a *History of the Stage* in 1749, describes a difficulty that had arisen in regard to printing the playbills. Of old the lists of characters had been set forth according to the books of the plays, without regard to the merits of the performers. "As, for example, in *Macbeth*, Duncan, King of Scotland, appeared first in the bill, though acted by an insignificant person, and so every other actor appeared according to his dramatic dignity, all of the same sized

letter. But latterly, I can assure my readers, I have found it a difficult task to please some ladies as well as gentlemen, because I could not find letters large enough to please them; and some were so fond of elbow room that they would have shoved everybody out but themselves, as if one person was to do all, and have the merit of all, like generals of an army." Garrick seems to have been the first actor honoured by capital letters of extra size in the playbills. The Connoisseur, in 1754, says: "The writer of the playbills deals out his capitals in so just a proportion that you may tell the salary of each actor by the size of the letter in which his name is printed. When the present manager of Drury Lane first came on the stage a new set of types, two inches long, were cast on purpose to do honour to his extraordinary merit." These distinctions in the matter of printing occasioned endless jealousies among the actors. Macklin made it an express charge against his manager, Sheridan, the actor, that he was accustomed to print his own name in larger type than was permitted the other performers. Kean threatened to throw up his engagement at Drury Lane on account of his name having been printed in capitals of a smaller size than usual. His engagement of 1818 contained a condition, "and also that his name shall be continued in the bills of performance in the same manner as it is at present," viz., large letters. On the other hand, Downton, the comedian, greatly objected to having his name thus particularised, and expostulated with Elliston, his manager, on the subject. "I am sorry you have done this," he wrote. "You know well what I mean. This cursed quackery. These big letters. There is a want of respectability about it, or rather a notoriety, which gives one the feeling of an absconded felon, against whom a hue and cry is made public. Or if there be really any advantage in it, why should I, or any single individual, take it over the rest of our brethren? But it has a nasty disreputable look, and I have fancied the whole day the finger of the town pointed at me, as much as to say, 'That is he! Now for the reward!' Leave this expedient to the police officers, or to those who have a taste for it. I have none."

O'Keeffe relates that once when an itinerant showman brought over to Dublin a trained monkey of great acquirements, Mossop engaged the animal at a large salary to appear for a limited num-

ber of nights at his theatre. Mossop's name in the playbill was always in a type nearly two inches long, the rest of the performers' names being in very small letters. But to the monkey were devoted capitals of equal size to Mossop's; so that, greatly to the amusement of the public, on the playbills pasted about the town, nothing could be distinguished but the words, MOSSOP, MONKEY. Under John Kemble's management, "for his greater ease and the quiet of the theatre," letters of unreasonable size were abandoned, and the playbills were printed after an amended and more modest pattern.

With the rise and growth of the press came the expediency of advertising the performances of the theatres in the columns of the newspapers. To the modern manager advertisements are a very formidable expense. The methods he is compelled to resort to in order to bring his plays and players well under the notice of the public, involve a serious charge upon his receipts. But of old the case was precisely the reverse. The theatres were strong, the newspapers were weak. So far from the manager paying money for the insertion of his advertisements in the journals, he absolutely received profits on this account. The press then suffered under severe restrictions, and was most jealously regarded by the governing powers; leading articles were as yet unknown; the printing of parliamentary debates was strictly prohibited; foreign intelligence was scarcely obtainable; of home news there was little stirring that could with safety be promulgated. So that the proceedings of the theatres became of real importance to the newspaper proprietor, and it was worth his while to pay considerable sums for early information in this respect. Moreover, in those days, not merely by reason of its own merits, but because of the absence of competing attractions and other sources of entertainment, the stage was much more than at present an object of general regard. In Andrews's History of British Journals it is recorded, on the authority of the ledger of Henry Woodfall, the publisher of the Public Advertiser: "The theatres are a great expense to the papers. Amongst the items of payment are, playhouses one hundred pounds. Drury Lane advertisements, sixty-four pounds eight shillings and sixpence, Covent Garden, ditto, sixty-six pounds eleven shillings. The papers paid two hundred pounds a year to each theatre for the accounts of new plays, and

would reward the messenger with a shilling or half a crown who brought them the first copy of a playbill." In 1721, the following announcement appeared in the *Daily Post*: "The managers of Drury Lane think it proper to give notice that advertisements of their plays, by their authority, are published only in this paper and the *Daily Courant*, and that the publishers of all other papers who insert advertisements of the same plays, can do it only by some surreptitious intelligence or hearsay, which frequently leads them to commit gross errors, as, mentioning one play for another, falsely representing the parts, &c., to the misinformation of the town, and the great detriment of the said theatre." And the *Public Advertiser* of January the 1st, 1765, contains a notice: "To prevent any mistake in future in advertising the plays and entertainments of Drury Lane Theatre, the managers think it proper to declare that the playbills are inserted by their direction in this paper only." It is clear that the science of advertising was but dimly understood at this date. Even the shopkeepers then paid for the privilege of exhibiting bills in their windows, whereas now they require to be rewarded for all exertions of this kind, by, at any rate, free admissions to the entertainments advertised, if not by a specific payment of money. The exact date when the managers began to pay instead of receive on the score of their advertisements, is hardly to be ascertained. Geneste, in his laborious *History of the Stage*, says obscurely of the year 1745: "At this time the plays were advertised at three shillings and sixpence each night or advertisement in the *General Advertiser*." It may be that the adverse systems went on together for some time. The managers may have paid certain journals for the regular insertion of advertisements, and received payment from less favoured or less influential newspapers for theatrical news or information.

One of Charles Lamb's most pleasant papers arose from "the casual sight of an old playbill which I picked up the other day; I know not by what chance it was preserved so long." It was but two-and-thirty years old, however, and presented the cast of parts in *Twelfth Night* at Old Drury Lane Theatre, destroyed by fire in 1809. Lamb's delight in the stage needs not to be again referred to. "There is something very touching in these old remembrances," he writes. "They make

us think how we once used to read a playbill, not as now peradventure singling out a favourite performer and casting a negligent eye over the rest; but spelling out every name down to the very mutes and servants of the scene; when it was a matter of no small moment to us whether Whitfield or Packer took the part of Fabian; when Benson, and Burton, and Phillimore—names of small account—had an importance beyond what we can be content to attribute now to the time's best actors." The fond industry with which a youthful devotee of the theatre studies the playbills could hardly be more happily indicated than in this extract.

