

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

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A Weekly Journal.

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

NEW SERIES.

VOLUME XIV.

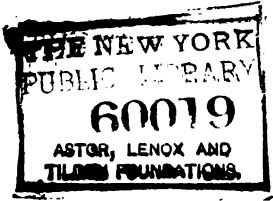
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SATURDAY, APRIL 3, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c., &c.

CHAPTER VII.

PARLIAMENT was to meet early in February. It seemed strange that that fact should have any interest for Rhoda Maxfield; nevertheless, so it was. Algernon was to go to London, but it was no use to be there unless Lord Seely, "our cousin," were there also; and my lord our cousin would not be in town before the meeting of parliament. Thus the assembling of the peers and commons of this realm at Westminster, was an event on which poor Rhoda's thoughts were bent pretty often, in the course of the twenty-four hours.

Mrs. Errington announced to the whole Maxfield family that Algernon was going away from Whitford, and accompanied the announcement with florid descriptions of the glory that awaited her son, in the highest Ancram style of embellishment.

"Well," said old Max, after listening awhile, "and will this lord get Mr. Algernon a place?"

Mrs. Errington could not answer this question very definitely. The future was vague, though splendid. But of course Algy would distinguish himself. That was a matter of course. Perhaps he might begin as Lord Seely's private secretary.

"A sekktary! Humph! I don't think much o' that!" grunted Mr. Maxfield.

"My dear man, you don't understand these things. How should you? Many noblemen's sons would only be too delighted to get the position of private secretary to Lord Seely. A man of such

distinction! Hand and glove with the sovereign!"

Maxfield did not altogether dislike to hear his lodger hold forth in this fashion. He had a certain pleasure in contemplating the future grandeur of Mr. Algernon, whose ears he had boxed years ago, on the occasion of finding him enacting the battle of Waterloo, with a couple of school-fellows, in the warehouse behind the shop, and attacking a Hougoumont of tea-chests and flour-barrels, so briskly, as to threaten their entire demolition.

Maxfield was weaving speculations in connection with the young man, of so wild and fanciful a nature as would have astonished his most familiar friends, could they have peeped into the brain inside his grizzled old head.

But this rose-coloured condition of things did not last.

One afternoon, Mrs. Errington looked into his little sitting-room, on her way upstairs, and finding him with an account book, in which he was, not making, but reading entries, she stepped in, and began to chat; if any speech so laboriously condescending as hers to Mr. Maxfield may be thus designated. Her theme, of course, was her son, and her son's prospects.

"That'll be all very fine for Mr. Algernon, to be sure," said Old Max, slowly, after some time, "but—it'll cost money."

"Not so much as you think for. Low persons who feel themselves in a false position, no doubt find it necessary to make a show. But a real gentleman can afford to be simple."

"But I take it he'll have to afford other things besides being simple! He'll have to afford clothes, and lodging, and maybe food. You aren't rich."

Mrs. Errington admitted the fact.

"Algernon ought to find a wife with a bit o' money," said the old man, looking straight and hard into the lady's eyes. Those round orbs sustained the gaze, as unflinchingly as if they had been made of blue china.

"It is not at all a bad idea," Mrs. Errington said, graciously.

"But then he wouldn't just take the first ugly woman as had a fort'n."

"Oh dear no!"

"No; nor yet an old 'un."

"Good gracious, man! of course not!"

"Young, pretty, good, and a bit o' money. That's about his mark, eh?"

Mrs. Errington shook her head pathetically. "She ought to have birth, too," she said. "But the woman takes her husband's rank; unless," she added, correcting herself, and with much emphasis, "unless she happens to be the better born of the two."

"Oh, she does, eh? The woman takes her husband's rank? Ah! well that's script'ral. I have never troubled my head about these vain worldly distinctions; but that is script'ral."

Mrs. Errington was not there to discuss her landlord's opinions or to listen to them; but he served as well as another to be the recipient of her talk about Algernon, which accordingly she resumed, and indulged in ever-higher flights of boasting. Her mendacity, like George Wither's muse,

As it made wing, so it made power.

"The fact is, there is more than one young lady on whom my connections in London have cast their eye for Algy. Miss Pickleham, only daughter of the great drysalter, who is such an eminent member of Parliament; Blanche Fitz-snowdon, Judge Whitelamb's lovely niece; one of Major-General Indigo's charming girls, all of them perfect specimens of the Eastern style of beauty—their mother was an Indian princess, and enormously wealthy. But I am in no hurry for my boy to bind himself in an engagement: it hampers a young man's career."

"Career!" broke out old Max, who had listened to all this, and much more, with an increasingly dismayed and lowering expression of countenance. "Why, what's his career to be? He's been brought up to do nothing! It'd be his only chance to get hold of a wife with a bit o' money. Then he might act the gentleman at his ease; and maybe his fine friends 'ud help him when they found he didn't want it.

But as for career—it's my opinion as he'll never earn his salt!"

And with that the old man marched across the passage into the shop, taking no further notice of his lodger; and she heard him slam the little half-door, giving access to the store-house, with such force as to set the jingling bell on it tinkling for full five minutes.

Mrs. Errington was so surprised by this sally, that she stood staring after him for some time before she was able to collect herself sufficiently to walk majestically upstairs.

"Maxfield's temper becomes more and more extraordinary," she said to her son, with an air of great solemnity. "The man really forgets himself altogether. Do you suppose that he drinks, Algy? or is he, do you think, a little touched?" She put her finger to her forehead. "Really, I should not wonder. There has been a great deal of preaching and screeching lately, since this Powell came; and, you know, they do say that these Ranters and Methodists sometimes go raving mad at their field-meetings and love-feasts. You need not laugh, my dear boy; I have often heard your father say that nothing was more contagious than that sort of hysterical excitement. And your father was a physician; and certainly knew his profession if he didn't know the world, poor man!"

"Was Old Max hysterical, ma'am?" asked Algernon, his whole face lighting up with mischievous amusement. And the notion so tickled him, that he burst out laughing at intervals, as it recurred to him, all the rest of the day.

Betty Grimshaw, and Sarah, the servant-maid, and James, helping his father to serve in the shop, and the customers who came to buy, all suffered from the unusual exacerbation of Maxfield's temper, for some time after that conversation of his with Mrs. Errington.

It increased, also, the resentful feeling which had been growing in his mind towards David Powell. The young man's tone of rebuke, in speaking of Rhoda's associating with the Erringtons, had taken Maxfield by surprise at the time; and he had not, he afterwards thought, been sufficiently trenchant in his manner of putting down the presumptuous reprob. He blew up his wrath until it burned hot within him; and, the more so, inasmuch as he could give no vent to it in direct terms. To question and admonish was

the acknowledged duty of a Methodist preacher. Conference made no exceptions in favour even of so select a vessel as Jonathan Maxfield. But Maxfield thought, nevertheless, that Powell ought to have had modesty and discernment to make the exception himself.

No inquisitor—no priest, sitting like a mysterious Eastern idol in the inviolate shrine of the confessional—ever exercised a more tremendous power over the human conscience, than was laid in the hands of a Methodist preacher or leader according to Wesley's original conception of his functions. But besides the essential difference between the Romish and Methodist systems, that the latter could bring no physical force to bear on the refractory, there was this important point to be noted: namely, that the inquisitor might be subjected to inquisition by his flock. The priest might be made to come forth from the confessional-box, and answer to a pressing catechism before all the congregation. In the band-meetings and select societies, each individual bound himself to answer the most searching questions "concerning his state, sins, and temptations." It was a mutual inquisition to which, of course, those who took part in it voluntarily submitted themselves.

But the spiritual power wielded by the chiefs was very great, as their own subordination to the conference was very complete. Its pernicious effects were, however, greatly kept in check by the system of itinerancy, which required the preachers to move frequently from place to place.

There are few human virtues or weaknesses to which, on one side or the other, Methodism in its primitive manifestations did not appeal. Benevolence, self-sacrifice, fervent piety, temperance, charity, were all called into play by its teachings. But so also were spiritual pride, narrow-mindedness, fanaticism, gloom, and pharisaical self-righteousness. Only to the slothful, and such as loved their ease above all things, early Methodism had no seductions to offer.

Jonathan Maxfield's father and grandfather had been disciples of John Wesley. The grandfather was born in 1710, seven years before Wesley, and had been among the great preacher's earliest adherents in Bristol.

Traditions of John Wesley's sayings and doings were cherished and handed down in the family. They claimed kindred with Thomas Maxfield, Wesley's first

preacher, and conveniently forgot or ignored—as greater families have done—those parts of their kinsman's career which ran counter to the present course of their creed and conduct. For Thomas Maxfield seceded from Wesley, but the grandfather and father of Jonathan continued true to Methodism all their lives. They married within the "society" (as was strictly enjoined at the first conference), and assisted the spread of its tenets throughout their part of the West of England.

In the third generation, however, the original fire of Methodism had nearly burnt itself out, and a few charred sticks remained to attest the brightness that had been. Never, perhaps, in the case of the Maxfields—a cramp-natured, harsh breed—had the fire become a hearth-glow to warm their homes with. It had rather been like the crackling of thorns under a pot. The driest and sharpest will flare for a while.

Old Max, nevertheless, looked upon himself as an exemplary Methodist. He made no mental analyses of himself or of his neighbours. He merely took cognisance of facts as they appeared to him through the distorting medium of his prejudices, temper, ignorance, and the habits of a lifetime. When he did or said disagreeable things, he prided himself on doing his duty. And his self-approval was never troubled by the reflection that he did not altogether dislike a little bitter flavour in his daily life, as some persons prefer their wine rough.

But to do and say disagreeable things because it is your duty, is a very different matter from accepting, or listening to, disagreeable things, because it is somebody else's duty to do and say them! It was not to be expected that Jonathan Maxfield should meekly endure rebuke from a young man like David Powell.

And now crept in the exasperating suspicion that the young man might have been right in his warning! Maxfield watched his daughter with more anxiety than he had ever felt about her in his life, looking to see symptoms of dejection at Algernon's approaching departure. He did not know that she had been aware of it before it was announced to himself.

One day her father said to her abruptly, "Rhoda, you're looking very pale and out o' sorts. Your eyes are heavy" (they were swollen with crying), "and your face is the colour of a turnip. I think I shall send you off to Duckwell for a bit of a change."

Duckwell Farm was owned by Seth, Maxfield's eldest son.

"I don't want a change, indeed, father," said the girl, looking up quickly and eagerly. "I had a headache this morning, but it is quite gone now. That's what made me look so pale."

From that time forward she exerted herself to appear cheerful, and to shake off the dull pain at the heart which weighed her down, until her father began to persuade himself that he had been mistaken, and over-anxious. She always declared herself to be quite well and free from care. "And I know she would not tell me a lie," thought the old man.

Alas, she had learned to lie in her words and her manner. She had, for the first time in her life, a motive for concealment, and she used the natural armour of the weak—duplicity.

Rhoda had been "good" hitherto, because her nature was gentle, and her impulses affectionate. She had no strong religious fervour, but she lived blamelessly, and prayed reverently, and was docile and humble-minded. She had never professed to have attained that sudden and complete regeneration of spirit which is the prime glory of Methodism. But then many good persons lived and died without attaining "assurance." Whenever Rhoda thought on the subject—which, to say the truth, was not often, for her nature, though sweet and pure, was not capable of much spiritual aspiration, and was altogether incapable of fervent self-searching, and fiery enthusiasm—she hoped with simple faith that she should be saved if she did nothing wicked.

Her father and David Powell would have pointed out to her, that her "doing," or leaving undone, could have no influence on the matter. But their words bore small fruit in her mind. Her father's religious teaching had the dryness of an accustomed formality to her ears. It had been poured into them before she had sense to comprehend it, and had grown to be nearly meaningless, like the every-day salutation we exchange a hundred times, without expecting or thinking of the answer.

David Powell was certainly neither dry nor formal, but he frightened her. She shut her understanding against the disturbing influence of his words, as she would have pressed her fingers into her pretty ears to keep out the thunder. And then her dream of love had come and filled her life.

In most of us it wonderfully alters the

focus of the mind's eye with its glamour, that dream. To Rhoda it seemed the one thing beautiful and desirable. And—to say all the truth—the pain of mind which she felt, other than that connected with her lover's going away, and which she attributed to remorse for the little deceptions and concealments she practised, was occasioned almost entirely by the latent dread, lest the time should come when she should sit lonely, looking at the cold ashes of Algy's burnt-out love. For she did mistrust his constancy, although no power would have forced the confession from her. This blind, obstinate clinging to the beloved, was, perhaps, the only form in which self-esteem ever strongly manifested itself in that soft, timid nature.

There was one person who watched Rhoda more understandingly than her father did, and who had more serious apprehensions on her account. David Powell knew, as did nearly all Whitford, by this time, that young Errington was going away; and he clearly saw that the change in Rhoda was connected with that departure. He marked her pallor, her absence of mind, her fits of silence, broken by forced bursts of assumed cheerfulness. Her feigning did not deceive him.

Albeit of almost equally narrow education with Jonathan Maxfield, Powell had gained, in his frequent changes of place and contact with many strange people, a wider knowledge of the world than the Whitford tradesman possessed. He perceived how unlikely it was, that people like the Erringtons should seriously contemplate allying themselves by marriage with "old Max;" but that was not the worst. To the preacher's mind, the girl's position was, in the highest degree, perilous; for he conceived that what would be accounted by the world the happiest possible solution to such a love as Rhoda's, would involve nothing less than the putting in jeopardy her eternal welfare. He could not look forward with any hope to a union between Rhoda and such a one as Algernon Errington.

"The son is a shallow-hearted, fickle youth, with the vanity of a boy and the selfishness of a man; the mother, a mere worldling, living in decent godlessness."

Such was David Powell's judgment. He reflected long and earnestly. What was his calling—his business in life? To save souls. He had no concern with anything else. He must seek out and help, not only those who needed him, but those who most needed him.

All conventional rules of conduct, all restraining considerations of a merely social or worldly kind, were as threads of gossamer to this man whensoever they opposed the higher commands which he believed to have been laid upon him.

Jonathan Maxfield was falling away from godliness. He, too evidently, was willing to give up his daughter into the tents of the heathen. The pomps and vanities of this wicked world had taken hold of the old man. Satan had ensnared and bribed him with the bait of worldly ambition. From Jonathan there was no real help to be expected.

In the little garret-chamber, where he lodged in the house of a widow—one of the most devout of the Methodist congregation—the preacher rose from his knees one midnight, and took from his breast the little, worn, pocket-Bible, which he always carried. A bright, cold moon shone in at the uncurtained window, but its beams did not suffice to enable him to read the small print of his Bible. He had no candle; but he struck a light with a match, and, by its brief flare, read these words, on which his finger had fallen as he opened the book—

“How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom? And how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?”

“To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?”

He had drawn a lot, and this was the answer.

The leading was clear. He would speak openly with Rhoda himself. He would pray and wrestle; he would argue and exhort. He would awaken her spirit, lulled to sleep by the sweet voice of the tempter.

It would truly be little less than a miracle, should he succeed by the mere force of his earnest eloquence, in persuading a young girl like Rhoda to renounce her first love.

But, then, David Powell believed in miracles.

HAMLET AND THE PLAYWRIGTHS.

SHAKESPEARE was long regarded, by a very large public, much in the light of a coat that could not be made to fit without very considerable altering and mending. Here curtailment was held to be necessary, and much valuable matter was accordingly shorn away; there new-shaping was counselled, involving serious sacrifice of original form and symmetry; and, now and again, the old garment was patched with new

cloth of very different substance and value. When upon the re-opening of the theatres at the Restoration, the plays of Shakespeare stole back one by one to the stage, it was with so changed an aspect that they were hardly to be recognised: the adapters had dealt with them so strangely. There can be little doubt that Nahum Tate's judgment to the effect that the writings of Shakespeare were as “a heap of jewels unstrung and unpolished,” met with very general support.

In the first instance the tragedy of Hamlet escaped the misfortunes that fell to the lot of the other plays. The leading character was nobly sustained by the great Mr. Betterton, and no charge could be brought against the representation, except upon the score of injudicious abbreviation. Some compression was of course expedient, if only on account of the question of time; the work is of unusual length, and if performed from the first line to the last, would have occupied the stage for at least four hours. It may be questioned, indeed, whether the tragedy was ever presented in its entirety, even to the playgoers of the Elizabethan period; in any case, theatrical performances were then usually limited to some two hours, as appears by the prologue to King Henry the Eighth, and the Induction to the Alchemist. Nevertheless, certain of the omissions from the acting edition of Betterton's time were quite unwarrantable. For instance, twelve important lines were expunged from the impressive speech beginning, “Angels and ministers of grace defend us;” and it is doubtful whether Mr. Betterton did not excise altogether the famous address to the players.

Still the form of the work had not been meddled with; the poet's text had been retrenched, but it as yet remained undisfigured by interpolation; this forbearance being probably due less to reverence for Shakespeare, than to a perception of the difficulties attending any remodelling of his work. Then came Voltaire, strong in his adherence to the forms of the classic stage of Grecco and Rome, loud and lofty in his scorn of the romantic drama of England. It is true that he preached one thing and practised another: fettering himself with regard for “the unities” only so long as suited his convenience; and slipping loose again just whenever he chose. His tragedies of Brutus, Zaire, Merope, Tancredé, Semiramis, all outrage more or less those laws of dramatic compo-

sition he had proclaimed in his professed devotion to the prescriptions of the classical stage. In short, he has been justly described as "a writer, who, while strenuously maintaining certain theories, knowingly and wilfully evades them, trusting to the general stupidity of the public not to find him out." But he lifted up his voice and denounced in very violent terms the barbarous condition of the British drama, and especially the numberless errors and incongruities of which England's greatest poet had been guilty. We will follow Murphy's translation of the discourse concerning Shakespeare, which is prefixed to the tragedy of Semiramis: "I do not mean," writes Voltaire, "to justify the tragedy of Hamlet in every particular; it is, in fact, a barbarous piece, abounding with such gross absurdities, that it would not be tolerated by the vulgar of France and Italy. The hero of the play runs mad in the second act, and his mistress meets with the same misfortune in the third. The Prince takes Ophelia's father for a rat, and kills him: in despair she throws herself into a river. Her grave is dug on the stage; the Gravedigger, with a skull in his hand, amuses himself with a string of miserable jests, and the Prince answers them in language equally disgusting. Hamlet, his mother, and father-in-law, drink together on the stage. They divert themselves with bottle songs (*chansons à boire*), they quarrel, they fight, they kill. One would imagine this play the production of a drunken savage. And yet, among these absurdities, which render the English drama absolutely barbarous, there are some strokes in Hamlet worthy of the most exalted genius. This has always been matter of astonishment to me; it looks as if nature, in pure sport, diverted herself with mixing in Shakespeare's head everything sublime and great, with all that can be conceived, low, mean and detestable."

Murphy, in his Gray's Inn Journal (No. 41, July 28th, 1753), published a reply to this extraordinary effort of criticism. "Is it thus," he demands, "the elegant and sensible Voltaire speaks of Shakespeare? I would ask yourself, sir, is this criticism candid? Is it a fair analysis, a true account of the tragedy in question? . . . Hamlet, sir, does not run mad; if he did, King Lear has proved what a beautiful distress might arise from it. Hamlet counterfeits madness, for his own private end. Nobody ever imagined that he thinks

he is killing a rat when he slays Polonius. If you will be pleased to recollect the passage, you will find that he takes him for his better, meaning the King, and the rat is only mentioned to save appearance." This, we may note, is but a prosaic explanation. Hamlet's explanation is not to be understood literally, but is rather referable to that fantastic humour distinguishing many of his utterances, and forming a curious constituent of a very complex character. "Ophelia does undoubtedly run mad," Murphy proceeds; "the desolation of her mind arises from filial piety: her virtue and her misfortunes make her respectable. Give me leave to add her distress is, perhaps, the most pathetic upon any stage. It is true she sings in misery, and that is not usual in grave and serious tragedy; but it occurs in nature, and what Shakespeare saw in nature, he transplanted into his drama. He knew of no rules to restrain him, and if he did, he scorned the restraint. . . . That Ophelia's grave is dug upon the stage, cannot be denied; but that very indecorum produces a string of beautiful reflections, and such a vein of morality as cannot be paralleled by the scene Française. I cannot recollect that Hamlet ever shocked me with miserable jests upon this occasion; nor do I remember that any of the personages are such honest bottle companions, as to carouse and sing merry catches on the stage, &c., &c."

Garrick's alteration of Hamlet was probably due, in part, to his regard for the judgment of Voltaire, and, in part, to the civilities received at his hands. For Voltaire had invited him to Ferney, renewing, at the same time, his scoffs at Shakespeare. Garrick had replied rather servilely: "Could I have been the means of bringing our Shakespeare into some favour with M. de Voltaire, I should have been happy indeed." But, in truth, Garrick had little real reverence for Shakespeare. Otherwise, he would surely have refrained from meddling with Hamlet, and have left unsoiled by his finger-marks "the rubbish of the fifth act," as he had the audacity to call it. For thirty years he had been content to adhere to the original text. His alterations were first exhibited upon the stage in 1772. He was careful not to print his revised edition. Rumour alleged, indeed, that he grew ashamed of his handiwork, and that the original copy of his adaptation was, by his express direction, buried with him in

Westminster Abbey. But some account of this amended Hamlet has been preserved by the actor's biographer, Tom Davies, in his *Dramatic Miscellanies*. The first act, which he held to be immoderately long, he divided into two—the first ending with Hamlet's determined resolution to watch, with Horatio and Marcellus, in expectation of seeing the Ghost. In consequence of this arrangement, the original third act now became the fourth, and the later scenes of the play underwent violent change. Laertes was rendered a more estimable personage, his plot with the King being entirely altered. Hamlet, having escaped from Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, returns, firmly resolved upon revenge. The Gravediggers and Osric are omitted from the list of dramatic personæ. No information is furnished touching the fate of Ophelia, who quietly disappears from the scene. The Queen, instead of being poisoned upon the stage, is led away in a state of insanity, due to remorse. Hamlet rushes upon the King, who draws his sword and defends himself, but is slain in the combat. Hamlet and Laertes die of their wounds.

It should be stated that the public did not object to the amended Hamlet. The omission of the Gravediggers would, it was apprehended, greatly disappoint the gallery; but the performance passed off tranquilly, if it roused no enthusiasm. And even after Garrick's retirement, his version continued in possession of the stage. It was not until 1780 that the original text was revived, and Garrick's alteration banished from the theatre for ever.

On Garrick's behalf, it is to be said that he was encouraged by many of the best critics of the time: by Stevens, for instance, who accounted the alteration "a circumstance in favour of the poet," such as he had been longing for; and held that, after the third act of the tragedy, the genius of Shakespeare "retires, or only plays bo-peep through the rest of the piece;" by Dr. Hoadly, who thought too little, rather than too much, had been altered, and proposed various other deviations from the text; and by Murphy, who, although he professed to censure the revised edition of the play, was quite prepared to concede that the original fencing-scene was "a wretched expedient," and that, if Garrick had there plied the pruning-knife and added, "from his own invention, something of real importance to bring about a noble catastrophe, he would have shown his

judgment." Altogether, we may conclude that if Garrick was, in this respect, no wiser than his generation, he was, at any rate, just as wise.

Tate Wilkinson, as a provincial manager, bethought him of introducing the altered Hamlet to the playgoers of the country, and applied to Benjamin Victor, the treasurer of Drury Lane, on the subject. "It is not in my power," wrote Victor in reply, "to send you the corrections lately made in Hamlet; no such favour can be granted to anyone. I presume the play will never be printed with the alterations, as they are far from being universally liked; nay, they are greatly disliked by the million, who love Shakespeare with all his glorious absurdities, and will not suffer a bold intruder to cut him up." But this was a mere flourish on Mr. Victor's part; the million cared little about the matter, and Mr. Victor's love for Shakespeare was in truth very inconsiderable; at any rate, it had not hindered him from himself cutting up the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, altering and adding to the comedy, treating it very freely indeed, to render it, as he believed, more effective in performance. Tate Wilkinson was not to be beaten, however. Failing Garrick's version, he resolved upon revising the play himself, and he has ventured to print his "jumble," as he justly calls it, in the first volume of his *Wandering Patentee*. It is professedly on the plan of Cibber's alteration of *Richard the Third*; made up, for the most part, of extracts from the other plays. "The reader will meet," says Wilkinson, "several obsolete passages from Shakespeare that to one not very familiar with that author's wonderful productions, may afford some entertainment." In this precious edition of the tragedy, the first act ends with the line, "Though all the earth o'erwhelms them to men's eyes;" the second with the line, "That ever I was born to set it right." The third and fourth acts are the second and third of the original. Wilkinson's fifth act begins with "There's matter in these sighs," and goes on regularly to Laertes' speech, "Too much water hast thou poor Ophelia;" then the catastrophe is suddenly brought about. The Gravediggers and the funeral of Ophelia, Osric, and the formal fencing scene, are all dispensed with. Hamlet returns and accusing the King of murder, "they fight round," so runs the stage direction, while the Queen "rushes out shrieking." The King falls, and dying "makes no sign;" a liberal

extract being here introduced from the scene of the death of Cardinal Beaufort in the second part of King Henry the Sixth. Laertes entering, fiercely attacks Hamlet, crying, "This for my King and sister; This for my father's death!" Cries Horatio: "My Prince in danger! Let me bare my breast!" and, according to the stage direction, he rushes between; Hamlet receives a first then a second wound, and falls into Horatio's arms. Captain and guards enter.

Hamlet. Rash youth, thou'st slain thy King, nay, more, thy friend.

The loss of life afflicts me not. *Laertes;*
My blood is due for thy dear father's death,
A fated unknown victim! Poor Ophelia!
For her my agonising heart weeps faster
Than all the crimson drops thy sword has drawn.

Horatio. It may be yet within the power of art—
Hamlet. Dream not of art, nor stir in my last moments;

I feel Death's arm, nor shrink within his grasp.
Laertes. I'm lost. Thy ways, O Heaven! are intricate;

If I have erred, impute it not—

Hamlet. When thou hast learnt the mystery from
Horatio,

Thou'lt pity and forgive. All I request is,
Comfort my hapless mother—ease her sorrows—
Relieve my country from distracting broils.
I could disclose; but, oh! I die. *Horatio,*
Thou livest—report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

and so on to the end. "This," says Wilkinson, "was acted at all my theatres, and well received, whether with any degree of desert I will not presume to say."

Of another extraordinary edition of Hamlet, Boaden gives some account in his Life of John Kemble. The biographer had found the book in the actor's library, and hastily assumed it to be "the very copy of the play upon which Garrick's alterations had been made," conjecturing, further, that Kemble had received it as a curiosity from Mrs. Garrick, when she had presented him with "the cane with which Mr. Garrick walked abroad." There is no evidence of this, however; and in the two editions there are many variations—the mangling has been done "with a difference." In this version the voyage to England, the execution of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, the funeral of Ophelia; "all the wisdom of the Prince and the rude jocularities of the Gravediggers" are omitted. Hamlet bursts in upon the King and his court, and Laertes reproaches him with the deaths of Polonius and Ophelia. The exasperation of both is at its height, when the King interposes: he had commanded Hamlet to depart for England, and he declares that he will no longer endure such rebellious

conduct, but that his wrath shall at length fall heavy upon the Prince. "First, feel you mine!" cries Hamlet; and he instantly stabs Olandius. The Queen rushes out, imploring the attendants to save her from her son's violence. Laertes, beholding treason and murder before him, and desirous of avenging his father, his sister, and the King, fiercely attacks Hamlet, who falls mortally wounded. Horatio is about to cross swords with Laertes, when Hamlet commands him to desist, assuring him that it was the hand of Heaven which administered, by Laertes, "that precious balm for all his wounds." The audience are then informed that the miserable mother had dropped in a trance ere she could reach her chamber-door. Hamlet implores for her "an hour of penitence ere madness end her." He then joins the hands of Laertes and Horatio, and commands them to unite their virtues and form a sort of coalition ministry, "to calm the troubled land;" the play concluding with the original lines as to taking up the bodies. The alterations were written in "a mean and trashy, commonplace manner;" and, as Boaden held, sullied the page of Shakespeare not less than they disgraced the taste and judgment of Mr. Garrick.

We will now turn to certain operations upon the tragedy performed by continental surgeons. Hamlet was first translated and equipped for representation upon the French stage, at a time when the Théâtre Français was absolutely governed by conventionalism, was devout in its reverence for "the unities," and for the antique forms of dramatic composition. As yet war had not been declared between the classicists and the romanticists, if indeed the latter can be said to have yet existed in France, as an organised and representative faction. Hamlet was taken in hand by M. Ducis, and duly placed upon the Procrustean bed of classical prescription. The tragedy was to be shaped anew, to suit the traditions of the Français. The adapter cut and carved, lopped and topped, with his eyes upon the examples of Racine, Corneille, Voltaire, and other of the great contributors to the strict repertory of French tragedy. The Ghost was struck from the list of dramatis personæ. "Buried Denmark," though often discussed, is never visible to the audience; it was feared that a French pit would not tolerate the spectre. Had there not been scoffing at the ghost in Semiramis? Claudius was made to descend from the

throne: he was no more a monarch, but appeared in the reduced form of a commonplace conspirator, who had been concerned in murdering the late king. Ophelia's parentage underwent change; she was converted into the daughter of Claudius, Polonius being otherwise deprived of all importance in the play. Laertes was omitted altogether, while Horatio was renamed Norcestes. Osric and the Grave-diggers shared the fate of Laertes, and were forbidden a share in the representation. The conduct of the play was, indeed, altogether altered. The hero does not make his appearance until the second act. The royal palace of Denmark is throughout the scene of action. Says a critic of fifty years ago—"There is nothing finer on the stage than the *entrée* of the French Hamlet." A group of courtiers express general alarm at the violent conduct of Hamlet, who, uttering frightful outcries, is rushing through the palace, fancying himself pursued by the ghost of his father. "In an instant you hear his frantic and broken exclamations, and he runs on the stage, which he courses with terrific wildness, productive of the most wonderful effect. The entrance and powerful acting of Talma, in this scene, drew down thunders of applause, loud and long continued, as ever shook the walls of a theatre." The introduction of an urn of classical pattern, supposed to contain the ashes of the dead king, forms the leading incident of the fourth act. Ophelia is not drowned, nor is Polonius stabbed. Hamlet is left alive at the end. Claudius, with due regard for classical propriety, is quietly disposed of behind the scenes. The Queen perishes by her own dagger at the close of the play. Talma's Hamlet was, from all accounts, nobly supported by the Queen of the great tragic actress Madlle. Duchesnois. As Hamlet, Talma wore robes of white and black, "simply but beautifully composed," and altogether unlike "the highly improper costume which has obtained such illegitimate authority for itself, upon the English stage. The era of Hamlet was that of Macbeth, and of our own Edward the Confessor, at whose court the Royal Dane was received. Our own inexcusable dress-mongers attire him precisely in the finery of the French Henry the Fourth, or the English James the First. Can anyone invent an apology for the sad and blundering infatuation that continues to us, at such a period as the present, an error, merely because it is

prescriptive, which any schoolboy might be supposed capable of pointing out?" It will be observed that there was not wanting an advocate for correctness in the matter of stage costume, even so far back as 1816.

By way of further note upon the Hamlet of Ducis and its interpretation by Talma, we may quote from the Diary of Haydon, the painter, who, with his friend David Wilkie, visited Franco in 1814, during the brief peace that followed upon Bonaparte's exile to Elba. "At Versailles we saw Ducis's adaptation of Hamlet to the French stage. The innocence and weakness of Ophelia were lost, and Hamlet was a blubbing boy. But when Hamlet was talking to his mother, and fancied, for a moment, he saw his father's ghost, Talma was terrific—it really shook my orthodoxy. The Ghost was not seen. There was really a cause for this stupor, and his talking, as if he only saw what we did not, frightened us all.

"In the next scene, Hamlet brings in an urn with his father's ashes—this was thoroughly French; yet, when he made his mother swear on the urn that she knew nothing of the murder, and touch the ashes, there was an awful silence throughout the house. Ducis has entirely lost that feeling of 'grief which passeth show'—his Hamlet's grief is all show."

A later adaptation of Hamlet to the French stage dealt with the play, less with a view of forcing it into a classical mould, than with a desire of converting it, as much as possible, to melodramatic uses. The adapters were Alexandre Dumas and Paul Meurice. This was in 1848, when Dumas had opened his own Théâtre Historique, in rivalry of the Porte St. Martin. Le Chevalier de Maison Rouge having run its course, Hamlet was produced. The alterations were considerable; the play lost very much of its original complexion. Now, there was borrowing from the stiff artifice, the pompous demeanour and declamation of conventional French tragedy; now, there was ranting and raving, after the latest fashion of highly-seasoned boulevard melodrama. It is scarcely worth while to examine the Dumas version scene by scene; we will turn to the last act, and note the new turn given to the catastrophe. Hamlet, it will be seen, is not slain by the poisoned rapier of Laertes; and the Ghost reappears, to speak the "tag," and conclude the performance. Claudius is killed by the difficult process of compelling him

to drain the poisoned cup, from which Gertrude has already sipped death. Laertes dies, indeed, the victim of politeness. He acquiesces in a change of weapons, and is then wounded by his own "unbated and envenomed" foil. He has failed to hit Hamlet, however, who thus escapes altogether uninjured. As the reader will bear in mind, the original stage direction in regard to the final fencing-bout runs thus:—"Laertes wounds Hamlet, then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes." But this, in the version of MM. Dumas and Meurice, is altered to:—"Hamlet strikes up the foil of Laertes. It falls: Hamlet picks it up and offers, instead of it, his own, to his adversary."

Laertes. Your pardon, but this foil
Is yours, not mine.

Hamlet (courteously.) A change of arms.

Laertes (aside.) I'm sped! [They play.]

The text is then followed pretty accurately up to the moment of the Queen's drinking from the poisoned cup. But from this catastrophe the tragedy assumes a new form, the concluding incidents and speeches being the distinct invention and sole property of the French playwrights. Our translation, we may note, is borrowed from the Athenæum of January 22nd, 1848, when, in a printed form, the new French Hamlet was submitted to the examination of an English reviewer.

Hamlet (forcing the King to drink.) Incestuous murderer! Thou shalt drain the cup.

Ah, curst one! Findest there thy pearl?

[The GHOST appears, visible to HAMLET only.]

The Ghost! The Ghost!

Comest thou to see thy slayers slain, dark shade?

[To the COURTIERs, on the GHOST making a sign to him.]

Forth with ye! Leave us. . . He who steps this way

Shall make no second step. What! I am King,

King of your lives, King of their agonies.

Betwixt us five we must play out our play.

Go! [Exeunt COURTIERs slowly.]

Turn! Behold ye aught, ye dying ones?

Laertes. Heaven's mercy! The dead King!

The King. My Brother!

The Queen. My Lord!

Laertes (to the GHOST.) Mercy!

The Ghost. Thy hot blood urged thee towards the abyss,

Laertes! Heaven hath stricken thee by thy crime;

But thou wilt find, where every heart is known,

Its sentence less severe! Pray thou, and die!

[LAERTES dies.]

The Queen. Pity! O pity!

The Ghost. Thy sin was all of love,

Too feeble one! Heaven loveth those who love.

Go! tears have washed the stain from off thy soul.

Here woman! Queen in Heaven! Hope thou and die!

[The QUEEN dies.]

The King. Pardon!

The Ghost. Vile murderer! Pardon? None for thee!

For thy foul crimes; within its burning round,

Hell's cruellest torments are too mild reward;
Incestuous traitor, go! Despair and die!

[The KING dies.]

Hamlet. And I? Must I remain, sad orphan! here
To breathe Earth's air impregnate with such woe?

Actor, whom God did in his wrath select,

If I ill-read my part, ill-played my play,

Scared by my task—wary, ere yet 'twas tried—

In place of one—I have done four to death,

Say, will Heaven lean its heavy hand upon me?

What chastisement awaits me?

The Ghost. THOU SHALT LIVE!

[THE CURTAIN FALLS.]

This new way of ending an old play is certainly surprising. It is difficult to understand how the Ghost, merely upon Hamlet's bidding, is able to become suddenly visible to the King, Queen, and Laertes, who had previously been unconscious of the spectre's presence. Nor are the playwright's views upon the subject of poetic justice particularly intelligible. Hamlet is sentenced to live by way of punishment—not for having compelled Claudius to drink poison—but in that his dilatoriness in killing the King is supposed to have brought about the deaths of four others—Ophelia, Polonius, Laertes, and the Queen. Prayer and death, hope and death, and despair and death, are the respective dooms allotted to Laertes, Gertrude, and Claudius. But MM. Dumas and Meurice did not, perhaps, affect any great regard for the designs of their author; they aimed chiefly at bringing the curtain down upon an effective catastrophe. And it should be said they contented their public. The new version of Hamlet was relished all the more for the new French method of dressing and serving it up; crowds flocked to the Théâtre Historique, and M. Melingue's melodramatic interpretation of the leading part won for him extraordinary applause. Nor can Englishmen, after all, with any sense of fairness or decency, censure this Gallic treatment of their poet. Hamlet had been grossly tinkered and tampered with, as we have shown, by Garrick and Tate Wilkinson; and yet the outrage had not moved the British lion one jot. In truth our playgoers had long tolerated, and in such wise connived at, a systematic maltreatment of Shakespeare by adapters of all kinds. Few had been found to object, at any rate no hissing was heard, when Romeo and Juliet, and King Lear, were provided with comfortable, in lieu of tragical, conclusions—the Capulets and Montagues became fast friends, Lear was restored to reason, and lived happily ever afterwards, his daughter Cordelia having become the fond wife of his faithful sub-

ject, Edgar; Macbeth had been permitted a last dying speech and confession; the *Tempest* had been re-fashioned by Dryden; the *Taming of the Shrew* cut down to a farce; the *Midsummer Night's Dream* converted into an opera; and, to make an end of enumeration, Richard the Third altered out of all recognition by Cibber. All this cutting and wounding of the poet had, indeed, met rather with the approval than the reprehension of the public. Nor, while blaming the doings of the past, have we altogether cause for self-congratulation, upon the proceedings of to-day. For even now, when Richard the Third occupies the stage, it is the tragedy according to Cibber's text, and not Shakespeare's, that is presented to the public.

CURIOUS OLD CHINA.

IN THREE PARTS. PART I.

LIKE other mild forms of insanity, chinamanias has its peculiar phases, and attacks different individuals in very different ways. Chinamanias of a broad catholic turn of mind, collect largely, and purchase crockery of every kind, while born specialists confine themselves to a particular school, and care for nothing beyond it. One harmless creature abandons itself to majolica, and another to early English china; one values the peculiar character of the paste, or the glaze, and raves about lustre, marzacotto and Bristol spiral; another, afflicted with Chaffers on the brain, labours to commit to memory the works of that enthusiastic guide, and is thoroughly prepared to discuss for hours the vexed question, whether the famous Bow figures and Bee pots were made at Bow or at Chelsea. Others—but these are weaker vessels—really care whether the things are pretty or not, and, like shallow pretenders, allow artistic feeling to influence their purchases. I hardly know whether these people deserve the name of Chinamanias at all, any more than those who collect only such pieces as possess a certain historic interest, and I may premise that it is to this latter class that my present remarks are mainly addressed.

It may perhaps be objected that many of the specimens mentioned by me hardly come under the denomination of china, but leaving for the moment all fine distinctions as to what is and is not china, the comparative merits of Oriental and European porcelain, the virtues of hard

paste and soft paste, and the proper distinction between pottery and porcelain, I will at once proceed to descant upon those curious examples of the fictile art, on which the cunning hand of the potter has impressed the tastes and fashions, the popular sentiments, and the political passions of his time.

The finest specimens of majolica are adorned with paintings of scriptural, mythological, or allegorical subjects, and are therefore devoid of positive historical value; but the minor efforts of the Italian potters are full of interest. Presents of majolica were frequently interchanged among the nobles of the sixteenth century, and in these cases the plates and dishes were adorned with the arms and portrait of the donor or the recipient, and sometimes with the arms of both. One class of these presents is peculiarly interesting. Plates, jugs, or deep saucers, called "amatorii," were offered by a cavalier to his lady-love, painted with her portrait, and inscribed with her name, with the complimentary addition, DIVA or BELLA—as CECILIA BELLA—GIULIA DIVA. These portraits at the present moment are less interesting as memorials of dead and gone loves and vows, fragile as the material upon which they are recorded, than as exact records of the costume of the day. Wide latitude seems to have prevailed. One young lady, MINERVA BELLA, at the bottom of a plate, has her hair in multitudinous plaits, and wears a handsome dress with a "low body;" while the beautiful CECILIA, smiling on a jug, wears her wealth of yellow hair in a few ringlets, looking like a "front," and rolled up in an enormous mass behind, as big as the head altogether, and confined by a green ribbon. This young lady, by no means unlovely, is also dressed in a "low body," from which springs the mysterious covering known in America as an "illusion waist," surmounted by a lace ruff, closing round the throat. The lady's name is generally written on a scroll, often oddly disposed. At the South Kensington Museum will be found at the bottom of a dark blue and yellow plateau, a picture of a lady who is clearly endeavouring to read her own name on the curly scroll before her. The contraction adapted by the artist has evidently puzzled the fair Susanna, who is trying to hunt up the wandering letters, SVANNA BELLA. Another lady, on a plate of ruby and gold lustre, is looking

rather gloomily at the motto inscribed on a ribbon, curling about in front of her. "He who steers his bark well is always in port," may be a sententious maxim, but it has little of the dash of the amorous cavalier. Sometimes, in place of the lady's portrait, was adopted a humbler decoration, somewhat after what I may call the "Valentine" style of art—such as two hands clasped over a fire, and above them a heart, pierced with darts. A beautiful specimen of this kind of amatory dish is at South Kensington. The male hand is adorned with a thumb ring, the female with two rings on the second and two on the fourth finger. The heart above them is in ruby lustre, transfixt with three arrows (why three?) and underneath the hands is a fire, the flames in yellow lustre. The border is of rays in golden lustre, between which are flowers in ruby on a white ground, with pale greyish blue outlines and shading. This may have been an engagement or betrothal plate. At the British Museum are several of these amatories. On one of these Cupid is riding on a stick, on another the god is mounted on a bird—the first is a fine specimen of Gubbio ware, of which middle-aged chinamanics will recollect a large quantity was bought for the Museum, at the sale of the Bernal collection. Very much after St. Valentine is a design mentioned by Marryat, "a heart transfixt with a sword and an arrow, over a burning flame, bedewed by tears falling from two eyes placed above," also these, "a greyhound with a heart in its mouth," and the two following, mentioned by Passeri. One of these is signed by the famous Maestro Giorgio Andreoli—a female head, having beneath, DANIELLA DIVA, and above a wounded heart, with "Oimè"! These dishes were not presented empty, but filled with fruit or flowers. Now that a fashion has sprung up for costly valentines, perhaps we may live to see this pretty old Italian custom revived. It would at least afford the artists of the nineteenth century an opportunity of doing something original, if only in the way of amatory designs.

While the finer majolica was enlisted in the service of love, the coarser kinds of pottery were frequently employed to caricature, as well as to celebrate, public men. The brown stoneware jugs made in Germany, and now generally called "grey-beards," were in England christened "Bellarmines," in derision of Cardinal

Bellarmino, and in compliment to that Scottish Solomon, King James, who had produced a rejoinder to the celebrated letter in which the cardinal sought to detach English Roman Catholics from their allegiance. As the art of potting advanced in England, the humour of the people frequently found vent in quaint pocket-pistols of brown earthenware topped by the heads of political celebrities, such as Lord Brougham and Daniel O'Connell. In France, the Nevers ware of the later and coarser period formed an excellent vehicle for the expression of popular sentiments. It may be denounced as vulgar, both in paste and in mottoes; but, on the Macaulay principle of sometimes reading history by the light of a street ballad, it is none the less valuable on that account. During the eighteenth century, the Nevers faïence reproduced all the popular songs and sayings, and the bouts rimés, which in our day are confined to dessert crackers. Persons setting-up house had their china made for them at Nevers; pieces were presented to the parish priest; and many more bore designs of a bacchanalian character. It was on the pedestal of a water-jug, consisting of a figure of Bacchus astride on a barrel, that Victor Hugo scribbled these lines in pencil:—

Je suis fort triste, quoiqu' assis sur un tonneau,
D'être de sac à vin devenu pot à l'eau.

M. Champfleury has collected a whole series of plates and salad-bowls, by the help of which may be followed the successive movements of the popular mind, from the approach of the revolution of 1789 to the year 1831. Oddly enough, at the time when the tricolour waved triumphantly, and inspired public and patriotic legends, no such colour as red existed on the palette of the potters of Nevers, so that it had to be replaced on crockery by yellow; the tricolour consisting, therefore, of white, blue, and yellow.

In the beginning the king appeared, according to this crockery chronology, to be popular enough. We find the crown supported on either hand by the helmet and the mitre, and lilies were still a favourite decoration. At about the same time we find Necker immortalised on a milk jug, with the motto—"The hope and stay of France." With the fall of the Bastille all was changed. The hated prison figured on hundreds of plates, and displayed from the topmost turret, "Live free or die." Mirabeau's death was made the occasion

of a violent crockery demonstration of grief. Sarcasm found vent in plates, on which is a peasant supporting the whole weight of the crown, the sword, and the crossier. This design appears to have been a great favourite, and underwent many variations. Sometimes Jacques Bonhomme is bent double under a sword and a cross, and leaning on his spade exclaims, "I am tired of carrying them." In 1792 came a notable change. Crowns and lilies disappear, and popular crockery displays a spade supported by cannon.

On a favourite inkstand of M. Champfleury is the motto "Live free or die." Another, of very uncompromising character, proclaims on one side "Death to Tyrants," and on the other side has the device, attributed to Chamfort, "War to the castle, peace to the cot." Plates are painted with trees of liberty, and the motto, "Liberty or death," and are dedicated to "The Mountain."

"Vive le Roy" was now supplanted by "Vive la Nation," the constitution (of the time being, 1792) duly celebrated; and finally appeared a plate painted with rustic implements, spades, hoes, rakes, &c., and the motto, "Vive l'Agriculture." By degrees the Phrygian bonnet and the tree of liberty replaced the spade and plough. At the bottom of a salad bowl children dance round a tree of liberty crying, "Let us dance the Carmagnole. Hurrah for the sound of the cannon." Fiercer grow the designs of 1793. Patriotic potters produce trophies of trees of liberty, flags, drums, and cannon—motto, "Ça ira." Under the Directory and the Consulate the pottery of Nevers became intensely military; great events, such as the taking of Mantua, being limned on soup plates and salad bowls. Also an undoubted spirit of reaction is shown in the plate representing a weary traveller walking towards the Hôtel de la Paix—saying, "I wish I could get there," and in another inscribed "Liberty without Licence." Under the Empire the potters of the Nivernais produced little beyond eagles sprawling over their wares, and the restoration of the Bourbons was only celebrated by a solitary potter, who proclaimed that "The lilies bring back peace." But the Revolution of July revived for a moment the enthusiasm of the potter, soon, however, destined to die out in a last feeble effort representing the crowned Gallic cock surrounded by tricolour flags above the motto, "Liberty, Order."

The intensely aristocratic prettiness of Sèvres renders it singularly barren of historic matter, unless, indeed, the record of the curious succession of marks and monograms employed under the various governments which have afflicted France for the last hundred years can be called history. Nevertheless, France produced a pair of notable vases in the porcelain of Sèvres, celebrating the battle of Fontenoy, made long after date of battle—a handsome but stale trophy, not struck off in a moment of national enthusiasm, but carefully elaborated "de par le roi." The vases are esteemed good specimens of *pâte tendre*, with a rose groundwork, veined with gold and blue, decorated with green palms and triumphal crowns—painted, moreover, by Genest, after Morin, with military scenes on two large escutcheons; here the French troops carry the works defended by artillery, and spike the guns; there they drive back the enemy into the orchards a little way out of the village of Fontenoy.

As a general rule, however, such interest as attaches to the *pâte tendre* is entirely that of association. For instance, a magnificent—to some tastes over-splendid—service in the possession of Sir Richard Wallace, and by him liberally exhibited with hundreds of pieces of the best period of Sèvres at Bethnal Green, is interesting from having been the gift of Louis the Fifteenth to Catherine the Second of Russia. Scattered about in various collections are numerous pieces said to have belonged to Marie Antoinette, and often painted with her monogram. It is well, however, to warn sentimental collectors that the soft paste of Sèvres is susceptible of a falsification which cannot be practised upon old Chelsea. Mr. Marryat tells us that "at the conclusion of the long war, the old stocks in the royal manufactory of Sèvres were put up to auction, and bought by certain individuals, who also collected all the soft ware they could find in the possession of other persons. The object of this proceeding for a long time remained a mystery, but at length the secret transpired that the parties had discovered a process which consisted in rubbing off the original pattern and glaze, and then colouring the ground with turquoise or any other colour, and adding paintings or medallions in the style of the old '*pâte tendre*,' thus enhancing a hundredfold the value of the pieces. With any other description of porcelain the

adoption of this process would have been impracticable without discovery, but the soft paste was found to have absorbed in the first firing such an excess of glaze, that the second application of heat had the effect of bringing out a fresh portion, sufficient to cover the surface where the original glaze had been filed away, and thus giving the appearance of the original process. The turquoise was found to succeed the best, and, therefore, more revivals of this colour exist than of any other."

It is said that the white Derby soft paste is now used for this process of conversion, the supply of Sèvres being exhausted. The fraud is so exceedingly difficult of detection, even by connoisseurs, that a deceased china dealer owed to it the immense fortune which he left behind him. Want of vividness in the colour, a want of evenness on the surface of the glaze, and now and then the marks of a second firing may betray the fraud, when the operation has been unskilfully performed; but good conversions defy the most practical eye, unless it be backed by a brain stored with the forms and styles made at Sèvres at every date. The following is an amusing instance of the impudence begotten by impunity. A certain person, having carefully "doctored" a breakfast service with portraits of Louis the Fourteenth and the principal ladies of his court, actually offered it to Louis the Eighteenth, in 1816, as having belonged to his grandfather, Louis the Fifteenth. It was sent to Sèvres to ascertain its authenticity. The irregularity of the marks, added to the anomaly of the forms, particularly that of the plateau which was of one not invented until 1788, furnished easy proof of the fraud; and the service, being of no further interest to the king, was placed in the Museum of Sèvres as a specimen of fraudulent imitation.

Facts of this kind should render purchasers extremely cautious respecting all presumed relics of Marie Antoinette; indeed the name of that unhappy queen should act rather as a beacon to warn, than a focus to attract. In the kindred matter of old lace, it is well known that the only difficulty is to find a fine piece that has *not* belonged to the wife of the royal locksmith.

The illustrious monarch, whose deeds have been superbly portrayed by Mr. Carlyle, and to whom Hogarth dedicated his March to Finchley, as "the King of Prussia (*sic*), a patron of the arts and sciences," to revenge himself on the little, peppery George, who "hated boots and

bainters," was greatly interested in china. About 1751, the manufacture of hard-paste porcelain was established at Berlin by Wilhelm Gaspar Wegeley, and was carried on for about eight years by the founder, who, as is usually the case, lost his money; and, becoming disgusted with the venture, abandoned it in 1761, when Gottakowski, the banker, purchased it, and, investing considerable capital, brought the manufacture to great perfection. In 1763, it was bought by Frederick the Great, and became a royal manufactory. In order to stimulate his modellers to the highest efforts, he made presents of superb services of Berlin china to several German princes, in 1766. When he occupied Dresden, during the Seven Years' War, he shipped off many of the best modellers and painters to Meissen, to form his royal manufactory, among whom were Meyer, Klipsel, and Böhme; and also transported a large quantity of clay and part of the collection. Moreover, in order to secure the commercial success of an enterprise employing five hundred persons, he restricted the Jews residing in any part of his dominions from entering into the marriage state until each man had obtained a certificate from himself, which was only granted on the production of a voucher, from the director of the manufactory, that porcelain to a given amount had been purchased, and that there was reasonable cause for granting the indulgence. As might have been expected, the Jews more readily disposed of their purchases than the general dealers; and this bit of paternal legislation was attended with complete success. Magnificent work was produced at Berlin, equal in quality and finish to anything produced at Meissen. In 1776, seven hundred men were constantly employed, and three thousand pieces of porcelain were turned out daily. Lithophanie—white biscuit plaques, with a design produced by the graduated thicknesses of the paste, which, when placed against a window, form transparent pictures—was invented at Berlin, as was Lithogeognosie, or transfer printing, on porcelain, by Pott, who published an illustrated book on this system as early as 1753.

A magnificent service was presented, by Frederick, to the Emperor Joseph the Second, on his coronation, adorned with highly-finished portraits; and, at a later date, the Berlin manufactory achieved a signal triumph in the magnificent service

presented, by the King of Prussia, in 1818, to the Duke of Wellington. To the last, old Fritz took a keen interest in his china, and was very anxious that his work should equal that of Dresden; and even went so far as to choose a somewhat similar trademark. Instead of the Saxon crossed swords, he adopted two crossed sceptres; but sometimes only one sceptre—a very sword-like one—was used, concerning which the Prince de Ligne recounts a pleasant anecdote of his visit to the King of Prussia, in 1780. "One day, I had turned a plate, to see of what porcelain it was." (Prince evidently himself a chinamaniac.) "Where do you think it comes from?" said the king. "I thought it was Saxon; but, instead of two swords, I see only one, which is well worth both of them." "It is a sceptre," said the king. "I beg your majesty's pardon," replied the prince; "but it is so much like a sword, that it might easily be mistaken for one." This sally met with a doubtful reception, for the prince adds, "I don't quite know whether he was infinitely pleased with my little allegory."

The "Protestant Hero" not only owned a porcelain manufactory himself, but was immortalised in English crockery. In the collection of Lady Charlotte Schreiber is a teapot, made at Bow, adorned with a portrait of the Great Frederick, holding a marshal's bâton, Fame heralding, and Victory crowning him. It is dedicated to the PRUSSIAN HERO. Curious fictile memorials of Fritz are also to be found in the Museum of Practical Geology. Among the specimens of salt-glazed ware—a cream-coloured fabric, nearly approaching to porcelain in quality, shaped by pressing the moist paste into metal moulds, and thus securing a sharp relief—is a circular plate, with a pressed border, in compartments, containing in relief a military trophy, the Prussian eagle, a portrait of Frederick, and the motto, "SUCCESS TO THE KING OF PRUSSIA AND HIS FORCES." The chief glory, however, of the admirable collection in Jermyn-street is the Worcester jug, dedicated to Frederick, and printed by "transfer" over the glaze. The jug is curious in itself; but its value has been increased a thousand-fold by the following passage, which occurs in Mr. Thomas Carlyle's History of Friedrich the Second, called Frederick the Great:—

"A Pottery-Apotheosis of Friedrich.—'There stands on this mantelpiece,' says one of my correspondents (the amiable Smelfungus, in short, whom readers are

acquainted with), 'a small China Mug, not of bad shape, declaring itself, in one obscure corner, to be made at Worcester, "R. I., Worcester, 1757"' (late in the season, I presume, demand being brisk); which exhibits, all round it, a diligent Potter's-Apotheosis of Friedrich, hastily got up to meet the general enthusiasm of English mankind. Worth, while it lasts unbroken, a moment's inspection from you in hurrying along.

Frontside, when you take our Mug by the handle for drinking from it, offers a well-meant China Portrait, labelled, KING OF PRUSSIA: copy of Friedrich's portrait, by Pesne, twenty years too young for the time, smiling out nobly upon you; upon whom there descends, with rapidity, a small Genius (more like a Cupid who had hastily forgotten his bow, and goes, headforemost, on another errand) to drop a wreath on this deserving head—wreath far too small for ever getting on (owing to distance, let us hope) though the artless Painter makes no sign; and, indeed, both Genius and wreath, as he gives them, look almost like a big insect, which the king will be apt to treat harshly, if he notice it. On the opposite side, again, separated from Friedrich's back by the handle, is an enormous image of Fame, with wings filling half the Mug, with two trumpets going at once (a bass, probably, and a treble), who flies with great ease; and between her eager face and the unexpectant one of Friedrich (who is 180° off, and knows nothing of it) stands a circular Trophy or Imbroglia of drums, pikes, muskets, cannons, field-flags, and the like, very slightly tied together; the knot, if there is one, being hidden by some fantastic bit of scroll or escutcheon, with a Fame and *one* trumpet scratched on it; and high out of the Imbroglia rise three standards inscribed with Names, which we perceive are intended to be Names of Friedrich's Victories—standards notable at this day with Names which I will punctually give you.

"Standard first, which flies to the westward or leftward, has "Reisberg" (no such place on this distracted globe; meaning Bevern's *Reichenberg*, perhaps), "Reisberg," "Prague," "Collin." Middle standard curves beautifully round its staff, and gives us to read "Welham" (non-extant, too; may mean *Welmiana* or *Lobositz*), "Rossbach" (very good), "Breslau" (poor Bevern's, thought a *victory* in Worcester at this time!). Standard third,

which flies to eastward or right hand, has "Neumark" (that is, *Neumarkt* and the Austrian Bread-ovens, 4th December); "Lissa" (not yet *Leuthen* in English nomenclature), and "Breslau" again, which means the capture of *Breslau City* this time, and is a real success, 7th—19th December, giving us the approximate date, Christmas, 1757, to this hasty Mug. A Mug got up for temporary English enthusiasm, and the accidental instruction of posterity. It is of tolerable China; holds a good pint "To the Protestant Hero, with all the honours," and offers in little a curious eyehole into the then England, with its then lights and notions, which is now so deep hidden from us, under volcanic ashes, French revolutions, and the wrecks of a Hundred very decadent Years."

EASTERTIDE IN GERMANY.

IN the old German heathen religion, each great Christian feast found its corresponding festival. In December, the sun was supposed to be born anew to the world, after having completed his annual course. Early or later in spring, according to the situation of the country, the festival of the goddess Ostara was celebrated; and, at the season of Whitsuntide, the German tribes were wont to symbolise in various ways the victory of summer over winter.

Pope Gregory the Great acted on the principle of adapting the Christian festivals to these seasons, partly that Christianity might be more readily accepted by the worshippers of Wodan and Donar, and partly to give a sacred character to those rites from which the people could not be easily detached. It is curious that, in Germany, both Christmas and Easter should have retained their pagan names. At the beginning of the Middle Ages, the priests did their utmost to substitute "Christmessen" for the ancient "Weihnacht" or "Holy Night," and "Paschen" instead of "Ostern," which showed too plainly its heathen origin. But their efforts were unsuccessful; and it is only in the Lower Rhine dialect that Easter is known by the name of "Poschen." Even Luther, in his translation of the New Testament, speaks of the Passover as "Ostern."

The name is derived from the goddess Ostara, and probably our own word Easter comes from the same source. Not much is known about Ostara, save that

she was the goddess of spring and the returning sunshine, and that she was peculiar to the Teutonic race; but her ancient importance is testified by the fact of the great Christian festival being allowed to bear her name. The month of April was also known as "Oster Monat," or "Easter month." In her honour the Easter bonfires blaze to this day, despite all endeavours, secular and clerical, to do away with the custom. As early as 752, when the first Church Synod was held at Regensburg, S. Boniface condemned the Easter fires as a heathenish practice.

Nevertheless, the Church adopted the original signification in the Easter candle and Easter lamp, which burn throughout the year. According to an old tradition, they must be extinguished before Easter, and relighted from virgin fire, kindled by flint and steel, not from any already burning. From this sacred flame the whole parish used, in former days, to fetch a light for their hearth; but this custom is now almost forgotten. On Easter Eve the fire was kindled in the churchyard according to the above-mentioned manner, and the old holy oil was burnt; after which the candles were lighted.

Formerly the baptismal water was also consecrated at this time, the peasants fetching it on Easter morning to sprinkle their houses and stables. The legend says that on Easter Eve, like Christmas Eve, all the water in the wells becomes wine, and likewise possesses supernaturally healing powers. Whoever bathes his face with running water on Easter Eve will not suffer from his eyes, or become sunburnt during the ensuing year; and if he take some home to drink, he will be successful in love, but perfect silence and solitude are always requisite. Easter water is also given to horses and poultry to drink. In Roman Catholic districts, articles of food, especially eggs, are consecrated in church on Easter Day. Generally, a snow-white Paschal lamb, formed of butter, and holding a tiny red flag, crowns the bread, cakes, bacon, and other contents of the artistically-arranged basket.

The Easter Fire is not a universal custom. Its chief home appears to be in North and Middle Germany, but it also takes place in Tyrol and Bavaria. In some places the Tyrolese peasants call it Burning Judas. The ashes and charred logs are taken home and buried under the stable door to keep the cows in good health and to drive away witches: they

also serve to make the fields fruitful. There are no fires in Swabia at Easter, but bonfires are lighted on the first Sunday in Lent, which therefore goes by the name of *Funken-Sonntag*, or *Spark Sunday*.

In parts of Westphalia, a resurrection hymn is sung whilst the flames rise, and the people walk round in solemn procession, bearing torches of birchwood. The practice of having bonfires was nowhere more general than in the Harz Mountains. In 1853, fifteen were seen blazing on the mountain crags in the neighbourhood of Osterode. The preparations begin six weeks before Easter, and everyone contributes either wood or else money to buy it. In the Halberstadt district, brooms (on which the witches are supposed to ride to the Brocken) and tar-barrels are preferred for the purpose. At Osterode everybody tries finally to snatch a brand from the embers, and then leaps about with it; the longer it burns, the better omen it is. An old woman at Osterhagen declared that anyone who gazed at the sun through a black silk handkerchief on Easter Day could behold the Paschal lamb dancing. In Westphalia and Swabia, the lamb is said to be reflected in a pail of water.

The belief that the sun dances on Easter morning appears to be very general. Some sixty years ago, the Westphalian peasants were wont to ascend the highest mountain in the neighbourhood at sunrise to behold this spectacle, and a similar custom existed in Swabia.

At Langenei, in Westphalia, pancakes were baked on Easter Day; after which the egg-shells were filled with holy water, and carried to the fields to protect the crops from being injured by storms. Consecrated palms are still set solemnly in the meadows at Easter for the same reason.

On Easter Day it was customary for the inhabitants of Velmeda, on the Ruhr, to visit a cavern which is situated above the town. The maidens then called down the almost perpendicular descent to the cave, "*Velleda, gib mir ein Mann!*" ("*Velleda, give me a husband!*") To which the echo responded, "*Hân!*" ("*Shalt have!*") The peasants also inspected the interior of the cave, which contained wells, for the height of the water foretold whether the ensuing year would be fruitful or the reverse. In Hesse the village youth perform a like pilgrimage, with the addition of placing a bunch of spring flowers on the waters of the small pool within the cavern. They

also drink of the water, and take some home. This custom evidently refers to former sacrifices to *Ostara*.

We now come to the universal custom of Easter eggs, which exists all over Germany. In Swabia and Hesse the Easter Hare is popularly supposed to lay them, and the Swabian mothers, when they prepare the eggs for their children, generally place a stuffed hare on the nest. The Carinthian peasantry say that the church bells go to Rome on Maunday Thursday to fetch them. It is generally considered the duty of sponsors to provide their god-children with the brightly-coloured eggs. Red is the favourite hue, a preference derived from heathenism, as red was sacred to Donar, and the Easter eggs are always, if possible, taken from those laid on Maunday Thursday.

It is known that eggs were employed as a sacrifice at the ancient Spring Festivals, and this is very likely the reason why so much magical power has always been ascribed to them. The writers of the Middle Ages, such as *Cesarius von Heisterbach*, relate numerous stories of bewitched eggs; they were said to fly towards the sun of their own accord, they moved, and on being opened were found to contain toads, snakes, or lizards, which were the well-known transformations of the heathen deities. Moreover, there was the celebrated egg laid by a seven years old cock, which, when hatched, produced a basilisk. A curious signification is attached to eggs in Westphalia, when a young peasant comes wooing. If he is regaled with coffee or porridge, it is reckoned a friendly, honourable reception, but he thereby understands that he is only admitted as a friend and not as a suitor. Should turnips or other vegetables be set before him, they signify that he is totally unacceptable; but an omelette with green herbs, or eggs alone, is a sure token of welcome, and he need then fear no refusal.

Easter eggs are believed to have peculiar properties, and a maiden can awaken love in a man's heart by sending him an egg which she has boiled on Easter Eve. The Tyrolese peasant casts an egg, laid on Holy Thursday and consecrated on Easter Day, over his roof-tree. He then buries it where it falls, and this will preserve his house from fire and lightning.

There are also Easter games, called *Eierklauben*, or *Gathering the Eggs*. They exist in North and South Germany, but they are held on the grandest scale in

Tyrol. The following account is from an Innsbruck paper of 1856.

The Eierklauben takes place either on Easter Tuesday or the White Sunday, as the first Sunday after Easter is called. Two youths go round to all the peasants' houses beforehand to ask for eggs, and, as the game is very popular, they obtain a considerable quantity. The young men assemble on the appointed day and choose two noted runners from their number. From a hundred and seventy to a hundred and seventy-five eggs are then laid along the road with an interval of five feet between each, every tenth egg being a coloured one. When afternoon service is over, the youths appear, clad in various costumes. Some represent legendary beings, such as Faggas and witches, while others are arrayed in the garb of gipsies, Turks, or Moors. Of course there is an immense concourse of spectators from all parts. Preliminaries having been settled, the two runners, adorned with flowers and ribbons, step forward and begin their race. One hastens to the eggs, each of which he must pick up singly and carry to the basket which stands by the first egg. In the Swabian game he is allowed to break a certain number of eggs, but if he exceeds it, he is declared the loser. This, however, is not the case in Tyrol. Whilst the egg collector is thus engaged, his rival must run over the Zamser Inn Bridge to Lötz, Perjen, over the Purschler Bridge to Landeck, and thence back again to the basket of eggs at Zams. Whoever first completes his task is hailed with thunders of applause from the crowd. The Landeck runner is generally the victor, for, although he has a long distance to traverse, still it is not such a tedious business as placing a hundred and seventy-five eggs in the basket. When the race is over, a sort of Carnival commences. The Sultan, surrounded by Turks and Moors, advances, followed by the rest of the masqueraders. Then the Sultan demands, "Tell me what news is there in Zams, Landeck, Fliess, Grius, Stanz, and Schönwies?" Thereupon one youth after another comes before the Mussulman and makes his report of unknown love affairs, tricks, &c. After this the whole company repair to the inn, where a huge omelette is made of the eggs, of which all partake. The performance concludes with dancing, which sometimes lasts till the following morning.

The same newspaper gives an account of another Easter game, which is, however,

not so harmless, so far as its victims are concerned. It takes place on Easter Monday, and appears to be peculiar to Tyrol, unlike the Eierklauben. The Ostereierfahren, or Easter eggs driving, is neither more nor less than a practical joke, and consists in every article, on which the village youths can lay their hands, being put in its wrong place. In spite of all precautions, taught by previous experience, the Bauer awakes, on Easter Tuesday, to find his manure-heap carefully laden on a cart, and hoisted on to his roof, along with ploughs, flails, harrows, and other farming utensils. The milkmaid seeks her pails in vain, for they are lying in the trough of the village-pump, with the churn to keep them company. The church is completely barricaded with waggons, benches, doors, faggots, &c. Mich'l misses his new pipe, and neighbour Joe'l, his brindled cow; but the latter's absence is easily accounted for, when the priest's good old housekeeper goes into the garden to water the lettuces. She might have saved herself the trouble, for the brindled cow has made short work with the vegetables. It may easily be conceived that the sufferers are not choice in their language towards the perpetrators of the mischief; but there the matter rests. No harm is done, and the missing goods and chattels are soon recovered by their rightful owners.

The Tyrolese peasantry believe that supernatural powers may be acquired by him who dares to go where four cross roads meet on Easter Eve. He will behold all manner of apparitions, comical and horrible, but he must keep strict silence, and neither laugh, nor weep, nor pray. At last the devil himself appears in the form of a huntsman, and endows the bold adventurer with the qualities of being always successful in games of chance, being victorious in wrestling matches, being bullet proof, being "frozen," or having the power of making himself and others rigid, and becoming invisible.

Not many years ago a solemn procession used to be held in the Stanz Valley at Easter, with either a plough or an Easter Lamb.

In the Hungerbrunnen Thal in Swabia, there is a spot which was formerly marked out with boundary stones, and was looked out in the light of a sanctuary. A small fair and a dance were held here at Easter, in olden times. Even now the young people go there on Palm Sunday, and buy

Pretzeln, from the bakers, who set up a booth for the occasion. The youths give the Pretzeln to their sweethearts, and on Easter Day the pilgrimage is repeated, when the maidens return the present with an egg. After a short stay, all go home singing.

A custom still existed about forty years back in the Bavarian Highlands, called the "Oster bock." This ram was carried down to church on Easter Day, and afterwards distributed among the peasants, who each had a right from time immemorial to a particular piece. The ram, all ready cut up and roasted, was laid on a hand barrow, which was covered with fresh moss, and decked with garlands and fir branches; its horns were richly gilt, and the head was wreathed with flowers; but it required considerable art to combine the joints of the animal in such a manner as to give it a natural appearance, and to divide them judgmatically, every household in the parish being entitled to a part. The Oster bock was provided by each Bauernhof, in turn, and it was a matter of great rivalry which should produce the finest specimen. After service, a procession conveyed the ram, amid strains of music, to the grass plot in front of the village inn, where the Bäuerin herself dispensed the meat. The head, with its gilded horns, was always the landlord's portion, but he was not suffered to take it away in peace. On receiving his booty, he was obliged to perform a dance, all by himself, holding the head in his hand, whilst the music played a merry jig, and the spectators shouting and singing formed a circle round him until he succeeded in breaking through the ring. Dancing then became general. Here we can plainly trace a reminiscence of the rams which were formerly slaughtered in honour of Ostara. But this ceremony is now only a vague tradition and no longer occurs.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK III. CHAPTER III. A FATAL TEST.

THE earlier portion of the journey was passed in ordinary conversation. Remembering how Anne had always shrunk from any allusion to Mr. Heath, Grace made but the slightest occasional mention of that gentleman, and amused herself by recounting to her companion the principal

incidents of her life since they had parted, and the most interesting episodes in her London career. Amused herself, and, at the same time, did exactly what Anne would most have wished; for she could sit by and listen, throwing in here and there an ejaculation of surprise, which contented the narrator, while all the time she was turning over in her own mind the manner in which she could bring about the revelation which sooner or later must be made. But, even in all her preoccupation, Anne was sufficiently attentive to notice the undoubted improvement in Grace's mental faculties; the childish ways had gone, and in their place there was a mixture of dignity and firmness which argued ill for the success of any one endeavouring to turn the heiress from her settled determination, or to interfere with the exercise of her will. It was evident, too, that Grace had a thorough appreciation of Mrs. Cratchley, and of the various members of the Waddledot family; and of them and their machinations she spoke with such genuine sarcastic humour, that Anne was, from time to time, roused from her reverie to give more than usual attention to what her friend was saying, and pay her the tribute of a smile.

It was at Brussels, their first halting-place, that Anne determined to tell her friend as much as was necessary of what had transpired, to explain to her the deception she had practised upon her, and the imperative necessity that existed of her having been brought away from London. She knew the difficulties that lay before her, the danger she incurred of being misunderstood, the possibility of Grace, in an access of rage at having been played upon, declining to acknowledge the service which had been rendered her, and, determining to be governed solely by her own thoughts, wishes, and impulses; but Anne knew also that she had acted rightly in electing to discharge the duties she had prescribed to herself, even though it might have a baneful effect on her future, which was even then not too hopeful.

They arrived at Brussels in the afternoon, and put up at the Hôtel de Flandre, securing two rooms at the back of the hotel, far from the noisy trouble of the Place Royale, and looking on to the palace, at that season of the year silent and deserted, with its blinds drawn down, and a couple of sentries sleepily sauntering on the terrace walk. There would be

disturbance later on in the mews immediately underlying the hotel windows, when the carriages came back from Waterloo, and the other excursions on which they had taken the English tourists, when the big Flemish horses would be plunging about the paved yard, and unwillingly submitting themselves to the washing and cleaning preparatory to their short rest. But at that moment all was silence and tranquillity; the hot air was filled with fragrance from the flowers of the royal garden, and a delightful sense of nothing-doing pervaded the place. Notwithstanding this, however, and the fatigue consequent upon her journey, Grace found it impossible to secure the sleep upon which she had been reckoning.

"It is of no use," she said, arising from the couch on which she had thrown herself, in her white peignoir, after having unbound her hair, and let it fall over her shoulders. "I am uncomfortable and restless, and sleep seems impossible to me. And you too, Anne, you are working away as though you had only just risen, instead of having been cramped up for hours in that dreadful railway carriage, and that worse than dreadful steamer."

"I am only patching up a rent made in my gown, in getting out of that 'worse than dreadful steamer,' as you call it," said Anne, with a smile. Then changing her tone, she added, "I am glad, however, dear, to find that you are not disposed to sleep just now, as I have something of great importance to say to you."

"More somethings of great importance," said Grace, petulantly; "when shall we have done with them and get a little peace?"

"What I have to say to you now," said Anne, "will probably try your patience and self-command, will require the exercise of that love for me, which I know you have, and your belief in that clearness of thought and common sense for which you used to give me credit, of your appreciation of my devotion to you, and your interests."

"Tell me, quickly, what it is," said Grace. "I have lost the habit of guessing riddles since I have been in London, and I am anxious to know what this important news can be."

"I will tell you, then, plainly," said Anne, after a moment's pause. "I have done evil, that good might come of it. I have deceived you."

"Deceived me!" cried Grace, with already flushing cheeks. "In what way?"

"I have brought you away from London because I knew it to be a matter of the deepest possible importance to you that you should come; but I have used a false pretext to beguile you here. Your aunt, Madame Sturm, though very ill, is not worse than when I last wrote you."

"Madame Sturm not worse—not dying!" cried Grace. "All that story about her desiring to see me an invention? What is the reason that you have brought me away with you?"

"To save you from inevitable destruction," said Anne; "to prevent your marriage with a man who would have rendered your life a burden and a disgrace."

"What?" cried Grace, springing to her feet. "You have taken this step with the idea of preventing my marriage; you have dared to impose upon me with a falsehood, in the hope of interposing between me and the man I love?"

"It was my only chance of getting you to come," said Anne. "It was impossible for me to give you the real reason while you were in London."

"And do you think that absence can make any difference?" asked Grace, with a sneer. "Do you think that I am more likely to give him up in Brussels than I should have been in Eaton-place? Do you think that he will be more willing to surrender me, because he is asked to do so in a letter posted abroad?"

"There is no question of your giving him up," said Anne, calmly; "and as to Mr. Heath, he has already expressed his intentions on the subject."

"George—expressed his intentions! To whom?—where?" asked Grace, breathlessly.

"To you, in this note," said Anne, handing to her friend the letter which Heath had written in the bank parlour.

Grace seized it and read it eagerly. "I cannot understand it," she said, after running through it a second time. "What does it mean? He says that it is impossible for him to fulfil his engagement; that you have reminded him that he is not free, and that he leaves any further explanation to you."

Anne bowed her head in silence.

"What does that mean?" cried Grace, fiercely: "how did you know that George Heath was not free to marry anyone he chose? how did you know anything about him? and what do you know?"

Her eyes were filled with tears of rage and disappointment, her voice shook, and

her lips, tightly as she endeavoured to compress them, quivered: her tone and action were alike aggressive and defiant.

Anne, with a dead weight at her heart, but with her sense clear and her outward aspect calm, marked all this; she saw in an instant that what she had long dreaded had come to pass, that the long existent friendship between her and Grace had melted like wax in the blaze of Grace's wrath at the loss of her lover, that she had applied the one test to her friend's feelings which they would not bear, and that further concealment beyond a certain point was useless. She was silent while she was revolving this in her mind, and was recalled to herself by Grace's angry voice repeating, "What is it you know about him?"

"Much," said Anne, sorrowfully; "more than I ever dared trust myself to think about, more than I should have ever dared to think of repeating, had not the force of circumstances brought out this explanation. You have never said anything; for you were too kind and tender-hearted to do so; but you cannot fail to have noticed, after we met again in Paris, that I was wholly reticent about all that had occurred during the interval of our separation."

"I did notice it," said Grace, "and thought it strange; but I forbore to ask you about it, as you say, because I imagined the subject was disagreeable to you, but if what happened then had nothing to do with your recent act, it is your duty, as it should be your wish, to make a complete disclosure."

"It is my duty, and it shall be done," said Anne, gravely. "You must know then, that during that interval I was thrown into constant communication with Mr. Heath; he and my father were old acquaintances, they were mixed up together in a thousand schemes of what they called business. I had already had to confess to you that my father was a bad and wicked man, and when you learn that Mr. Heath was his constant associate—his prompter rather, as being by far the cleverer of the two—you will be able to form some opinion of him, from whom——"

"Keep to your story, please," interrupted Grace, fiercely. "My opinions are not likely to be warped or moulded by your comments."

"The result of this constant communication was that I was engaged to be married to Mr. Heath."

"What!" cried Grace, in a considerably

softened tone, "you, my poor Anne, were engaged to be married to George, and he deserted you for me?"