Mention of Old Drury Lane and its burning bring us naturally to the admirable "story of the flying playbill," contained in the parody of Crabbe, perhaps the most perfect specimen in that unique collection of parodies, *Rejected Addresses*. The verses by the pseudo-Crabbe include the following lines:

Perchance while pit and gallery cry "Hats off!"
And awed consumption checks his chided cough,
Some giggling daughter of the Queen of Love
Drops, soft of pin, her playbill from above;
Like Icarus, while laughing galleries clap,
Soars, ducks, and dives in air the printed scrap;
But, wiser far than he, combustion fears;
And, as it flies, eludes the chandeliers;
Till, sinking gradual, with repeated twirl,
It settles, curling, on a fiddler's curl,
Who from his powdered pate the intruder strikes,
And, for mere malice, sticks it on the spikes.

"The story of the flying playbill," says the mock-preface, "is calculated to expose a practice, much too common, of pinning playbills to the cushions insecurely, and frequently, I fear, not pinning them at all. If these lines save one playbill only from the fate I have recorded, I shall not deem my labour ill employed."

Modern playbills may be described as of two classes, in-door and out-of-door. The latter are known also as "posters," and may thus manifest their connexion with the early method of "setting up playbills upon posts." Shakespeare's audiences were not supplied each with handbills as our present playgoers are; such of them as could read were probably content to derive all the information they needed from the notices affixed to the doors of the theatre, or otherwise publicly exhibited. Of late years the venders of playbills who were wont urgently to pursue every vehicle that seemed to them bound to the theatre, in the hope of disposing of their wares, have greatly diminished in numbers, if they have not wholly disappeared. Many managers have

forbidden altogether the sale of bills outside the doors of their establishments. The in-door programmes are again divided into two kinds. To the lower priced portions of the houses an inferior bill is devoted; a folio sheet of thin paper heavily laden and strongly odorous with printers' ink. Visitors to the more expensive seats are now supplied with a scented bill of octavo size, which is generally, in addition, the means of advertising the goods and inventions of an individual perfumer. Attempts to follow Parisian example, and to make the playbill at once a vehicle for general advertisements and a source of amusing information upon theatrical subjects, have been ventured here occasionally, but without decided success. From time to time papers started with this object, under such titles as the Opera Glass, the Curtain, the Drop Scene, &c., have appeared, but they have failed to secure a sufficiency of patronage. The playgoer's openness to receive impressions or information of any kind by way of employment during the intervals of representation, have not been unperceived by the advertiser, however, and now and then, as a result, a monstrosity called an "advertising curtain," has disfigured the stage. Some new development of the playbill in this direction may be in store for us in the future. The difficulty lies, perhaps, in the gilding of the pill. Advertisements by themselves are not very attractive reading, and a mixed audience cannot safely be credited with a ruling appetite merely for dramatic intelligence.

A TRYST.

Her red-gold locks by broad blue ribbons bound,
Fell o'er her graceful shoulders—her low voice
Was as the south wind mid the summer leaves,
Making melodious music: Love's bright spell
Lay in the tangled masses of her hair,
Lurked in her sunny eyes: her red lips held
Such living pearls, as from the Indian deep
Ne'er diver brought—a costly merchandise,
To gem a monarch's crown.

Finger-on-lip,
Dewy-eyed eye crept onward: and the star,
The silver spark, that glitters in the west,
Even mid the roseate cloud-waves that enshroud
The parting sun-god's golden chariot wheels,
Rose o'er the belt of pines, whose sable fronds
Showed black and plum'd, 'neath the mellow light
Of the young crescent-orb.

And then a maid,
Brushing the glittering dew-drops with her feet
From off the lawn, stole to the withered oak,
That skirts the garden-fence: Aureola!
There didst thou stand, with quickly-beating heart,
Thy colour heightened, though no eye to see,
Waiting for him—who came not. Ah, ah me!
Sweetling! too oft the thistle-down hath weight
Compared with man's false oaths.

Slowly and sad,
Homeward again she turned: The white owl wailed,

The nightingale, upon the lilac-bush,
Sang "Love, O buried Love!" and o'er the path,
The showering rose-leaves, to Aureola,
Seemed omens of her "fate." Sudden she paused:
Then with a backward impulse, sought again
The withered trysting-tree: two youthful loves
Hung on that precious moment—and two lives!

What is yon shadow on the gravelled path?
What is yon figure, leaning 'gainst the oak?
Back to the maiden's cheek the life-blood glows.
Had she gone homewards, she had missed her "fate;"
What happy impulse moved her to return?
Love, 'twas thine inspiration—he is here!

A PENNY READING AT MOPETOWN.

MOPETOWN—and some perverse fate seems to thrust me on the place more frequently every year—after many visits, seems to me to be the very ignis fatuus of the entertainers. They know that no one in the place wants to be entertained, still less to pay for being entertained; yet some horrid infatuation seems to draw them there, offering their dismal buzzings, and invariably burning their wings. Suddenly the amateurs of the place caught the mania. Why should not something be done to amuse the Mopetownians? Was it not churlish, keeping all these delightful gifts to themselves? When a few words will rescue misery out of its distress, as Mr. Sterne says of the cab, the man that could grudge them must be a mean curmudgeon indeed. It was some such noble and unselfish principle that led to the Mopetown Penny Readings. It was all a spectacle of the purest charity and self-sacrifice, and the furnishers of the show devoted themselves for the good of the famished and semi-barbarous natives of the place.

To my surprise I found that the admission charges to these so-called Penny Readings were two shillings, one shilling, sixpence, threepence; while the "title-admission," as it might be called, was too contemptible to be quoted at all in the bills.

"And do you mean to tell me," I said, indignantly, to a sort of crab-faced man who sat beside me, "that after calling them Penny Readings, pretending to have a graduated scale of charges for admission——"

"See here," he said, earnestly, "if you mean the admission to these 'ere preserved seats——"

"Reserved!" I mildly uttered.

"Reserved, preserved, or *deserved*, they're seats all the time, I suppose? If the admission to these here was a farthing apiece, they'd only beat up a couple, and they'd be children. The whole thing's gre-

scotous. They go out and ram their tickets into everybody's hands: they sweep the streets and lanes. The parson touts among all his folk, the doctor does the same, and so does the attorney. So do all the old women of the parish."