"Not quite so," said Anne, shaking her head; "I will do him no injustice. Before I came to Paris—long before you left Bonn for England, the engagement between us was broken."

"By him?" asked Grace, quickly.

"Yes," said Anne, after a moment's hesitation and reflection, "by him; by the force of circumstances, upon which it is not necessary for me to dilate, we were parted, and he was, as I believe, unaware of my existence, until I felt it to be my duty to assert my claim on him as the only means of preventing you from falling into a snare, and marrying one utterly unworthy of you."

"Mr. Heath must have been very deeply in love with you at the time when you were engaged," observed Grace, with a sneer; "since your influence over him even now is so great?"

"It was sufficient to obtain my purpose," said Anne, pointing to the letter which Grace still held in her hand.

That was a terrible moment in Grace Middleham's life. Torn by conflicting emotions, she remained dazed and silent; her love, her pride, her confidence had each and all been outraged by the revelation which she had just heard, from the lips of one whom she had been accustomed to look upon as her dearest friend. When Anne first mentioned the fact of her engagement with Heath, the fierce rage with which Grace's heart was filled had disappeared for an instant, under the idea that she herself had been unconsciously enacting a disloyal part in robbing Anne of the affections of the man she loved. But when she saw, as she could not fail to do by every inflection in Anne's voice, by her every gesture, that Heath was abhorrent to her, Grace felt it was she herself who had been betrayed, and that Anne, by her recent intermeddling, had deprived her of the one love of her life, had alienated from her the only man for whom she had ever felt anything to be dignified by the name of a passion. Oh, it was too cruel! The bitter tears of rage stood in her eyes as she reflected that, notwithstanding all her wealth, and in spite of the position which she held, and which she had lately been taught to prize so highly, she could do nothing to help herself in her present strait, nothing to rescue herself from the degradation into which she had been plunged,

by what looked like the treachery, but what, at its best, would be the officious interference of one to whom she had proved so true a benefactress. Anne saw Grace's tears, saw her working lips, her arms uplifted over her head, and her hands clasped together in her great agony, and, with her own heart breaking, longed to clasp her friend to her bosom, to unsay what had been said, and speak to her words of comfort. She knew, however, that that was impossible; all she could do was to turn away and avoid witnessing the mental torture of her whom she loved so dearly.

When her convulsion of rage had somewhat subsided, Grace said, "Your plea for your conduct in this matter is, as I understand, that you have been entirely guided by your regard for me, by your desire that I should be rescued from contracting a marriage with one so utterly unworthy of me. Is that so?"

Anne bowed a silent assent.

"Will you then be good enough to explain in what Mr. Heath's unworthiness consists. All the charges you have hitherto brought against him have been vague and unsatisfactory; in the merest spirit of fairness something definite should be advanced."

Anne saw at once the dilemma in which she was placed. It was impossible for her to bring forward any charges of weight against Heath, without going into the history of his crimes, and that, of course, was not to be thought of for an instant—there were too many interests involved, too many persons concerned. Anne did not know whether her father was alive or dead, but in any case her own horror at the remembrance of the scenes she had witnessed would prevent her referring to them.

Grace marked her friend's hesitation. "You are apparently at a loss for an answer," she said. "Those who bring vague charges frequently find themselves in that position, I believe, when pressed home."

"I told you often," said Anne, "in the happy bygone days, that you were dearer to me than myself. This man had broken his plighted faith to me, he would not scruple to break it to you. The humiliation which I suffered did not matter—I was unknown and uncared for—but it would have been different in your case, and I was determined that you should be spared from the risk of undergoing it."

It has been said that Grace's perceptive

faculties had greatly increased of late. As she listened to the hesitating manner in which this answer was given—so different from Anne's usual frank, outspoken way—she saw at once the attempt at evasion, but did not trace it to its proper source. She remembered that Anne, though admitting her father's general wickedness, had invariably refused to be betrayed into any special revelations, and had done her best to screen him by always turning the subject; and Grace Middleham's instant suspicion was that the motive for Heath's conduct, in regard to Anne, was to be looked for in the character and the actions of Captain Studley. There was an evident mystery, and that was the only clue to it, which presented itself to Grace's mind. The answer which Anne had given to Grace's strongly urged demand, that she should prove Heath's unworthiness, was wholly vague and unsatisfactory, and was evidently not the reply which Anne would have made, had she been free from the pressure of circumstances. That pressure was to be looked for in the intimate relations at one time existing between Heath and Captain Studley, in regard to which Anne's mouth was sealed. Anne must have some reason, Grace thought. Changed as she might be, warped by those fatal connections, she could not be base enough to bring misery upon her best friend, by causing a rupture with her lover, merely for the sake of revenge for wounded vanity. The explanation lay in the intimacy of Mr. Heath and Anne's father—Grace felt certain of that. But what was she to do? She could not declare her belief to Anne—there was a coolness between them which would have entirely prevented such an admission; and, guarded as she was now, Anne was not likely to corroborate her friend's idea. Nor could Grace act practically upon this conviction, though she was firm in it, by making any advance to Mr. Heath. That letter which Anne had handed to her placed such an idea out of the question; she was not, of course, aware of the circumstances under which it was written; but, taken by itself, it was wholly conclusive. In it Mr. Heath plainly renounced all claim to the fulfilment of her promise; renounced it so plainly and so positively as to render it impossible for Grace to sacrifice her dignity and self-respect, by ever entering into communication with him again.

Grace felt that there was no one now to

whom she could refer for advice or assistance in her distress. Her pride revolted at the thought of appealing to her uncle's old friends, who had been left as trustees of his affairs; and even had she done so, her experience of Mr. Bence and Mr. Palmer told her there was but little to be hoped for from them. Selfish, worldly men, engrossed in their own pursuits, they had been only too well pleased to rid themselves of their responsibility as soon as it was legally possible, and it was not likely that either of them would be willing or able to undertake the delicate functions of an adviser in such a matter as that under consideration. Nor was there anything to be hoped for from an appeal to the lawyers, Messrs. Hilman and Hicks; both they and the trustees had, as Grace knew, the highest opinion, not merely of Mr. Heath's commercial shrewdness, but of his honourable and straightforward character, and all would be alike persuaded that whatever he had done in the matter, had been actuated on his part by motives of the highest order.

What was to be done? There was not the slightest use in returning to London, Grace felt, as there her only acquaintances were members of Mrs. Crutchley's family, or persons who had been brought around her through Mrs. Crutchley's influence; and though nothing had ever been said by anyone—least of all by herself—Grace could not help inwardly acknowledging that, to Mrs. Crutchley's skilful manipulation, she owed the fact of her engagement with Heath. That estimable lady had prepared the way for him, had sung his praises, decorously, indeed, and without any undue exaltation, but with sufficient strength and perseverance to compel Grace's attention; had arranged those meetings on the quiet off-evenings, which had been so delightful; and had lost no opportunity of forwarding his suit. London, then, to Grace Middleham, meant Mrs. Crutchley. To attempt to enter into communication with her would be as lowering to Grace's dignity as if she were to write to Heath himself, and therefore her return to London was at present impossible. She must go home to Germany, leaving behind her all the gaiety which she had so much enjoyed, the incense of adulation, which had been so freely offered to her, and must recommence the old, dreary life—listening to the fretful murmurs of Madame Sturm, with the professor's piano as her only source of relaxation.

The æsthetic teas and the musical evenings, with the long-haired students and the solemn old doctors in attendance, must henceforth be the substitutes for the brilliant balls at which she, as the heiress of Loddonford, had been singled out for special admiration. Innumerable other girls, without half her wealth or pretensions to beauty, had happier lives; for, at least, they were living in civilised society, and had the opportunity of winning husbands for themselves, a chance which Grace looked upon as wholly denied to her. Not among the Eckharts and the Fischers would she deign to look for the future partner of her life; indeed, as she had often said to Anne—there was another misery! What she had said to Anne she could say no more; all confidence between them was suspended; it seemed impossible that their former relations could ever be renewed. Grace scarcely knew which to be most angry with—Anne's past silence or present confession; both seemed equally inopportune. She could not help avowing to herself that the mystery about Mr. Heath must be something very dreadful, or Anne, with her clear, calm sense, would never have taken so decided a step as to interfere between them. Her pride forbade her to acknowledge the existence of this feeling to her friend, her wounded vanity prevented her from appealing to Anne by recounting all the old memories of their passed companionship, to tell her unhesitatingly the truth, and to solve the horrible doubt which then possessed her. She could do nothing of this, she could only give vent to her anger, her humiliation and disappointment in a flood of bitter tears. This resource she availed herself of, throwing herself upon her bed and sobbing as if her heart would break, while Anne, who longed to comfort her, felt that any offer of attention would be either unwelcome or misunderstood, and consequently wandered out into the Parc, and strolled up and down there until she was tired out, an object of great admiration to the tight-waisted little brave Belges, who, in ogling and flirtation, as well as in other matters, fashion themselves on the model of their Parisian brethren.

The next morning they continued their journey to Bonn, and though neither of them took the other into confidence, both were secretly comparing the enormous difference between their present dreary silent pilgrimage, and the bright and happy trip they had made through

almost the same country on their way from Paris, but a few months previously. No resting now among the old Belgian cities, picture-seeing and memorial-visiting; no delightful talk of their experiences, no happy interchange of hopes and aspirations. Then Grace saw everything before her in bright colours; her coming of age was imminent, and that meant something pleasurable and novel. Now, that was a thing of the past; the one man whom she had learned to love was separated from her, and her future was hazy and indistinct. And Anne's reflections, too, were of a sufficiently disheartening character. The last time she had travelled that road she had begun to feel, in all her trouble and misery, a blessed sense of repose, the first foreshadowings of that state of peace which characterised her sojourn at Bonn; but her present forebodings were of a very different kind. Then she knew—for she had just had direct experience of the fact—that she was all in all to Grace Middleham, who, at her first appeal, had flown to her, succoured and nurtured her, with a more than sisterly affection. Now all that was changed; Grace, as was natural enough, had formed other ideas and associations, and she who from childhood had been her chosen companion had now lost all place in her heart, because she had dared to interfere between her friend and certain destruction. It was quite true that Anne had the satisfaction of knowing that she had done her duty; but this, notwithstanding all that the moralists may say, is not always a sufficient consolation for a great deal of mental misery and bodily discomfort.

The difference was most felt on their arrival at Bonn. They had not let the professor know at what time they might be expected, so that there was no one there to meet them. Both the girls thought—Grace carelessly, but Anne with a touch of tenderness—of their first meeting with the students at the station, of Fischer's boyish romance and Eckhart's blunt but hearty kindness. Eckhart would have been there then, Anne thought, had he known she was coming; but she learned afterwards that he had some time since quitted Bonn, had sold the paternal

brewery, and was pursuing his artistic career in Rome. They drove in the lumbering old drosky—for Bonn still remains inferior, even to the rest of Germany, as regards its public vehicles—to the Poppelsdorfer Allee, where they found persons and things pretty much in the same condition as when they had left them. The professor himself seemed very little surprised at their return, but received them both with equal cordiality, for his gentle nature had learned to appreciate the goodness of "Vallare," as he persisted in calling Anne, and was delighted with the opportunity of talking with Grace over the wonders of London, a subject which had wholly occupied his every leisure moment, according to his wife's account, since his return thence. Madame Sturm, a little weaker perhaps than when Grace had left Bonn, was unfeignedly pleased to see her niece. Most fortunately no hint of the intended marriage with Heath had ever been conveyed to the worthy lady, who was therefore unable to wound Grace's susceptibilities, as otherwise with the best intentions she undoubtedly would have done, but she prattled away, inveighing against the English climate and the frivolities of the London season, which, she said, had robbed her niece of her healthy colour, and declaring that the plain fare, early hours, and bright atmosphere of Rheinland were necessary to set her up again.

"And as for you, Waller," continued the old lady, who had not been in such high spirits for months, "I declare it is like a gleam of sunshine to see you coming into the house again. Now, I shall know what it is to be nursed and attended to properly. I cannot tell you what I have suffered at the hands of these clumsy creatures; not one of them could remember at what time my tonic should be brought to me; and, as for rubbing in a lotion, they were worse than nothing at all."

But it is doubtful whether Madame Sturm would have been so joyous, had she been aware of the resolution which had, for some time, been forming itself in Anne's mind, and which she determined to carry out immediately.

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELMANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c., &c.

CHAPTER VIII.

ALL that she had heard of the Methodist preacher had taken strong hold of Minnie Bodkin's imagination. Mr. Diamond's description of him especially delighted her. It was in piquant contrast with her previous notions about Methodists, who were associated in her mind with ludicrous images. This man must be something entirely different—picturesque and interesting.

But there was a deeper feeling in her mind, than the mere curiosity to see a remarkable person. Minnie was not happy; and her unhappiness was not solely due to the fact of her bodily infirmities. She often felt a yearning for a higher spiritual support and comfort than she had ever derived from her father's teachings. She passed in review the congregation of the parish church, most of whom were known to her, and she asked herself what good result in their lives or characters was produced by their weekly church-going. Was Mrs. Errington more truthful; Miss Chubb less vain; Mr. Warlock less gloomy; her father (for Minnie, in the pride of her keen intellect, spared no one) less arrogant and overbearing; she herself more patient, gentle, hopeful, and happy, than if the old bell of St. Chad's were silent, and the worm-eaten old doors shut, and the dusty old pulpit voiceless, for evermore? Yet there were said to be people on whom religion had a vital influence. She wished she could know such. She could judge, she thought, by seeing and conversing

with them, whether or not there were any reality in their professions. Minnie seldom doubted the sufficiency of her own acumen and penetration.

No; she was not happy. And might it not be that this Methodist man had the secret of peace of mind? Was there in truth a physician who could minister to a suffering spirit? She thought of Powell with the feeling half of shame, half of credulity, with which an invalid hankers after a quack medicine.

Minnie had been taught to look upon Dissenters in general as quacks, and upon Methodists as arch-quacks. Dr. Bodkin professed himself a staunch Churchman, and a hater of "cant." He considered that Protestantism, and the right of private judgment, had justly reached their extreme limits in the Church of England as by law established. He detested enthusiasm as a dangerous and disturbing element in human affairs, and he viewed with especial indignation the pretensions of unlearned persons to preach and proselytise. Although he had no leaning to Romanism, he would rather have admitted a Jesuit into his house than a Methodist. Indeed, he sometimes defined the latter to be the Jesuit of dissent—only, as he would take care to point out, a Jesuit without learning, culture, or authority.

"I can listen to a gentleman, although I may not agree with him," the Doctor would say (albeit, in truth, he had no great gift of listening to anyone who opposed his opinions), "but am I to be hectored and lectured by the cobbler and the tinker?"

Minnie had no taste for being hectored or lectured; but it seemed to her that what the cobbler and tinker said, was more important than the fact that it was they who said it. She thought, and pondered,

and wondered about the Methodist preacher, and about her chance of ever seeing or hearing more of him, until a thought darted into her mind like an arrow. Little Rhoda! She was a Methodist born and bred, and knew this preacher, and—Minnie would send for little Rhoda.

When she announced this resolution to her mother, Mrs. Bodkin found several difficulties in the way of its fulfilment.

"What do you want with her, Minnie?"

"I want to see her. Mrs. Errington talks so much of her. I remember her coming here with a message once, when she was a child. I recollect only a little fair face and shy eyes, under a coal-scuttle straw bonnet. Don't you, mamma? And I want to talk to her about several things," added Minnie, with resolute truthfulness.

"Oh, dear me! What will your papa say?"

"I don't see how papa can object to my asking this nice little thing to come to me for an afternoon, when he doesn't mind your boring yourself to death with Goody Barton, whose snuff-taking would try the nerves of a rhinoceros, nor forbid my inviting the little Jobsons, who are unpleasant to look upon, and stupid beyond the wildest flights of imagination. He lets me have any one I like."

"Yes; but you teach the little Jobsons the alphabet, my dear. And that is a charitable work."

"And Rhoda will amuse me, and I'm sure that is a charitable work!"

Minnie would get her own way, of course. She always did.

That same evening Minnie said to her father, with her frank, bright smile, "Papa, may I not ask Rhoda Maxfield to take tea with me some afternoon?"

"Rhoda what?"

"Little Maxfield, the grocer's daughter, papa," said Minnie, boldly.

Mrs. Bodkin bent nervously over her knitting.

"What on earth for? Why do you want to associate with such folks? Have you not plenty of friends without——?"

"No, papa. But I don't ask her because I'm in want of friends."

"Oh, Minnie," said Mrs. Bodkin in the quick, low tones she habitually spoke in, "I'm sure nobody has more friends than you have! Everybody is so glad to come to you, always."

"You're my friend, mamma. And papa is my friend. Never mind the rest. I want to have little Maxfield to tea."

Minnie laughed at herself, the moment after she had said the words, in the tone of a spoiled child.

Dr. Bodkin crossed and uncrossed his legs, kicked a footstool out of the way, and then got up and stood before the fire.

"If you want amusement, isn't there Miss Chubb, or the McDougalls, or—or plenty more?" said he, shooting out his upper lip, and frowning uneasily.

"Now papa, can you say in conscience that you find Miss Chubb and the McDougalls perennially amusing?" Then, with a sudden change of tone, "Besides, you know, the other people are playing their parts in life, and strutting about hither and thither on the stage, and they find it all more or less interesting. But I—I am like a child at a peep-show. I can but look on, and I sometimes long for a change in the scene and the puppets!"

The doctor began to poke the fire violently. "Laura," said he, addressing his wife, "that last tea you got is good for nothing. They brought me a cup just now in the study that was absolutely undrinkable. Is it Smith's tea? Well, try Maxfield's. You can have some ordered when the message is sent for the girl to come here."

In this way the doctor gave his permission.

The next day Minnie despatched her maid, Jane, with the following note to Mr. Maxfield:—

"Will Mr. Maxfield allow his daughter Rhoda to spend the afternoon with Miss Bodkin? Miss Bodkin is an invalid, and cannot often leave her room, and it would give her great pleasure to see Rhoda. The maid shall wait and accompany Rhoda if Mr. Maxfield permits, and Miss Bodkin undertakes to have her sent safely home again in the evening."

Old Max was scarcely more surprised than gratified on reading this invitation. He stood behind his counter holding the pink perfumed note between his floury finger and thumb, and turning over the contents of it in his mind, whilst his son James served the maid with some tea.

Miss Minnie was a much-looked-up-to personage in Whitford. And here was Miss Minnie inviting Rhoda just as though she had been a lady, and sending her own maid for her. This would be Algy's doing, the old man decided. Algy had more sense than his mother. Algy knew that Rhoda was fit to go anywhere, and could hold her own with the best. The young

fellow was very thick with Dr. Bodkin's family, and had, no doubt, talked to Miss Minnie about Rhoda. All sorts of ideas thronged into old Max's head, which, nevertheless, looked as obstinately idealess as one as could well be imagined, as he stood conning the pink note, with his grey eyebrows knotted together, and his heavy under-lip pursed up. Perhaps not the feeblest element in his feeling of exultation was the sense of triumph over David Powell. Powell might approve or disapprove, but, anyway, he would see that he was wrong in supposing the Erringtons did not think Rhoda good enough for them! If they introduced her about among their friends, that meant a good deal, eh, brother David? And that the invitation came by means of the Erringtons, Maxfield felt more and more convinced, the more he thought of it. So many years had passed, and Miss Minnie had taken no notice of Rhoda. Why should she now? Maxfield was at no loss to find the answer. Maybe old Mrs. Errington had talked for talk's sake more than she meant. Maybe her boasting was in order to drive a hard bargain, when Algy should come forward and offer to make Rhoda a lady.

The Erringtons' friends were going little by little to make acquaintance with Rhoda, in view of the promotion that awaited her. Well, Rhoda could stand the test. Rhoda was quite different from the likes of him.

He called his sister-in-law out of the kitchen, and in a few hurried words told her of the invitation, and bade her tell Rhoda to get ready without delay. He cut Betty Grimshaw short in her exclamations and inquiries. "I've no time to talk to you now," he said. "The maid is waiting. Bid Rhoda clothe herself in her best garments."

"What! her Sunday frock, Jonathan?" exclaimed Betty in shrill surprise.

"Sh! woman!" answered Maxfield, and gripped her wrist fiercely. He did not want that family detail to come to the ears of Miss Bodkin's maid.

Rhoda was completely bewildered by the invitation, and by the breathless haste with which Betty announced it to her, and hurried her preparations. "But I don't want to go!" murmured Rhoda plaintively. At the same time she suffered her clothes to be huddled on to her in Aunt Betty's rough fashion.

"Ah! tell that to your parent, my dear. I have the mark of his fingers on

my wrist at this moment; he was in such a taking, and so—so uncumboundable." This latter was a word of Betty's own invention, and she frequently employed it with an air of great relish.

The idea of going amongst strangers was more terrible to Rhoda, than can easily be conceived by those who have never lived so secluded a life as hers had been. Had she been able to say a word to Algernon, she thought she should have derived a little comfort and support from him. But he and his mother were both from home.

All the way from her own house to Dr. Bodkin's, Rhoda uttered no word, except to ask Jane timidly if she were sure Miss Minnie would be alone—quite alone?

The gloomy court-yard, and the stone entrance hall of the house struck her with awe. The old man-servant who opened the door seemed to look severely on her. She followed Jane with a beating heart up the wide staircase, whose thick carpet muffled her footsteps mysteriously, and then through a drawing-room full of furniture all covered with grey holland. There was the glitter of gilt picture-frames on the walls, and the shining of a great mirror, and of a large, dark, polished pianoforte at one end of the room. And there was a mingled smell of flowers and cedar-wood, and altogether the impression made upon Rhoda's senses, as she passed through the apartment, was one of perfume, and silence, and vague splendour. She had no time, even if she had had self-possession, to examine the details of what seemed to her so grand, for she was led across a passage and into a room opposite to the drawing-room, and found herself in Miss Bodkin's presence.

The room was Minnie's bed-room, but it did not look like a sleeping-chamber, Rhoda thought. To be sure a little white-curtained bed stood in one corner, but all the toilet apparatus was hidden by a curtain which hung across a recess, and there were bookshelves full of books, and flowers on a stand, and a writing-table. On one side of the fireplace, in which a bright fire blazed, there was a curious sort of long chair, and in it, dressed in a loose crimson robe of soft woollen stuff, reclined Minnie Bodkin.

Rhoda was, as has been said, extremely sensitive to beauty, and Minnie's whole aspect struck her with admiration. The picturesque rich-coloured robe, the delicate white hands relieved upon it, the graceful

languor of Minnie's attitude, and the air of refinement in the young lady and her surroundings, were all intensely appreciated by poor little Rhoda, who stood dumb and blushing before her hostess.

Minnie, on her part, was a good deal taken by surprise. She welcomed Rhoda with her sweetest smile, and thanked her for coming, and made her sit down by the fire opposite to herself; and when they were alone together, she talked on for some time with a sort of careless good nature, which, little by little, succeeded in setting Rhoda somewhat at her ease. But careless as Minnie's manner was, she was scrutinising the other girl's looks and ways very keenly.

"She is absolutely lovely!" thought Minnie. "And so graceful, and—and—lady-like! Yes; positively that is the word. She is as shy as a fawn, but no more awkward than one. It is not what I expected."

Perhaps Minnie could scarcely have said what it was that she had expected. Probably a quiet, pretty-looking, well-behaved young person, like her maid Jane. Rhoda was something very different, and the young lady was charmed with her new protégée. Only she was obliged to admit, before the afternoon was over, that she had failed in the main object for which she had invited Rhoda to visit her. There was no clear and vivid account of Powell, his teaching, or his preaching, to be got from Rhoda.

Rhoda could not remember exactly what Mr. Powell said. Rhoda could not say what it was which made all the people cry and grow so excited at his preaching. Rhoda cried herself sometimes, but that was when he talked very pitifully about poor people, and little children, and things like that. Sometimes, too, she felt frightened at his preaching, but she supposed she was frightened because she had not got assurance. Many of the congregation had assurance. Yes; oh yes, the people said Mr. Powell was a wonderful man, and the most awakening preacher who had been in Whitford for fifty years.

Minnie looked at the simple, serious face, and marked the childlike demureness of manner with which Rhoda declared Mr. Powell to be "an awakening preacher." "I don't think he has awakened you to any very startling extent!" thought Minnie. "This girl seems to have received no strong influence from him."

That was in a great measure the fact;

but also, Rhoda was held back from speaking freely, by the conviction that her Methodist phraseology would sound strange, and perhaps absurd, in the young lady's ears. Moreover, it did not help to put her at her ease, that she felt sundry uneasy pricks of conscience for not "bearing testimony" with more fervour. She knew that David Powell would have had her improve the occasion to the uttermost. But how could she run the risk of being disagreeable to Miss Minnie, who was so kind to her?

That was the form in which Rhoda mentally put the case. The truth was, hers was not one of those natures to which the invisible ever becomes more real and important than the visible. It was incomparably more necessary to her happiness to be in agreeable and smooth relations with the people around her, than to feel herself in higher spiritual communion with unseen powers.

When Minnie at length reluctantly desisted from questioning her on the subject of Powell, and her chapel-going, and her religious feelings, she was surprised to find how the girl's frigid, constrained manner thawed, and how her tongue was loosened.

She chatted freely enough about her visit to Llanryddan in the summer, and about Duckwell Farm, where her half-brother Seth lived, and, above all, about Mrs. Errington. Mrs. Errington had been so good to her, and had taught her, and talked to her; and did Miss Minnie know what a change it was for a lady like Mrs. Errington to live in such a poor place as theirs? For, although she had the best rooms, of course it was very poor, compared with the castle she was brought up in. About Algernon she said very little; but it slipped out that she was in the habit of being present when Mr. Diamond came to read with the young gentleman; and then Miss Minnie was very much interested in hearing what Mr. Diamond said to his pupil, and how Rhoda liked Mr. Diamond, and what she thought of him. And when it appeared that Rhoda had thought very little about him at all, but considered him a very clever, learned gentleman—perhaps a little stiff and grave, but not at all unkind—Miss Minnie smiled to herself and said, "He is a little stiff and grave, Rhoda. Not the kind of person to attract one very much, eh?"

And then tea was brought, and Rhoda sipped hers out of a delicate porcelain cup, like those which Mrs. Errington had in

her corner cupboard. And there were some delicious cakes, which Rhoda was quite natural enough to own she liked very much. And then Mrs. Bodkin came in, and sat down beside her daughter; and finally, at Minnie's request, she took Rhoda into the drawing-room, and played to her on the grand piano.

"Rhoda likes music, she says, mamma. But she has never heard a good instrument. Do play her a bit of Mozart!"

"I am no great performer, my dear," said Mrs. Bodkin, opening the piano; "but I keep up my playing on my daughter's account. She is not strong enough to play for herself."

Minnie had her chair wheeled into the drawing-room, in order, as she whispered to her mother, to enjoy Rhoda's face when she should hear the music.

Rhoda sat by and listened, in a trance of delight, while Mrs. Bodkin made the keys of the instrument delicately sound a minuet of Mozart, and then give forth more volume of tone in "The Heavens are telling." This was different, indeed, from the tinkling old harpsichord at home! The music transported her. When it ceased she was breathing quickly, and her eyes were full of tears. "Oh, how beautiful!" she faltered out.

"Why, child, you are a capital audience!" said Mrs. Bodkin, smiling kindly.

Then it was time to go home. She was made to promise that she would come again and see Minnie whenever her father would let her. She left Dr. Bodkin's house in a very different frame of mind from that in which she had entered it. Yet she was as silent on her way home as she had been in the afternoon.

How happy gentlefolks must be, who always can have music, and flowers, and talk in such soft voices, and are so polite in their manners, and so dainty in their persons! She could not help contrasting the coarse, rough ways at home with the smoothness and softness of the life she had had a glimpse of at Dr. Bodkin's. She tried to hold fast in her memory the pleasant sights and sounds of the day.

In this mood, half-enjoying, half-regretful, she arrived at her father's house to find the little parlour full of people—besides her own family and Powell, there were two or three neighbours who joined in the exercises—and a prayer meeting just culminating in a long-drawn hymn, bawled out with more zeal than sweetness by the little assembly.

PHYSIOLOGY OF VEGETATION.

THE vegetable kingdom—to use the formal nomenclature of earlier days—presents problems harder of solution than any which inorganic matter can afford. No student of natural history can fail to note the striking points of similarity, as between animal and vegetable life, which incessantly obtrude themselves. And yet the patient investigator cannot ignore the yet more obvious distinctions which separate the shrub, the tree, the flower from the animal creation of which they present a pale reflex. Thus, plants, in their higher development, are of distinct sexes: they have life-blood and a circulating system, with organs of respiration, and the same need of light and heat, of air and water, that we have. But in many important respects they differ from any, save the lowest invertebrate, forms of animal life. Locomotion, for instance, is denied them. They are dumb and passive. That to a limited extent they feel, few candid observers would deny; but direct physical agency is required to affect their sluggish sentient powers.

Without vegetable life, it is manifest that animal life would shortly, in this planet of ours, become extinct. Plants and herbs are the true purveyors of all nourishment, the humblest green thing being a laboratory, for the conversion into edible substances of all the waste matter that comes in contact with its roots; while every leaf is as a trap to catch the carbon, that would otherwise vitiate the atmosphere to a dangerous degree. As regards the sea, all marine creatures, from the huge whale to the tiniest infusoria, ultimately depend for their nutriment on the immense mass of vegetable and animal refuse washed by a thousand rivers into the deep, and without which neither the beds of seaweed nor the innumerable forms of vital organism could exist. It is not easy, however, to draw a hard-and-fast line as to where the boundaries of the animal and vegetable worlds should be traced. The madrepora, the sponge, the sea-anemone, the coral animal, and other zoophytes, the shell-fish clinging to rock and pile, the many-coloured living blossoms that make the bottom of the ocean resemble a flower-garden, are so like vegetables, that it is hard at first to discriminate the technical difference. On the other hand, we see land plants, such as the curious flycatcher of South America, car-

nivorous by instinct, feeding on the insects which they ensnare within their quickly-contracting leaf-cup, and scarcely to be distinguished, save in appearance, from so many sedentary spiders.

The vast geological changes which the earth has undergone, with now an Arctic rigour of climate, then tropical heat, and anon a period of submergence, have produced in all ages such an effect on the flora of a country as was to be expected. At first the cold, wet soil, intersected by sullen lagoons, and furrowed by the action of ice, can bear nothing but moss, fucoid, and lichen—cryptogams that need little aid from the sun's rays to enable them to live. Next succeed the tall reed-beds, the fern-thickets, matted tangles of coarse grass, cane-brakes, and growths of hemp and flax. To these series, long since carbonised, belong nearly all our coal-measures. We feed our furnaces with what were once sheets of moss, browsed by the hungry reindeer. The blaze that warms our hearths consumes tall tree-ferns, slender palmettoes, all of home growth, the British bamboo, the British cactus and mimosa—a vegetation fitter, to our fancy, for some Indian forest than for its original birthplace. The fir, the pine, the birch, the hazel, and even the stately beech, had all of them to grow and to decay before our woodlands were fit for their crowning ornament—the magnificent oak, a very late comer indeed, geologically speaking, into Europe north of the Alps.

Analysis of the sap, which is the blood of trees, reveals its constituents to be water, with some potass, a small admixture of carbonate of lime, and some characteristic vegetable products, which differ according to the species. Attempts have been made in France, not unsuccessfully, to impart a permanent stain to the growing wood by making, at the proper season, incisions in the bark, and by transfusing coloured liquids into the ascending sap. There is, however, no small risk of poisoning the tree, should mineral acids or coal-tar dyes be selected; and, indeed, trees are readily killed by whatever of a deleterious nature comes into contact with their leaf-lungs, their roots, or their epidermis. The emanations from smelting-works, baleful to human beings, are still more fatal to trees; and even the leakage of gas-pipes lays low many a stately elm and chestnut in our public parks and pleasure-grounds. It has been often noted, that an

excess of heat and moisture promotes the growth of inferior or parasite vegetation, at the expense of the higher. In the forests of Western Africa and of South America, the many majestic trees are short-lived, and rarely sound at heart, choked and oppressed as they are by the twining luxuriance of the innumerable parasites that enwrap them into their flower-laden tendrils, and suck from them the strength that should go to nourish the tall branches that wither one by one. The very finest trees are to be found in drier and more temperate climates—such, for instance, as that of California.

The seeds of plants have been aptly compared to the eggs which play so important a part in the animal creation; while their number varies, from the million or so of germs accredited to the spleen-wort, or from the three hundred thousand of the tobacco plant, to the solitary seed of the sea-pink. Only a small percentage of seeds, as of eggs in the kindred cases of the insect or the fish, ever fulfil their primary purpose; but in the majority of cases there is an ample provision against waste, and human life in especial is largely dependent on what falls from the overbrimming cornucopia of Nature. Our own staff of existence—wheat bread—is derived from this apparently prodigal bounty; and the same may be said of the rice of the Bengal ryot and the buckwheat of the Russian moujik. Were it not for the abundance of seeds produced by leguminous, and especially culmiferous plants, our sustenance must be on roots alone, in addition to such animal food as we could procure. That—although wild rice has been, though rarely, observed—wild wheat is nowhere met with, is a notable fact as illustrating what care and culture must be given to the taming of cereals which, when neglected, have a tendency to degenerate into mere grasses.

Fruit—which is, after all, but the fleshy husk of seeds—seemingly simple substance though it be, is extremely complex when analysed into its nine, ten, or eleven constituents. There is always malic, and often tartaric acid; gelatine, mucilage, and tannin must combine with sugar, water, and potass, and to these must be added a peculiar colouring and a flavouring principle before the grape, peach, or apricot, thus cunningly compounded without hands, is ready for the table. Heat, which develops the saccharine properties, is, of course, the familiar agent in ripening; but

heat, under some conditions, can do its work without light.

Fruit, when gently warmed in a vessel sealed against light and air, becomes rich in sugar: the gum, water, and woody fibre shrinking proportionably as the glucose is formed. Flowers, again, would yield no scent were it not that solar or artificial heat promotes the evaporation of the essential oil, fraught with perfume, in which their fragrance lies. So inflammable, under some conditions, is this, that there are plants, such as the fraxinella, which readily take fire when flame is brought into close proximity to their odorous stems.

Trees hollow by nature, and the cavities of which are filled with a soft pith—such as the palm, tree-fern, and other such members of the sylvan family—are, like the cane and the reed, chiefly the natives of tropical and sub-tropical climates; while solid timber is common in more temperate zones, with a marked preponderance of resinous trees as we approach high latitudes. The people of Mesopotamia have from time immemorial fed their baking-ovens with grass; while, on the other hand, the Norwegian peasant has been glad to eke out the rye-meal and barley, by mixing the sawdust of the yellow pine with his coarse bread. It is no slight victory of civilisation that the inferior cereals, which, with pulse, were once the food of four-fifths of the population of Europe, have slowly and surely given place to wheat. Roots, also, unknown to or neglected by our forefathers, have within the last half century come to be prized as they deserve. But for turnips, mangold-wurzel, and beet-root, our farmers would have been compelled, in the old wasteful way, to consign, each winter, half their cattle to the pole-axe and the corning-tub, and the price of fresh meat would have become fabulously high. As for the heavy debt of obligation which we in Europe owe to the potato, it would be hard to exaggerate it. It must be admitted, however, that a population which can contentedly feed upon roots alone is sure to be in a backward state. The facility with which yams can be raised by very light labour co-operates, with the profusion of plantains and cassavas, to render the negro the indolent being which we find him, both on the West Coast of his ancestral Africa, and among the fruit-groves of Jamaica.

There are some vegetable anomalies;

among which the cow-tree of Bolivia ranks high. It was no trifling boon that, among the dry and stony table-lands of Upper Peru, a tree, the yucca, should be ready to reward the thirsty wayfarer who pierces its bark, by pouring forth a copious stream of rich and refreshing milk. The oil-nut, the shea-butter tree, and the vegetable ivory of the Guinea Coast, the wax-tree of South America, and the camphor of Sumatra, are almost equally remarkable. The palm gives syrup, sugar, and intoxicating liquor, as well as fruit, cordage, timber, thatch, clothing, and fuel. The bamboo serves a hundred uses. The bread-fruit tree of the South Sea islands, with fish and fern-roots, made the inhabitants independent of agriculture and art. Some two years since, a Swedish professor of chemistry, M. Stenberg, subjected the famous moss which his country produces in such profusion, and which had hitherto been regarded merely as the indispensable food of the hardy reindeer, to a series of experiments. These were, both from a scientific and a commercial standpoint, brilliantly successful. It was found that the verdant carpet, which drapes many hundreds of square miles of untrodden field and bleak mountain, was a source of wealth, till then unknown. From sixty-six pounds of well-washed moss the clever professor extracted five gallons of pure alcohol. Eighteen hundred-weight of the same moss, under proper treatment, yielded to M. Stenberg the enormous amount of nearly twelve hundred-weight of unrefined sugar. The sugar-cane and the beet-root, cultivated at great cost, and requiring peculiar conditions of soil and climate, do not, weight for weight, compete with this wild growth of the Swedish hills; and it is not surprising to hear that the price of moss at Stockholm has of late risen to about a halfpenny a pound, and that lack of capital and machinery alone retards the practical results of so important a discovery.

Oddly enough, copper, a poisonous metal, is found in the tree—the cinchona—which supplies us with our chief safeguard against fevers, quinine; while the oak is remarkably rich in iron, with respect to which it is surpassed only by the iron-wood of Brazil and Guinea, and possibly by the hard lignum-vitæ of Honduras. Previous to the discovery of America, there were but few varieties of wood at the service of the cabinet-maker save oak and walnut, and a small quantity of ebony,

imported by the Venetians or the Portuguese from Africa or India, and sold at an extravagant price.

The demand for mahogany, which was first imported into England in 1724, steadily increased, until, in 1830, it exceeded twenty thousand tons annually. The supply is still very large, but woods of brighter colour and finer grain, such as maple and satin-wood, black walnut, partridge-wood, and rosewood, have in some degree supplanted it.

Foreign gardeners acknowledge the superiority, in size and flavour, of the fruit forced in English hothouses and ripened on the red-brick walls of English gardens. And this is the more remarkable since Britain is, as regards wild fruit, not quite so well off as her neighbours in the same latitudes. In Northern France, Belgium, and South Holland, wild strawberries, bilberries, and so forth, are very much more abundant than among our own woods and heaths. Vegetables were, indeed, somewhat slow in becoming naturalised among us. The Tudor sovereigns depended on the Netherlands for their salads, no less than for their artichokes, carrots, and other rarities. Holland, it should be remembered, was, to English eyes, so late as a hundred years ago, a very triumph of civilised industry—a combination of dairy, farm, garden, and factory, immensely in advance of the slovenly tillage of our island home. One of Shakespeare's anachronisms, no less flagrant than Falstaff's mention of potatoes, is Jack Cade's desire to appease his hunger on the salads in Squire Arden's walled demesne. British salads, when Elizabeth reigned and Shakespeare wrote, were exotic novelties, almost as new to England as the now familiar tubers which had lately, under their Chilian name of batatas, been transplanted from Sir Walter's Irish garden at Youghal to the eastern side of St. George's Channel. Hops, which surely deserve to be reckoned as a national institution, were forbidden to be planted by the parliaments of Henry the Sixth, and were denounced by those of Henry the Eighth.

Hot climates and sunny countries are the chosen abode of evergreen trees, such as the cork and the cypress, the palm and the ilex; while nine-tenths of the ornaments of our own forests are stripped of their foliage at the first breath of winter. There is often, however, something melancholy in the aspect of these dark-green un-

changing glades, while the grey olive and mulberry are far from adding cheerfulness to the landscape. The gloom of the stern vegetation of Australia, with the metallic tints of the dusky foliage, and the sullen aspect of the unvarying bush, saddened the spirits of the first exiles and explorers, utterly unaware of the rare capabilities of the country. At the antipodes, even more than with us, care and skill have wrought wonders. In the tropics, however, and in some favoured spots beyond their limits, the results of the most scientific agriculture fall short of those which accrue from the almost spontaneous bounty of Nature. A little plot but twelve yards square, planted with bananas, averages a yield of four thousand pounds of farinaceous fruit. The same area, under wheat, would give but thirty-three pounds of grain, and a return of one hundred pounds if planted with potatoes. Four jack-trees, heavy with yellow fruit, and two or three cocoa-palms, render a native family in Ceylon independent of labour; and although the sturdier population of Burmah is a grain-fed one, so fertile is the black alluvial soil, that the lightest labour and scantiest intelligence suffice to raise such harvests as would appear incredible, even to those accustomed to the crops now reared by Flemish industry, or by the higher agricultural skill employed in Norfolk and the Lothians.

JUDY.

At dawn on a February morning, fifty years since, the look-out on board the sloop-of-war *Rosebud*, engaged in repressing the slave-traffic on the African coast, reported a suspicious sail about eight miles to leeward. Chase being made, the vessel was quickly identified by the delighted pursuers as the *Arrow*, a noted slaver, whose capture had hitherto proved impossible; her captain and mate, both English, being men distinguished alike for skill and hardihood, and possessing a far more accurate knowledge of the coast, than was furnished to those newly arrived, by the imperfect charts of that time.

The keen *Arrow* had not been slow to discern her danger. Up went her helm, and away she flew, with studding-sails set—despite the greatly-increasing wind—shaping her course for a small but secure cove (very little visited, and most probably unknown to the *Rosebud's* commander)

situated about a hundred miles northward of Loango.

The chase had commenced about seven o'clock in the morning, and by three land was reported, something less than twenty miles distant; chase five miles still to leeward, and apparently running straight for the nearest headland.

As they approached, the land rose high, and, shelving towards the shore, displayed small clumps, marking itself as that kind of coast which generally terminates in rocks.

"Strange!" remarked Captain Henderson, of the Rosebud. "The fellow is heading straight for that beach. If he escapes drowning, he should hang for at least a hundred murders. They say he never ships less than a hundred and twenty at a trip."

"Perhaps they'll raft it, or try the boats," said the first lieutenant, Mr. Hall. "Wind's freshening, sir. Had we not better shorten sail and close-reef topsails?"

"Yes. Turn the hands up at once, bend cables, and have all ready for coming to an anchor. If this gale holds, I doubt if we could weather this shore. Send me the charts."

In vain did he, with the master, examine these documents. The surveys had been evidently incomplete, and there was merely a dubious mark, indicating the possibility of a cove somewhere at hand. The captain gave orders to reef courses and not to bear up after the chase, but keep a good look-out upon her and get a cast of the deep-sea lead.

"Thirty fathoms, sir; fine hard sand," reported a quartermaster. "Chase still continues to run for the shore, although shortening sail."

"How far is she from land, think you?"

"About four miles, sir—standing end on."

"How far from us?"

"About the same, sir."

"I think, sir," Mr. Hall remarked, as he saw his chief glance anxiously at the tremendous sea rolling in, "we had better creep off. We need not lose sight of her, and can anchor also, should she do so."

"You are right, Hall. Still, I fear that to beat out against this sea is impossible; and, as to anchoring, you hear we have a sandy bottom. Nothing would hold."

"Shall we try the other thing, sir?"

"Yes. Try. Set the courses. Down your topgallant yard and masts on deck. Clap on preventer-braces, and keep her half a point off the wind, so as to fore-reach."

In this not very pleasant situation, by no means sure of escaping wreck, and with the ship that had lured them into danger standing in as coolly as if entering a familiar haven, we leave the Rosebud for the moment, and board the chase.

"'Twill be touch and go," observed Rawley, the mate, to the captain of the slaver.

The person addressed was a short, thick-set, small-eyed vagabond, dressed in a round jacket, a glazed hat with broad brim, large rough trowsers, and an old weather-worn glass stuck under his arm. He seemed perfectly unconcerned, though the vessel under him was apparently rushing on to inevitable destruction.

"'Touch and go!' If we had kept to sea, it would have been 'touch and take!' We've been in here before. Why not again? Is all ready to anchor there?"

"All ready, sir."

"In foretopsail. Don't be nice in the furling. There's the entrance! Starboard, you Jones!"

"Starboard it is, sir," responded Jones, not quite so cheerily as was his wont, for he knew that, if the Arrow touched, every soul was lost; and was, perhaps, booking up the log of his memory, and seeing how the dead reckoning of his misdoings tallied with the observation.

"There—meet her, now—and keep that clump of trees on with the bluff point. Steady, so. Jump forward, Rawley, and see the anchors clear. We must be smart when we clear the first ledge—or—" he made a significant sign.

The Arrow had now got the passage (at all times dangerous, but now fearful) open. It was so narrow, that the surf from the rocks whitened the whole, and left no smooth part to indicate the deeper channel. The long roll of the sea rendered steering difficult, and the captain, standing on a small gun abreast the wheel, kept his eye steadily on the clump of trees, occasionally warning the helmsman of the coming sea, which he heard roaring behind him but never deigned to look at.

The crew were all on deck, and fully awake to their danger. The first line of breakers was passed, and their courage rose as they witnessed the cool bearing of the captain. Once only he betrayed

emotion, turning deadly pale, but without changing a muscle. It was when the sea caught the Arrow on her starboard quarter, and she threatened to broach-to before the helmsman could stop her. But Jones was a good hand. He checked her at the critical moment, and kept her head well in the centre. It was when this sea, which lifted the vessel and surged along with her, subsided, that the vessel, as she fell into the hollow, just touched the ground. It was but for a moment. The next sea lifted them clean off the passage, the helm was clapped hard a-starboard, the point was rounded, and the anchor let go in what was, comparatively, a mill-pond. Sails were furled. She was safe as in Dover harbour.

"What about the 'ebony'?" asked Rawley of his chief. "The sloop must see our mast above the rocks, and may try the passage. In that case we're trapped."

"She'll be lost to-night," replied the other, coolly. "She could never claw off in this sea, and is too close in to escape. If she drifts to leeward only a mile an hour, she'll be hard and fast and battered to chips by midnight. Send a hand aloft, and let me know what the fellow's doing."

Report was presently made that the sloop was off the point, some seven or eight miles, carrying a press of sail, yet apparently dropping shoreward.

"Hah!" said the captain, rubbing his hands. "She's not to have the picking of the little Arrow this trip, anyhow! Well, now about the niggers. In these climates the wind chops round in a second, and then we should have her boats in the cove before we could land our ebony! They will always keep the passage open—for, if it blows, 'tis their only chance."

"Well, sir, they'll have more luck than often falls to such sharks, if they get in here!" said the mate.

"Well, land the beggars, and away with them to the rear of the hillock, where the old hut stands. Shackle them well, and land half the hands to watch them. Look after the crew yourself, or they'll be cruising on land, and be pickled and eaten before we know of the cookery."

"Shall I land them all?" asked Rawley.

"No, not all. Leave Judy to me," replied the other, glancing towards a corner of the deck where, throughout the recent perilous manœuvre, something like a human figure had lain crouched under a tarpaulin.

The mate hesitated.

"If these devils see her, we might as well leave the whole lot of 'em aboard," he muttered.

"D'ye think I don't know that?" asked the captain, with a dark, sinister look. "Off with you, and get through this before dark. I'll land and watch our friend in the offing. We may pick up something when she goes to pieces, and make our own salvage awards!"

The unfortunate slaves—a hundred and seventeen in number, three having died on the passage—were quickly landed, and goaded along to their destined hiding-place. They were an unusually fine lot, prisoners made in a recent native battle, and sold by the conquerors for glass beads, rum, looking-glasses, and a little hard cash, not to mention an occasional cocked-hat and some metal buttons, at that great slave mart, Loango.

The hold cleared, the captain, with somewhat more gentleness than might have been expected from such a ruffian, uncovered the crouching figure, and assisted it to stand. It was a negress, and—let it not startle the reader—a beautiful one!

If, as Burke asserts, beauty consists in curved lines and eschews the straight, this young dingy Venus deserved the appellation. Her head was small, of the real Congo type, not a straight line about it; her hair curled; her nose was slightly arched; her lips were round; her form symmetrical and undulating. Judy was now at the perfection of negress womanhood—sixteen. She was cheerful and intelligent; so quick, indeed, of apprehension, that in the short time she had been a captive, but distinguished by the captain's favour from her fellows in misfortune, she had learned much English, and begun to read.

Poor Judy beheld with some uneasiness her friends marching away. They were the only companions with whom she could freely converse, and it was only by the judicious administration of a few comfits, and, finally, a small mirror, that she consented to be pacified.

Meanwhile, on board the Rosebud things looked less and less satisfactory. Despite all efforts, she had neared the land considerably. The wind rather increased than diminished, and Captain Henderson, though externally calm and confident as ever, began to feel serious alarm.

Again and again had he striven to make out the narrow entrance, and been compelled to claw off from the perilous spot. It was in one of these anxious searchings that he discovered the Arrow's masthead—motionless, and evidently in security. Suddenly, there was elevated on a small hillock an English union-jack! Was this a tender of assistance? Was it intended to direct them to the difficult entrance? An anxious consultation followed.

The first lieutenant proposed bearing up, and running for the place at once. Another officer gave more cautious counsel. The flag might be shown on a wrong point, as a lure. But this opinion was scouted by the gallant straightforward captain.

In the meantime dusk crept on, the sea was running high, and the sloop was almost buried under the press of her canvas, groaning as she forced her way through the rough, toppling sea.

At length the mainsail split and went to ribbons, and there being no alternative but to anchor, the necessary order was given.

On sounding, they found but eighteen fathoms water—muddy bottom—showing how much they had drifted in shore, but also affording some hope, as the anchors might now hold, thanks to the mud mingled with the sand.

Allowing her to drift into twelve fathoms, the Rosebud's captain let go both bower anchors—one backed by the stream, the other by the kedge—at the same moment, and veered away a whole cable, when she let go the sheet-anchor, and veered away a cable upon that, so that now he had five anchors down, each bearing a proper strain.

The leadsman in the chains announced that the anchors held, and the ship surmounted one or two terrific jerks without starting anything. Of course, in such a predicament, little hilarity prevailed. The master, a steady old seaman, had watched the coast, and taken the bearings of the softest spot to run the vessel upon, should she drift. The sea roared as it rolled past, and sometimes over, the sloop; but still she held.

"Does she drift?" asked Henderson every moment, in his accustomed steady voice, though an affirmative would have been his ship's death-warrant.

"Not an inch, sir," was the invariable reply.

Thus affairs remained for more than an hour.

On shore, the captain and mate of the slaver had been carefully watching their imperilled pursuer.

The suspicion started on board the latter had been correct. The flag had been so placed that, had the sloop used it as a guide, she must inevitably have been dashed upon the outer ledge of rocks.

As the day shut in, the two worthies resolved to improve the snare. They obtained a couple of lanterns from the brig, and hoisted them on the false bluff. This done, they returned on board, where the mate made a kind of official report relative to the slaves.

Judy sat by the captain's side, and was encouraged to taste his grog. Rough and brutal as the man was, all human feeling was not banished from his heart. After his coarse fashion, he loved the dark beauty, and her position, alone among white strangers—the negro's terror and abhorrence—appealed to whatsoever of pity lingered in his nature. In "sheer kindness," like the man who buttered his horse's oats, he made poor Judy sip and sip, until she had to be despatched to bed, as nearly deprived of reason as a human being can be without being a natural idiot.

Day dawned. The gale had moderated. The Rosebud was safe. She had held on well, and though she had dragged a little, had still ten fathoms water. About noon, a slight flaw of wind coming off the land, she instantly weighed, and got under canvas.

The slaver's people eyed this operation with intense delight, and the captain and mate had a little carouse of congratulation. At last it occurred to the wary skipper to see what the sloop was doing, and a hand was sent aloft.

The report was startling.

"Hove to, sir. Boats just entering the cove."

Rawley looked at his chief.

"Condemned, sir. Judy——" was all he said.

"No time to land her?"

"Impossible."

The captain's tanned visage flushed, and then grew sheet-white.

The mate pointed significantly in the direction of the coming boats.

"Here, Rawley," said the other, putting his hand on his shoulder, and whispering in his ear. "Be quick. You understand.

Down, every man of you, fore and aft," he continued, "and scrub out the hold as quickly as possible."

The hands disappeared, and the mate, who had jumped below also, returned, leading Judy.

The captain took her in his arms, and kissed her affectionately. Then addressing the mate, he said:

"Bear a hand, my lad, or we're done for!"

And he turned away.

Those below heard one loud shriek, sounding above all the noise they made, and stopped appalled. But the mate's voice was heard, talking cheerfully:

"I'll give them work enough! They shan't get the Arrow out without a job! They shall weigh every anchor themselves. And here goes another!"

The axe was heard to fall on the stopper, and the larboard anchor dropped from the bows.

At this moment the Rosebud's boats rounded the point, and dashed alongside.

Mr. Hall had come in person. Too shrewd of observation to be easily gulled, he had observed, on entering, that had they steered for the signal they must have been lost. This confirmed him in his opinion of the character of the vessel pursued, even had she not already been pretty well identified as the victorious Arrow.

As the armed boats dashed up, the captain and mate were seen quietly smoking on deck, much at their ease.

"What vessel is this?" demanded Hall, as he jumped on deck.

"The Arrow, of Liverpool."

"Where from last?"

"Sierra Leone."

"Your cargo?"

"Emptiness," was the saucy reply.

"Jump down there, men," said Hall, disdaining further colloquy, "and examine the vessel thoroughly."

Half-a-dozen men obeyed.

"How many men have you on board?" asked Hall, now addressing the mate.

"Six."

"What are you doing here?"

"Getting out of the way of the wind."

"Then whither bound when we first sighted you?"

"To Loango."

"Working 'Tom Cox's traverse,' eh?" said the other ironically. "You were standing to W.N.W. with a fair wind. Is that the course for Loango?"

"I was working my own reckoning,"

put in the captain, "and perhaps I should have found my port just as well without your assistance."

"Show me your papers."

"Here."

There was nothing in the papers inconsistent with what had been stated. The vessel was bound, apparently, for gold-dust; and, as far as observation went, there was nothing to justify her detention. The midshipmen reported, indeed, that the vessel, though empty, was not guiltless of that peculiar aroma that, to the nose of experience, denotes the recent presence of negroes. And a shackle or two had been found; but, beyond this, there was nothing on board, to bear out the suspicion that this notorious craft was still engaged in the inhuman traffic she had hitherto pursued.

"Stay. How came you to stick up that flag yesterday in the wrong place?" resumed Mr. Hall, sternly.

"There, Mr. Rawley," ejaculated the slaver's captain, addressing his mate, with a sanctified look. "See what men get for doing a good turn. There were we, up half the night, straining our blessed eyes out, with ropes and everything ready, to render these people assistance, and this is the reward—to be treated as slaves and pirates!"

"That doesn't answer my question, sir," said the officer. "Come, you must see the captain; and, as we can't part company with such kind and well-intentioned folks, just weigh at once, and out with you, alongside the sloop."

"Weigh for yourself," was the sullen reply. "I shan't go out of this till better weather. If you start my anchors, I hold you responsible for anything that may happen to the vessel. Mind now, sir. I tell you, before you begin, not a man of mine shall render you the least assistance. The instant you touch my anchors I give up charge of the vessel, and hold you responsible to its owners. Note that down in the log, Mr. Rawley. Mark the exact time. And now, sir" (addressing Mr. Hall), "begin as soon as you please."

The officer hesitated—he knew the danger of the passage. The wind was very light, the sea still running heavily on shore, and it was far from certain he could take the brig out in safety. In this dilemma, he despatched one of his boats to the Rosebud, giving an account of what he had seen, and requesting further

orders. In the meantime, he got into the other boat, and examined the soundings of the cove.

No sooner had he left the vessel, than the captain sent men aloft to unbend the fore-topsail, slightly split near the starboard clue, but which could have been quite as easily repaired where it was.

On the return of the boat sent to the sloop, the midshipman handed a card to Mr. Hall, who at once pulled back to the slaver.

"You will get under weigh, sir, and go out to the sloop. There are your orders. About it, with no more palaver."

"I shall do nothing of the kind," was the answer. "I am in a safe harbour, and here I stay, till my sails are repaired and my rigging set up. If you choose to take charge of her, do so, but you get no help from me."

"Very good. Then I relieve you from all responsibility. Board her, men. Some of you get that topsail aloft, just as it is. The rest weigh anchors. Smartly now. Wind's dropping."

The mate here interfered.

"Why give yourselves and us more trouble than is necessary? You know very well we shall be back here in a couple of hours."

"Will you?" said Mr. Hall, doubtfully.

"At all events, we'll take the chance. So why not slip the cables and buoy the ends? There's nobody here to steal the wood."

"All right. I've no objection to that. So slip and buoy, my lads."

Giving this direction, while walking forward, Mr. Hall remarked that the larboard anchor, which lay in only three fathoms' water, was upside down. He therefore ordered his people to slip the starboard cable; and, as he came aft again, observed to the captain:

"As you've so little cable out on the larboard anchor, we'll weigh that."

"Why so?" asked the other, uneasily.

"Because, if the wind fails us, as seems likely, we may have to anchor outside. Now, bear a hand aloft there with the topsail; and jump up, one or two of you, and loose the sails on the mainmast."

Meanwhile the mate had run forward, and was seen assisting busily to unsplice the lower cable.

"Belay that," cried Hall. "Unsplice the other, the starboard cable, men!"

The mate made an attempt to complete the work, however, by attempting to let

slip the end through the hawse-hole. But he was again frustrated, for some of the Rosebud's men had stiffened the cable before all, and brought-to the messenger.

By this time the sails were loosed, and the men, assembling at the capstan, began to heave round.

The result must, I think, have been anticipated. Very few who have acquainted themselves with the but too authentic narratives of the barbarities practised by slave captains at this period will doubt the truth of this. They need not; for the circumstances, names excepted, are perfectly accurate.

When the anchor reached the bows, it brought up with it, lashed to the shank, and gagged, to stifle her cries, the corpse of poor Judy!

This condemned the Arrow as a prize.

Such, however, was the indignation of the Rosebud's men, that it required the energetic interference of Mr. Hall to protect the captain from summary vengeance. Unhappily for Rawley, the active instrument in the murder, that miscreant, hoping to escape altogether, leaped into the sloop's boat which lay alongside, with only the boat-keeper remaining in it. Striking the latter on the head with some heavy instrument, and sending him into the water, the mate jumped overboard, and made for the shore.

"Come back, you murdering scoundrel," shouted Hall, whose quick eye had caught the whole proceeding, rapid as it was.

"Back, or we fire!"

He had scarcely uttered the last word, when a shot from the bows, fired by a sailor, who had mistaken the menace for an order, stopped the fugitive. Turning round, he rose, as by some convulsive movement, half above the surface, then, with a wild toss of the arms, went to the bottom.

The stunned seaman having been quickly picked up and passed on board, the boat proceeded in search of the mate's body, which, owing to a strong eddy, had been carried some little distance from the spot at which he sank. It was at length descried through the clear water, and, by means of the boat's anchor, with little ceremony hauled on board, of course lifeless.

The brig was condemned, and the value of the prize was much augmented by the circumstance of her crew—to ingratiate themselves with their captors—betraying the hiding-place of the slave cargo. These

were speedily re-shipped in the very vessel in which they had been so roughly stowed—but, this time, with more regard to humanity—and in due course regained their homes.

GOOD-BYE.

We two, who met, too late, too late;
We two, the toys of ruthless fate;
We too, who never should have proved
The brief bright rapture of the Loved;
We, vanquished in a pre-doomed fight,
We two must say good-bye to-night.

Nay, what avail the clinging hands?
Slow, sure, and sullen part the strands;
The cup of joy was barely tasted,
The precious draught, just touched, is wasted;
Wild tears but dim the yearning sight,
We two must say good-bye to-night.

And oh, my darling, parting thus,
What is of comfort left for us?
Owning the bitter sentence just,
We dare not hope, we may not trust;
Past, present, future, lose their light
As we two say good-bye to-night.

Such love as ours, unsanctified,
Born of passion, nursed by pride,
Spite strength, and force, and mortal throes,
For ever nears such dreary close;
Not even memory's tender might
Soothes the good-bye we say to-night.

CURIOUS OLD CHINA.

IN THREE PARTS. PART II.

NOTWITHSTANDING the brilliant example of the Prussian tea-pot, but few historic materials can, as a rule, be extracted from those useful articles. Whether the nature of the beverage to be brewed in them was not sufficiently inspiring to quicken the brain of the potter, I know not; but, although immense variety exists in their form, they rarely come under the head of speaking-pottery. The largest collection of tea-pots known was that of the late Mrs. Hawes, who bequeathed three hundred specimens to her daughter. Among them are several formerly belonging to Queen Charlotte. Mr. Croker mentions a tea-pot that belonged to Dr. Johnson, and held two quarts; but this is a bachelor affair compared with that purchased by the late Mrs. Marryat at the sale of Mrs. Piozzi's effects at Streatham. This tea-pot, used at Johnsonian tea-fights, holds more than three quarts. It is of old Oriental porcelain, painted and gilt. George the Fourth had a large assembly of tea-pots—tea was not much in his way, by-the-bye—piled in pyramids in the Pavilion at Brighton; and Mrs. Elizabeth Carter was also a collector of tea-pots, each of which possessed some traditionary interest. The so-called "Elizabethan" examples are clearly miscalled, for tea was

not drunk, nor tea-pots made, in England until the decline of the dynasty which succeeded the Tudors. Liverpool produced two historic tea-pots, one of which is dedicated to the Earl of Derby, printed in "Liverpool transfer," with the Stanley crest and the following inscription: "Good health and success to the Right Honourable the Earl of Derby."

Long may he live,
Happy may he be,
Blest with content,
And from misfortune free.

The second famous Liverpool tea-pot is dedicated to John Wesley, and is decorated with his portrait. A specimen of this Wesley tea-pot may be seen at the South Kensington Museum. Another Wesley tea-pot, upon which are his portrait and some acrostic lines in his praise, was made at the Staffordshire potteries.

Liverpool pottery, however, was not always dedicated to such noble persons or objects. One fine specimen, covered with ships and trophies, bears the inscription, "Success to the Africa Trade;" a sentiment sufficient to destroy the appetite of anybody who happens to recollect what was meant at Liverpool by the "Africa trade."

The Bow, or, rather, the so-called Bow, figures—for many of them were probably made at Chelsea—are always interesting. In Jermyn-street is a bust of the famous "Butcher" Cumberland, in plain white-glazed porcelain. Other famous contemporaries were modelled in this apparently unpromising material with extraordinary success. A pair of perhaps the finest and most characteristic figures ever produced at Bow, or elsewhere, was recently sold at the sale of the Townsend collection, at Christie's, for thirty-six guineas; and another pair, at the sale of the Bohn collection, for forty-three pounds. The persons represented are an actor and actress, of no small renown in their day—Woodward, as the Fine Gentleman, and Mrs. Kitty Clive, as the Fine Lady, in Garrick's farce of *Lethe*. The figure of Woodward is admirable. Made up carefully, to a charming degree of extra fineness, over-dressed, but without reaching the limit of caricature, and wearing a delicious smile of good-humoured imbecility, there stands no silly, ideal shepherd, but the man Woodward, as he appeared, when it pleased him to enact the Fine Gentleman. Kitty Clive is the most striking china figure I have ever seen. Without the aid of colour, and, despite

the disadvantageous play of light on a white-glazed surface, the modelling is so masterly, that every fold in Kitty's voluminous robe, and every feature of her face, reveal the superfine character she is performing. The attitude is life-like, the poise of the head, the slightly up-turned face and elevated eyebrows all helping to convey the stage idea of an intensely over-fine lady.

Not only actors and actresses, but political personages, not quite so great as Frederick of Hohenzollern, were held up to glory or ridicule by English potters. In the British Museum is a handsome bust of Prince Rupert, life-size, attributed to Dwight of Fulham—said, in his day, to have so far "advanced the art plastic, that 'tis dubious whether any man, since Prometheus, have excelled him, not excepting the famous Damophilus and Gorgasus of Pliny." At a later period, the famous Wedgwood produced, in black Egyptian ware, many life-size busts of Dutch worthies—Cornelius de Witt and others—and found a ready market for them in Holland. While Bow turned out figures of Quin in Falstaff, and Garrick in Richard, Chelsea produced busts of King George the Second, and statuettes of Marshal Conway and Jack Wilkes, the latter a fair, but slightly flattered, portrait—squinting horribly, nevertheless. Famous potteries vied with each other in producing memorials of great men. The Marquis of Granby, Lord Chatham, and General Wolfe were all commemorated in crockery; while naval heroes and their deeds shone out on punch-bowls, mugs, and jugs of all qualities. Lord Rodney was celebrated in coarse earthenware and in fine Derby porcelain. On a pint mug of coarse ware, coated outside with orange-coloured enamel, appear two full-length portraits of Lord Rodney and an oval medallion, with a ship laid on in cream-coloured paste, tinted green. The vessel represented is De Grasse's flag-ship, *Ville de Paris*, taken by Rodney, in 1782. The famous "Rodney jug," made at Derby, is richly ornamented, and, by a quaint fancy, the head of the hero, topped by a mighty three-cooked hat, is made to form the spout. Liverpool, Newcastle, and other English potteries never tired of doing homage to Britannia, the Wave Ruler. Punch-bowls were painted with a ship in full sail, and, above it, the rather mildly-punning motto, "Success to Friend;" and quart mugs were printed in black, with

Duncan's ship, the Venerable, towing De Winter's ship, *Vryheid*, and inscribed with the following verse—

Vain are the Boasts of Belgick's sons,
When faced by British ships and guns—
Tho' de Winter does in Autumn come,
Brave DUNCAN brings his harvest home.

As might have been expected, the gallant Nelson figured on pint and quart mugs, with "Victory" and other mottoes. His glory was also set forth in those curious mixtures of sentiment and fun, called "frog mugs." The exterior of the Nelson "frog mug" is painted in black, with monument and trophies in honour of Lord Nelson, while in the inside lurks a roughly-modelled frog-coloured "proper." The reptile is represented climbing up the inside of the vessel, so that as the liquid is drunk the creature appears to be leaping into the drinker's mouth.

Jokes against tithe-collecting clergymen, Scotchmen, and others, were embodied in china or pottery. "Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen," was straightway printed on a barrel-shaped pint mug; the construction of the bridge over the Wear at Sunderland was also celebrated in poetry and pottery; the life of the sailor and eke that of the farmer were extolled in like fashion, but the happiest efforts of the potter were dedicated to events of great national importance. Several remarkable specimens of this peculiar branch of fictile art are to be seen at the Museum of Practical Geology. A quart jug in white ware is decorated on one side with a hay-making scene; on the other side is John Bull seated on a column inscribed "The British Constitution," and looking across the Channel at Napoleon weeping the loss of the flotilla by the aid of which he had hoped to invade England. The Emperor cries, "Oh! my poor crazy gunboats, why did I venture so far from home?" and John Bull replies, "I told you they would be all swamp'd, but you would be so d—d obstinate." The whole is inscribed "Patience on a Monument Smiling at Grief," with the following distich—

The Mighty Chief with fifty thousand Men,
March'd to the coast, and March'd back again.
Ha! Ha! Ha!

The burning of Moscow is commemorated by a bust of the Emperor Alexander, and, more quaintly, in a huge jug. On one side of this curious bit of crockery caricature is depicted a Russian peasant, killing the last Frenchman; on the other, the

boor is returning home with three tiny Frenchmen impaled on his bayonet, while his child is riding cock-horse on an imperial eagle—between them, Moscow in flames. The return of peace is celebrated on a flowerpot of white glazed earthenware, printed on either side in pale brown and purple under the glaze, with a monument inscribed, "Peace of Europe signed at Paris, May 30th, 1814," supported by female figures of Peace and Plenty backed by the united flags.

Apart from its artistic, historical, and industrial value, old china is rendered at the present day additionally interesting by its high, but fluctuating, value in money.

While Sèvres and choice Dresden have always fetched good prices, other ceramic treasures have at times gone begging for a customer. Forty or fifty years ago, plates of Gubbio lustre and choice bits of Henri Deux ware might have been bought respectively for a few shillings or a few pounds. At the sale of the Strawberry-hill collection, in 1842, Sir Anthony de Rothschild bought a Henri Deux ewer for twenty pounds—now estimated by that excellent authority, Mr. Chaffers, at twelve hundred pounds; a tazza, of the same ware, was bought at Poitiers for fifty shillings by M. Delange, and is now valued at one hundred and eighty pounds. In the Louvre is a salt-cellar, bought in 1824, of M. Lehrié, by M. Sauvageot, for five pounds, but now estimated at three hundred. A tazza, bought originally by M. Sauvageot, as a Palissy, for eight pounds, is also in the Louvre, and is now estimated at five hundred.

Palissy ware, being moulded, is so easily reproduced from the original models, that its value falls far short of other work more difficult of imitation. Nevertheless, exceptionally fine specimens fetch high prices. A large circular salver was sold, at the dispersion of the Soltykoff collection, to Baron Sellières, for four hundred pounds. At the sale of the Bernal collection, one hundred and sixty-two pounds was paid by Baron G. de Rothschild for a fine lizard dish, which had been originally purchased at a stall in Paris for twelve francs, and, after being restored, was sold to Mr. Bernal. These two, however, are very rare cases, as Palissy specimens may generally be bought for one-eighth of the prices mentioned.

Genuine Majolica has also suffered depreciation from the prices of twenty years ago, by the extensive manufacture of

pseudo-Majolica. Immediately after the Bernal sale—where a single plate, of the Gubbio lustre ware, by Maestro Giorgio, fetched as much as one hundred and forty-two pounds—prices increased, from day to day, till they reached an extravagant height. At Florence, one thousand five hundred and sixty pounds were once paid for thirteen plates; but, since then, distrust has brought down prices. At the sale of the Marryat collection, in 1867, two companion plates, which fetched at the Bernal sale forty pounds and fifty pounds respectively, were sold for twenty-three pounds and twenty-seven pounds, and other specimens with a proportionate depreciation.

Fine Dresden figures rarely fail to fetch a good price, but the vases from this manufactory are too numerous to retain an exorbitantly high value. Fairly judged, excellent Dresden fetches no more than it is worth, and is, at the present day perhaps, as cheap as any choice china. Sèvres, on the contrary, has risen enormously in value. When at the sale of the Bernal collection thirteen hundred and eighteen hundred guineas were given for a pair of gros bleu and a pair of Rose du Barry vases, the town was struck dumb with amazement, although it is probable that this high price was not more than double the cost of production. Since then it has become generally known that the fine old Sèvres—the true *pâte tendre*—was only made during a period of about forty years, and that the excessive risk in the furnace, and the high salaries paid to artists, render any commercial reproduction of this famous porcelain impossible. The *pâte tendre* was emphatically a *porcelaine de luxe*. It cannot be, or, at least, is not reproduced, and the quantity made from the best models was not very great, so that there are many reasons why good samples should fetch high prices, but it must seem to the general public that the prices recently realised are beyond all rhyme or reason. At a famous sale of china last season, a cup and saucer with green ground, richly gilt, painted with pastoral figures in medallions, by Chabry, fetched one hundred and five pounds; and a cup and saucer with white ground, richly gilt, painted with two military subjects by Dodin, realised one hundred and ten pounds. Plateaux and vases fetched proportionate sums. An oviform vase, thirteen inches high, with upright flattened handles and festoons of foliage in relief,

gilt on gros-bleu ground, painted with a camp scene in a large medallion, and a military trophy on the reverse, by Morin, sold for one thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven pounds ten shillings; and a set of three oval-shaped jardinières, rose du Barry ground, with white and gold foliage handles, painted with large subjects of exotic birds by Alonde, and flowers in medallion, brought two thousand five hundred and seventy-two pounds ten shillings. The vase is (if not since broken) of very elegant shape, but there is nothing wonderful in the outline of the jardinières, the centre one of which is only six inches high. A pair of very small turquoise vases next fetched five hundred and twenty-five pounds; but all these were thrown into the shade by a matchless "garniture de cheminée," consisting of a vase and cover, formed as a "Vaisseau à mâts" (the arms of the city of Paris), fourteen and three-quarter inches high, and a pair of éventail jardinières and stands, eight and a-half inches high, the ground rare rose du Barry, with bands of green richly gilt and exquisitely painted with subjects of peasants and flowers in medallions by Morin (marked with the letter G for the date 1759), which was knocked down for the amazing sum of ten thousand six hundred and fifty pounds! The ship-shaped vase, allusive to the ship borne in the armorial shield of the city of Paris, is extremely rare; but, for the consolation of readers who cannot secure a specimen for their own chimney-piece, I may add that a fine example of this model, in dark blue, green, and gold, may be seen for nothing at the Bethnal Green Museum, among the magnificent collection lent by Sir Richard Wallace.

Those who marvel at the great prices given for old English china at the present may well be reminded that it was very dear when new. Horace Walpole—an eminent chinamaniac—in a letter to Sir Horace Mann, dated 4th March, 1763, writes:—"I saw yesterday a magnificent service of Chelsea china, which the King and Queen are sending to the Duke of Mecklenburg. There are dishes and plates without number, an épergne, candlestick, salt-cellars, sauce-boats, tea and coffee equipage. In short it is complete, and cost one thousand two hundred pounds." Far higher prices were paid for services of Worcester—a style of porcelain peculiarly well adapted for state and presentation purposes. On the occasion of the

visit of the Grand Duchess of Oldenburg, in 1814, a magnificent set was produced for the Emperor of Russia. The design was in the somewhat formal style of the Empire, the ground of a rich dark blue, profusely ornamented with raised gold. The imperial arms were emblazoned in the centre, and coloured "proper." About the same date a superb service was made for Lord Valentia, and ornamented with copies of the drawings made by the artist who accompanied him to the East. A richly decorated set, heavily gilt, and relieved with delicious paintings by Baxter, was made for the "Nabob of Oude," and a charming breakfast service for the Princess Charlotte, on the occasion of her marriage. The plates of this set have a gadroon edge. This edge is solid gilt, the ground, extending nearly to the centre of the plate, is a beautiful apple green, having three large and three small panels, in which are painted groups of flowers and flies, on an ivory ground. The centre has a group of flowers by Astles, a very clever flower painter.

Much of the best work of George the Fourth's period was defaced by a hideous fashion, encouraged by George the Third, George the Fourth, William the Fourth, and the rest of the royal family. According to the perverted taste in favour with royal and consequently other personages at this time, the armorial bearings of the owner of the service were drawn very large, so as to completely fill the centre of the plate, and were painted in proper colours. Lions, unicorns, leopards, griffins and salvage men grinned horribly at the guests through his clear soup, and other heraldic beasts cantered round the edge of his plate. As crest-painting, the work was beautifully executed, but the surpassing ugliness of the effect was only kept down by the rich dark-blue ground and massive gilding for which Worcester was celebrated. It is superfluous to remark that since Her Majesty's accession the style has completely changed. Abhorring all that savours of vulgar show, the Queen at once reduced heraldic decoration to its lowest terms. The royal arms, instead of sprawling all over a plate, shrank modestly into a corner, and this example having been once set, met with general and immediate adoption.

During the heraldic period many costly sets were turned out at Worcester. John Company had a fine set made for Madras. This consisted of dress and undress services,

and cost four thousand one hundred and ninety pounds four shillings, of which one thousand seven hundred and forty-two pounds was charged for painting the coats of arms. A handsome service was also made for the Prince Regent, in 1816, at a cost of two thousand five hundred and thirty-nine pounds one shilling. The soup tureens cost twenty-four pounds apiece, and the soup plates three guineas and a half. This costly dinner set was reinforced by a breakfast service, at five hundred and sixty-six pounds twelve shillings, and a dessert service at eight hundred and thirty-seven pounds six shillings. During the early part of the century, the Worcester works were frequently visited by royal and noble personages, but perhaps the most cherished memory is that of a visit from Lord Nelson, in 1802. The arrival of Nelson produced immense excitement at Worcester. The men at the works were in a tremendous state of ebullition when at last (said an old workman) "a very battered-looking gentleman" made his appearance, with Lady Hamilton leaning on his left and only arm—while among the general company following after, came "a very infirm old gentleman," Sir William Hamilton. The hero was greatly delighted at what he saw, and declared that, though he already had the finest china Dresden and Naples could produce, he had seen none equal to Worcester, and left an order for a complete breakfast, dinner, and dessert service, and also for "one elegant vase, richly decorated with a miniature of his lordship, supported by a figure of Fame," and "one ditto, with a likeness of Lady Hamilton." Of this order, only the breakfast service was completed—Trafalgar intervening to prevent the completion of the whole. This famous service is now scattered among collectors—the teapot, rich in decoration but hideous in shape, was sold the other day. It was long supposed to have been presented to Nelson by the ladies of England, but there is no foundation for this belief.