Greatly astonished at these revelations, I asked, "But *why* should they do this? What is the object?"

"It's a mere 'Vanity-shop,' that's the whole truth. Every man, woman, and girl among 'em is panting to show off. They'd pay a mob in the street to stop and listen to 'em. If they could only get the attention given to a Punch and Judy show, they'd be happy: but they can't. *That's* a higher order of thing. Here they come! *That's* Cleaver, the parson's son, who thinks he's got a turn for speaking, and got the whole thing up. Oh! a regular Vanity-shop!"

Mr. Horace Cleaver, I saw from my bill, was "hon. sec.," a smiling, fussy gentleman, who was received with great applause.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "there is one matter in connexion with the Readin's which I wish to bring before your notice. After much deliberation we have determined to conclude the series a little abruptly; and I have now to announce that there will be *only six more*. The reason for this step has nothing to do with want of support, as was insinuated lately in a certain quarter." (Crab-face nudged me and whispered, "Th' Argus, you know.") "That I brand simply as A CALUMNY!" (Applause.) "On this very night we have had to turn away people from the doors. The truth is, that in about five weeks we shall lose our valued friend who has contributed so much to your amusement, Mr. Hornblower." (All faces turned here, as if the word of command "Eyes left!" had been given, to a corner of the room.) "Business calls Mr. Hornblower to London. Then, again, Miss Weekes, to whose light fingers we are so much indebted, has to leave." (My neighbour repeated to me, with a chuckle, "D'ye hear, light-fingered, is she? *That's* a funny sort of compliment.") "However," said Mr. Cleaver, "having stated so much, I have only to add that Miss Weekes will now perform a solo on the 'pianerfort.'"

Mr. Cleaver bowed and retired, then returned, leading out, in rather a hurried and flurried manner, Miss Weekes—a very agitated young virgin—who gave us an abrupt curtsy, and then, squeezing herself

in between the stool and the instrument, scrambled off into the late M. Thalberg's fantasia in Norma. That master, it is acknowledged, generally wrote on rather difficult lines, and Miss Weekes was not equal to the occasion. The young lady's hands sprawled about, leaped, plunged, invariably falling short of the correct note, making out, indeed, something that had a rude outline of the March in Norma, but could not bear investigation for a moment as finished or artistic playing. It was all a musical muddle; but at Mopetown, I understand, we were never very exacting, and if the normal sounds of the instrument were fairly produced, it was considered unreasonable to ask more. When the performance was over, Miss Weekes fled away in a frightened fawn-like manner, disregarding Mr. Cleaver's proffered cavaliership.

I now found that Mr. Brook Derrick would read for us the Execution of Montrose, which would be, as a lady behind me said, "a treat." This, of course, referred to the subject matter, whose excellence was ascertained, but the interpretation was, of course, matter of speculation. Suddenly a gloomy and sepulchral gentleman strode out slowly, a kind of stage volume in his hand. He had black hair and a yellow skin, and I noticed took a good deal of time in placing his book after he got it open at the right place, smoothing it in a reflective way, while his eyes roamed gloomily over the audience. I have seen this at other readings, and it is considered the distinguishing "note" of an experienced performer. After the smoothing, going on for some time, had produced (as was intended) a kind of nervous stillness, Mr. Derrick gave out slowly and undertakerly, "The Execution of Mun-tearose!" He had a scornful fashion about his interpretation; never looking at us, always at a remote cornice or ventilator, at which he flashed his eye and defied the bloodthirsty mob. He allowed his eye to kindle as he crouched down, and scowled, and curled his lip, and snarled, and grew husky. He at last cut off the hero's head, looked at us all round with ineffable disgust, closed his volume slowly, and stalked out, bearing it with him. Not one of us liked him: and I think we should have had no objection to have seen him laid personally on the block in lieu of the unhappy Scotch nobleman.

Miss Speedy was announced as the next candidate for our approbation, who was set down to sing a coquettish ballad entitled

Why don't He ask Me? She was a buxom, apparently shy; but in reality forward young person: florid, healthy, and with a mouth that was always hovering on the edge of a grin. She kept her music before her like a tea-tray; her sister was at the instrument, and was I could see unnerved by agitation. The strain referred to a gentleman supposed to be a candidate for the affections of the singer. She described him as a "Robin" who

Comes every day
With something to say,
Which to guess, would not task me,
Then why—
(*Flourish of the piano from the sister.*)
Then why—
(*Flourish ditto.*)
Then why, why don't he ask me?

This was delivered with coyness—a wish to hide her head behind the music, an arch shyness. We of course felt that had we been in the gentleman's position, we should not have hung back in that fashion. Still I think she was more or less "brazen," with a tendency to the more. My neighbour said she "would follow a camp," but this was a coarse reflection on the young lady's character.

Next, Mr. Cleaver came out to say that Mr. Siddons Green had kindly consented to recite for us "Edgar Allan Poe's piece of word-painting, the Bells." There was much applause. Siddons Green, I heard from behind, was a gentleman who either had been on the stage, was on the stage, or was going on the stage, I could not make out which distinctly. Another lady whispered something about "going into the Church," and seemed to perceive no discrepancy between the callings. To my surprise Mr. Siddons Green had nothing of the vault about him; and had indeed rather the young curate air—a tenderness and a plaintiveness. His reading of Mr. Poe's bit of "word-painting" was highly curious. It will be remembered that the piece describes various descriptions of bells with singular power, the first strophe, I think, being devoted to the wedding bells. We listened with pleasure to the melodious lines—

Hear the music of the bells,
Wedding bells,
How they, &c.

He gave the nuptial tone tenderly and sweetly, with a kind of conjugal grace, and when the burden came, he chimed it out:

Bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells, bells,

and began to peal them as if he were a bell-ringer himself. His voice fell into a sing-

song key. Some few tittered behind, but we were all more astonished than amused. The effect was odd. But at the next verse, which dealt with funeral bells, Siddons Green became mortuary, and dead-cart-like. He suddenly turned into a ghoul, and when it came to the burden we seemed to hear the chimes of an adjoining tower:

To the pealing of the bells,
Bee-yulls, beeyulls,
Boolls, boolls, bulls, bulls, bulls,
Boles, BOWLES, BOWLES!