The great advance in the value of Wedgwood ware is little to be wondered at. In his lifetime, the Empress Catherine the Second paid three thousand pounds for a service of his ware for the "Grenouillère" palace, near St. Petersburg. This service was decorated with one thousand two hundred views—many of them sketched for the purpose—of the different country-houses and gardens in England,

and a green frog was painted on each piece. At Mr. Brett's sale, in 1864, some plaques—white on a blue ground—fetched from twenty-six pounds to forty-four pounds apiece; the busts in old black ware were also realised good prices. Patriotism and Beauty ranked high: Cornelius de Witt sold for seventeen pounds seventeen shillings; Venus, for fifteen pounds fifteen shillings; Seneca, fifteen pounds; Bacon, ten pounds ten shillings; Cato, nine pounds ten shillings—philosophy and suicide at the bottom of the scale. Old Chelsea figures and vases fetch prices very much higher than Wedgwood; but the rarity and beauty of that famous soft paste justify, to a great extent, the furor for it among collectors. At the great sale of last year, an old Chelsea vase, with pierced neck and cover, crimson, white, and gold, and painted on each side with a group of Chinese figures, in a garden, in colours, on a gold ground, sold for four hundred pounds; while a pair of oviform vases, with crimson feet and necks and scroll handles, painted with flowers, brought six hundred and ninety pounds. A single fruit-dish brought ninety-six pounds at the sale of the Bohn collection, a few weeks since.

Old Plymouth and old Bristol are at the present moment very valuable; but their historical value may be summed up in a few words—they represent the first introduction of hard-paste manufacture into England, by Cookworthy, at Plymouth; and by Champion, under Cookworthy's patent, at Bristol. Plymouth china is now very scarce; and it is to this scarcity, rather than to any especial beauty, that its market price must be attributed. A large proportion of it is in blue and white, after the Oriental style. The blue is of a blackish tinge—altogether unlovely; but yet a Plymouth teapot will fetch an astounding price.

When first I took kindly to the study of old china, I found considerable difficulty in squaring my unsophisticated ideas with those of connoisseurs. On one occasion I was shown a coarsely-modelled teacup, thick and clumsy—decorated with green festoons—and I was told to admire it. I demurred, and nearly suffered death at the hands of the amiable chinamania to whom I am indebted for catching the disorder, for hinting that I could buy prettier things than that from a street barrow. He muttered something about "hard paste," "Champion," "Old Bristol," "seldom met with," "did not last long." I said, simply,

I thought it did not matter much, and that the collapse of the Bristol works about a century ago was a trouble that might be got over. Then he turned the cup over and said, "Look there." I looked, and there was a plain bluish slate-coloured +. I was silent, for I knew a lady who used a set of this precious ware for common everyday tea-drinking. So far as I know, it is in use to this day, if not broken. I mentioned this circumstance to a few china-maniacs the other day, and they raised a hideous howl at what they deemed little short of sacrilege.

Our old friend, Horace Walpole, lets us into the secret of the original cost of Bristol china. Writing to Lady Ossory on the 17th October, 1775, he says: "To my sorrow I did not know that last year's Act, to favour the Bristol manufacturers, laid a duty of one hundred and fifty per cent. on French china, and I paid at Dover seven guineas and a half for a common set of coffee things that had cost me but five." In his catalogue he mentions "a cup and saucer, white, with green festoons of flowers, Bristol porcelain, also a round picture of white flowers, in alto-rilievo, of the same," which fetched at the Strawberry-hill sale a solitary guinea. Contrast these prices with the following instance. In 1774, Edmund Burke was staying for a fortnight with the father of the late Mr. Smith, of Berkeley Crescent, Clifton, during the contested election for Bristol in which he was successful. To acknowledge, in a delicate manner, the kindness he had received, Burke ordered from Champion a very fine tea and coffee service of Bristol china, rich in gilding, elegant in design—and presented it to the wife of his host and supporter. Some few of the pieces of this historic tea-service are without any mark, but nearly all have the usual Bristol mark of the + in slaty blue. The initials of Mrs. Smith (S.S.) are inscribed upon every piece, and serve to identify it. The predominance of green in the decoration was in honour of Burke, whose electioneering colour it was. Miss Smith, sister of the late proprietor, courteously presented a cup and saucer to Mr. Joseph Marryat. At the sale of that eminent connoisseur's collection, in 1867, this lot fetched nine pounds five shillings. Sugar tureens of old Bristol have since been sold for as much as two hundred and thirty, and a pair of dishes for forty-seven, pounds.

At the great china sale last year, a pair

of Bristol figures, "Fire and Water," fetched a hundred and twenty-three pounds; a solitary figure, "Autumn," a hundred and eight; while a pair of white and gold Bristol figures of Sphinxes—supposed to be the portraits of Kitty Clive and Peg Woffington—went, a week or two ago, for twenty-two pounds. All this is bewildering enough to the uninitiated, but, as an eminent collector said to me the other day, "China is not a mere fancy, it requires study—a complete education."

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK III. CHAPTER IV. ALONE IN THE WORLD.

LIFE among the quiet household in the Poppelsdorfer Allee seemed, for the first few days after the return of the English girls, to go on in its usual uneventful round. The decisive step Anne Studley had determined upon taking, and which she had been brooding over during the journey from England, she felt herself compelled to defer, at least for some few days. The delight which the Frau Professorin did not attempt to disguise, at having her patient and skilled nurse once more in attendance upon her, and the obvious assistance which Anne was enabled to render the old lady in her weak and helpless condition, induced her to postpone for a time any declaration of the necessity which existed of her quitting Bonn, and finally and abruptly breaking the bonds which had bound her for so long to Grace Middleham. That was the step which Anne found herself impelled to take; nothing short of so sweeping a measure could possibly have the effect of restoring to her any vestige of that peace of mind which she had partially recovered during her first sojourn at Bonn, but which had now once again entirely deserted her. Since the scene at Brussels, when she had declared to her friend the deceit she had practised upon her, Grace's manner towards her had wholly changed. Her rage had probably spent itself during that stormy discussion, for there were no further signs of its existence; she was no longer insolent or sarcastic, asked no more questions, and made no further reference to the conversation which had taken place, or the occurrences which had led to it, but she persistently avoided

being brought into communication of any kind with Anne, and more especially took care that she should never be left alone with her. All the sweet confidence, the pleasant colloquy, the talk which needed to be only half spoken—so completely did they divine each others thoughts—were at an end; and Anne felt that, instead of being, as she had been, Grace's other half, she was now merely a pensioner upon the bounty of one between whom and herself there had fallen the cold shadow of misunderstanding, and whose love for her had entirely passed away. In the trials and miseries which she had undergone, Anne had been sufficiently humbled, but her natural spirit of independence still remained, and she felt the impossibility of continuing in such a position. Moreover, she had an infinite longing—such a longing as is only known to those who have drunk deeply of the cup of worldly misconception and ingratitude, for the rest and peace which are only to be found, if not in solitude, at least in a complete severance from those with whom the recent years have been passed, and a complete oblivion of them, their words and deeds. Her fate was upon her she felt, and she must yield to it; she would take an opportunity of having one more explanation from Grace, and then leaving her for ever.

As to Grace herself, her condition was almost equally pitiable. Her anxiety to avoid any meeting with Anne prevented her from frequently visiting her aunt's chamber, in which Anne's days were almost wholly passed, and the professor being, save at the time of the mid-day meal, occupied from morning till evening at the university, Grace had an abundance of time at her disposal for solitary reflection. The result of this, though not favourable to Anne—for Grace could never forgive the deceit that had been practised upon her in bringing her away from London under a false pretext—was, on the whole, beneficial. When her natural good sense, undisturbed by surrounding influences, came into play, the young heiress began to doubt whether the passion which she imagined herself to entertain for George Heath had any real foundation, or whether it was merely a passing fancy, evoked principally by the difference between him who paid her assiduous and deferential court, and her other admirers, who seemed to think that she should consider herself honoured by their offers, and encouraged

by the dexterous and never-failing laudation of Mrs. Crutchley. Her first feeling of liking for Mr. Heath had, probably, she thought, originated in gratitude for the manner in which, according to the testimony of all, he had managed her property; but he had been duly paid for that, and had his reward in the position which he then held. He had been very kind to her, it is true, on her first arrival in London, and it was owing to him that she had been emancipated from the dulness to which the ignorant insouciance of her trustees would have consigned her, and obtained an insight into the inner life of that society in which she so much delighted, and where she had played so distinguished a part; but, after all, she really knew very little of Mr. Heath—much less than of many of those whom she was in the habit of meeting daily, and who professed themselves devoted to her service. And while Grace Middleham was in this train of thought, the uncomfortable reflection came to her that it was by no means impossible she had been made a tool of; that collusion might have existed between Mrs. Crutchley and Mr. Heath for the purpose of advancing their mutual interests, and that there was just a chance that, by leaving London, she had been saved from an undesirable connection. Not that she felt—much less would allow—any gratitude to Anne for the part which she had played in these proceedings. She might have rescued her from the impending alliance with Heath, but the alleged magnanimity of the motive obtained little credit from Grace. The fact that Heath had once been engaged to her guardian friend could not but have its influence; and then there was the unexplained mystery about that odious Captain Studley, and all that had been done between the interval of her parting with Anne at Hampstead and meeting her again in Paris; and altogether Grace felt that though George Heath might be wrong—was wrong, doubtless, in writing that extraordinary letter—Anne Studley was wrong too. Grace did not know which was worse, to bear the pangs of wounded friendship, or of wounded love. Meanwhile her cogitations had one result; she addressed a letter to Mrs. Crutchley, informing that worthy lady that she should not return to London for some time, and that she should have no further occasion for Mrs. Crutchley's services; the house in Eaton-place must be given up at the end of the term, then close at hand,

until which time she could remain there if she chose. The letter contained no allusion of any kind to Mr. Heath; to mention his name would be, Grace felt, to compromise her dignity. The reference to her protracted absence from London would, probably, convey to Mrs. Crutchley all she required to know on that point, even if she had not already been made acquainted with what had passed.

There came a time when, Anne's preparations being all complete, and the burden of her life, with its constant attendance in the sick room, its want of sympathy and companionship, its knowledge of the feeling by which Grace was actuated, was greater than she could bear, she determined upon carrying out the step which she had recently had in contemplation. One morning, when she had left the Fran Professorin comfortably settled upon her sofa deep in the newly-arrived newspaper, she tapped softly at Grace's door, and being admitted, found the heiress in that contemplative nothing-doing state which had recently become characteristic of her. Grace's cheeks flushed for an instant as she saw her visitor; but she speedily recovered herself, and made some ordinary remark, having responded to which, Anne said:

"I have come to ask you to give me a few minutes of your time; I shall not detain you long; but what I have to say must be said at once."

"My time is not so valuable that you need apologise for occupying it," said Grace; "on the contrary, I ought rather to be thankful to you for helping me to get through any portion of the dreary day."

"The reaction after your life in London is doubtless sufficiently unpleasant," said Anne, "and I have noticed, with great regret, that your residence here seems to have grown distasteful to you. There is, however, no reason why it should continue; you are your own mistress, with the means and power to live where you like, and to do what you choose; and, so far as I am concerned, you will be rid henceforth of the clog which I may possibly have been upon your actions."

Grace looked up in wonder.

"I am not aware," she said, "of ever having given you any reason to form such a thought."

"You may not be aware of it, and yet it may perfectly well have existed," said Anne. "However, what brought me here was not to open up any discussion, but simply

to announce to you that, for a long time, I have been convinced of the impossibility of my continuing in the position which I have occupied since our return to this house."

"You are alluding, I suppose," said Grace, "to your attendance upon Madame Sturm? You must remember that you took her under your care wholly of your own free will, and without the expression of any wish on my part. If those duties are irksome to you, they can be discontinued at once."

"They are not irksome to me; and I should be only too glad to remain in the discharge of them," said Anne, "provided other circumstances were unaltered. As it is, however, that is quite impossible. My presence in this house originated in the fact of my being your chosen friend, shielded and sustained by you at a time when such protection and sustenance were absolutely essential to me. For what you did then I must be eternally grateful; but, as I said before, the circumstances under which those relations existed are entirely changed."

"Will you explain in what way they are changed?" asked Grace.

"That," said Anne, "is easily done. I am painfully conscious that the old feeling between us is gone, I suppose, for ever; and it is, therefore, impossible for me to remain here a mere recipient of your bounty, hanging on to the memory of something which was once, but is no more. What you did for me I accepted in the spirit in which it was done, and honestly felt no compunction; but I have my pride, too, and I should be unworthy of the feeling with which you once regarded me, if I were to continue an inmate of this house."

"Does it not occur to you," said Grace, in a more gentle tone, "that there is no reason why your pride should be wounded, even regarding it in the light in which you do? Do you not see that, in fulfilling your present position, and rendering invaluable service to Madame Sturm, you more than repay me for anything I may be able to do for you?"

"I should have been very content to have fulfilled that position under other circumstances, and had I not an unfortunately vivid recollection of what has gone before. As it is, I cannot do so; I must seek another home and a more active life."

Grace was silent for a moment; then she said, in a somewhat tremulous tone:

"You are sure that you have well con-

sidered this step—that you are certain you are doing right in taking it ?”

“I have been turning it over night and day for weeks,” replied Anne, “and thought of it in all its bearings, and I have satisfied myself that I shall be doing right.”

There was another pause. Then Grace said, “What do you propose to do ? where do you intend to go ?”

“I have convinced myself,” said Anne, “that any small or temporary change would be totally useless, and that to do what I wish, and gain the oblivion I hope for, it will be necessary for me to divert the whole current of my life. I have therefore been making inquiries with regard to emigration, and I have been lucky enough to find that Herr Schapwinkel, the farmer at Derendorf, is about to emigrate with his family to the Western States of America. They hope to start next week, and they are willing to take me with them.”

“You going to America !” cried Grace, “to emigrate with a German farmer’s family ! You, with your education and taste, to be the companion of such people ! In what capacity do you propose to go, in Heaven’s name ?”

“To do whatever I may be able to undertake ; to make myself generally useful,” said Anne, with a sad smile.

“Do you know the grasping, grinding nature of people of this class ?” cried Grace ; “do you know that they will take advantage of your being weak and unprotected, and, whatever they may say to the contrary, will take the first opportunity of reducing you to the level of a servant ?”

“I do not think so badly of them as that,” said Anne ; “and even if I did, I am not sure that it would prevent my acceptance of their offer. There is nothing like hard work and a rough life to root out old memories, and prepare the mind for the proper reception of new experiences.”

“But have you no defined position with them—no agreement of what you are to do ?”

“Oh yes,” said Anne ; “I am to teach the children English on the voyage out, and be general interpreter and household manager when we first settle down. They are rough people, as you say, but they are essentially kind and honest, and seem to have great confidence in me.”

“A feeling which you strangely reciprocate. It is too horrible, Anne, to think of your going away to such a place,

and with such people ; and though, of course, I have no right to interfere with your actions, or to make any objection to anything you may choose to do, I do not think it ought to be allowed. By-the-way,” said Grace, suddenly changing her tone, “where do these people sail from—from Liverpool ?”

“Oh no,” said Anne ; “they go out in one of the North German Lloyd’s steamers, from Bremen.”

“Then they have nothing to do with England ?” said Grace, apparently relieved.

“Yes,” said Anne ; “I believe they put into Southampton, but only for a few hours, and of course I should not think of going on shore.”

Although in her first startled surprise Grace Middleham had denounced Anne’s avowal of her intention to leave her friends and commence a new life, yet, when she reflected upon all that had passed, and upon the division confessedly existing between those who had been so devoted to each other, she could not help admitting to herself that the course which Anne proposed to take was for the best. Grace was surprised at Anne’s declaration, and yet it was not wholly unexpected ; it had come to her suddenly, and before its time, that was all. For weeks she had vainly contended with the painful sense of concealment and want of confidence which had come between them, and had had more than one idea of going away on a prolonged tour, accompanied by a maid, leaving Anne to preside over the household in the Poppelsdorfer Allee, and to take care of the invalid and the professor. She was not yet sure that she would not propose such a plan, which, besides providing for herself change of scene, would have the advantage of securing a kind and watchful nurse for Madame Sturm, whose helplessness increased daily, and would prevent the necessity for Anne’s going away. That there should be a temporary separation between them, Grace felt was needful ; during a spell of absence the asperities now existing would be forgotten, and the rough edges of recent discussions worn down, but there was no earthly reason why that separation, instead of being temporary, should be eternal ; or why Anne, in her desire to get away, should place herself wholly beyond any chance of recall. The Western States of America were, in Grace’s imagination—based upon a perusal of Cooper’s novels—entirely given up to buffaloes, trappers,

Indians, and leather-stocked scouts; and she fully believed that Anne, once settled there, in the midst of the German family in which she proposed to surround herself, might be looked upon as dead and buried; in short, that some solution of the difficulty was desirable, but some better means to the end than those suggested might be found.

These were Grace Middleham's better thoughts; but there were others which, not unfrequently, occupied her mind and exercised a certain amount of dominion over her. She could not make up her mind to forget or forgive the deception practised upon her, in bringing her away from London by false representations; and though, as has been said, she occasionally half-admitted to herself that her supposed passion for Heath had no real foundation, and was, in reality, tolerably reconciled to his loss, she still resented the fact of having been duped. Anne had deceived her in that matter, and Grace found it impossible to place further confidence in her. The thought that her quondam friend would not scruple at any further deception, had induced Grace to ask whether Anne would visit England before sailing for America; and though, at the time, she had been satisfied with the reply, yet, on thinking over the conversation again, and remembering Anne's avowal that the ship would touch at Southampton, Grace conceived the wild idea that Anne had made up her mind to take that opportunity of seeing or communicating with Heath. So possessed was she by this notion, that the bitter feeling of jealousy towards Anne, of which she had almost cured herself, was renewed in fullest force. Under the influence of it she almost brought herself to believe that the whole story of the intended emigration was deception; and that Anne had adopted this roundabout means of effecting her departure, to do away with any clue to her future hiding-place, or, at least, if she went to America with the Schapwinkels, she would be joined at Southampton by Heath, and they would go together.

This idea obtained such sway over her that, abnegating the self-command and the dignity usually so characteristic of her, Grace determined upon testing the truth of her belief. Accordingly, one morning, when she knew that Anne was in attendance on the invalid, she entered her aunt's sitting-room, where she found not merely Anne, but the professor, who was giving an account of a

musical party at which he had been a guest the previous evening, and whose utter inability to give any information as to the dresses of the ladies present was being querulously deplored by his wife. After the usual salutations, Grace took advantage of a pause in the conversation to ask Anne whether she had had any letters from England that morning. Anne, with some astonishment, replied in the negative. There was no one in England to write to her, and no news thence could possibly interest her.

"I am not so sure of that," said Grace, speaking deliberately. "If what I hear is true, my informant, who is likely to be correct in such matters, tells me that changes are about to be made in Middleham's Bank."

"I cannot imagine," said Anne, quietly, "that anyone could give you information on such a subject. From your position, you must necessarily be consulted on any proposed alteration, and nothing could be carried out without your consent."

"This," said Grace, "is merely a hint of what will later on be brought before me officially, I imagine; at present I am supposed to know nothing about it."

"I hope things are not going wrong, my dear," said Madame Sturm; "you are not likely to lose any of your money, are you?"

"Oh no, aunt, I trust not," replied Grace; "the hint which I have received is that Mr. Heath, the manager of the bank, and to whom its great prosperity is supposed to be due, and who is, I should say, a great friend of—of Mrs. Waller's here—is about to give up his long-held position, and retire into the country, there to lead a rural and domestic life."

"Mr. Heath could not possibly have any interest for me," said Anne, coldly.

"Not even if he were to emigrate to America, as has been suggested?" asked Grace suddenly.

"Not even if he were to emigrate to America," repeated Anne, in measured tones, but with flaming cheeks, for the shaft had gone home, and she knew the motive by which it had been sped.

"This Mr. Heath must have made money, I suppose?" asked Madame Sturm, fortunately coming to the rescue.

"I—I do not know. I suppose he has," said Grace, half dazed, and not knowing whether to take Anne's flush as a sign of innocence or guilt.

"Lor' bless you, yes, my dear, of course he has," said Madame Sturm; "while he

has been collecting a fortune for you, he has naturally put by a little for himself; and why a man, who has anything decent to live upon in England, can want to go muddling away and emigrating to America I cannot understand."

"I think, dear Madame Sturm," said Anne, rising, quietly crossing the room, and seating herself by the invalid's bedside, "that I will take this opportunity of saying what must have come sooner or later, and what indeed I had made up my mind to mention to you within the next day or two. On Monday next I am going to say farewell to you—I am going away."

"Going away, Waller!" cried Madame Sturm; "why, bless my soul, you have only just come back. Where on earth are you going to?"

"To the place about which you have just been speaking—to America!"

"To America?" cried the Frau Professorin, "that is a long way off—you could scarcely go further."

"Or fare worse, according to your notion," said Anne, with a smile.

"I do not mean that in all instances," said Madame Sturm. "If you have any money, as this banking man no doubt has—having taken care to feather his nest well while he was about it—then you had better stop in England; but I should think, from all I have read, that America is perhaps the best place for a young woman who is poor, and who wants a husband—not that I mean by that that you do, my dear Waller. I dare say, though you have never opened your mind about it, that you had quite enough worry with your first; but, I understand, America is a good place to make your fortune in, and the men there who take wives look to the woman, and not to the dowry which she can bring."

"I have given but little consideration to that part of the subject," said Anne, "but I feel that I need a more active life, and am likely to find it there."

"Well, I only know I shall be heartily sorry to lose you, Waller," said the Frau Professorin; "you have been a real treasure to me, and how I shall get on without you, I do not know. But what does Grace say to your going—oh, I did not know she had left the room. Professor, do you hear Waller leaves us next Monday; she is going to emigrate to America. What do you think of America, professor?"

The professor's opinion of America was not a very high one. He declared it to be a country which imported its literature, and looking at it from that standpoint, he regarded it with great contempt. But he, like his wife, was much grieved at the threatened loss of "Vallere," as he called her, and did not shrink from openly expressing his regret.

Monday was the day fixed for Anne's departure, and Grace was growing uncomfortable as to the leave-taking which would have to be gone through. Her bitter indignation against her former friend still retained its newly-acquired hold over her, but she could not contemplate the idea of parting for ever from one with whom she had been so closely allied, without a considerable amount of heart-sinking and wretchedness. As the day approached, all the memories of their former affection, the love of their childish days, the confidences of their maturer years, came thronging upon Grace in such profusion that her heart was melted; and one night, in the solitude of her chamber, she determined to go to Anne and implore that the old alliance between them might be renewed. Very early the next morning, before the household was astir, she rose, and wrapping her dressing-gown round her, opened her door with the intention of proceeding to her friend's room; some thing which had been placed upon the door-handle fell from it at her touch. It was a note. Picking it up, Grace saw it to be in Anne's handwriting, and read the following lines:—

"When you receive this, I shall be some distance on my road. I have felt so unequal to bidding you a personal farewell, that I have resorted to this means of saying 'good-bye' to you for ever. I have never had any wish to deceive you, and therefore I do not pretend that the story I told you in answer to your inquiry is the true one; but it is the most conclusive explanation for Madame Sturm. To you I offer none. You will never hear of me again, but I shall have the satisfaction of carrying with me the assurance that I have proved to the utmost the gratitude I feel for you—my only friend in the past, the sole memory of good and peace which remains of one who must henceforth be alone in the world.—A."

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER IX.

RHODA stood with her hand on the parlour-door for a minute or so. Little Sarah, the servant-maid, who had admitted her into the house, and had left the parlour in order to do so—for all the Maxfield household was held bound to join in these weekly prayer-meetings—told her that the hymn would be over directly. Rhoda felt shy of entering into the midst of the people assembled, and of encountering the questions and expressions of surprise, which her unprecedented absence from the evening's devotions would certainly occasion.

Presently the singing ceased. Rhoda ran as quickly and noiselessly as she could along the passage, and half-way up the stairs. From her post there she heard the neighbours go away, and the street door close heavily behind them. Now she might venture to slip down. Everyone was gone. The house was quite still. She ran into the parlour, and found herself face to face with David Powell.

Her Aunt Betty was piling the hymn-books in their place on the little table where they stood. There was no one else in the room.

"Where's father?" asked Rhoda, hastily. Then she recollected herself, and bade Mr. Powell "good evening." He returned her salutation with his usual gentleness, but with more than his usual gravity.

"Oh!" exclaimed Betty Grimshaw, looking round from the books. "It's you,

is it, Rhoda? Your father is gone with Mr. Gladwish to his house for a bit. They have some business together. He'll be back by supper."

It very seldom happened that Maxfield left his house after dark. Still such a thing had occurred once or twice. Mr. Gladwish, the shoemaker, was a steward of the Methodist society, and Maxfield not unfrequently had occasion to confer with him. Their business this evening was not so pressing but that it might have been deferred. But Maxfield did not choose to give Powell an opportunity of private conversation with himself at that time; he wanted to see his way clearer, before he took the decided step of openly putting himself into opposition with the practice of his brethren, and the advice of the preacher; and he knew Powell well enough to be sure that evasions would not avail with him. Therefore he had gone out, as soon as the prayers were at an end.

"I must see to the supper," said Betty, and bustled off without another word. Nothing would have kept her in Mr. Powell's society but the masterful influence of her brother-in-law. She escaped to her haven of refuge, the kitchen, where the moral atmosphere was not too rarefied for the comfortable breathing of ordinary folks.

David Powell and Rhoda were left alone together. Rhoda made a little half-timid, half-impatient movement of her shoulders. She wished Powell gone, more heartily than she had ever done before in the course of her acquaintance with him.

Powell stood, with his hands clasped and his eyes cast down, in deep meditation.

At length Rhoda took courage to murmur a word or two, about going to take her cloak off. Aunt Betty would be back

presently. If Mr. Powell didn't mind for a minute or two— She was gliding towards the door, when his voice stopped her.

"Tarry a little, Rhoda," said the preacher, looking up at her with his lustrous, earnest eyes. "I have something on my soul to say to you."

Rhoda's eyes fell before his, as they habitually did now. She felt as though he could read her heart; and she had something to hide in it. She did not seat herself, but stood, with one hand on the wooden mantelshelf, looking into the fire. In her other hand she held her straw bonnet by its violet ribbon, and her waving brown hair shone in the firelight.

"What is it, Mr. Powell?" she asked.

She spoke sharply, and her tone smote painfully on her hearer. He did not understand that the sharpness in it was born of fear.

"Rhoda," he began, "my spirit has been much exercised on your behalf."

He paused; but she did not speak, only bent her head a little lower, as she stood leaning in the same attitude.

"Rhoda, I fear your soul is unawakened. You are sweet and gentle, as a dove or a lamb is gentle; but you have not the root of the matter as a Christian hath it. The fabric is built on sand. Fair as it is, a breath may overthrow it. There is but one sure foundation whereon to lay our lives, and yours is not set upon it."

"I—I—try to be good," stammered Rhoda, in whom the consciousness of much truth in what Powell was saying, struggled with something like indignation at being thus reproved, with the sense of a painful shock from this jarring discord coming to close the harmonious impressions of her pleasant day, and with an inarticulate dread of what was yet in store for her. "I say my prayers, and—and I don't think I'm so very wicked, Mr. Powell. No one else thinks I am, but you."

"Oh, Rhoda! Oh my child!" His voice grew tender as sad music, and, as he went on speaking, all trace of diffidence and hesitation fell away, and only the sincere purpose of the man shone in him clear as sunlight. "My heart yearns with compassion over you. Are those the words of a believing and repentant sinner? You 'try!' You 'say your prayers!' You are 'not so wicked!' Rhoda, behold, I have an urgent message for you, which you must hear!"

She started and looked round at him. He read her thought. "No earthly message,

Rhoda, and from no earthly being. Ah, child, the eager look dies out of your eyes! Rhoda, do you ever think how much God loveth us? How much he loveth you, poor perishing little bird, fluttering blindly in the outer darkness of the world!—that darkness which comprehended not the light from the beginning."

Rhoda's tears were now dropping fast. Her lip trembled as she repeated once more, "I try—I do try to be good," with an almost peevish emphasis.

"Nay, Rhoda, I must speak. In His hand all instruments are alike good and serviceable. He has chosen me, even me, to call you to Him. However much you may despise the Messenger, the message is sure, and of unspeakable comfort."

"Oh, Mr. Powell, I don't despise you. Indeed I don't! I know you mean—I know you are good. But I don't think there's any such great harm in going to see a— a young lady who is too ill to go out. I'm sure she is a very good young lady. I'm sure I do try to be good."

That was the sum of Rhoda's eloquence. She held fast by those few words in a helpless way, which was at once piteous and irritating.

"Are you speaking in sincerity from the very bottom of your heart?" asked Powell, with the invincible, patient gentleness which is born of a strong will. "No, Rhoda; you know you are not. There is harm in following our own inclinations, rather than the voice of the spirit within us. There is harm in clinging to works—to anything we can do. There is harm in neglecting the service of our Master to pleasure any human being."

"I did forget that it was prayer-meeting night," admitted Rhoda, more humbly than before. Her natural sweetness of temper was regaining the ascendant, in proportion as her dread of what might be the subject of Powell's reproving admonition decreased. She could bear to be told that it was wrong to visit Minnie Bodkin. She should not like to be told so, and she should refuse to believe it, but she could bear it; and she began to believe that this visit was held to be the head and front of her offending. Powell's next words undeceived her, and startled her back into a paroxysm of mistrust and agitation.

"But it is not of your absence from prayer to-night that I would speak now. You are entangling yourself in a snare. You are laying up stores of sorrow for

yourself and others. You are listening to the sweet voice of temptation, and giving your conscience into the hand of the ungodly to ruin and deface!" He made a little gesture towards the room overhead with his hand, as he said that Rhoda was giving her conscience into the hands of the ungodly.

"I don't know what you mean, Mr. Powell. And I—I don't think it's charitable to speak so of a person—of persons that you know nothing of."

She was entirely taken off her guard. Her head felt as if it were whirling round, and the words she uttered seemed to come out of her mouth without her will. Between fear and anger she trembled like a leaf in the wind. She would have fled out of the room, but her strength failed her. Her heart was beating so fast that she could scarcely breathe. Her distress pained Powell to the heart; pained him so much, as to dismay him with a vivid glimpse of the temptation that continually lay in wait for him, to spare her, and soothe her, and cease from his painful probing of her conscience. "Oh, there is a bone of the old man in me yet!" he thought, remorsefully. "Lord, Lord, strengthen me, or I fall!"

"How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom? And how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?"

The remembrance of the lot he had drawn came into his mind, as an answer to his mental prayer. It was natural that the words should recur to him vividly at that moment, but he accepted their recurrence as an undoubted inspiration from Heaven. The belief in such direct and immediate communications was a vital part of his faith; and to have destroyed it would, in great part, have paralysed the impetuous energy, and quenched the burning enthusiasm, which carried away his hearers, and communicated something of his own exaltation to the most torpid spirits.

He murmured a few words of fervent thanksgiving for the clear leading which had been vouchsafed to him, and without an instant's hesitation addressed the tearful, trembling girl beside him. "Listen to me, Rhoda. If it be good for your soul's sake that I lay bare my heart before you, and suffer sore in the doing of it, shall I shrink? God forbid! By his help I will plentifully declare the thing as it is. I have watched you, and your feelings have not been hid from me. No; nor

your fears, and sorrows, and hopes, and struggles. I have read them all, so plainly, that I must believe the Lord has given me a special insight in your case, that I may call you unto him with power. You are suffering, Rhoda, and sorry; but you have not thrown your burden upon the Lord. You have set up His creature as an idol in your soul, and have bowed down and worshipped it. And you fancy, poor unwary lamb, that such love as yours was never before felt by mortal, and that never did mortal so entirely deserve it! And you say in your heart, 'Lo, this man talks of what he knows not! It is easy for him!' Well—I tell you, Rhoda, that I too have a heart for human love. I have eyes to see what is fair and lovely; and fancies, and desires, and passions. I love—there is a maiden whom I love above all God's creatures. But, by His grace, I have overcome that love, in so far as it perilled the higher love and the higher duty, which I owe to my Father in Heaven. I have wrestled sore, God knoweth. And He hath helped me, as He always will help those who rely, not on their own strength, but on His!"

Rhoda was hurried out of herself, carried away by the rush of his eloquence, in whose powerful spell the mere words bore but a small part. Eyes, voice, and gesture expressed the most absolute, self-forgetting enthusiasm. The contagion of his burning sincerity drew a sincere utterance from his hearer.

"But you talk as if it were a crime! Does anyone call you wicked and godless, because you have human feelings? I never should call you so. And, I believe, we were meant to love."

"To love? Ah, yes, Rhoda! To love for evermore, and in a measure we can but faintly conceive here below. The young maiden I love is still dearer to me than any other human being—it may be that even the angels in Heaven know what it is to love one blessed spirit above the rest—but her soul is more precious to me than her beauty, or her sweet ways, or her happiness on earth. Oh, Rhoda, look upward! Yet a little while, and the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest, and there cometh peace unspeakable. This earthly love is but a fleeting show. Can you say that you connect it with your hope of Heaven and your faith in God? Does he whom you love reverence the things you have been taught to hold sacred? Is he awakened to a sense of

sin? No! no! A thousand times, no! Rhoda, for his sake—for the sake of that darkened soul, if not for your own—yield not to the temptation which makes you untrue in word and deed, and chills your worship, and weighs down the wings of your spirit! Tell this beloved one that, although he were the very life-blood of your heart, yet, if he seek not salvation, you will cast him from you.”

Rhoda had sunk down, half-crouching, half-kneeling, with her arms upon a chair, and her face bowed down upon her hands. She was crying bitterly, but silently; but, at the preacher's last words, she moved her shoulders, like one in pain, and uttered a little inarticulate sound.

Powell bent forward, listening eagerly. “I speak not as one without understanding,” he said, after an instant's pause. “I plentifully declare the thing as it is, and as I know it. Your love—! Rhoda, your little twinkling flame, compared to the passionate nature in me, is as the faint light of a taper to a raging fire—as a trickling water-brook to the deep, dreadful sea! Child, child, you know not the power of the Lord. His voice has said to my unquiet soul, ‘Be still,’ and it obeys Him. Shall He not speak peace to your purer, clearer spirit also? Shall He not carry you, as a lamb, in His bosom? Now—it may be even now, as I speak to you, that His angels are about you, moving your heart towards Him. Rhoda, Rhoda, will you grieve those messengers of mercy? Will you turn away from that unspeakable love?”

The girl suddenly lifted her face. It was a tear-stained, wistfully imploring face, and yet it wore a singular expression of timid obstinacy. She was struggling to ward off the impression his words were making on her. She was unwilling, and afraid to yield to it.

But when she looked up and saw his countenance so pale, so earnest, without one trace of anger, or impatience, or any feeling save profoundest pity, and sweetness, and sorrow, her heart melted. The right chord was touched. She could not be moved by compassion for herself, but she was penetrated by sorrow for him.

In an impulse of pitying sympathy she exclaimed, “Oh, don't be so sorry for me, Mr. Powell! I will try! I will do what you say, if—”

The door opened, and her father stood in the room. Rhoda sprang from her

knees, rushed past him, and out at the open door.

“Man, man, what have you done?” cried Powell, wringing his hands. Then he sat down and hid his face.

Jonathan Maxfield stood looking at him with a heavy frown. “We must have no more o' this,” he said harshly.

SOUTH WALES COLLIERIES.

It is barely two years since South Wales monopolised a large share of the newspapers, on account of a gigantic strike that took place amongst the ironworkers and colliers of the coal-basin; and it is now the theatre of a still more calamitous dispute, the result being that two hundred thousand people are, directly or indirectly, prevented earning their daily bread. Though public attention was then, as now, keenly directed to that part of the kingdom, and many interesting reports have been furnished by the various special correspondents, it is still comparatively little known, except to those engaged in working its treasures; and there is so much in it that is quaint and characteristic to the lover of nationality, that I have determined to jot down some of my reminiscences during a many years' residence there.

As a rule, the British tourist has overlooked that part of the country with curious persistence, seeing that it contains some scenery of a high order. For a coal-basin, it has been wonderfully little spoilt by mining accessories; and even in places which are essentially of that character, there is a natural wildness which is most enjoyable, and quite lifts South Wales out of comparison with the Black Country, or canny Newcastle.

A few words on its physical features may not be amiss, before I proceed to speak of the people. It is really more like a basin than any other British coalfield, except the Forest of Dean. But even South Wales is not round, like the section of an apple, but rather resembles the shape of a bishop's-thumb pear, the broad or eastern end of which occupies a portion of the shires of Monmouth and Brecon; the middle including nearly the whole of Glamorganshire, and the stalk or narrow end being represented by parts of Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire. The outside of the pear consists of a belt of carboniferous or mountain limestone,

which forms a complete barrier of rugged cliffs between the basin and the fertile valleys of Breconshire. To the south, however, this barrier has a good deal dwindled away, and in some places is overlaid by more recent geological rocks; while in others, as at Swansea Bay, it has been altogether demolished by the sea. The district thus enclosed is about sixty miles in its long axis (from east to west), by twenty miles in its broad one; and by reason of the great height at which most of the population lives, and especially at the large ironworks on the north border, it goes by the generic name of the "Hills." Until within the last few years, during which railways have crept down from the heights and linked themselves with the great inland trunk systems, to live upon "the hills" meant, in the eyes of the outside world, a species of banishment worse than that of the backwoods. Physically speaking, the limestone barriers divide the coal-basin from a country which is utterly unlike it—different in aspect, climate, soil, produce, inhabitants, and social manners. In the valleys we have an agricultural population; charming scenery; pleasant society; handsome residences; and pretty towns—in fact, all the bright side of English country life; but, once the limestone wall is passed, we have, instead, wild mountain moorland; grimy, rough people; severe climate; soil producing little but coal; and society at the lowest ebb. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the dweller in the valleys only troubles the hills with his presence under pressure of important business, and regards his iron neighbours with a certain curiosity, as men of another type.

The chief scenic characteristic is a broad expanse of heather and bog, with little to relieve the outline but an occasional cairn of grey stones, raised to commemorate some Celtic warrior who fell in pre-historic fight. But for all its monotony, there is much to charm the lover of moorland—the peat-stained streamlets wimpling with the faintest of murmurs; the rich green patches of whin and bog-berry plants; the springiness and elasticity of the heather hummocks; and the glorious breeze that blows straight up from the Bristol Channel. It is in this plateau, formed geologically of millstone grit, that the rivers of the coal-basin collect their forces, and make their way to the sea through the most charming of glens or "cwms," all of which have a strong family

likeness—so much so indeed, that I have known ludicrous mistakes to happen, of strangers finding themselves in one valley, while their host's dinner was waiting for them in another, separated by a range of hills some eighteen hundred feet high. So steeply do the mountain sides slope, that there is usually room for nothing but the road and the river, the latter often concealed from view by the overarching boughs of the woods. Indeed, to this day there are spots, within easy walk of populous ironwork towns, which still deserve Archdeacon Coxe's description in the last century of "wild solitudes, trodden only by adventurers in search of game." Occasionally we see the chimney of a colliery amongst the trees, but the "cwm" is so well wooded, that it is but a small eyesore. One reason of this is, that the coalseams run in strata along the hill-sides, and can therefore be reached by driving a horizontal gallery, technically called a "level." There is, therefore, no occasion for all the paraphernalia of shafts and pumping-engines, such as are required for the deeper veins of steam coal lower down the valley; for as the coal-beds slope at a certain inclination (called the dip) from the north of the basin towards the south, it follows that the deepest seams are to be found in the middle. Where they first appear on the north crop, the coals are so close to the surface that they can be dug out as from an open quarry, and this mode of extraction is called "patch-work;" but the inclination of the beds speedily carries them out of the reach of the "patch-man," and necessitates, first of all, levels, and then regularly organised collieries.