As this extraordinary mimetic representation set in, some Mopetownians began to look wonderingly at each other, then to smile, and at last a wave of tittering began to spread away even to the last benches. Siddons Green looked up with scornful surprise—there are low persons in every audience—and then addressed himself to the final stanza, where I think a house is described as being on fire, and the bells ring violently for the firemen. He described it all vividly, "how they clang, how they bang!" (or in words to that effect) until he came to the burden again. "to the ringing and the swinging" of the

Bells, bells, bells, bells, bells,
Beeyells, beeyells, beeyells,
Bells, bells, bells, &c.

At this effort of campanology we could restrain ourselves no longer, and roared and roared again in hysterical merriment. It was too funny, and the ringer, glaring furiously, closed his book vehemently and walked away indignantly.

When we had recovered from our hilarity, Mr. Cleaver, who never omitted the ceremony of announcement, though we had all bills in our hands, came out to say that "Miss Puxley would now sing the Irish song, Patrick, Asthore." This announcement produced great applause. But looking round, I was struck by the motionless hands and soured faces of a whole family who were sitting behind. There was present on each and all a sort of grim consternation, for which so simple an announcement could scarcely be accountable. It flashed upon me in a second that these must be representatives of the other coquettish female delineator who had put the question, "Why don't he ask me?" Here was an opposition arch creature, and who going to be musically coy and forward alternatively in reference to "Patrick, asthore." The surmise proved to be an exceedingly sagacious one, for there emerged a very bouncing young lady with dark eyes, which she dropped shyly and slyly, and then caused to range boldly over the whole room. I

heard snortings and rustlings of contempt behind me, with the word "brazen" borne to my ears distinctly, accompaniments which increased as the lady would now decline the amorous advances of "Patrick, ashore," now encourage them, now appear ready to sink with confusion, as with the successful effrontery of his countrymen, the lover pushed his advantages. Now she began to pout, now to push him away with a musical indignation which we could see was only simulated. The party behind showed how disgusted they were. "Without shame," were the words used. But now a change came o'er her face; she grew pensive:

O mother I'll cry,
O mother I'll die,
If Patrick, ashore,
Should come here no more!

But there was no need of this protest, for in came Paddy himself, more forward and unpolite than ever. And she exclaimed at the last time of the recurring burden:

"Go away, ah do,
I begin to hate you."
But the impudent fellow,
As though he'd grown mellow,
Said "Here's hit or miss,"
And gave me—well *this!*
Provoking Paddy, ashore!

So arch was the pantomime with which the forward Paddy's compliment was conveyed that it completely took the audience by storm, all save the hostile detachment immediately behind, whose snortings and champings of impatience, disgust, and even anger, were loud enough for a whole squadron of cavalry. "Minx!" "Such an exhibition!" "Brazen creature!" "Well, I never!" were some of the depreciatory remarks I again heard, which convinced me that in this line of business this young lady bore away all suffrages, and had completely extinguished her rival. I trembled when I thought of the competition at the next reading, when the sense of competition would probably lead the first young lady into a display of pantomimic love-making that would scandalise the decorous.

The next postulant was the famous Mr. Hornblower, whom I heard spoken of with jocular interest as "Jack." He was a tall, heavy young man, who appeared with a familiar smile on his face, as though he well knew his power over all hearts, a confidence which was, indeed, presently justified, as, with a simple glance of humour, while the symphony was playing, he threw us all into convulsions of laughter. This power contrasted forcibly with the rather

tentative efforts of his companions, who were timorous and insecure as to the result of their efforts: while he, on the contrary, had a calm and undisturbed command over his resources, and the temper of his audience, which must have been the envy of the others. Nor did his performance belie this promise. He sang a melody descriptive of the career of "a very big man," everything about this gentleman being "very big;" and when he alluded to this person's marriage with "a very big wife," the ceiling of the Mopetown Rooms rang again and again with screams of convulsive laughter, which I doubt if the late Mr. Liston, or the present Mr. Toole, ever succeeded in rivalling. Between the verses, as he walked round on his toes, and hitched up his shoulders, some of the young ladies grew hysterical in their enjoyment, and tears flowed from the eyes of stout gentlemen. But curious to say, I observed precisely the same phenomenon as I had done in the case of the soi-disant flame of "Patrick, ashore," namely, a family who preserved an almost cataleptic rigidity at the exertions of the humorist. In vain he postured and grimaced, they looked on with a stony attention. The son of that house, for so I conjectured him to be, whispered now and again to his mother, so I conjectured her to be, and from his face I could have sworn he was saying, "Miserable exhibition! How a man could so degrade himself! A positive buffoon!" I later gathered there was another artist in the same line, who answered the description of this young man.

But I must not linger too long, for the night is wearing on apace. The most interesting feature of the evening, as I should have supposed, was to conclude the performance. The "popular secretary," as I knew the Mopetown prints were certain to style him, had kept a *bonne bouche* for these last nights of the series, a little reading of his own. He did not (I was sure) set up to have the broad humour of his other friends; nor had any pretension to be one of your public performers. But still, in a small way, he had a "quiet fun" of his own; as, indeed, those who enjoyed his friendship in the domestic privacy could testify. Mr. Cleaver had very little voice, and gave us the well-known Trial in Pickwick. His voice was so small and husky, that after about a quarter of an hour's progress, the genuine penny folk in the distance began to grow impatient, and a navy who had strayed in, perhaps taking it for

some inverted shape of "free and easy," called out with profane irreverence, "Speak oop, mon!" The disrespect of this address made a spasm pass over the form of the reader, while a shiver, attended with almost regimental turning of heads, affected the audience. The navy, leaning on his elbows, only grinned. Mr. Cleaver could treat such an interruption with contempt; and as this did not help to raise his voice, the example of the navy became presently contagious, and demoralised the people about him, who began to make a tramping noise with their heels, which entertained them more than the reading itself. Mr. Cleaver turned very red; he was just coming to Sam Weller's examination, where, as the friends of domestic privacy assured him, he was matchless. He said, in a trembling voice:

"I think this interruption very improper and uncalled for, after all the trouble I have taken. This is a reading which— which— which—"

A voice, the owner of which has never been known to this hour—though it is suspected he was hired to interrupt—here finished the sentence, "*which ain't worth listening to.*"

A ghastly silence followed. Mr. Cleaver was regarded with a fetish-like worship. He was white with rage at the indecent interruption. He could only murmur something about "sending for the constable." I am told the subject furnished matter of conversation for days after I had quitted Mopetown.

Such was the Mopetown Reading at which I had the honour to assist. Readers who will search their memories will surely find that it seems familiar, and will stir up memories of other similar entertainments. There is a strong family likeness in all Penny Readings.

WASTED PRESENTIMENTS.

EVERYBODY likes a good ghost story; and still more popular, perhaps, are those quasi-supernatural histories which treat of presentiments realised, of dreams fulfilled, of words lightly spoken, but carried out in a manner that the speaker little expected. A list of such stories is at everybody's fingers' ends; but it has been my lot to meet with several instances of another class of stories, much less frequently commented on, but to my mind even more curious; cases, I mean, in which a peculiar warning has

been—all but, and yet not quite—borne out by subsequent events; so that the intimation could not be passed over as altogether trivial, and yet missed its mark. Several such occurrences have been related to me by witnesses in whose testimony I have full confidence, and I will proceed to give them without further preface.

Doctor J., a retired physician in delicate health, resided, some years ago, in one of the principal towns in the West of England. He was one night seized suddenly with violent illness, and within an hour or two was pronounced to be in a hopeless state. Doctor J. being a Roman Catholic, the Reverend Doctor V., a priest of that communion, was sent for to administer the last rites of religion; and, soon finding that his presence could be of no further use to the unconscious sufferer, he bethought himself how he could best procure female companionship for the poor wife, who was quite stunned by the sudden blow. With this intention, he hastened, in the early morning, to the house of an excellent elderly lady, a pious member of his congregation, and a friend of Mrs. J. The lady had not yet left her room, and he simply sent up word that he wished to speak to her. In a few moments she came hurrying into the room, with every appearance of agitation, and, before he could explain his sad errand, she seized his hand, breathlessly exclaiming: "Oh, Doctor V., how thankful I am to see you! I have had the most frightful, vivid dream about Doctor and Mrs. J.!" Doctor V. might well start, but she hurried on. "I dreamed that I went to call at their house, and that Mrs. J. came down to meet me in a widow's cap, with her face all swollen with tears, and she said to me: 'Oh! Mrs. M., my dear husband is just dead; and he desired me to say that you will be the next.'" "And how did you tell her?" Doctor V.'s auditors were won't to ask at this part of the narration; to which the reverend gentleman invariably answered, "I dare say it was very cowardly, and I dare say it was very foolish; but I did not tell her at all: I bolted!"

So far the story is like many another tale of the marvellous, but the usual sequel is wanting; for though Doctor J. died, Mrs. M. lived on for many years; and certainly was not "the next," unless in some mysterious sense confined to the world of spirits.

In the early days of our New Zealand colony, Mr. P., a younger son of an English peer, settled there with his family. Having hurt his arm, he was advised to try rest and change of air, and accordingly he set out for a trip to the other island, leaving his young wife, whose numerous and constantly increasing nursery duties kept her at home. The time fixed for his return was drawing near, when Mrs. P. was one night awakened by a scream from her eldest child, a little girl four or five years old, who was sleeping in the same bed with her mother. The child had awakened suddenly in a paroxysm of terror, and for some time no soothings were of any avail: all she would do was to point persistently to one corner of the room, while she sobbed out, "Oh! poor papa! poor papa! all dripping with water! all dripping with water!" Of course she was first petted and then laughed at, scolded for a silly little girl, and assured that papa could not possibly have been there; but when Mrs. P. reflected that her husband was probably at that moment on the sea, it is not to be wondered at that she felt her heart grow sick with anxiety. A few days later, as she and her children were sitting down to their breakfast, she saw one of their few neighbours riding up to the door. That he should have come away from his home in the busy morning hours betokened something unusual, and no sooner had she looked in his face than she exclaimed: "Tell me at once, my husband is drowned!" "How did you know?" he responded, thus confirming her fears; and he handed to her a copy of a local newspaper, in which she read that the steamer by which her husband had intended to return, had foundered at sea. The date tallied with her child's dream, and that circumstance seemed to her conclusive; so that when her friend tried to point out to her that there was no proof of her husband's death, she only answered that she had received a fearful warning, and gave herself up to her sorrow. At the end of a few days, Mr. P. quietly walked in, and was a good deal astonished at the agony of almost terrified joy with which his arrival was greeted. It was by the merest chance that he had not been in the lost vessel; he had taken his passage, and had actually gone on board, when he was struck with the extreme lowness of the bulwarks, and thought that, should there be bad weather, he, with his still helpless arm, might be in some danger of being washed

overboard. He therefore returned to the shore, and arranged to come by the next ship instead. So there the story ends, except that we will hope no time was lost in administering a dose of physic to the troublesome little dreamer.

The next story, perhaps, ought hardly to be placed in the same category with the others, since it is possible that the warning may have prevented its own fulfilment.

My great-grandmother was an active Lady Bountiful to a very rustic country population, over whose affairs, temporal and spiritual, she exercised a benevolent, if slightly tyrannical, sway. Among her most frequent pensioners was Soft Billy, as he was called, a poor, half-witted lad, generally quite harmless, but subject to occasional fits of temper, in which he was hard to deal with. One night she dreamed that she was walking along a lane in the neighbourhood, when, from a gap in the hedge, Soft Billy suddenly jumped down into the path before her, brandishing a reaping-hook. His flaming eyes and distorted face showed that his "dark hour" was upon him, and in another second he had flown at her, his fingers were gripping her throat with deadly strength, the steel flashed before her eyes, the very bitterness of death was rushing over her, and she awoke; awoke quivering all over, the cold perspiration standing on her forehead, and her heart beating to suffocation. It was long before she could force herself to meet Soft Billy, even in the presence of others, and for months she avoided the lane which she had traversed in her dream. At last, some sudden case of distress in the village called for her presence, some sick child was to be physicked, or some wife-beating husband to be brought to book, and my great-grandmother set forth, never recollecting, till she had gone some distance, that she must inevitably pass through the dreaded lane. On she went, laughing at her own fears, till suddenly she saw before her the very gap which had appeared in her dream, and which she had never noticed before, and, at that moment, from that very gap, down jumped Soft Billy, and in his hand he brandished a reaping-hook. The dream, in all its horrors, seemed on the verge of fulfilment; but my great-grandmother was a strong-minded woman, and, though her heart was throbbing with terror, she neither fainted nor screamed; she walked straight up to the idiot, and gave him a kindly greeting. "I am glad

to see you, Billy; I am walking to the end of the lane, and now you shall take care of me." The lad, highly flattered, was meek and amiable in a moment, and they walked the rest of the way together, she keeping up an incessant chatter in her most cheery tones, though her heart was doubtless beating at every swing of the ungainly figure, and every flourish of the deadly weapon in the poor, purposeless fingers. At the cottage door she thanked him, and wished him good-bye; and it will readily be believed that she procured another escort for her walk home.