With most of the coal seams, and particularly on the north crop, are associated veins of ironstone; and this is the reason why we find all the large ironworks, such as Merthyr, Nantyglo, Tredegar, and Ebbw-vale, occupying situations at the heads of the valleys. Coal is worked more cheaply here, from its being so near the surface; the iron ore is, or was, ready to hand from the same source, while the limestone, used as a flux for smelting the ore, is quarried only a few miles off in the barrier of rocks of which I have just spoken. The juxtaposition of these essentials for iron-making is the reason why a district which, one hundred years ago, was barren moorland, without a sign of human life, is now covered with large towns, and plays so important a part in the commercial history

of England. But for years and years these great works were, notwithstanding their growing wealth, as isolated from the rest of the country as though they were in Canada. It is not fifty years ago since iron was carried from Merthyr to Cardiff on the backs of mules, and the opening of the Taff Vale Canal was looked upon as the achievement of the age. Then came tramroads, laid through the valleys to the shipping ports, the load, fortunately for the mules, being down hill. I remember, too, when I first went to reside (for my sins) on the "Hills," that a population of some twenty thousand was dependent for their connection with the outer world upon one coach, and one miserable tram-car, which held about a dozen people. Every second mile or so this vehicle got off the line, and the passengers had to jump out and put their shoulders to the wheel to hoist it on again. The seclusion of so large a population from the rest of manufacturing England had the result of creating a feeling of clanship throughout the "Hills." Workmen seldom went away from the district, and foreign labour seldom came into it. Moreover, the ironmasters, some of whom were the original founders of the works, lived, for the most part, among their people at the "Big House," and maintained a rough, though not unkindly, sway over the population to which they gave employment. But within the last twenty years a great change has taken place. The old tramways have been superseded by railways, which, originally intended for local traffic, have gradually become linked to the Great Western and London and North-Western systems, so that now there is not a valley in the coal-basin which has not its regular telegraphic and railway communication with London, Liverpool, and Manchester.

In consequence of these facilities, the proprietors began to give up residing among their people; while, as time went on, the works themselves fell victims, more or less, to the limited liability mania, and are now chiefly in the hands of shareholders who never see them, or take the least interest in them, except as a medium for dividends. The feeling of the workpeople towards the "Big House" and the "master" has now pretty well died away; and this has been much assisted by the readiness with which the colliers and ironworkers can now migrate to other parts of England, their places being filled by new comers, who have

neither the nationality or the *amor patrie* to bind them to their employers. Indeed, in the lapse of time, many of the reasons for establishing the works where they are have lapsed also. The iron ore, which was so cheaply and easily worked in former days, has been either extracted altogether, or has become expensive to obtain. Foreign ore is, therefore, largely imported to South Wales—brown ore from Somersetshire, oolitic from Northamptonshire, hematite from Lancashire, specular ore from Elba, Spanish ore from Bilbao and Santander—causing an enormous interchange of traffic, though taking away from the district a considerable item in self-dependence.

The old ironmasters of South Wales were very peculiar men, and deserve a retrospect; for it was to their unbending resolution and stern determination, that the South Wales iron trade owes its existence. Many have gone into the trade since their time, and lost their money over and over again; but these sturdy old iron kings kept their way through good and evil report, and took good and bad times with a dogged equanimity. As a rule, they rose from small beginnings, and were emphatically self-made men. Everybody knows the story of Crawshay, of Cyfartha, and how, as a lad, he rode from Yorkshire to London on his pony; for this is one of the staple stories of encouragement to young beginners. But others, besides Crawshay, did very much the same thing, except that they did not leave quite so much money behind at their deaths; and, though most of them ended their days in grand houses, perhaps as baronets or senators, there were very few who could, by any stretch of imagination, be called gentlemen, or even decently-educated men. Their manners were rough, their speech rougher; and, what with frequently enforcing their orders with a volley of strong language, and sometimes even with a blow, it is hard to say which was the most uncivilised, the master or the man. But, with all this there was often much kind personal feeling, which, when it was shown, lighted upon the recipient with such good result, that it was a pity that this leverage was not more constantly in operation. Even as it was, the influences of unionism fell harmless on the district for years. The Welshman could not see its advantages, and did not believe in it; and, if this feeling had been properly understood and carefully cultivated, the ruinous strike of

1873, and the still more lamentable look-out of 1875, would, in all probability, never have been heard of.

On the other hand, I am bound to say that the masters, despite a certain amount of rough good nature, were sadly oblivious of the responsibilities imposed upon them, by bringing together such large masses of people. As a rule, they did little towards making them cleanly, healthy, or moral. As far as health was concerned, the pure air of the hills is such that the general mortality was very small as compared with manufacturing towns; and to each work a medical man (paid by the "stoppages" of the people) was allotted. But, beyond this, the sanitary conditions of the iron-works were, and still are, at zero; and most of the towns of the district show a defiance of cleanliness and decency which is a scandal to the Principality. It is true that individual, and sometimes public, endeavours have been made of late years to improve matters; but there are arrears of neglect of physical and social duties which have to be scored down to the account of these old ironmasters, who got so much of the country and gave so little back.

Educational and religious matters fared better than the sanitary ones, for the Welsh are an eminently religious people, or, I should more correctly say, a service-going people; and although the Church of England has striven manfully to grapple with the spiritual destitution, it could do but little compared to the good that was done by the Dissenters. This was but natural, and arose partly from the geographical position of most of the works. In the old days, when the boundaries of our parishes were laid down, enormous areas of desolate mountain land were parcelled off to the nearest church, which was perhaps eight or ten miles distant; for nobody could guess, that tens and hundreds of thousands would ultimately settle down in these lofty regions. But so it was; and when the population did come, the parish church was the last place that the inhabitants ever thought of visiting, even if they knew of such an institution. The churches themselves were evidently not the centres of much ecclesiastical activity, for there is an old document in the Llandaff Cathedral archives, purporting to be a petition from the parishioners of Bedwelly (the parish church of Tredegar Ironworks, and some thirty thousand people), that they might be allowed the

boon of a sermon once a month! It was natural, therefore, that the Dissenters should obtain the mastery of such a district. At all events, if churches are somewhat scanty in the district, there are chapels without end, and in every iron-work town or colliery village we find that Pisgah, Bethel, Calvary, Zion, or Moriah are the fashionable temples. But while admiring the devotion that prompted the erection of these conventicles, of which some twenty or more may be counted in one place, it is sad to record that the greater number of them are in debt. A chapel is easily run up, for the architecture is not generally of a kind that requires much discussion; but the builder seldom gets his money, until after repeated pressure upon the congregation in the shape of tea-parties, lectures, concerts, and Bands of Hope. I believe, however, that the contributions of a congregation are generally large in proportion to their means, and the Welsh minister well knows how to use the lever of public opinion for procuring supplies—in this respect being more fortunate than the Church of England parsons. The service in the church is usually carried on with a certain simplicity, Ritualism having fortunately got but little hold in South Wales, and the clergy, as a rule, being totally unaccustomed to its intricacies. Indeed, a High Church curate of the present day would have stared with astonishment at my old vicar, who, worthy man, paid me an inaugural call, with a good deal of ceremony, and a long clay pipe sticking out of his pocket. Smoke was still proceeding from the bowl, by which I conjectured that he had at that moment knocked the ashes out in deference to conventionality. Certainly the Welsh clergy, who are usually of the Lampeter degree, have been the subjects of very funny stories, most of which, I fancy, have arisen from their want of familiarity with the English language, though their powers of expression in their native tongue are often very great. I was moved to much laughter on one occasion by a quaint little curate, who declared from the reading-desk that "I do publish the banns of marriage between Thomas Williams and William Jones." Finding, however, by the titterings around him that he had done something irregular, he mended the matter by proclaiming the union of William Jones and Thomas Williams, and it was only at the third attempt that he sorted the right couples. I remember, too,

a very comical announcement by the Rev. Jenkin Price, a queer old Welshman, who officiated at a private chapel built by one of the ironmasters. The occasion was a confirmation, and was made public in the following extraordinary terms: "I do give notice, that there will be a confirmashun in this church next Tuesday. No! Tuesday did I say? Well, I did mean Wednesday. The Bishop be coming, and her Leddship say, you may all come if you like!" Another eccentric old parson in Glamorganshire caused great consternation amongst his congregation by the action that he took about the singing. A psalm was given out, but nobody felt competent to start it, whereupon the vicar gazed irascibly around, and thus addressed a parishioner: "Mr. Churchwarden Matthews, why don't you begin directly, sir?" But Mr. Churchwarden Matthews, having no music in his soul, only looked sheepish, and made no sign. His Reverence forthwith pitched upon an unfortunate stranger, and adjured him thus: "You, sir, you look as if you had a singing face, you begin!" The oddities, however, were not always confined to the parson. I remember an ironmaster, as well known in South Wales as the Bank of England, who, probably with an idea of saving time, always kept his prayer-book cut up in sections, and held together with indiarubber bands, so that he might not spend precious moments in finding his place. The old gentleman was most intolerant of anything being said or done in the service which would lengthen it out by a single moment, and audibly expressed his impatience then and there. For instance, if the clergyman gave out, as was proper, "The fifth Sunday after Trinity—the Collect," a rejoinder would come from the big pew: "The fool! as if we didn't all know that—why can't he get on?"

The ironworkers and colliers, as a rule, prefer the chapels to the churches. In the former they get a more sensational service than in what they consider the cut-and-dried forms of the Church of England, which are a great deal too cold and impersonal for them. The singing in the chapels is hearty and refreshing, and nowhere is the peculiar talent of the Welsh better shown than in their religious music. The world has seen at the Crystal Palace what Welsh singers can do with native training; and this facility of music pervades the whole of the district to a remarkable extent. At Christmas

time, and on state occasions, a choir of thirty to forty will come to your house and sing, without music, for the hour together; not merely plain psalms or glees, but intricate fugues, in which the parts are taken up with wonderful precision. Although their intonation is very defective, there is never a hitch or a false note; while, generally speaking, the lights and shades are carefully attended to. Handel is a great favourite in South Wales; and in passing a row of cottages I have often heard the inmates and their friends hard at work on a chorus of the Messiah. At the Cymrygyddion, or Eisteddfod, the national meetings, at which the Welsh language, poetry, and music are supposed to be especially cultivated, one often sees an amusing rivalry between the various choirs of the district, who feel that the eyes of the world are upon them, and that it is their duty not only to win the prizes, but, what is more important, to keep up their reputation as musicians of the first water. Welsh conceit, which is proverbial, is here seen to the greatest advantage; but I do not know that it differs much from the conceit which is indigenous to all choirs, except that it is more openly expressed. Funerals, too, are occasions when we have some very characteristic singing. It is the custom in the ironworks for a large gathering, principally of women, to follow the corpse to its last home; and I know of few sights more impressive than the long train of five or six hundred people slowly winding up the mountain side, with the waves of the deep-toned hymn rising and falling with the wind. This funeral-going is more particularly considered the proper thing, when the death has resulted from accident in the works; or when, as I have more than once seen, three or four have fallen victims to an underground explosion, the sympathy of the whole district is aroused, and the neighbourhood turns out en masse.

It is singular that, though accidents of the gravest character daily happen, there is no hospital in the whole of the coalfield, except at the seaport towns; and each case, no matter how complicated, has to be attended at the patient's own home. At the works' surgery a vast amount of somewhat rough-and-ready doctoring is carried on; and I remember being infinitely amused, when staying at the doctor's house, to see a row of colliers, squatting on their haunches (the usual "at ease"

attitude of pitmen) waiting to be bled. They had always been accustomed to be bled at a certain time of the year, and although my friend laboured hard to show them the absurdity of the practice, it was all to no good. Bled they would be, and bled they were; and not all the talking of the doctor would convince them of the uselessness of this custom. Another squad was grimly waiting to have their teeth taken out, each man or boy marching up to the chair of torture with a sort of proud consciousness that the eyes of the world were upon him, and that he would be a hero, or despised, according to the measure of his endurance. It was almost as nervous work for the operator as for the patient, as the criticisms on his performance were given without the slightest regard to his feelings, and a quick, steady tooth-drawer gained infinite kudos, and stamped himself in the minds of the bystanders as a man of genius. Half the children in the place came for plaster, which was given without stint to all applicants, although, as the doctor pathetically observed, he knew that most of it went to mend the windows, or as a ready material for lighting fires. Some of the professional conversations were funny enough. "Well, Mrs. Morgan," said the doctor, "how is your boy this morning?" "Well, to be sure, sir, he be not a bit better whatever." "Did you put the mustard-plaster on his chest, as I ordered?" "Well, 'deed to goodness, doctor, I did not then, for the bachkin was afraid; but I did mix the mustard up with a lot of beef, and I did make him eat it, whatever."

A compulsory accident fund is established at most of the works for the benefit of those who are temporarily disabled—a most excellent provision, without which the wives and children would come badly off. The South Welsh workman is not one whit more provident than his fellows in other parts of the kingdom; no matter what are his wages, the chances are that, after being down with a broken leg for a fortnight, he comes upon the parish for aid. People were rather scandalised, during the late high prices for coal, at hearing that colliers drank champagne; but from my experience of the way in which many of them lived, I should say that such instances of extravagance were perfectly credible. I have myself gone into cottages at breakfast time, and found the family making a first-rate meal of coffee, ham and eggs,

and muffins; and I remember also being in a fishmonger's shop at Newport, when my eye lighted on a fine piece of salmon. Not being a collier or a furnaceman, I could not afford such dainties at three shillings a pound; but, before I left the shop, one of these millionaires came in with his son, had the fish weighed, paid his guinea, and carried it off in triumph for his supper! And yet if this Lucullus met with an accident the next week, the chances are that his wife would be clamouring at the door of the relieving-officer. In the days of which I am writing, the truck-shop had a good deal to do with this unhealthy state of things; and even now, although truck is illegal, I fear that the workman is not free from its influence. The company's shop had a great advantage over all others, as the men were paid through its agency, and very frequently paid in kind. Few colliers—or rather few colliers' wives—could stand the temptation of having indefinite supplies without the necessity of present payment; and they never reflected that, as their own money filtered to them through the shopkeeper, he possessed an absolute certainty of paying himself on his own terms. Many men have made large fortunes out of these shops, and are now colliery proprietors on their own account, justices of the peace, and what-not; but I have no hesitation in saying that the "company" shops, as a rule, were hotbeds of extortion and cheating. Here is a sample of the way in which it was done. Tobacco was, and perhaps still is, a frequent circulating medium, like the cowrie-shells of the savages. The workman bought a pound on tick at the shop at a high price; the pound, as I have been credibly informed, having first been divided into five quarters. He would then take the tobacco to the public-house, and exchange it (at a considerable loss) for bad beer. When the publican had accumulated a good stock, he would take it back to the shop, and resell it to the shopkeeper, of course making a second profit; while the workman lost on every point of the transaction. It would be an interesting problem to find out how much money was turned over by the pound of tobacco before it was eventually smoked. I remember being present at a police-court, at which one of the magistrates, who, although he had become a great man, was still interested in the company's shop, fined a petty huckster for short weight.

She paid the fine; but took her revenge by quietly remarking, "Deed to goodness, Mr. J., that last pound of bacon that I did buy of you was short, too!"

There is one point in which the South Welsh workmen contrast most favorably with those in other districts, or of other trades—and that is, in the immunity from serious crime. The petty sessions have plenty to do in the way of "drunk and disorderly," small larcenies, assaults, household quarrels, and cases of lovers who have loved "not wisely but too well," but of real premeditated crimes there are very few; and considering the extent and wildness of the district, and the comparatively small body of police that keep order, it speaks volumes for the native love of peace and order. In times of excitement, it is true that there have been serious riots, such as those of Merthyr Tydvil, about fifty years ago, and the Chartist riots of more recent date; but, as a rule, nearly all the Welsh excitement evaporates in talk, and it requires a good deal of continuous prompting to keep up Welsh revenge to high-anger mark. Indeed, the strike of 1873, and I believe also the present one, would have soon ended, if the men had been allowed to have their own way. But this is just what the agitators take care not to let them have; and to those who are unacquainted with the moral cowardice of the British workman in general, and of the South Welsh collier in particular, it would appear a perfect enigma how some half-dozen glib-tongued stump orators, strangers to the country, keep a hold for so many months over a hundred thousand operatives. The latter recognise the folly of it, and yet dare not protest either verbally or actively; and I remember, when paying a visit in 1873 to my old district, meeting a couple of colliers "at play," with Sunday coats on and disconsolate faces. "Well, John Williams," quoth I, "I suppose this is the old story, eh?" "Indeed yes, master," was the answer. "We are the same silly fools that we always were." No doubt many of the men by whose blind obstinacy the present unhappy state of things in South Wales has been brought about, are beginning to take John Williams's view of the case—and will, in all probability, have it put still more forcibly to them, when they have succeeded in ruining the trade of the district beyond recovery, as they seem to be in a fair way of doing.

CONCERNING THE NOSE.

A YOUNG gentleman of Nuremberg, who had wooed and won, and wanted to wed the fair daughter of a wealthy burgher, deemed it advisable to pop the question to papa by proxy, and found a mutual friend willing to act for him. Knowing the lover's circumstances, that shrewd individual said, ere he went on his mission, "I will give you twenty thousand dollars for your nose, if you will allow me to cut it off!" "Not for the world!" was the reply. As the go-between anticipated, the lady's father raised no objection to her suitor, but simply inquired as to his means. "Well," said the wily ambassador, "he has not any landed property, nor much ready-money at his command, but he possesses a jewel for which, to my knowledge, he has refused twenty thousand dollars." As unsuspecting as an M.P. ambitious of a profitable directorship, the old gentleman closed with the offer of the oily-tongued promoter of matrimony, and found himself saddled with a son-in-law whose nose was his only fortune.

Had the 'cute friend of the fond pair been in earnest, and made his strange bid in the open market, he would hardly have obtained the most insignificant of snubs for his money. No man or woman would willingly part with the most prominent of the features—the one that gives character to the rest, and makes or mars the beauty of the human countenance. Artists generally hold, with Sir Joshua Reynolds, that the Grecian is the only perfect nose, the straight-ridged form being more beautiful than the concave, convex, or any other irregular shape. The author of *Notes on Noses*, on the contrary, awards precedence to the aquiline, royal, or Roman nose, as being a sure indication of an energetic, resolute, ruling mind; and cites in proof the names of Julius Cæsar, Canute, Charles the Fifth, Edward the First, Robert Bruce, Wallace, Columbus, Pizarro, Drake, William the Third, Condé, Loyola, Elizabeth of England, Washington, and Wellington. He tells us that astuteness and craft, refinement of character, and love of art and literature, are the characteristics of Grecian-nosed folks; but we are not aware that Milton, Petrarch, Spenser, Boccaccio, Raffaele, Claude, Rubens, Titian, Murillo, Canova, Addison, Shelley, Erasmus, Voltaire, and Byron were remarkable for craftiness, however truly set down as lovers of literature and

art. Alexander the Great, Constantine, Wolsey, Richelieu, Ximenes, Lorenzo de' Medici, Raleigh, Philip Sidney, and Napoleon, owned hybrid noses, neither Roman nor Grecian, but something between the two. The wide-nostriled nose betokens strong powers of thought and a love for serious meditations; Bacon, Shakespeare, Luther, Wycliffe, Cromwell, Hogarth, Franklin, Johnson, and Galileo being a few of the famous "cogitative-nosed" ones. Vespasian, Correggio, and Adam Smith, odd as the conjunction seems, were men of the same mental type, possessing deep insight into character, and a faculty for turning that insight to profitable account, or their hawk-noses were false physiognomical beacons. Certainly it would be unsafe always to judge of a man by his nose. Suvaroff, for instance, scarcely comes in the category of weak-minded men, although he wore as veritable a snub as James the First, Richard Cromwell, and Kosciusko. Even if there be an art to find the mind's construction in the nose, there are so many mongrel organs about, that it must perforce be one of but limited application, and scarcely more helpful than the advice of the wise man, who, professing to furnish ladies with instructions as to choosing their husbands, says, "I would recommend a nose neither too long nor too short, neither too low nor too high, neither too thick nor too thin, with nostrils neither too wide nor too narrow."

If the beauty of a nose depends upon its shape, its power is regulated by its length, which ought never to be less than one-third of the profile, measured from the roots of the hair to the tip of the chin. Should it exceed that proportion, so much the better; for we are assured that whenever two persons, the one having a large nose and the other a small one, come into collision, the latter must yield, unless it is of the feminine gender and takes a celestial turn; then, perhaps, the little nose may conquer, by possessing impudence alone. Napoleon had a prejudice for long-nosed men, on the ground that their breathing was bold and free, and their brain, lungs, and heart, in consequence, cool and clear. But there are disadvantages attached to an over allowance of nose. Probably Wilson, the painter, did not feel grateful to Nature when street-boys saluted him as Nosey; and the Greek who could not hear his own sneeze, and the Roman who was asked to

place his nose opposite the sun, and open his mouth to expose his tremendous teeth, that he might serve passers-by for a sundial, would both have gladly, had it been possible, shorn the obtrusive organs of their unfair proportions. Such well-provided gentlemen as these would have been qualified for the membership of the Ugly Club, one of the rules of that society running, "If the quantity of any man's nose be eminently miscalculated, whether as to the length or breadth, he shall have a just pretence to be elected." Under a strict interpretation of that clause, to a man with no nose at all a seat among the uglies would have been as unattainable as the chair of the Doge of Venice. Perhaps it was a knowledge of this that impelled an eccentric gentleman to invite every noseless man he met in the street to dine at a Covent Garden tavern, upon a certain day. When the strange company assembled for the first time, they gazed at each other in silent wonder; until one of them, glancing at the well-spread table, observed that, though there was not a nose in the room, every one present had a mouth, which, under the circumstances, seemed to be the more useful of the two. Upon this the company proceeded to discuss the good cheer provided, subject to but one condition, that any gentleman putting his nose into his glass forfeited a quart of wine. Once every month did this odd society meet, at the expense of their benevolent entertainer; but it was not destined to exist long. Ere the No Nose Club had enjoyed a year of life, the founder died, and the club with him.

It was said of old, it is not given to every one to have a nose. If our eyes did not teach us the contrary, we should be justified in believing that Nature, after trying her prentice hand on man, discovered noses were inelegant superfluities, and so, when making the lasses, gave them none at all. Although

Noses are always touched when lips are kissing,
And who would care to kiss where nose was missing ?

Cupid has ever ignored the existence of a feminine nose. A smooth brow, a rosy cheek, a coral lip, a swan-like neck, a bright eye, a white hand, a taper waist, a neat foot, a dainty ankle; each has sufficed alone to ensnare the heart of man; but where is he who will own himself captivated by a nose? An old writer upon the etiquette of courtship instructs the would-be wooer that he must

assure the lady he would win, that her brow is a smooth milky galaxia, wherein Love sitteth in triumph to discharge his artillery; that her tresses are golden ensigns of love; her eyes, loadstones of affection, shedding a firmament of light; her lips, an altar where the heart is offered for sacrifice; and liken her cheeks to Punic apples, and her voice to the western wind gladdening Arabian shores. But he has not one compliment to spare for the nose; that is left out in the cold, as if to remind a lady she possessed such a feature were an offence as deep a dye as to remember that a Queen of Spain had legs. One lover boasted of having indited a hundred sonnets to his mistress's eyebrows; another wrote a long string of verses upon a hair from his lady-love's eyelash; but, with the exception of the enthusiastic author of the lines—

I know a nose, a nose no other knows,
'Neath starry eyes, o'er ruby lips it grows,
Beauty is in its form and in its blows!

never did lover honour his sweetheart's nasal organ with so much as a couplet. Poets, too, give the go-by to that necessary appendage to a beautiful face. Dudu's Phidian organ; Lynette's, "tip-tilted like the petal of a flower;" and Rosial's, "directed straight even as line," are the only noses belonging to poetic heroines we can call to mind. It is true the learned author of *The Marriage of the Arts* says of one of the ladies in his play—

Her nose, Phaleneosake-like, in comely sort,
Ends in a trochii, or a long and short;

but then Holyday was not a poet; only a pedant, whose dulness disgusted his pedant sovereign, for it is recorded—

At Christ Church Marriage, done before the king;
Lest that those mates should want an offering,
The king himself did offer—what, I pray?
He offered twice or thrice—to go away.

The Lady Olivia, giving the false Cesario an inventory of her charms, enumerates two lips indifferent red, two grey eyes with lids, a neck, and a chin; but contemptuously includes her nose in an "and so forth." This feature is the only one the sex leaves to itself, neither attempting to improve it or to set it off with ornaments. The dark-eyed damsels of ancient Israel indeed wore jewels in their noses; but, as a rule, the ladies have declined to decorate them.

When a lady on her face
Sticking-plaster used to place,
As an ornament and grace,

she never wasted a solitary patch upon her

nose; and those women of the period who, in the hope of making themselves beautiful for an evening, if not for ever, do not hesitate at loading their heads with more hair than Nature has licensed them to carry, while pencilling their eyebrows, giving artificial lustre to their eyes, and artificial lilies and roses to their cheeks, leave their noses untouched by art, and throw no half-guineas away on machines warranted to convert the most ill-shaped of noses into absolute perfection.

Men feel towards their noses much as Verbruggen the actor did towards his pretty wife, for whom he cared nothing, although prompt to resent any affront offered to her. An insult to his nose, consequent upon his telling his princely master to pull off his boots for him, drove De Comines from Burgundy to France, to revenge the unforgotten injury years afterwards by pillorying his first patron in his *Memoirs*. Many a man has had the satisfaction of being shot for pulling another's nose, or for having his own served the same way, that being at one time, and not so very long ago, the approved manner of insulting a man. A correspondent of the *Spectator*, praying for a redress of the grievance, writes: "I do not wear a sword, but I often divert myself at the theatre, where I frequently see a set of fellows pull plain people by the nose. I was in the pit the other night when it was very much crowded. A gentleman leaning upon me very heavily, I, very civilly, requested him to remove his hand, for which he pulled me by the nose. I would not resent it in so public a place, because I was unwilling to create a disturbance; but I have since reflected upon it as a thing that is unmanly and disgenerous, renders the nose-puller odious, and makes the person pulled by the nose look little and contemptible."

Nose-wringing was bad enough, but nose-slitting was something a great deal worse. Pepys's patron, Sir William Coventry, hearing that Killigrew purposed bringing him upon the stage, gave that incorrigible joker warning that, if he dared to do so, or if any of his actors offered anything like a representation of him, he should not trouble himself to complain to the Lord Chamberlain, nor content himself, as Sir Charles Sedley had done, with getting him a beating, but would cause his nose to be slit. Strangely enough, some nine months afterwards, Sir William's nephew, Sir John Coventry, while on his

way home from the tavern at which he usually supped, was waylaid near Suffolk-street by twenty of His Majesty's guards, commanded by Sir Thomas Sands, and the son of the Earl of Inchiquin. Snatching a flambeau from his servant's hand, Sir John drew his sword, and placing his back to the wall, fought against odds like a brave gentleman. He succeeded in disabling O'Brien and one or two more of the military gang; but, at last, losing his weapons, he was thrown to the ground, and there left by his cowardly assailants, but not till they had cut his nose to the bone. This outrage was Charles the Second's revenge upon Sir John for having asked, when the Court party in the House of Commons opposed a playhouse tax, on the ground that the players were the king's servants, and part of his pleasure, whether the king's pleasure lay among the men or women that acted? The deed was worthy of the monarch who instigated it; and Marvel celebrated the attacking of one man by a troop of horse in the lines—

While the King of France, with powerful arms,
Gives all his neighbours strange alarms;
We, in our glorious beechanals, dispose
The humbler fate of a plebeian nose.
'Tis this must make O'Brien great in story,
And add more beams to Sands's former glory.

The immediate results of the scandalous business was the passing of the so-called "Coventry Act," banishing the principals in the affair, and declaring them incapable of receiving the royal pardon; while ordering that henceforth the cutting, maiming, or disfiguring of any man should be counted felony, without benefit of clergy, and punished with death. The Mohocks seem to have forgotten the existence of this law, or, if they remembered it, set it at defiance with impunity. It remained on the statute-book until 1828, when it was repealed, without any adequate punishment being provided for offences of the sort; so that, even now, one cannot take up a newspaper without being taught that, in the eye of the law, the maiming and disfiguring of man or woman is a venial offence, compared to the snatching of a till or the picking of a pocket.

The nose can boast one prerogative entirely its own—that of bringing a blessing upon its owner's head. How it comes by this honourable distinction is a mystery, none the easier of solution by reason of the custom of blessing a sneezer being pretty well universal. According to one tradition, the practice arose in the pontifi-

cate of Gregory the Great, when Rome was scourged by a plague peculiar for instant death following upon a sneeze, "whereof it grew into a custom that they who were present when any man sneezed should say, 'God bless you!'" This story must have been a pious invention to disguise the heathenish origin of the odd custom, which was familiar to Romans long before they had any acquaintance with Popes. They, in all likelihood, merely imitated the Greeks. Ross, taking the cue from Aristotle, says the Greeks worshipped the head in stertutation, as being a divine part, the seat of the senses and cogitation. He assures us "Prometheus was the first that wished well to the sneezer, when the man, which he had made of clay, fell into a fit of stertutation upon the approach of that celestial fire which he stole from the sun." But if the rabbins are to be believed, sneezing heralded death rather than life; for they taught that men in the old, old days only sneezed once in their lives, and then died of the shock to the system; until Jacob, by his prayers, obtained a more merciful dispensation, conditionally upon the act of sneezing being followed with a "God bless you!" whereupon all the princes of the earth commended their subjects to let a benediction ever wait upon a sneeze.

Ancient Hindu etiquette prescribed an interchange of blessings. Mr. Childers, in *Notes and Queries*, thus translates a passage in the Buddhist Scriptures:—"One day, Buddha, while seated in the midst of a large congregation of disciples, to whom he was preaching the law, chanced to sneeze. Thereupon the priests exclaiming, *May the Blessed Lord live! May the Welcome One live!* made a loud noise, and seriously interrupted the discourse. Accordingly, Buddha addressed them as follows: 'Tell me, priests, when a person sneezes, if the bystanders say, *May you live, will he live the longer or die the sooner for it?* Certainly not, Lord. Then, priests, if any one sneezes you are not to say to him, *May you live;* and if any of you shall say it, let him be guilty of a transgression. From that time forth, when the priests sneezed, and the bystanders exclaimed, *May you live, sirs;* the priests, fearful of transgressing, held their peace. People took offence at this. What, said they, do these priestly sons of Sakya mean by not uttering a word when we say, *May you live, sirs?* The matter came to Buddha's ears. Priests, said he, the laymen are the corner-

stone of the church; when laymen say, May you live, sirs! I give my sanction to your replying, Long life to you! Buddha was not disposed to lose disciples by running counter to their superstition; so the believing Hindu still looks upon a sneeze as something portentous, and will pause in his devotions if he chances to sneeze, and after touching his forehead, nose, chin, and cheeks with the tips of his fingers, begin his prayers again. In the land of the Caciques, sneezers used to be saluted with, May the sun guard you! May the sun protect you! and wherever the custom prevailed the formula observed was almost identical, and plainly originated in some fancied connection of sneezing and death."

Superstition never yet was consistent. It is, therefore, not surprising that the Greeks welcomed a sneeze as a lucky omen when it made itself heard between midnight and morn; and the Romans hailed one with joy, provided it was a sneeze to the right. But if the notions of some good folks be correct, a sneeze in any direction ought to be acceptable, since it proves the sneezer is in full possession of his wits, for no idiot can, they say, sneeze under any provocation. If it be so, it is well, for an idiot might take the old writer to be serious who advises—

When you would sneeze, straight turn yourself unto
your neighbour's face,
As for my part, wherein to sneeze, I know no fitter
place;

It is an order, when you sneeze good men will pray
for you;

Mark him that doth so, for I think he is your friend
most true.

And that your friend may know who sneezes, and
may for you pray,

Be sure you not forget to sneeze full in his face
away.

But when thou hearest another sneeze, although he
be thy father,

Say not, God bless him; but choke up, or some
such matter rather.

CURIOUS OLD CHINA.

IN THREE PARTS. PART III.

A PROFOUND study of the history of Oriental porcelain induces the conviction that we are indebted to China itself for the mania for collecting crockery. Before porcelain was either made or collected in Europe, immense sums were paid by Chinese connoisseurs for choice specimens of ancient make. It may be premised that the manufacture of porcelain in China consists of two branches—the production of new varieties of form and colour, and the imitation of the ancient

porcelains of the empire. The latter is one of the results of minute subdivision of labour—of one man being employed to paint a tree, another a flower, a third a dragon, and so on. The imitation system is in itself ancient. The Mongolian dynasty imitated the wares of the Song, the Ming those of the Mongolian and preceding dynasties, and their porcelain was in its turn reproduced by their successors. Veritable ancient porcelain is so highly esteemed by the Chinese, that fine specimens have been reshipped in England for sale in China, where they fetch higher prices than they have, until just recently, fetched here. It is recorded that the Princess de Vaudemont sold her valuable collection of curious porcelain to a china merchant, who restored the choice pieces to their native country, at a profit of some two or three hundred per cent. Other porcelain than that originally made in China is now exported to that grateful country by western barbarians. A certain variety called *Céladon* was and is highly prized by the Celestials. Its peculiarity consists in the colours being mixed with the glaze and burnt in at the first firing. The term *Céladon* was originally applied to the soft sea-green colour upon pieces of old Oriental porcelain, which command a very high price; and, in the case of the now fashionable colour for silks and cashmeres, retains its meaning as denoting a colour only; but in France it has been extended to all porcelain of whatever colour manufactured in the manner described above. Strictly speaking, *Céladon* is a proper name borne by the gloomy shepherd in the old romance of *Astrée*. By the caprice of the ladies of the court, the name of the lugubrious *Céladon* was attached to the sea-green colour which then, as now, was greatly in fashion. Old sea-green—the original *Céladon*—is very rare and of great antiquity. The Chinese believe it to be at least a thousand years old, and pay for it in proportion, "in which connection" I may cite a curious instance of the operation of the laws of supply and demand. Mr. Fortune, an English scientific author and a well-known collector of real china—who sold off his collections in 1857, 1859, and 1860—formed them in China itself. The sales mentioned created the greatest excitement among both collectors and manufacturers, as presenting examples of colour and glaze remarkable for their beauty and brilliancy—the art of producing which has long since been lost, even in China itself.

Considering that the revival of taste in favour of Chinese porcelain had not then set in, the prices realised were handsome, so great was the confidence felt in the authenticity of specimens which had passed through Mr. Fortune's hands. Nevertheless, this skilled expert was deceived as to the genuineness of some of his acquisitions; certain Céladon bottles manufactured in France for the Chinese market, and which had found their way into the interior, being included in his collection.

Mr. Fortune gives a highly interesting account of his visit to a native china-maniac, who led him from room to room, and pointed out a collection which was enough to make one's "mouth water!" "He showed me many exquisite bits of crackle of various colours—grey, red, turquoise, cream, pale yellow, and, indeed, of almost every shade. One vase I admired much was about two feet high, of a deep blue colour, and covered with figures and ornaments in gold; another of the same height, white ground, with figures and trees in black, yellow, and green—rare and bright colours lost now to Chinese art, and never known in any other part of the world. Taking the collection as a whole, it was the finest I had ever seen, and was a real treat to me. While the Chinese are indifferent about the ancient works of art of foreign countries, they are passionately fond of their own. And well they may be, for not only are many of their ancient vases exquisite specimens of art, but they are also samples of an art which appears to have long passed from among them. All my researches tended to show that the art had been lost; and indeed it must be so, otherwise the high prices which these beautiful things command would be sure, in a country like China, to produce them."

At Peking, Mr. Fortune found the street Loo-le-chang a sort of compound of Pater-noster-row, Wardour-street, and Hanway-yard. Here "the greater part of the porcelain is of the Kien-lung period, and although not ancient, is very far superior to the porcelain made in China at the present day. According to the Chinese, that emperor was a great patron of the arts, and tried to copy and imitate the production of the ancients. But the beautiful productions of his reign are yet far inferior to those manufactured during the dynasty of the Mings. The wonderful and lovely colours in turquoise, ruby, apple green, and red found in the ancient specimens are still

unrivalled by anything which has been produced in more modern times, either in China or among the civilised nations of the West." While Mr. Fortune was in the state of ecstasy indicated, an old man called his attention to some beautiful samples, "which it was impossible for a lover of Oriental porcelain to resist; and although he asked high prices for them, I was obliged to submit." Happy victim! kissing the rod wielded unmercifully by the "old soldier" of Loo-le-chang!

For many long centuries the only pieces of Oriental porcelain which reached Europe were brought by the Crusaders, or by way of Venice; but very little of this was real china, the larger quantity being Persian. The doubling of the Cape of Good Hope, however, speedily introduced Chinese and Japanese ware to European markets. First the Portuguese, and afterwards the Dutch, imported large quantities. So early as 1506, Oriental porcelain reached England. In that year, Philip of Austria and Joan, who had taken the title of King and Queen of Castile, were driven into Weymouth by a storm, and were hospitably entertained by Sir Thomas Trenchard. On taking leave, the king presented his host with some immense delft-ware dishes and some bowls of Oriental china, one of which was enclosed in massive silver-gilt of moresque pattern. These famous cups are now in the possession of Mr. J. B. Trenchard, and are said by Marryat to be of blue and white Nankin. Another curious old specimen is Archbishop Warham's drinking-bowl of the pale sea-green thick ware, mounted in silver gilt, and preserved at New College, Oxford. Her glorious majesty Queen Elizabeth received many presents of porcelain, most of which were acquired by her subjects as incidentals in the plunder of Spanish and Portuguese ships. The famous Cavendish was conspicuous among those who presented porcelain to the queen. Early in the seventeenth century, England did a trade in porcelain, and in 1631 a proclamation was issued to restrain the excess of the private trading carried on by the officers and sailors of the East India Company, containing a catalogue of the wares and merchandise allowed to be imported, among which are china dishes and "purslanes" of all sorts.

About the date of the Revolution, a mania for china-collecting spread from Holland to Saxony and England. Frederick Augustus the First, Elector of Saxony

from 1694 to 1733, fostered the ceramic art in his own country, by making the immense collection of Oriental vases in the celebrated Japan palace at Dresden. This building was purchased in 1717, and a large part of its contents was obtained from Holland. Between Frederick William the First of Prussia, and the Physically Strong Augustus, a curious interchange of courtesies took place. The Prussian contributed twenty-two large vases, in return for which the Elector made over to him his finest regiment of dragoons—or at about the rate of twenty men per china vase.

The Dresden collection of Oriental porcelain occupies thirteen rooms. The first room contains the famous old red unglazed ware of Japan, with raised patterns in white, red, and black, and richly gilded. In the blue gallery are forty-seven vases, five feet high, of every shade of the purest blue, and others of buff and brown. The Japan rooms contain eighty-two large vases, with white grounds, and green, black, red, or blue ornaments, and also models of ships, cats, and monsters of every degree of benevolent hideousness. There is, moreover, a wondrous collection of crackle porcelain, and the famous old sea green. Every variety of colour is here represented, and among the rarest of the rare are three fine pieces of the Imperial china—made for the Brother of the Sun and Moon alone. These consist of a bowl of citron-yellow ground, with black dragons and rim, and two flat canary-yellow bowls with impressed patterns. The white ware room contains a large collection of figures, odd and monstrous; and there is also a service executed in china, by the order of Charles the Fifth, for Prince Maurice of Saxony, who was his ally from 1536 to 1541, and many dessert and tea sets made by order of Augustus the Second.

In England, the taste for collecting porcelain made rapid progress. Serious Mr. John Evelyn speaks lovingly of "porselan," and refers to the great collection at the king's house at Kensington. Equally serious, but not equally gentle, Macaulay demolishes handsome Mary and her pretty china in his usual sledgehammer style:—"Mary had acquired at the Hague a taste for the porcelain of China, and amused herself by forming at Hampton a vast collection of hideous images, and of vases on which houses, trees, bridges, and mandarins were depicted in outrageous

defiance of all the laws of perspective. The fashion—a frivolous and inelegant fashion it must be owned—which was thus set by the amiable queen, spread fast and wide. In a few years almost every great house in the kingdom possessed a museum of these grotesque baubles. Even statesmen and generals were not ashamed to be judges of teapots and dragons; and satirists long continued to repeat that a fine lady valued her mottled green pottery quite as much as she valued her monkey, and much more than she valued her husband."

The stern Puritan is full heavy handed to deal with eggshell china, and possessing besides the great advantage of knowing nothing either of porcelain, or of the mysterious ky-lins, and other sacred beasts depicted thereon, pounds away remorselessly. It is amusing to contrast, with the passage just quoted, the language of that Spectator whom Macaulay never tired of praising, and whose "light hand" would have been upon occasion invaluable to him. Macaulay is a true bull in a china shop—smashes everything right and left: the Spectator daintily treads a minuet among the teacups. "Every room in my house is furnished with trophies of her (his wife's) eloquence—rich cabinets, piles of china, japan screens and costly jars; and if you were to come into my parlour, you would fancy yourself in an India warehouse. Besides this, she keeps a squirrel, and I am doubly taxed to pay for the china he breaks."

In another paper, Addison says that no mansion, possessing the least claim to fashion or even to superiority, was considered furnished without a vast accumulation of "loves of monsters;" and, in the *Lover*, he writes: "There is no in inclination in woman that more surprises me than this passion for china. When a woman is visited with it, it generally takes possession of her for life. China vessels are playthings for women of all ages. An old lady of fourscore shall be as busy in cleaning an Indian mandarin as her great-granddaughter is in dressing her baby." At a later date the *Lounger*, speaking of a lady afflicted with chinamania, says that in her china-room "were piles of plates and dishes, and pyramids of cups and saucers, reaching from the floor to the ceiling. In one quarter was a rampart of tureens and soup-dishes; in another, an embellishment of punch-bowls, candle-cups, and porringers. The dark blue of

Nankeen was contrasted with the ancient red of Japan; the production of Dresden was opposed to the manufacture of Sèvres, and the Mock-Saxon of Derby to the Mock-Indian of Staffordshire. In the ornamental porcelain, the eye was completely lost in a chaos of pagodas, wagging-headed mandarins, and bronzes, red lions, golden dogs, and fiery dragons."

Horace Walpole, of whom it was written—

China's the passion of his soul;
A cup, a plate, a dish, a bowl,
Can kindle wishes in his breast,
Inflame with joy, or break his rest—

tells a capital story against mere curiosity-hunters. It refers to a man named Turner, a great chinaman, who had a jar cracked by the shock of an earthquake. The price of the jars (a pair) was originally ten guineas; but, after the accident, he asked twenty for one of them, because it was the only jar in Europe that had been cracked by an earthquake.

While Walpole was forming his collection at Strawberry-hill, he inspired the famous Mr. Beckford with a noble ambition to do likewise; and the result was the magnificent collection at Fonthill, where, it was said, was a breakfast service of china for every day in the year. Sir Joseph Banks, also, possessed a fine collection of Oriental porcelain; and it is somewhat remarkable that, since the dispersion of the splendid collection formed by Queen Charlotte, the greatest collectors of pottery and porcelain have been of the sterner and clumsier sex—Bernal, Soulages, Soltykoff, Sauvageot, Fontaine, Fortune, Drury Fortnum, the late Marquis of Hertford, King George the Fourth, Beresford Hope, H. G. Bohn, Jacquemart, and Barbet de Jouy.

About the middle of the last century the price of real china was very high; but, as attention was withdrawn from Oriental to European porcelain, the price of the former underwent a sensible diminution. At the famous sale at Strawberry-hill, in 1842, superb specimens of Oriental porcelain were sold at prices which, read by the light of 1875, appear incredibly low. Two small vases, of old sea-green, sold for twenty-two pounds; a pair of dark-blue beakers and covers, richly decorated with flowers in relief of same colour, forty-two inches high, went for fifty-seven pounds; and a curious old white Oriental teapot was actually knocked down for two pounds. At the sale of the Beckford col-

lection better prices were secured, although not half so high as those of the present day. The ruby backed plates, which fetched three or four guineas each, realised considerably more at the Bernal sale a few years later. Indeed, from this famous sale may be dated the revival of chinamania as an epidemic. Early in this century there were collectors, and very great collectors, but they were few and far between, and prices were comparatively low; but, so soon as nations bought crockery, every private person wanted some, and the fancy laughed at a hundred years ago recurred with increased virulence. Immense prices are now given for choice specimens. In 1850 and 1860, one bottle of elegant form, of imperial yellow ground, fetched ninety-five guineas; two pairs of jars fetched, respectively, four hundred and fifty and four hundred and eighty-five guineas; a pair of vases brought six hundred and forty guineas; and one egg-shell plate, with a ruby back, was knocked down for twenty-five pounds! At the sale at Ferol, in March, 1863, a diminutive ovoid urn, about eight inches in height, the brim swollen out in a thick cushiony edge, entirely enamelled in green camellia leaves, with large crackles, fetched forty-eight pounds four shillings. It is now part of the collection of M. Barbet de Jouy, and would fetch, saith M. Burty, double the money. More recently, a carp and its carplings, enamelled in intense violet, sold for one hundred and twenty pounds; and the prices realised at the Dalhousie and other sales strengthen the belief, that the rage for Oriental porcelain is increasing every day.

Abandoning, as utterly hopeless, any attempt to describe the work of the various provincial factories in China, I will endeavour to distinguish the species of real porcelain deemed most worthy of honour.

Passing over, then, the ancient blue, green, and white, and that famous shade of blue said to represent the blue of Heaven as it appears between the clouds after rain; the famous blue crackle with veins like the roe of fishes; that with veins like the claw of a crab, and other celebrated kinds; I may proceed to say at once that the finest period of Chinese porcelain was that of the Song, Mongolian, and Ming dynasties, extending from A.D. 960 to 1647. During this period, and for some centuries before and after it, an imperial manufactory existed at King-te-chin. In the earlier part of this period the porcelain was of a

pale blue or rice colour, moon-white, and deep green. Violet and white china was produced anterior to the fourteenth century, when the white and blue style (of which our old friend the willow pattern is an example) to a great extent supplanted all others. Now came (1368) the great dynasty of Ming, under which were produced many of the treasures most highly prized by Chinese antiquaries. Between 1426 and 1435 was produced the finest porcelain of the Ming dynasty, every production being of the highest artistic value. Later on, egg-shell china, thin as paper, was made, and foreign cobalt was at last introduced into China. The fine blue used at an earlier date—possibly arsenite of cobalt—had been lost, and the importation of cobalt was hailed with delight. Nevertheless, the Chinese still use a native pigment—perhaps silicate of cobalt—besides the pure cobalt, which they now derive from England. Simply referring to the ingenious arrangement (by Messrs. Jacquemart and Le Blant) of Chinese porcelain into groups, it may be well to make a few remarks upon the so-called “monsters” which occupy so large a space in Oriental decoration. These “monsters” are, in fact, sacred animals. To begin with, there is the dragon, of which are many species—the dragon of the heavens, the dragon of the mountains, the dragon of the sea, dragons with or without scales, wings, and horns. A five-clawed dragon is the dynastic symbol of the emperor and princes of the first and second class, and figures upon the imperial standard; that with four claws belongs to princes of the third and fourth rank. The mandarins have a serpent with four claws. Next in importance to the dragon comes the Ky-lin—a creature known in Europe only as a “grotesque,” or as a “monster.” His appearance is frightful; he is covered with scales, is spiky as to his back, but is so gentle a creature that he swerves in his fleetest course to avoid touching a worm, and is of excellent omen. Hence we meet him everywhere, especially as a statuette perched on the top of a vase. Another curious but intensely sacred creature is the dog Fo; the sacred horse is another odd beast, but not wilder in his aspect than the immortal bird Foang-hoang—a very sprawly celestial peacock.

An ancient kind of porcelain is the white, which is also most beautiful from the purity of its paste, its whiteness of enamel, and brilliancy of polish. There are two varieties of this, the pure white and the

bluish white. Much of this was exquisitely thin, and its beautiful translucency was taken advantage of for a species of decoration, the art of producing which is now lost. On the pure white vessel being filled with liquid, blue fishes and other animals became visible, which were absolutely imperceptible when it was empty. This effect was produced by enclosing the coloured figures between two thin laminae of porcelain paste, and reducing the thickness of the outer side as much as possible before the varnish was applied. Perhaps the most beautiful of all Chinese colours is the turquoise blue, the original of the same colour in Sèvres. It is totally distinct from sky-blue, which is derived from cobalt, while turquoise is obtained from copper, and retains its hue in an artificial light. An equally pure and brilliant colour is the violet obtained from oxide of manganese. The old violet is even more rare than the turquoise blue. Both are prepared in the same manner, the Chinese placing the enamel on the pieces in the state of biscuit. Specimens of these colours are eagerly sought after. I have before referred to the price paid for a violet carp, and it is recorded that a violet cat belonging to Madame de Mazarin was sold for an incredible sum.

The ancient crackle vases date from the Song dynasty, and are highly prized both in China and Japan. In the latter country, three hundred pounds is not considered too much to pay for a single specimen. The colours are white, grey, green, brown, yellow, crimson, and turquoise: the last is considered the rarest, but those of a rice colour and pale blue appear to be the most ancient. Sometimes two or three colours are blended together, so as to resemble marble or agate in its veining and colouring. All these varieties have resulted from the keen attention of workmen, desirous to profit by any slight accident. “Observe,” says M. Burty, “the cracks running over some of these vases, like the meshes of a fisherman’s net, in parts marked delicately as the back of a trout, and again regularly as the channel lines of a honey cake. This must necessarily spring from a want of homogeneity in the body, and the glaze covering the so-called Céladon vases; the unequal contraction of the body and the glaze causing the surface coating to split with a thousand little lines. The veined or mottled colours are caused by jets of heat—for the atmosphere of the kiln is so

incandescent that we cannot talk of flame—which attack certain portions of the coating of the piece, and by this greater degree of heat modify the tone or colour of the mineral element with which it is decorated.”

The blue and white porcelain commonly called Nankin, is held in great esteem in the East, but is not sufficiently rare to command high prices in Europe. More esteemed are the enamelled porcelain, covered with the most brilliant colours, profusely and richly decorated with flowers, principally the peony and the chrysanthemum; the beautiful green and rose; the charming ruby ware; and last, but not least, the citron-yellow ware. Made for the exclusive use of the emperor, the citron-yellow is excessively rare. The colour is striking, from its exquisite brilliancy and purity; the paste is the daintiest eggshell. Mr. Marryat declares that he “has met with genuine specimens in only two collections—viz., in the Japan palace at Dresden, and at the late Mr. Beckford’s. Those of the latter sold for their weight in gold. A quantity of spurious specimens of this ware has been made at Canton, which place being far from the imperial observation, and its products chiefly exported, they escaped detection. Of this description were the yellow specimens in the collection of H. R. H. the late Duke of Sussex.”

Supposed to be an offset of the Chinese manufacture, the porcelain of Japan has yet a distinct character of its own. Between the China and Japan workmen yawns the great gulf between routine and individuality. One is a production upon which innumerable hands have left traces of their skill, the other a distinct creation, stamped with a peculiar talent. In the inexhaustible variety, and deliciously eccentric beauty, of their designs, Japanese artists excel all others. Abhorring geometrical regularity of design, instead of planting his big bird in the centre of a plate, like a tavern sign, the Japanese flings him down haphazard, straggling from the rim into the middle, but always with a charming and novel effect. This is the explanation of the real value of this style of decoration. It never wearies, never palls upon the taste, like the hideous regularity of the West.

Great efforts have been made in Europe to imitate Japanese ware, in the first place with the simple object of passing it off as original. The pieces were made wholesale

in Paris, and forwarded to Havre, where vessels touching on their way home from the Indian seas took them and unshipped them in Holland, whence, guaranteed authentic, they were sent to Paris and sold as Oriental porcelain. The imitation ware is far from approaching the excellence of the original, but there is enough of it in circulation to justify the extreme caution of collectors. There is also another kind of Japanese ware manufactured to order by the gross. This, of course, is of no artistic value, and will bear no comparison with the beautiful, cunningly-careless productions of the Japanese artist, whose colours and figures appear as if they had fallen upon his porcelain by accident.

In conclusion, I can only remark to young collectors, that they should adopt an exactly opposite line of conduct to that counselled by Danton. In the place of “Audacity, audacity, always audacity,” they should, when they see a tempting piece marked “imperial yellow,” “old sea-green,” or “old Japan,” softly murmur, “Caution, caution, always caution.”

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF “BLACK SHEEP,” “CASTAWAY,” “THE YELLOW FLAG,” &c. &c.

BOOK III. CHAPTER V. A CASE FOR THE ACCIDENT WARD.

TWELVE months had passed away since Grace Middleham had received that farewell letter from Anne Studley which had caused so much sorrow both to the writer and the recipient; twelve months during which certain events, not without importance to the principal actors in our little drama, had occurred. The King of Terrors had appeared upon the scene and quietly removed one of them. After Anne’s departure, the good old Frau Professorin, growing daily weaker and weaker, and no longer sustained by the real solicitude and sympathy which her English attendant had bestowed upon her, had gradually sunk to her rest, and left a kindly-mourned and oft-named blank amongst the æsthetic tea circles and the knitting coteries of the dear old German town. The worthy professor grieved much and honestly over his wife’s death; the fractiousness and irritability of her latter days were forgotten, and he only thought of her as in the time when she held to him with loyal devotion, and refused to give way to the pressure brought to bear upon

her by those who deprecated the idea of her alliance with a foreigner, and, above all, with a foreigner who had only his brains to look to as a means of subsistence. The old man felt that, so far as the exercise of his profession was concerned, his life was at an end; he had no heart for the preparation of his lectures, and the society of his comrades of bygone years could not compensate him for the blank desolation of his home. If his niece had remained with him it might have been well enough, for, almost unconsciously, she had wound herself round his large and trusting heart, and there was no one now left to him in the world for whom he had such affection; but the dreariness of the daily routine in the Poppelsdorfer Allee, scarcely supportable while Madame Sturm lived, became insufferable after her death; and, so soon as it was possible, Grace carried out the intention which her aunt's illness alone had induced her to postpone, and took up her abode in England. Before parting with her uncle, with a prevision of the state into which he would probably fall when left to himself, Grace had told the professor that, though she could no longer remain with him in Germany, it was her earnest wish that their lives should not be divided, and that, should he choose to come to England, he would always be welcome to share her home. At the time it was made, the old man put this offer aside with thanks; he was in the first access of his grief just then, and a daily visit to the little cemetery outside the town seemed to him indispensable; but in the course of a couple of months, when he found that what was left of the old association had no longer any charm for him, and that he was pining for his niece's society, he wrote to Grace, and receiving in return pressing invitation, he broke up his establishment, sold his furniture, gave Lisbeth a handsome donation, and with his beloved books and pipes started for England.

When Grace Middleham decided upon establishing herself in London, it was with no idea of recommencing the life which she had led, or, of endeavouring to renew the acquaintanceship which she had formed during her first and only season there. The glamour of "society," if it had ever existed—and it must be allowed that, for a young, pretty, and wealthy girl, impressionable and much sought after, she had been very little fascinated by it—had entirely died away. She had fully made up her mind that the home which she was about to

sense of the word. Her lines would, she hoped, be cast in pleasant places; but not in any of those which Mrs. Crutchley, the members of the Waddledot family, or their friends, were likely to frequent. In this view, Grace had purchased a residence in the neutral ground lying between Kensington and Bayswater, which has, as yet, not fallen into the hands of any enterprising builder, and which, dotted here and there with a few well-built, costly villas, yet contains within itself a sufficiency of open garden-ground to allow a man, of even small imaginative powers, to forget that he is within four miles of the roar and bustle of the Strand. In making this selection, Grace was influenced by the fact, not merely that she would be beyond the sight and sound of those with whom she had formerly lived, and whose habits, occupations, and subjects of discourse would now have been inexpressibly wearying and distasteful to her, but that she should be enabled to enjoy a certain amount of fresh air, to which she had grown accustomed, and a more than certain amount of independence, which had become a necessity to her. For, while abjuring the balls and set dinners, the daily park and promenade, and all the set and not-to-be-pretermitted duties which fashion prescribes, Grace had no idea of lapsing into solitude, or of denying herself a great deal of enjoyment in her own way. During her short régime at Eaton-place she had made the acquaintance of several men distinguished in letters and art, who combined a love for their profession with a taste for society. Is it that the Bohemian life immortalised in the Newcomes no longer exists? or that, having slipped out of it with the progress of years, one is apt to imagine of it, as of all other things, that they must have perished of inanition when we deserted them? Doubtless, thoroughly happy days are still spent at Rosherville, and rockets shoot up before the eyes of admiring thousands at Cremorne, though it seems impossible to believe it. Very probably the successors of Dick Tinto and John James Ridley are still unshorn and unkempt, giving to the wearing of velvet coats, the smoking of brier-root pipes, the drinking of pots of beer, the frequenting of some new "haunts," where the floor is still sanded, the conversation still bristling with allusions to Brown's three-voler, which was "slated;" Jones's farce, which was "goosed;" or Robinson's picture, which was "spoiled" at Rosherville House. But

the original Richard and J. J. of early days know this kind of life no longer; they wear elegant clothes and trim beards, and wash themselves regularly; they inhabit lovely villas in Camden Hill or St. John's Wood, and have handsome studios in squares which are anything but Fitzroy; while their names are to be found in the newspapers at the fag-end of the list of fashionables at a duchess's reception, and their talk is of Shakespeare and the musical-glasses.

A young lady with ample means has no difficulty, in London, in suiting herself with such society as she chooses, and when Grace had once settled down, with her uncle for her companion, it was an easy matter to renew the acquaintance of her literary and artistic friends of former days, and through them the circle rapidly spread. "Talented people," as they are called by the gentilities, who are accustomed to regard them with a half-envious, half-patronising feeling, are by no means averse to the charms of good living, of which they are the more appreciative, as the viands and wines on which the said gentilities usually regale their lions are generally but moderate in quality. Miss Middleham's table was plentifully supplied, and with the best of everything; and there was a pleasant Bohemianism about the establishment—the Bohemianism of cleanliness and respectability, as distinguished from that of dirt and indecorum—a liberty which never slipped into licence, an immunity from conventional rule which was never permitted to become too lax or too revolutionary, and which harmonised entirely with the tastes of the visitors. To the "Hermitage"—for such was, on the locus a non lucendo principle, the name of the villa—came men celebrated in all the various walks of literature and art. Travellers and men of science, rarely looked upon by ordinary mortals save at the gatherings of the Geographical or Royal Societies, were found strolling about Miss Middleham's pretty grounds, or chatting in her pretty rooms, brought thither by their highly-esteemed fellow labourer Professor Sturm, with whose writings they were familiar, with whom they had long corresponded, and whom they were only too pleased to meet in the flesh. Dr. Grumph, who had been so many times lost in the interior of Africa, and whose prolonged absences from his home at Islington were reported to be caused by the terror excited in his scientific bosom by Mrs. Grumph, a Scotch

lady of weird aspect and acrid tongue; Major Shotover, the ex-dragoon, who had several times nearly discovered the source of the Niger, who, it was whispered, had for months habitually lived on steaks cut from the living animal, which found itself none the worse for the operation, and whose ordinary Eastern travelling costume was stated to be a lump of grease placed on the top of his head, and nothing more; Stratum, the great geologist, who, being on one occasion benighted and befogged, and without the slightest definite notion as to his whereabouts, happily thought of the expedient of grubbing-up, and placing in his mouth a portion of the earth's crust, and immediately, by its taste, recognised that he was at Isleworth! These and other eminent lights of science, for the most part snuffy old gentlemen in ill-fitting clothes, came to the Hermitage, at the invitation of the professor, and were warmly welcomed by its mistress. Thither, also, came Glaucus Murray, bright and handsome as an ancient Greek, with his classical profile and his curling perfumed locks, charming equally men and women by the delicacy of his compliments and the enforced attention which he paid to all; and with him, of course, came his never-failing companion, Odin Furstenwald, a thorough Englishman, despite his Northern name—a hearty giant, rough as Esau's hands, but loving his art, and holding a good position in it. Came also Scumble, R.A., whom his friends delighted to call the modern Hogarth, an appellation with which he was himself not dissatisfied; and the great Wogg, who, from constantly painting Charles the Second, had become something like him, especially as regards his complexion; and occasionally, but not often, Tom Dalton, greatest of them all, who painted portraits like Gainsborough and landscapes like Constable, who was too highly placed and too magnanimous to know what envy or jealousy meant, and who walked in and out among the crowd like a great Newfoundland dog, with a kind word or an encouraging smile for the smallest of the craft.

It was at Miss Middleham's, too, that Scratchley, the great social caricaturist, not merely received suggestions for the famous woodblocks which made the fortune of Mr. Jollett's comic periodical, but covertly made many capital sketches of the persons figuring therein. Nor was literature without its representatives. Besides Mr. Jollett, who there had ample opportunity of practising that art of hand-

shaking which, alone, had raised him to eminence in his profession, a frequent attendant was young Mr. O'Rourke, whose delightful novels of Irish life were just then beginning to attract attention to their author. The outside world was astonished to find that Mr. O'Rourke was an extremely dull young man, who, however well he might write, distantly imitated his famous countryman in talking "like poor Poll." Nor were they less astonished on having pointed out to them the writer of those trenchant attacks on society in the *Scarifier*, which were popularly attributed to a well-known caustic wit, but were really the work of a consumptive curate in Shoreditch.

These, and other people of the same kind, composed the society at the Hermitage, and acknowledged Grace as their queen, or rather as the female president of their republic; and her life, on the whole, was tolerably happy. One great source of her delight was, that she had been able to provide for her uncle an existence far more enjoyable than any he had previously known. With the British Museum at his command in the morning, the Royal Institution in the afternoon, and either a nebulous discussion with brother philosophers in his own rooms, or a part in the general conversation with Grace's guests in the evening, the professor was in a perfect paradise. As for herself, Grace had her own time at her disposal, and managed to employ it very pleasantly. Although she had become the occupant of a hermitage and had renounced fashionable society, Grace Middleham had no intention of giving up the world; she had her carriages and horses, got through a good deal of visiting, and daily took long rides through the lonely London suburbs, so little known to most dwellers in the metropolis. Very rarely she came across any of those whom she had known during her tenure of the house in Eaton-place; and though all such were anxious for a renewal of the acquaintance, knowing, as they thoroughly well did, that Grace's state was still unchanged, she, while perfectly polite, managed to decline the proffered honour.

It must not be imagined that, pleasant and interesting as her life then was, Grace Middleham had forgotten her early days, or the friend who had so faithfully shared her childish joys and sorrows. The one bitter drop in her cup of happiness was her remembrance of Anne Studley, the singular circumstances which had es-

tranged them, and the mysterious manner in which Anne had disappeared. Often and often during the long watches of the night Grace lay awake, wondering what had been the fate of that strange girl, who had given up all that constituted the pleasures of existence to rescue her friend from what she conceived to be an impending doom. That Anne had emigrated to America with the German family, Grace never believed for an instant; that, according to the statement in Anne's letter, had been a story confessedly concocted for the purpose of satisfying any affectionate scruples which poor Madame Sturm might have felt at Anne's departure, and it had accomplished its object. The sad refrain of that letter, "alone in the world," haunted Grace Middleham with terrible iteration. She herself was solitary in the sense that she had no friend to share her confidences—no one dearer than a friend whom she could look to for love and protection. Her wealth had not brought her these blessings, but, at all events, it had surrounded her with comforts, and, so to speak, with happiness; while Anne, delicate, sensitive, "alone in the world," must combat with that world unaided and uncountenanced, and must be dependent on her own exertions for her daily bread. Quietly, and without letting any one know what she was doing, Grace had made such inquiries after her friend as seemed to her desirable. So far as was consistent with safety, she had taken into her confidence some members of the detective police, and of the members of that ex-official body who devote themselves to the solution of mysteries. On several occasions she had inserted in the *Times* an advertisement commencing with the old catchword "Tocsin," and calling upon A. S. to communicate with her friend at an address then indicated, but without avail. After the non-successes of these last attempts, Grace's heart grew sore indeed, for she thought that, if Anne had seen them, she would have understood them to convey the assurance that her devotion and self-sacrifice were now appreciated in their integrity, and that she would have found herself at liberty to respond to the appeal, the wounded pride would have been healed, the spirit of independence which could brook no acceptance of favours without making some return for them would, Grace thought, have been pacified by these words; and when she found that her advertisement was without response, she was forced to the sad conclusion that

Anne Studley was beyond her reach, and that the chances were that she would never look upon her old friend's face again.

One summer afternoon Grace took it into her head that she should like to drive over to Hampstead, and look at the scenes where her school-days had been passed. She had been thinking of Anne a good deal that morning, and her impulse prompted her, as far as possible, to renew the old association. Chapone House, under its original title, existed no longer; it had become the North-Western University for ladies, where diplomas were granted, and degrees conferred, under the auspices of learned professors. The worthy old ladies who had so long presided over it, in its earlier and humbler days, had retired upon their savings, eked out by a subscription from their former pupils, to which Grace had liberally contributed. But although the old-fashioned red-brick house had been changed into a stuccoed building, the grounds and the neighbourhood were scarcely altered, and, descending from her carriage, Grace easily found the spot where she and Anne had been seated, on that momentous evening when Mr. Heath arrived with the tidings of her uncle's murder. What had they not all gone through since then? The memory of that time seemed more of a dream than a reality, and occupied Grace's attention the whole way home; and she was still brooding over the subject, when a sudden swerving of the carriage and a loud cry called her to herself.

"What is it?" she cried to the footman, who was rapidly descending from the box.

"Nothing, mum," said the man; "at least not much, I think—only an accident. A person who tried to cross just in front of the horses has been knocked down. Not Thomas's fault, mum, I can assure you."

"Let me out," said Grace, quickly. "I will see what it is for myself."

An old man was being propped up by two of the bystanders, who had just withdrawn him from the horses' feet. Shabbily dressed, pinched and poverty stricken, his pallid face marked here and there with blotches, his eyes were closed and he was insensible, the blood trickling from a wound in his forehead.

"Is he much hurt?" asked Grace, bending over the prostrate figure.

"Can't say, mum," said the person against whose knee the old man was reclining; "no bones broke, I should say; but he seems to have had an awkward one on the head."

"Run right between the horses' legs, mum," said the coachman, bending forward from his box, and touching his hat. "Just as I was bringing 'em round through the gates I see this party, and I halloed to him, but he didn't take no notice, and give a kind of stagger, and it was a mercy we wasn't over him, wheels and all."

"Let him be taken indoors instantly; carry him into my morning-room, and lay him on the sofa."

"Wouldn't it be better, mum," said the butler, who had by this time joined the group, "if the sofa was brought into the hall, the party being bleeding profuse, and likely to make the furniture in a mucky state?"

"Better let me and my mate take him to the 'orspittle," said a man in the crowd, immediately scenting a job. "We have got a barrow here which we could lay him on, or, if that was considered too open, we might run him down to St. George's in a cab."

"The poor man is not in a condition to be moved," said Grace; "let him be carried indoors at once."

A mattress was fetched from the house, and the sufferer, being laid upon it, was carried indoors by the two men who had first attended to him. The butler, still active in the interest of the furniture, directed them to deposit their burden in the hall. The old man continued silent and senseless; he opened his eyes once and looked vacantly round, but closed them again immediately.

"Excuse me saying that you had better have the party taken to the 'orspittle," said the butler; "it is close upon seven o'clock, the ladies and gentlemen will be coming to dinner, and to see him laying in the hall in this way is, to say the least of it, arbitrary."

"The man cannot be moved, Jennings," said Grace, shortly; "let him remain where he is."

"Then, mum, hadn't James better run for a doctor. Mr. Pettigrew is on the terrace, close at hand."

"There is no occasion for that; Mr. Burton is coming to dinner, and will be here immediately: he is always punctual. You and James lift this mattress into my morning-room out of the bustle and confusion of the hall."

This had scarcely been done when a Hansom-cab drove up, from which Mr. Burton alighted. He was a tall, good-looking young man, with curling chestnut hair and breezy whiskers, and clear blue eyes. The expression of his face was at

once honest and clever, and there was a good deal of firmness in the mouth. Firmness and unflinching zeal had been the making of him, for without them he might have been a poor country apothecary, instead of being regarded as one of the most rising of London surgeons. The only child of a widowed mother, with but a small pittance, he came up to town to walk the hospitals with a determination of succeeding in the profession which had been his dying father's wish he should pursue. Charles Burton's own tastes lay rather in the legal direction. When a boy he had taken every opportunity of attending the assizes in the county town in which they lived, and had been captivated by, and envious of, the eloquence of the forensic leaders; but his father's wish was to him law, and he accepted the "Middlesex" as his fate. Soon he got interested in his work, and interest begat liking; his intellect had always been clear and sound, and by the aid of high courage and singular manual dexterity, though not yet thirty years of age, he had made his name. Professor Sturm, too, took great interest in physiology, had made Mr. Burton's acquaintance at the house of a professional friend, and had been much struck by the young man's cleverness and modesty. Mr. Burton made an equally favourable impression on Grace, to whom he was soon introduced, and at the time of the occurrence of this accident, he was a frequent visitor at the Hermitage.

"I am so glad to see you, Mr. Burton," said Grace, advancing with extended hand; "we have had an accident—an unfortunate man has been knocked down by my carriage horses, and although the wheels did not pass over him, I fear he may be seriously hurt. I have had him carried into the little room there, and shall be much obliged if you will examine him and give me your opinion upon him."

Mr. Burton entered the room and closed the door carefully behind him. In the course of ten minutes he came out, looking somewhat grave.

"I was right," said Grace, who had been anxiously expecting him; "the poor man is seriously injured?"

"It is impossible to say how seriously at present, from such a cursory examination," said Mr. Burton, "but undoubtedly he is in a bad way; not so much from the actual effects of this accident, but that he

has evidently been a free liver; his blood is in a bad state from drink, and there is every danger of erysipelas setting in. My advice is that he should be at once moved to the hospital."

"I trust that you will not think that necessary," said Grace, quickly. "I feel that the responsibility of the accident rests upon me. It was my carriage by which the mischief was done; and it is my wish that he should remain in this house, and be cared for and tended at my expense."

"I would give way to you, my dear Miss Middleham, if I had nothing further to urge," said Mr. Burton; "but for the man's own sake, I think it necessary that he should be taken to St. Vitus's. There the means and appliances of cure, or, at least, of relief, are better than they can be at any private house; and, as his is a case which requires a constant and skilful nursing, be persuaded by me. If you will order round your carriage, the professor and I will take him to the hospital, and leave him in charge of the house-surgeon, who is an old friend of mine, and who will take every care of him."

"And you will come back and tell us the result of your mission?" said Grace.

"Certainly, if you wish it," said Mr. Burton; "though, I fear, I shall have no very cheering report to bring."

Two hours afterwards Mr. Burton returned. He said that the further examination of the patient confirmed his first impression; he had received some internal injuries which were considered to be of a serious character, and the setting in of erysipelas was greatly feared.

"Poor creature!" said Grace, "I cannot help feeling myself responsible for anything that may happen to him. Is any thing known of him? where he comes from? who he is?"

"Yes," said Mr. Burton, "he came to himself for about ten minutes, and Channel, the house-surgeon, spoke to him. He could not make out where he was, nor did he know how the accident occurred, but he seems an educated kind of man, and he said that his name was Studley."

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER X.

THE time which elapsed between Rhoda's first visit to Minnie Bodkin and the beginning of February—February, which was to carry Algernon Errington away to the great metropolis—was a vexed and stormy one for the Maxfield household.

Jonathan Maxfield had come to a down-right quarrel with the preacher—or to something as near to a quarrel as can be attained, where the violence and vituperation are all on one side—and had ordered Powell out of his house. This was a serious step, and was sure to be searchingly canvassed. Maxfield absented himself from the next class-meeting on the plea of ill-health. There was a general knowledge in the class and throughout the society that there had been a breach, and many members began to take sides rather warmly.

Maxfield was not a personally popular man, but he had considerable influence amongst his fellow Wesleyans; the influence of wealth, and a strong will, and the long habit of being a leading personage. David Powell, on the other hand, was not heartily liked by many of the congregation.

The Whitford Methodists had slid into a sleepy, comfortable state of mind, in their obscure little corner. They acquired no new members, and lost no old ones. Even the well-devised machinery of Methodism, so calculated to enforce movement and quicken attention, had grown somewhat rusty in Whitford. Frequent change

of preachers is a powerful spur to sluggish hearers; but even this—among the fundamental peculiarities of Methodism—was very seldom applied to the Whitfordians. Circumstances, and their own apathy, had brought it to pass that two elderly preachers—steady, jog-trot old roadsters—had alternately succeeded each other in exhorting and preaching to this quiet flock for several years. There was, besides, Nick Green, foreman to Mr. Gladwish, the shoemaker, who enjoyed the rank of local preacher for a time, but who finally seceded from the main body, and drew with him half-a-dozen or so of the more zealous or excitable worshippers, who subscribed to hire a room over a corn-dealer's storehouse in Lady-lane, and by the stentorian vehemence of their Sunday devotion there speedily acquired the title of Ranters.

Into this sleepy, comfortable Whitford society David Powell had burst with his startling energy and fiery eloquence, and it was impossible to be sleepy and comfortable any longer. No one likes to be suddenly roused from a doze, and Powell had awakened Whitford as with the sound of a trumpet. Yet, after the effects of the first start and shock had subsided, the Methodists began to take pride in the attention which their preacher attracted. Their little chapel was crowded. His field-preaching drew throngs of people from all the country side. Instead of being merely an obscure little knot of Dissenters, about whom no outsider troubled himself, they felt themselves to be objects of general observation. Old men, who had heard Wesley preach half a century ago, declared that this Welshman had inherited the mantle of their founder.

But then came, by no slow or doubtful degrees, the discovery that David Powell

had inherited more than the traditional eloquence of John Wesley; and that, like that wonderful man, he spared neither himself nor others in the service of his Master.

He set up a standard of conduct which dismayed many, even of the leading Methodists, who did not share that exaltation of spirit which supported Powell in his disdain of earthly comforts. And the awful sincerity of his character was found by many to be absolutely intolerable.

He made a strong effort to revive the early morning services, which had quite fallen into desuetude at Whitford. What! Go to pray in the cold little meeting-house at five o'clock on a winter's morning? There was scarcely one of the congregation whose health would allow of such a proceeding.

Then his matter-of-fact interpretations of much of the Gospel teaching was excessively startling. He would coolly expect you to deprive yourself not only of superfluities, but of necessities—such, for instance, as three meals of flesh-meat a day, which are clearly indispensable for health—in order to give to the poor.

It must be owned that he practised his own precepts in this respect; and that he literally gave away all he had, beyond the trifling sum which was needful to clothe him with decency, and to feed him in a manner which the Whitfordians considered reprehensibly inadequate. Such asceticism savoured almost of monkery. It was really wrong. At least it was to be hoped that it was wrong; otherwise—!

So the awakening preacher by no means had all his flock on his side, when they suspected him to be in opposition to old Max.

Jonathan's mind had been, as he expressed it, greatly exercised respecting his daughter. He was drawn different ways by contending impulses.

To speak to Rhoda openly; to send her to Duckwell, out of Algernon's way; to let things go on as they were going; (for was not Rhoda's reception by the Bodkins manifestly a preliminary step to her permanent rise in the social scale?) to talk openly to Algernon, and demand his intentions: all these plans presented themselves to his mind in turn, and each in turn appeared the most desirable.

Jonathan was not an irresolute man in general, because he never doubted his own perfect competency to deal with circumstances as they arose in his life. But now

he felt his ignorance. He did not understand the ways of gentlefolks. He might injure his daughter by his attempt to serve her. And although he had fits of self-assertion (during which he made much of the value of his own money and of Rhoda's merits), all did not avail to free his spirit from the subjection it was in to "gentlefolks."

Again, he was urged not to seem to distrust the Erringtons by a strong feeling of opposition to Powell. Powell had warned him against letting Rhoda associate with them. Powell had even gone so far as to reprehend him for having done so. To prove Powell wholly wrong and presumptuous, and himself wholly right and sagacious, was a very powerful motive with Maxfield.

Then, too, the one soft place in his heart contributed, no less than the above-mentioned feelings, to make him pause before coming to a decisive explanation with the Erringtons, which might—yes, he could not help seeing that it might—result in a total breach between his family and them, and this increased his hesitation as to the line of conduct he should pursue. For the conviction had been growing on him daily that Rhoda's happiness was seriously involved; and Rhoda's happiness was a tremendously high stake to play.