Now for my last story, which I had from the lips of a venerable old Presbyterian minister, the last man to indulge his imagination.

He was in the habit of going every Sunday afternoon to conduct the worship at a little village on the coast of Scotland. One Saturday night he dreamed a vivid dream. He saw the village, and the bay, the waves tossing and beating in a storm, and he saw a pleasure-boat upset, and dashed to pieces against the rocks. Two men were buffeting with the water, fighting for their lives; one a fair, slight youth, the other a middle-aged sailor. As the dreamer looked, he saw them both clutch at, and cling to, a floating spar; it swayed and sank under the double weight, and, while the thought passed through his mind, "it can never support them both," he saw the sailor deliberately raise his fist and strike his companion a blow which stunned him. The young man loosed his hold, and, as he sank into the sea, the sleeper awoke. A few Sundays afterwards he was greeted with the news that a pleasure-boat had been upset, that the body of a young English traveller had been washed on shore, and that an elderly seaman was the only survivor. The man was a good deal injured, and was in bed at a public-house, to which the corpse of the poor young traveller had also been conveyed. The minister at once begged to be taken thither, and so strongly was he impressed with the conviction that his dream had had a literal fulfilment, that he entered the room of the sick man with the fullest intention of taxing him with murder. But when he approached the bed he saw a face totally unlike the one which had haunted his sleep, and every feature of which was vividly impressed on his memory. His visit to the poor dead youth had a like result.

These stories are actual facts, for the

truth of which I can vouch. I will leave all speculations on the subject to those who read them.

GEOFFREY LUTTRELL'S NARRATIVE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "IN THAT STATE OF LIFE," &c.

IN ELEVEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER VIII.

A WEEK and then a fortnight passed, without any other letter from Assunta. Mr. Walbrooke had written twice, in a calm and forbearing manner considering the provocations he received, and had invited Harry to the Grange; but this had only elicited a flat refusal. The poor fellow was now under the impression that his letter to Assunta had never been forwarded, but destroyed by his uncle, and he tried in vain, through various channels, to learn her address. It was clear to me that she herself had taken every precaution to prevent his tracing her; but he would not see it in this light. I then wrote to her myself, begging her to let me have a line—if she had bound herself by any promise not to write again to Harry—to say if she had received his letter. This I thought it best to enclose to Mr. Walbrooke (who knew of my correspondence with Assunta), begging him to forward it to Miss Fleming. I received a few lines from him, replying that he had done as I requested, feeling sure that I had Harry's interests too much at heart to plead for this insane boy with the young lady, who, having as much good sense as right feeling, had resolved to break off all communication with him. And, in the course of another week, I heard from Assunta herself. The note was without date; short and sad enough, though there was a very evident effort to make it appear otherwise. She had received Harry's letter. She could not write to him; perhaps it was better that she should not write to any one much just at present. She grieved to hear from Mr. Walbrooke that Harry refused to go to the Grange. The thing that would make her happiest now was to know of a complete reconciliation between him and his uncle. As to his entering the wine trade, perhaps she had no longer any right to express an opinion, or offer her advice, but she could not help begging him to pause before he took a step which she dreaded might prove prejudicial to him in all ways. She was very busy, and constant occupation was, no doubt, the best thing for her. She hoped that Harry would not try and track her to her present home, as it would only distress her to no purpose.

I read this, as it was plainly meant I should, to him whom it chiefly concerned. The only effect it produced was to inflame him yet further against his uncle. The poor boy alternated now between fits of profound depression and storms of passion, which, while they lasted, rendered him absolutely ungovernable. And yet, to my surprise, I found that he made efforts of which I believe no one who has not that thirst in the blood can estimate the cost, to subdue the wild craving for drink which seized him whenever he felt especially wretched. So far as I know, for more than two months, he never once exceeded, and this first led me to hope, with a certain amount of confidence, that, under favourable circumstances, my poor friend might yet overcome his fatal tendencies. He was now, nominally, in Mr. Strahan's house; and had he been required to do desk work, he might perhaps have applied himself; but for the particular duty required of him—that of going up and down the world preaching the faith in Strahan's sherry—he was at present wholly unfit; and his employer must have found him an unprofitable servant. His thoughts were never absent from one subject; he wandered through the streets, looking gloomy or ferocious as he was in the humour, and if he met a friend, and tried to blow Strahan's trumpet in a few minor chords, the effect was only to make the man hurry away, muttering, "Good Heavens! How changed that fellow is! He was the jolliest chap I ever knew at Trinity." The advocacy of gay, jovial Harry Walbrooke would have met with eminent success, as I doubt not the astute wine-merchant had calculated; but this same youth, transformed into a sad, stern man, proved but an indifferent huckster of the wares he was paid to dispose of. The only satisfaction which Harry got out of the business was, I am afraid, the knowledge that he was doing something eminently annoying to his uncle. No communication had passed between them for some weeks. Lena wrote, much to our surprise, that Mr. Walbrooke was absent from home; he had not been away half a dozen times in the last ten years. I had a latent apprehension that he had gone to resuscitate his interest, to Harry's detriment, in some long-neglected nephews in the north. But it was not so.

One evening in June—I remember it as if it were yesterday—I sat alone at my open window. In the distance there was the roar of the mighty city, lessening hour by hour. Above me the broad arms of night raised themselves to embrace the few

gold-haired children of the sky who yet lingered there. And evoked by that image of the end which comes to hush and darken all, in my heart arose the oft-recurring question, How shall it be after this life is ended? Shall there be a dawn where the love, the fidelity, which remain unknown till darkness comes to swallow the loving and unloved alike, shall blossom and bear fruit? Such questions trouble me no more, thank God, for the time is now near at hand when I shall know all.

I was interrupted by the entrance of the maid-servant, who announced a gentleman, and I recognised in the twilight Mr. Walbrooke.

"I am in London for only a few hours," he began, "and as all communication between my hopeful nephew and myself is at an end for the present, I wish you to give him a piece of intelligence, Luttrell. Miss Fleming is to be married to Mr. Ridgway, of Hapsbury, next week. This, I hope, will bring him to his senses."

"God help him!" I groaned. "Oh, Mr. Walbrooke, may you never have reason to repent this bitterly!"

The squire gave me a look of offended surprise. "Why so, pray? Not on Harry's account, I conclude? Nothing but this would cure him of his folly. He himself wrote to me as much. And as to Miss Fleming——"

"She will be miserable!" I interrupted, with a vehemence which must have contrasted strangely in the squire's ears with my usually mild utterances. "She has consented to this self-sacrifice from a mistaken sense of her duty to Harry—and to you, Mr. Walbrooke, and perhaps, also, to Mrs. Fleming, who is in great poverty."

"Mrs. Fleming did, I am glad to say, second me very strongly, and therein showed her good sense," said the squire, with a dogged sententiousness. "It would have been flying in the face of Providence for a girl in Miss Fleming's position to persist in rejecting an offer of such exceptional brilliancy. She might wait long enough before she got such another."

"Better wait all her life—better wear her fingers to the bone! No blessing ever yet came upon a marriage where there was no love, and there is no love here upon either side."

"You have no right whatever to assume that," and a red spot rose upon the squire's cheek. "Mr. Ridgway has, I am sure, a very sincere a—affection for the girl. In fact, he has proved it by his pertinacity. He has renewed his proposal three times."

"Yes," I cried, "because he thinks the world will condone his past offences when he is married, especially when married to so charming a creature."

"I am surprised that you should lend an ear to such miserable scandal," he rejoined; but there was more of annoyance than conviction in his tone.

"I don't lend an ear, in the sense of believing it, Mr. Walbrooke; but you cannot deny that it exists, nor can you, I suspect, deny that this is one of the chief causes of Mr. Ridgway's pertinacity; this, and the fact that his vanity would suffer at being rejected by a poor governess, after proclaiming his admiration so openly as he did."

"I don't say that that may not have something to do with it," said the squire, with the air of a man who magnanimously concedes more than he need; "but I do say that Ridgway, with all his cleverness, and with such a fortune and place, might have married any one. Few dukes' daughters would have refused him; and I think it shows that he has a real—a—affection for Miss Fleming to have selected her."

"It only shows that he has that for which he has always been renowned, good taste. But I am not thinking of him, but of her, Mr. Walbrooke. Were he ever so much in love that would make no difference in the fact that her heart is entirely Harry's."

"Pshaw! All boys and girls who live in the same house fancy themselves in love. Harry happens to be more obstinate than most boys, that is all."

"So I am afraid you will find."

"He has chosen to become bagman to a wine merchant, with the intention of frightening me into concession, I suppose; but he will find himself mistaken. As long as he continues to disgrace my name I can have nothing to say to him; so you may tell him, Luttrell. But this marriage will, I hope, open his eyes, and make him see the utter folly of his conduct."

I shook my head. "Is Miss Fleming's present residence still a secret, Mr. Walbrooke?"

"No; indeed, she asked me to beg you to go down and see her, if you were able, any day this week. They are living in a cottage near Waltham, where Mrs. Fleming's mother resides. You understand, of course, that this information is for you, not for Harry. I asked her whether she would wish to see him, and she said 'on no account.'"

The squire shortly after this left me. I resolved not to tell Harry the fatal news until I had had an interview with Assunta;

and, accordingly, the next morning saw me on the top of the coach, which started on its short journey at an early hour. I had no difficulty in finding Mrs. Fleming's humble dwelling, which was less a cottage than the dejected offshoot of a street, with a pretence at gentility, and a reality of hideous gloom. It stood at the end of a small wilderness of unfinished buildings of scarlet brick. The house itself was of the same material, with a bright green door, and brass knocker; it had no garden, no pleasant out-look, only the white dust of the road, and the hot glare of the surrounding houses. The door was opened to me by a little maid-of-all-work, of about fifteen, and she showed me into a room some twelve feet square, where sat Mrs. Fleming, Assunta, and three very red-faced children, at their early dinner. They were all in deep mourning, of course, and looked oppressed by the heat. The window was open, yet the room was, indeed, oppressive, partly owing to the fumes of an Irish stew, which hung about the dingy curtains, and mud-coloured paper, and the six horse-hair chairs. It is puerile to dwell on these details, and I know they heightened the sense of discomfort, and the contrast with all I had hitherto seen Assunta surrounded by. She rose, held out her hand, and introduced me to Mrs. Fleming, a silly-looking woman, who had once been pretty, no doubt, but whose face now, with its little pointed, red nose, was very unattractive. Sad it was, certainly, and sorrow generally interests me, but there was nothing sacred in the expression of this grief. It had taken sharp and querulous lines that played round the corners of the mouth; and she indulged in frequent "suspirations of the breath" in her flatulent discourse, which aggravated me. Assunta herself looked pale and worn. The children, two of whom were very young, were fed by her, and seemed to look to her, rather than to their mother, for everything, except constant scolding, wherein the poor lady evidently thought her maternal duty chiefly lay. When Assunta had given the children their rice pudding:

"I will now take Mr. Luttrell into the next room, dear mother," she said.

"As you please, my dear. Tommy, take your fingers out of your plate directly, and look what a mess you've made of your pinafore!"

I closed the door upon Mrs. Fleming's maternal strictures, and followed Assunta into the sitting-room on the opposite side of the passage, which was the counterpart

of the parlour, except for the addition of a horse-hair sofa, and the substitution of a coloured for a white cloth upon the table, on which were a Bible, a prayer-book, a work-basket, and some half-made frocks.

She sat down, and looked intently into my face. "How is Harry? How did he take the news?"

"He doesn't yet know it. I wanted to see you first. I wanted to know from your own lips that—that you had definitely made up your mind to this before I told him."

"I have definitely made up my mind," she said, in a low voice.

"And you have no misgiving? Forgive me for saying this, but if I may plead the privilege of an old friend——"

"You may, and I shall thank you; but I have weighed everything, dear Mr. Luttrell, and the result is—I have given my word to Mr. Ridgway. When I had once brought my mind to see that I must give up Harry, nothing that could happen to me signified much, and it seems to me the best thing for every one, except myself. If you knew all——" Here she sighed, and hesitated for a moment.

"I don't require to know all to be very sure that it cannot be right to sacrifice yourself thus."

"Oh, I had already done that," she said, shaking her head. "This is hardly to be called a sacrifice. I had certainly rather have worked for my daily bread if I had only had myself to think of; but I never disliked Mr. Ridgway, and he has behaved so nobly about poor Mrs. Fleming, that I feel deeply grateful to him. If my marrying him can make him happy——"

An impatient exclamation, I am afraid, burst from me, but I checked what I was about to say, and changed it to:

"Mr. Walbrooke, of course, it is who has brought this about? He was bent upon it from the very first."

"He would not have succeeded but for two things. First, Harry's insane letters to his uncle. I saw from them very plainly that he would continue to pursue this fatal scheme of his, and remain at open war with the squire as long as I remained unmarried. He said so; and, on some points, he has all the Walbrooke tenacity of purpose. Ah, if he only had it in all!"

"He has been battling manfully with temptation during the past three months," I said.

"Has he?" she rejoined, eagerly. "How thankful I am."

"And the other thing?" I asked. "What was that?"

She was silent for a moment.

"Not even Mr. Walbrooke knows; but I will tell you. Poor Mr. Fleming died terribly in debt, far more so than we had any idea of at first. After everything was sold, there was still a large deficit. Mr. Walbrooke was very kind, as you know, but what he gave me only went to relieve Mrs. Fleming's immediate necessities, and I could not have applied to him again. Of course you are aware that Mr. Fleming and his wife brought me up out of charity, that I am indebted to them for everything I have ever had? When Mr. Ridgway offered to settle four hundred a year upon my adopted mother, and she, poor soul! went down on her knees to implore me not to reject this maintenance for her, urging, very justly, that thus only could I repay all that her husband and she had done for me, how could I refuse? What possible means had I of extricating her from her troubles but this? I might get eighty or a hundred a year as a governess, if I had great luck, and send her sixty or seventy out of it—that was the utmost I could look forward to doing for her and these penniless children. As I have already said, my sacrifice was made—to ratify it thus was not so hard, and it seemed to be my duty."

"I can't think so, and I can't forgive Mrs. Fleming——" I began, warmly, when the door opened, and the widow entered, followed by her children. Assunta took up one of the frocks from the table, and Mrs. Fleming another, and both began stitching assiduously.

"I suppose Assunta has told you all about her prospects?" said the widow. "It is the most wonderful piece of luck, as Mr. Walbrooke says. If poor Mr. Fleming could only have lived to see it! Ah, dear! (Sammy, leave that thimble alone.) Yes, when I think of the day we found her, nearly twenty-one years ago now (Jane, will you sit still, once for all?), I little thought she would live to be a great lady—the sickliest-looking baby I ever saw—a great contrast to all mine, even the three I lost; ah, dear! they weren't so puny. I have had plenty of trouble, Mr. Luttrell. Some people are born to trouble, just as others are born to luck, like Assunta. To be left with four children, as I am! Ah, dear!"

I felt that I could not talk to this woman, and turned to ask Assunta where she was to be married. Mrs. Fleming answered for her.

"Here, I am sorry to say. Mr. Walbrooke asked us to go to the Grange for it, which would have been much nicer, but

Assunta wouldn't. She didn't consult my feelings, nor how poor Mr. Fleming would have felt, had he been alive, at having to receive Mr. Ridgway in such a house as this. (Tommy, get down off that chair this minute, sir. My dear, reach me your scissors.) No, it is very humiliating, after being accustomed to one's own plate as I always have, and such beautiful table-linen, for poor Mr. Fleming liked everything nice, and such books as he had; all sold, with every stick of furniture in the house (Jane, if you can't sit still you must go out of the room), and then to come down to pewter, with Mr. Ridgway's elegance, too. Ah, dear, dear!"

"There is no disgrace in poverty, mother, and Mr. Ridgway is too truly a gentleman for you to worry about such things."

Still Mrs. Fleming ran on for another half-hour a Jeremiad over her various losses; her husband, her own health, and her piano, her Brussels carpets, her three dead children, and her Worcester china, all very much in the same tone, interspersed with sundry moral fillips to Tommy, Jane, and Sammy, as irritating to the tempers of those poor little animals as the constant twitches of a heavy-handed driver are to his horses' mouths. And Assunta—what a life must hers have been during these past three months! What a sore addition to her other trials, the blister of this foolish woman's tongue!

By-and-bye I looked at my watch, and seeing that it wanted but a quarter of an hour to the time when the coach was to start, I made bold to ask if Assunta would walk part of the way to the inn with me; for it was my only chance of getting another word alone with her. She ran and put on her bonnet.

As soon as we were in the street, "You will understand, I am sure," she said, "why I couldn't go to the Grange. Poor Mrs. Fleming thinks it is my pride, and I cannot undeceive her. There are two things I have not strength and courage for—to revisit the place where I was so exquisitely happy, and to see Harry again."

"Have you any message to him?" I asked, after a pause.

"Tell him not to think too hardly of me, that is all. What I have done has been because I believed it to be for his good."

"I hope it may prove so, but I doubt it.

I should not be a friend to you both if I withheld from you my belief that you are utterly wrong. I see the force of all your arguments for this marriage, but you cannot make black white. And Harry will not see it as white: don't deceive yourself."

We were crossing one of the streams that intersect the town. She stopped for a minute, as if transfixed by some agonising thought, and leaned on the little wooden parapet of the bridge, looking over into the water, so that I could not see her face. Presently she raised it and said:

"He is young, he will get over his grief; and by-and-bye, in the course of time, he will find some woman who loves him nearly as well, perhaps, as I do, and whom he can love, and whose influence over him is greater than mine has been. In the mean time, Mr. Luttrell, there will be this immediate good. He and his uncle will be reconciled."

I thought differently; but it would have been cruel to harass her mind further by raising doubts on this point. She had resolved to immolate herself. I felt myself powerless to prevent the consummation of this mistaken self-sacrifice, and having once spoken, what right had I to add to her misery, poor child! by painful and fruitless discussion?

I heard the guard wind his horn: and taking her hand within mine, I murmured:

"May it all turn out as you expect. God bless you! Mr. Ridgway has bought a pearl of great price, if he knows how to value it. May you at least find peace in your new home!"

And so we parted on that little bridge; and I left behind me the brightest, the best, the dearest vision of my youth. When we next met, that vision had become a sad reality among the stern, hard truths of middle life.

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ENTITLED

SLAVES OF THE LAMP.

END OF THE SIXTH VOLUME.

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