The discussion between himself and Powell did not trouble Maxfield so much. The world—his little world, as important to him as other little worlds are to the titled, or the rich, or the fashionable, or the famous—supposed him to be greatly chagrined and exercised in spirit on this account. And people sympathised with him, or blamed him, according to their prejudices, their passions, or—sometimes—their convictions. But the truth was, old Max cared little about being at odds with the preacher or with the congregation, or with both.

He had been an important personage among the Whitford Methodists, all through the old comfortable days of sleepy concord. And was he now to become a less important personage in these new times of "awakening?" Better war than an ignominious peace!

Nay, there came at last to be a talk of expelling him from the Methodist society, unless he would confess his fault towards the preacher, and amend it. Maxfield had no lack of partisans in Whitford, as has been stated; but then there was the superintendent! In those days the

superintendent (or, as some old-fashioned Methodists continued to call him, in the original Wesleyan phrase, the assistant) of the circuit in which Whitford was situated, was a man of great zeal and sincere enthusiasm.

For those unacquainted with the mechanism of Methodism, it may be well briefly to state what were this person's functions.

Long before John Wesley's death, the whole country was divided into circuits, in which the itinerant preachers made their rounds; and of each circuit the whole spiritual and temporal business—so far as they were connected with the aims and interests of Methodism—was under the regulation of the assistant (afterwards styled the superintendent), whose office it was to admit or expel members, take lists of the society at Easter, hold quarterly meetings, visit the classes quarterly, preside at the love-feasts, and so forth.

The period for the superintendent's next visit to Whitford was rapidly approaching. Maxfield weighed the matter, and tried to forecast the result of a formal reference of the disagreement between himself and Powell to this man's judgment. Had this superintendent, Mr. John Bateson by name, been a Whitford man, one of the old comfortable, narrow-minded tradesmen over whom "old Max" had exercised supremacy in things Methodistical for years, Maxfield would have felt no doubt but that the matter would have ended in an unctuous admonition to Powell to moderate his unseemly excess of zeal, and in the establishment of himself, more firmly than ever, in his place as leader of the congregation. But Mr. Bateson could not be relied on to take this sensible view. He was one of the new-fangled, upsetting, meddling sort, and would doubtless declare David Powell to have been performing his bounden duty, in being instant in season and out of season.

"So that," thought Jonathan, "I should not be master in my own house!"

And if he included in the notion of being master in his own house the power of shutting out his fellow Methodists—preacher and all—from the knowledge of his most private family affairs, the conclusion was a pretty just one. Moreover, it was one to which the very constitution of Methodism pointed *a priori*. But old Maxfield had never in his life been brought into collision with any one who carried

out his principles to their legitimate and logical results, as did David Powell.

Maxfield's creed was a thing to take out and air, and acknowledge at chapel, and prayer-meetings, and field-preachings, and such like occasions; whilst his practice was—well, it certainly was not "too bright or good for human nature's daily food."

David Powell's uncompromising interpretation of certain precepts was intolerable to many besides Maxfield. But the majority of the Whitford Methodists looked forward to Powell's removal to another sphere of action. His stay among them had already been longer than was usual with the itinerant preachers; but it was understood to have been specially prolonged, in consequence of the abundant fruits brought forth by his ministration in Whitford. Still he would go, sooner or later, and then there would be a relaxation of the strong tension in which men's minds and consciences had been strained by the strange influence of this preacher.

But old Maxfield thought it very probable that, before leaving Whitford, the preacher might compass his (Maxfield's) expulsion from the Methodist body.

Then he took a great resolution.

One Sunday, Jonathan, James, and Rhoda Maxfield, together with Elizabeth Grimshaw, were seen at the morning service in the abbey church of St. Chad's, and again in the afternoon.

Dr. Bodkin himself stared down from his pulpit at the Methodist family. Those of the congregation to whom they were known by sight—and these were the great majority—found their devotions quite disturbed by this unexpected addition to their number.

The Maxfields kept their eyes on their prayer-books, and, outwardly, took no heed of the attention they excited. Old Jonathan and his son James looked pretty much as usual; Rhoda trembled, and blushed, and looked painfully shy whenever the forms of the service required her to rise, so as to bring her face above the pew (those were the days of pews) and within easy range of the curious eyes of the congregation.

But Betty Grimshaw held her head aloft, and uttered the responses in a loud voice, and without glancing at her book, as one to whom the Church of England service was entirely familiar. Betty was heartily delighted with the family conversion from the errors of Methodism, and

supported her brother-in-law in it with great warmth. Her Methodism had, in truth, been a mere piece of conformity, for "peace and quietness' sake," as she avowed with much candour. And she was fond of saying that she had been "bred up to the Church;" by which phrase it must not be understood that Betty intended to convey to her hearers that she had entered on an ecclesiastical career.

If the sensation created in the abbey church by the Maxfields' appearance there was great, the surprise and excitement caused by their absence from the Methodist chapel was still greater. By the afternoon of that same Sunday it was known to all the Wesleyans that old Max, with his family, had been seen at St. Chad's. No one deemed it strange, that the whole family should have seceded in a body from their own place of worship. It appeared quite natural to all his old acquaintances that, whither Jonathan Maxfield went, his son, and his daughter, and his sister-in-law should follow him. It is probable that, had he turned Jew or Mohammedan, they would equally have taken it for granted that his conversion involved that of the rest of his family, which opinion was certainly complimentary to old Max's force of character.

And such force of character as consists in pursuing one's own way single-mindedly, old Max undoubtedly possessed. A good, solid belief in oneself, tempered by an inability to see more than one side of a question, will cleave its way through the world like a wedge. We have seen, however, that into Maxfield's mind a doubt of himself on one subject had entered. And, as doubt will do, it weakened his action very considerably as regarded that subject; but on all other matters he was himself, and perhaps infused an extra amount of obstinacy and self-assertion into his behaviour, as though to counterbalance the one weak point.

Towards his old co-religionists he showed himself inflexible. Mr. Bateson, the superintendent, duly arrived, but Jonathan refused to see him, and walked out of his shop when the superintendent walked into it. Maxfield was grimly triumphant, and kept out of the reach of any expression of displeasure from Mr. Bateson, if displeasure he felt.

His defection was undoubtedly a blow to the Methodist community in Whitford. And much indignation, not loud but deep, was aroused in consequence against Powell,

who was looked upon as the prime cause of it. What if the preacher did possess awakening eloquence and burning zeal to save sinners? Here was Jonathan Maxfield, a warm man, a respectable and a thriving man, an ancient pillar of the society, lost to it beyond recall by Powell's means!

And by whom did Powell seek to replace such a man as old Max? By Richard Gibbs, the groom—brother of Minnie Bodkin's maid—who had hitherto enjoyed a reputation for unmitigated blackguardism; by Sam Smith, the cobbler, once drunken, now drunken no longer; by stray vagrants who were converted at his field-preaching, and by the poorest poor, and wretchedest wretched, generally!

And the worst of it was, that one could not openly find fault with all this. David Powell would, with mild yet fervent earnestness, quote some New Testament text, which stopped one's mouth, if it didn't change one's opinion. As if the words ought to be interpreted in that literal way! Well, he would go away before long; that was some comfort.

The period during which this rift in the Methodist community was widening, was a time of peculiar pleasantness to some of our Whitford acquaintance. Of these was Minnie Bodkin. By degrees the habit had established itself among a few of her friends, of meeting every Saturday afternoon in Dr. Bodkin's drawing-room.

Mr. Diamond usually made one at these meetings. Saturday was a half-holiday at the Grammar School, and he was thus at leisure. He had grown more sociable of late, and Mrs. Errington was convinced that this change was entirely owing to her advice. There was Algernon, whose sparkling spirits made him invaluable. There was Mrs. Errington, who was made welcome, as other mothers sometimes are, in right of the merits of her offspring. There was Miss Chubb very often. There was the Reverend Peter Warlock, nearly always. And of all people in the world there would often be seen Rhoda Maxfield, modestly ensconced behind Minnie's couch, or half hidden by the voluminous folds of Mrs. Errington's gown.

No sooner had Mrs. Errington heard of Rhoda's first visit to Dr. Bodkin's house, than she took all the credit of the invitation to herself. She decided that it must certainly be due to her report of Rhoda. And—partly because she really wished to be kind to the girl, partly because it

seemed pretty clear that Minnie was resolved to have her own way about seeing more of her new protégée, and Mrs. Errington was minded that this should come to pass with her co-operation, so as to retain her post of first patroness—the good lady fostered the intimacy by all means in her power. The Italians have a proverb, to the effect that there are persons who will take credit to themselves for the sunshine in July. Mrs. Errington would complacently have assumed the merit of the whole solar system.

Now, at these Saturdays, there grew and strengthened themselves many conflicting feelings, and hopes, and illusions. It was a game at cross purposes, to which none of the players held the key except Algernon.

That young gentleman's perceptions, unclouded and uncoloured by strong feeling, were pretty clear and accurate. However, the period of his departure was fast approaching, and, "after me, the deluge," might be taken to epitomise his sentiments in view of possible complications which threatened to arise among his own intimate circle of friends. To whatever degree the time might seem to be out of joint, Algy would never torment himself with the fancy that he was born to set it right. "If there is to be a mess, I am better out of it," was his ingenuous reflection.

Meanwhile, whatever thoughts might be fitting about under his bright curls, nothing, save the most winning good-humour, the most insouciant hilarity, ever peeped for an instant out of his frank, shining eyes. And the weeks went by, and February was at hand.

ENGLISH CATHEDRALS.

LINCOLN.

THAT the old proverb is true, that "the Devil looks over Lincoln," we do not for more than a moment dispute; but that surely is no reason why we should overlook Lincoln, that bright particular star among English cathedrals, that heaven-pointing beacon, which rises so proudly above the wolds, heaths, and fens of the marshy and amphibious county, and which is loved, by true Lincolnshire folk, as a palladium, a wonder, and a treasure.

According to the Venerable Bede, Lincoln derives its name from the Latin word *Collinus*, which refers to its being built on a hill; but the early Britons called it *Lindcoit*, from the woods that surrounded it. Roman Lincoln was an expansion of

British Lincoln, and the walls, from east to west, covered an area, it is believed, of about one thousand three hundred feet in length and one thousand two hundred in breadth, having only one gate near the middle, which is the Newport Gate of the present day. The southern gate was taken down about 1777, and it was all that the workmen could do, with a powerful battering-ram, to bring it to the ground. According to that eminent antiquary, Mr. Gough, the cathedral close comprehends nearly half of the old Roman city eastward. The west gate of Lincoln was probably pulled down when the Conqueror built the castle, but the east gate stood till 1813, when Sir Cecil Wray built a house on the site. The old Roman wall of the city, says Gough, passed in a direct line through the site of the present chapter-house and upper transept to the brow of the hill, whence, at the enlargement of the original Roman city, it passed down by the Were Dyke to the Tower Garth on the water side. The Bail was the true old Roman Lindum.

The Newport Gate, Dr. Stukeley, another most eminent old antiquary, considered a splendid relic of old Rome. The semicircular archway, sixteen feet in diameter, is formed of only twenty-six Cyclopean stones of coarse grit, laid apparently without mortar; the original height of this portal for the legionaries having been twenty-two feet and a half. Eastward of this gateway ran another lump of Roman wall, and westward a mass of alternate brick and stone, which went in Lincoln by the name of the Mint Wall, though it was probably only a fragment of a Roman granary. From Roman coins found near the north-west wall, it is supposed that Roman Lincoln dates back to the usurper Carausius, or Julian the Apostate. If the former emperor, the Lincoln walls go back as far as the end of the third century after Christ. In 1739, at the south-west corner of the cathedral close, near the Chequer Gate, there were discovered three Roman stone coffins, a white tessellated pavement, and a hypocaust, thirteen feet below the level of modern Lincoln—so deep, says Mr. Gough, in his edition of Camden's *Britannia*, had old Lindum sunk into its grave. In 1782 a Roman sweating-bath was dug into near the King's Arms; and in 1790, in an open field half a mile from the east gate, a rough Roman sarcophagus and urn, and several earthen and glass funeral urns, were found. In 1786 Roman conduit-

pipes were dug up between the castle and Quay Tower, on the side of Foss Dyke. In the area of the castle have also been discovered fragments of black and gilt pottery. In 1791, in digging in the cloister court of Lincoln cathedral, two tessellated rooms were discovered, and there is still a Roman inscription built into the west wall of St. Mary's Tower.

The Danes frequently stormed Lincoln; nor were the rapacious Normans much less greedy and cruel. The Conqueror's first order, after his victory near the Sussex seashore, was to build four great castles—at Hastings, Nottingham, York, and Lincoln. The latter town then contained, as Domesday Book shows, one thousand and seventy houses, two hundred and forty of which were destroyed by William's workmen, to make room for the new fortress that was to curb the stubborn and reluctant Saxons. Little but the gates, walls, and keep now remain. The latter is now a gaol; and opposite it is an entrenchment, originally thrown up by King Stephen.

It was in the reign of our first Norman king that Lincoln really began, in spite of the half-Frenchman's greedy tyranny, to bloom and burgeon. It was the proud Norman's will that all sees should be removed to the chief cities in the diocese, and lurk no longer in small towns or obscure villages; so, at William's fiat, Remigius de Foscamp took down his crozier and mitre from Dorchester and hung them up again at Lincoln, and began the foundation of a cathedral which he completed in the brief space of four years, but which he did not live to consecrate.

In the reign of Henry the First the city became at once wealthy and populous by the energy of the richer citizens, who cut a navigable canal from their river Witham to the Trent, near Torksey; and this was probably the first canal ever cut—except for military purposes—in England. The Trent, thus opened, led to the Humber, and the Humber to the sea; and thus foreign imports were added to inland exports, and so came industry and wealth.

Lincoln survived a terrible fire in 1110, and an earthquake in 1185, and took an active part in the wars of Maud and Stephen, for it had now become rich and powerful.

Stephen had taken Lincoln Castle from a half-brother of Ranulph, the warlike and powerful Earl of Chester. The two brothers, however, won it back by force

or fraud from Stephen, and even obtained his pardon and a confirmation of their old claims. The Lincoln citizens disliking—or, as old chroniclers call it, "greatly disrelishing"—the Earl of Chester, soon sent secret word to Stephen that he might now, by a sudden and impetuous attack, take the ill-provided castle and seize the two brothers, one of whom had married a daughter of the Earl of Gloucester, Maud's great partisan. Stephen was at the time near London, with his army, preparing to celebrate the Christmas festivals. The king, false and careless of oaths of honour, instantly drew together a force and invested Lincoln Castle; yet, after all, the prey escaped him. The Earl of Chester, slipping away by night, passed Stephen and his army, spurred off to Wales, sent to his father-in-law, the Earl of Gloucester, for troops, and arrived back at Gloucester just as it was about to surrender, worn out with a six weeks' close siege. The earl, passing a swollen river, where Stephen should have fallen on him, met Stephen on a plain near Chester, in battle array.

Stephen, brave to the core, but inferior in number to the earl in knights and men-at-arms, stood at bay at last, round his royal standard, which he himself, dismounting, defended with axe and spear. He had unhorsed the strongest of his knights and formed them into a solid phalanx; his two scanty divisions of cavalry he posted on his flanks, which were led by eight earls, of whom the Earl of Richmond was chief. The Earl of Gloucester had, also, three divisions; but he did not dismount his knights, and he placed in the vanguard a band of barons and knights attached to Maud, and whom the brave usurper had deprived of their lands. These desperate men, throwing away their spears and drawing their swords, fell desperately on the Earl of Richmond's cavalry, and put them to rout, with all the earls, in a pack. The onset now pressed closer and closer on Stephen's band, which, William of Malmesbury says, "was finally invested like a castle." The phalanx long withstood both horse and foot, axe, spear, sword, and arrow; but, at last, the Earl of Chester, strenuous for victory, and dismounting all his cavalry, wedged into the solid square, and hewed a way to the usurper. All round Stephen were now either killed or taken; but he fought on, beating down the earl with a blow of a mace. At last, his battle-axe and sword

broke; he was wounded on the head by a stone, his vizor was seized by a knight of great strength, and he was then overpowered and sent to Bristol Castle, where he was thrown into prison. Things, however, in spite of all, went well with the brave usurper; for his great enemy, the Earl of Gloucester, was soon after taken by William of Ypres, one of his (Stephen's) adherents, and exchanged for the great prisoner; and the Earl of Chester, on his release, delivered up to him the castles of Coventry and Lincoln. At the latter place, Stephen spent a merry Christmas in 1044; and, finally, after a reign of nineteen troublous years, was succeeded by Henry the Second, with whom he had long been at peace.

It is said by Speed that, after being crowned in London, Henry the Second was crowned again at Lincoln. It is certain, at least, that on his return from a meeting with Malcolm, King of Scotland, Henry wore his crown at Wishford, but not at Lincoln; the people of that powerful city having a superstition that a king wearing his crown within the walls was a forerunner of disaster. Richard the First put up Lincoln Castle for sale, but with what result is not recorded. In the reign of John, David, King of Scotland, did homage to the usurper outside the city. In all these ceremonies and catastrophes Lincoln cathedral had its share of rejoicing or deprecating processions, and victors and captives alike knelt at the shrine.

When the barons turned out against John, one of them took Lincoln, but the castle still held out stoutly for the king. It was on his way to relieve the city that John lost all his treasure and baggage in the inundated marshes, and soon after died, either poisoned or broken-hearted. The Earl of Pembroke, as regent of the young king, at once raised a powerful army and pushed on to Lincoln to save the castle. The French, under the Earl of Perch, were attacked on all sides, and were soon defeated, the earl being speared through his vizor in the churchyard of the cathedral, some four hundred rebel knights taken, and the rest drowned in the Witham, or butchered by the country people. The riches of the barons' camp were plundered and sold, and hence the battle was mockingly known as "Lewis Fair."

The castle of Lincoln, in the reign of Edward the First, became annexed to the Duchy of Lancaster. John of Gaunt made the castle his summer residence, and is

said to have built himself a winter palace in the southern suburbs below the hill.

Edward the First held a parliament at Lincoln, where it was agreed to resist the Pope's prohibition against waging war with Scotland; and, four years after, Edward wintered here, and confirmed Magna Charta. Edward the Second also held a parliament in Lincoln to consult how best to prevent Scotch outrage. This king first granted the privilege of a mayor to Lincoln; and Richard the Second, when visiting the city, granted the mayors of the town the privilege of having a sword carried before them in their civic processions. Henry the Sixth, in 1446, held his court in the episcopal palace on the hill.

In the reign of Edward the Fourth Lincoln was the scene of a short-lived rebellion, and, at the cathedral, prayers must have been offered up both for the success and defeat of the conspirators. The son of Lord Wells, enraged at the death of his father, whom Edward had cruelly beheaded, collected thirty thousand men at Lincoln and attacked the Yorkist army at Stamford, where he was defeated and some ten thousand men slain. The Lincoln men, in their eagerness to escape, stripped off their coats to run faster, from which circumstance the battle is still known at Lincoln as "The Battle of Lose Coat Field." After Bosworth, Henry the Seventh visited Lincoln. Here he spent three days offering up prayers and thanksgivings at the cathedral for his victory; and here, too, he heard of the breaking up of Lord Lovell's army. Lincoln was again in effervescence, when Henry the Eighth and Cromwell enforced the reading of the Lord's Prayer, and other parts of divine service, in English. A priest, known as Captain Cobler, soon gathered together twenty thousand insurgents, but they laid down their arms on the king threatening to march against them in person. The town paid a forty-pound benevolence, however, for this clemency.

After this, Lincoln remained quiet among its marshes till the Civil War, when it was besieged by the Earl of Manchester and his Parliamentary army, who soon took all but the castle and minster. The scaling was done very gallantly at two in the morning; the garrison, ceasing from firing and hurling down large stones, Sir Francis Fane, the Cavalier governor, and some seven hundred soldiers, were taken prisoners. The cathedral did not suffer much from this short storm.

Of the Bishops of Lincoln who presided in this beautiful cathedral, Remigius, the first Norman prelate, died on the eve of the day appointed for the consecration of the new church he had built, and to which he had invited every bishop in England. This good man, the legend goes, fed daily, for three months in every year, one thousand poor persons. It is said he instigated the Conqueror to erect Battle Abbey.

His successor, Bloet, who had been chaplain to William, added twenty-one prebends to the cathedral, which he adorned, furnished, and consecrated. He was thirty years bishop, and died suddenly of apoplexy at Woodstock, as he was riding with King Henry the First. In Bloet's time Ely was taken away from the see of Lincoln. The third bishop, Alexander de Blois, rebuilt Lincoln cathedral on its being burnt, and also built three castles, for which last proof of ambitious ostentation he was imprisoned by King Stephen, upon which, on obtaining his freedom—to atone for his fault—he built and endowed four monasteries.

The next bishop, Robert de Chisney, began injuring the revenue of the see by constant indiscreet grants to greedy relations; but eventually grew more prudent, and, as compensation for his extravagance, built the episcopal chapel at Lincoln, and provided a house for himself and successors on the west side of Chancery-lane in London (now known as Lincoln's Inn Fields). After his death there was a vacant throne in the cathedral for six years, when Geoffrey Plantagenet, one of Henry the Second's illegitimate sons by the Fair Rosamond, without ever visiting Lincoln, or even being consecrated priest, pocketed the revenues of the marshy diocese with pious punctuality.

Walter de Constantis, the next bishop, abandoned Lincoln for Caen, in consequence of a vague prophecy that no Bishop of Lincoln could long wear his mitre in peace. His successor, Hugh, a Somersetshire prior, and a man of great piety and austerity, who enlarged the cathedral, died in London, and his body arrived at the gate of Lincoln, just as John and Malcolm of Scotland entered the city. The two kings, eager to honour so holy a corpse, at once set their shoulders to the bier and bore it to the cathedral, where it was buried near the altar of St. John the Baptist. Abbot Hugh, twenty years later, was canonised at Rome, and sixty years after his bones were placed in a gold

shrine, which disappeared at the Reformation, when zeal and theft ran high. Bishop Fuller afterwards erected a plain altar-tomb over the good man's grave. It was this Bishop Hugh who cruelly dug up Fair Rosamond's body and removed it, as a desecration, from Godstow nunnery.

Hugh de Wallies, Chancellor of England, a later bishop, was excommunicated by the Pope for supporting the just cause of the barons against King John; but he bought off the Papal curse by a fine of one thousand marks.

And now we come to a very great and enlightened man indeed—Bishop Grosseteste, one of the earliest of our Greek scholars, and an eminent mathematician, philosopher, and theologian. Richard of Bardney, a rhyming chronicler, who versified the bishop's life, describes the boy as being seen at school by the mayor of Lincoln, whose interest he had excited while begging at his door; but he was really a Suffolk man by birth, and was educated at Oxford, where he studied Greek and Hebrew, wrote a book on astronomy, and was supposed to have invented a brazen head, that answered questions, and uttered prophecies, every Saturday. He is said by some to have been the first Englishman to introduce the Greek numerals; and, above all things, he openly and resolutely opposed the encroachments of the Pope. He was, in fact, one of the early reformers of the English Church, and in many respects rivalled Wycliffe. It is probable that Grosseteste finished the present cathedral nave as far as the west towers, including the great transept and rood tower, begun by Hugh de Wallies; and he raised the rood tower as high as the upper windows, Bishop D'Alderly afterwards adding the spire, which fell down in 1547. On the night Grosseteste died, Fulke Basset, Bishop of London, being near Buckden, heard "a certain sweet bell sounding high in the air;" and he said to his attendants, "By St. Paul, I am of opinion, brothers, that the venerable bishop passed out of this world is now seated in the heavenly region; and this bell is a token of it, for there is no abbey near."

This enlightened man was a great opponent of the Italian clergy thrust into English benefices by that overbearing Pope, Innocent the Fourth. He calculated that these Italian intruders pocketed more than seventy thousand marks a year, whilst the king's income did not amount to a third of

that sum. He boldly wrote to the Pope, denouncing such appointments, and insisting that no papal mandate could be valid that was repugnant to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles. He would not obey such an absurd mandate, he said, though an angel from Heaven should command it. The Pope fell into a rage at this honest letter.

"Who is this old dotard," he cried, "deaf and imbecile, who thus rashly presumes to judge my actions? By Peter and Paul, if the goodness of my heart did not restrain me, I would so chastise him as to make him an example and spectacle to all the world. Is not the King of England my sworn vassal, and, at a word of mine, would he not throw him into prison, and load him with infamy and disgrace?"

The Pope then solemnly excommunicated Grosseteste, and even appointed a successor to his see. The learned man, however, took no notice of the brutum fulmen, and was not a whit the worse for it. On his death-bed, Grosseteste plainly denounced the Pope as Antichrist, for the usury, simony, and rapine he encouraged; and prophesied that only the edge of the sword would ever save England from such Egyptian bondage. This man, who was so much before his age, was interred in the upper south transept. An effigy of the bishop, in brass, was raised upon an altar-tomb. The Pope rejoiced over his death, and first wished to write to King Henry and order the bishop's bones to be cast out of the church and burnt. An indulgence of forty days was granted by Bishop D'Alderly to all who visited his tomb; out of which, said the monks, oozed a holy and healing oil. The grave was opened in 1782, and the bones discovered, with a sheet of lead placed above, where the face had been. His crozier was carved at the top into a lamb's head, and there was also found a ring, with a small blue stone, a chalice, and paten. On the crozier-top was a brass plate, inscribed with these words:

*Pro baculi formam,
Prelati discito, Normann.*

The seal bore a bishop standing on one side, and on the other, Our Lady and the Child Jesus, with the motto, "Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum." Edward the First in vain endeavoured to obtain the canonisation of Grosseteste; and the dean and chapter of St. Paul's, equally in vain, plied the Pope with eulogies of the dead man's learning, piety, and miracles.

The effigy and arms of this tomb were destroyed during the Civil War.

But it is round another mitred monument of Lincoln cathedral that the greatest number of legends cluster. It stands desolately in the south aisle of the choir, and is traditionally supposed to be the tomb of little Sir Hugh, a child found murdered at Lincoln in 1225, and vulgarly supposed to have been crucified by some cruel and blasphemous Jews, in derision of Our Saviour's sufferings. A body supposed to be that of the sainted child was discovered, says good old Pegge, in his life of Grosseteste, in 1791, when the north aisle of the choir was repaired; but only another old Pegge will ever believe him. There were many ballads written about this supposed crime, the best of which commences,

*The bonny boys of merry Lincoln
Were playing at the ball;
And with them stood the sweet Sir Hugh,
The flower among them all.*

Chaucer, with his quick perception of the beautiful, at once seized on so recent a miracle, and introduced "Young Hew of Lincoln" into his Prioress's story. Bishop Percy, with less than his usual acumen, mistook "Mirryland Toun" for Mailand, Milan, and concluded the whole to be of Italian origin. The story is, after all, a true one, for Matthew Paris, who was living at the time, relates it circumstantially. Mr. Lethieuller proved the fact in the *Archæologia* by two records, one of which was a commission from the king (Henry the Third) to seize for the king's use the houses belonging to those Jews who were hanged at Lincoln for crucifying a child. According to Matthew Paris, the boy, eight years old, was tortured for ten days and then crucified before a large council of Jews, in contempt of Christianity. The body was found in a pit or draw-well in the house of a Jew, which the boy had been seen to enter. The Jew, being promised pardon, confessed the crime, and avowed that such murders were committed nearly every year by his nation. Notwithstanding the promise of pardon, the Jew was tied to the tail of a horse and dragged to the gallows, and eventually eighteen of the richest and most distinguished Jews in Lincoln were hanged for sharing in the murder, and many more sent as hostages to the Tower of London. Herd and Jamieson both give variations of this once popular ballad. In 1736, when Lethieuller visited Lincoln cathedral, he was shown a painted statuette of a boy

which was erroneously supposed to have formed part of "Bishop Hugh's" tomb. There were bleeding wounds marked on the hands, feet, and side, and the antiquary conjectures that the shrine given in Stukeley's *Itinerarium Curiosum* was the real tomb of Sir Hugh.

Poor old Lincoln cathedral has suffered much from reformers, both rough and gentle. Peck, in his *Desiderata Curiosa*, gives one hundred and sixty-three monumental inscriptions as existing in 1641, and most of these were soon after torn off or brutally defaced. The list had been collated carefully with Dugdale. The cathedral was a gold mine for Henry the Third, who rummaged out of its treasures no less than two thousand six hundred and twenty-one ounces of gold, and four thousand two hundred and eighty-five ounces of silver, besides pearls and precious stones. St. Hugh's shrine was of pure gold, and Bishop D'Alderly's of massy silver. The episcopal mitre was the richest in England, and the cloths for the altar were of costly cloth of gold, embroidered with patriarchs, apostles, evangelists, and virgins. At the Reformation many old tombs were destroyed in search of treasure. The bishop and dean pulled down, or defaced in holy zeal, all crucifixes or figures of saints. Last of all came the fanatics of the Civil Wars, who worked as hard to destroy all Gothic adornments, as if a new road to Heaven was to be paved with their shivers. The brass plates on the walls and stones were torn out and sold, and the handsome brass gates of the choir and of several of the chantries pulled down and broken up. The episcopal chapel, built by Bishop Alnwick, has been partially destroyed since 1727. The south porch also, the usual entrance for the bishop, has been cruelly treated, the central statue being decapitated and the other much defaced.

There is a tradition in Lincoln about two lancet windows in the south front of the lower transept. The legend is that one of these was constructed by the master mason, who destroyed himself on his apprentice surpassing him in a second window. This must be an old freemasons' tradition, for a similar story is told at Melrose, only there it is a pillar and here a window.

The choir at Lincoln is remarkable for its arches, filled with figures of angels playing on musical instruments with the quaintest earnestness, or the most innocent and seraphic indifference. In the sixty-two stalls are misereres, or half-seats, or-

namented with foliage and grotesque devices, some not altogether reverent or even becoming. Amongst these is one figure with a bellows, puffing at a fire beneath a chaldron, from which a mitred head is rising. This is supposed to represent good Bishop Grosseteste at the moment he had completed his oracular brazen head, of which Gower says, in his *Lover's Confession* : —

How busy that he was
Upon the clergy a head of brass
To forge, and make it for to tell
Of such things as befell.

On the north side of the high altar are the monuments of the Bishops Remigius and Bloet, probably erected at the same time when the choir was rebuilt by Bishop Alexander, in the reign of Stephen. The two form a screen, and are divided into six stalls, divided by small pinnacled buttresses; the three divisions nearest the altar (Bloet's tomb) were, in the middle ages, used as the Holy Sepulchre, during the solemn ceremonies of Passion week. At the door are three mailed knights reclining on their shields, and representing the Roman guard placed to watch the holy sepulchre.

On the south side of the choir, facing the tomb of these two early bishops, is an altar-tomb with the plaster figure of a coroneted lady, representing Catherine Swynford, first mistress, then wife of John of Gaunt; and near her is the tomb of her only daughter, Joan, Countess of Westmoreland.

But perhaps the most remarkable curiosity in this history of English cathedrals is that singular paradox in stone, that architectural puzzle, the unsupported "Centenarian beam"—a daring artifice of the old Gothic builders—to register, once and for ever, the settlement of the cathedral towers. It is a bow of uncemented stones, eleven inches in depth; twenty-nine feet long and twenty-one inches in diameter at either end, tapering in the middle to twelve inches. A more magical and exquisite gauge and test-piece was never invented by human ingenuity, and only the brazen head that good Bishop Grosseteste framed could surely ever have suggested such an invention. No wonder the brazen head went mad after that great intellectual effort, and beat itself wildly to pieces.

And now, one word for poor old Great Tom, though he, too, is cracked, like the celebrated head, fragments of which, the

vergers tell you, are indisputably to be found somewhere in the cathedral vaults. Truly, Sir Thomas of Lincoln is great, and his greatness, indeed, was at last too much for him. He weighs four tons fourteen hundredweight, and holds four hundred and twenty-four gallons (ale measure)—a pretty good draught, even for the bishop's brazen head—and his mouth is seven yards and a half wide. "Mighty Tom" of Oxford, however, beats Tom of Lincoln by three tons. Tom was always too big for Lincoln tower; but, when it was first cast in the minster yard, in the reign of James the First, it was always boomed out at the sight of the judges coming over the Fens towards Lincoln.

Among the good, bad, or eccentric bishops of Lincoln we should not forget spiteful Fleming, who founded Lincoln College at Oxford, and who strewed Wycliffe's ashes in the Swift, forgetting that

The Swift went to the Severn,
And the Severn to the sea.

Sanderson (Charles the First) was the last bishop who wore a moustache; and, last of all, we may mention sturdy Bishop Thomas, who matrimonially distinguished himself by marrying and burying five wives.

HAUNTED.

THESE broods no shadow o'er these ancient walls,

Where the bright roses clamber;
As fitly the mellow blackbird calls,
As silverly the fountain spirits and falls,
As when, of old, her face from yonder chamber
Looked forth at dewy morning early,

While yet the moon, a crescent pale and pearly,
Hung low in the blue west, and all the east was amber.

There broods no shadow, such as evil times
And fallen fortunes summon, cold and grey,
Beneath whose shroud creeps the slow ghoul decay,
Slow but insatiate. Wild unworded crimes,
And nameless sorrows have not pall'd the place
With bodiless gloom, more dread than darkness' self.

The weird wan-visaged elf,
Solitude, voiceless mate of silence, keeps
No endless vigil here. A ring-dove sleeps,
Sun-warmed, upon the porch. Joy's song is chaunted
By happy lips of children all day long.

It is a home of peace and summer song;
And yet, the place is haunted!

The heart-loved haunts of memory are thronged
With gentle ghosts, that chill us not, nor chide.
Once through these flower-pied paths a form did glide,

Whose sunny eyes shine happier o'er the years,
And brighter through my tears.
That far-off spring with sweeter birds was song'd
Than any summer now, because her voice
Sang refrain to all carols. In my heart
The music echoes still; oh heart rejoice
That aught so dear and deathless may have birth
In this care-cumbered earth!

Here is the curl she clipt! Its fellows now
Show silver 'gainst its sable, yet within
All wakes to youth at thought of her. The din

Of desperate life, of wild and strenuous days,
Has never drowned those low, love-burden'd lays
She sang to me at twilight here. Ah strange!
Was it last even? Here? The changeful range
Of three long decades shrinks, and lo!
I'm pulse to pulse again with the dim long ago.
See, there she glides, her long soft hair unbound,
Her lightsome feet scarce pressing the glad ground,
More than some flying leaf!

Can tears so quicken sight, and phantoms shape
From memory's shadows? Thee I cannot drape
With any veil of age, or garb of grief;

So young, so bright, so gay,
A denizen of day

Thou wert, thou art; not even death hath power
To shadow thee. This was thy favourite bower,
This, this—and still, as are thine eyes did close,
The honeysuckle mingles with the rose.

A benison on those soft stranger hands
That have been tender with this leafy screen;

In what dear visions seen
On lonely nights, in far and flowerless lands!
A gentle spirit-touch is on mine eyes,
Soft as thy lips were. Should thy wraith arise
Between me and the sun, wert thou more near,
Oh darling of my youth, long dead, yet doubly
dear?

Haunted! This garden was her best-loved realm,
From lilac time to leaf fall. Branchy elm,
Peers not a face between thy leafy low
Sward-sweeping boughs? Ah no!

To-day the nodding roses know her not,
Even the gentle lily hath forgot

The gentler hands that tended, long ago,
Its buds of breaking snow.

Quick Nature holds no memory of the dead;
Ghosts of slain blossoms, leaves that last year shed,
Haunt not her greyest hours. The roses live
But for the living, and no fragrance give
To parted spirits, though their blossoms wave
Above a green and unforgetten grave.

Man only lives in memory's ground enchanted;
Only the heart is haunted.

THE STORY OF OWEN GORTON.

IN SIX CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

A LOUD knocking at my door. Should I pay any heed to it? I wanted to see no one. I never received visitors: I was too well content to be alone and at peace. If any one desired to see me, what was that to me? Why should I sacrifice my will and my pleasure to his? Let him knock till he was tired, and then go about his business.

I lived in the corner house, facing the river, of one of the many dull, shabby no-thoroughfares which run from the Strand southwards. It was a large rambling old-fashioned building, that had once probably been the mansion of a nobleman. It was now let out, in sets of chambers, to tenants of various kinds and callings. At high tide its walls were almost washed by the river; at low water, an acre or so of thick black mud, with here and there narrow fringes of rushes and rank vegetation, was left to rub against and sap and soil the foundations. I am describing the place as it

existed some twenty years ago—a gloomy, grimy house, that had known little of paint or whitewash, or even of soap and water, for many a long day; smoke-dried, soot-encrusted, weather-stained, worm-eaten, and altogether decayed and dilapidated. Still it suited me—for reasons I may by-and-by adduce—to live in it. I had for a considerable period occupied a quaint, cramped group of apartments on the highest floor. They were small, low-ceilinged, and ill-arranged, with narrow windows, starved fireplaces, and chimneys that invariably smoked. They were burning hot in summer, from the sun beating so directly on the slated roof; and bitterly cold in winter, when the wind came roaring up the river, dashing against the house till its every timber creaked and trembled, and the rooms seemed to rock and plunge in the gale like a ship at sea. Now there was the whispering as of shrill voices through the keyholes; now the carpet on the floor was lifted as though by human hands; now the doors seemed prized and started from their locks and hinges; now some furious gusts hurled rain, or hail, or snowflakes against the casements, until their fastenings were rent, and with a wild crash they sprang open. It was by no means an admirable dwelling-place; still, as I have said, it suited me.

And then my rooms had their advantages. In fine weather I could mount to the roof, and enjoy a fine panorama of London. I could note the glories of sunrise and sunset; the soft cloud of distant hills on the south; the wide-flowing river below, and the numberless little vessels riding upon its jaundiced waters. At night there were the twinkling lamps upon the bridges to be observed; the multitudinous stars overhead, or the white moon rising from a bank of fog or smoke, flecking the wavelets with silver, or flooding the house-tops with light. The hours and hours I have passed upon my roof! The many times I have seen the death of the day and the birth of the night, the sinking of the sun, the rising of the moon! London asleep, midnight gone, and silence over all, but for the ceaseless soft lapping of the river, and now and again the solemn striking of the church clocks—tolling ever, as it were, for the passing away of time. The world hushed and asleep, and I and the stars the only watchers!

And I loved my roof in that it seemed to bring death and me so near together. It was a weird fancy, perhaps, but it

often recurred to me, and I found myself greatly harping upon it. At any moment a step from the low parapet—a chance step, or one taken by design—it mattered little which—and my life was at an end. I derived a curious pleasure from considering the ease with which I could thus dispose of myself, for ever. But a step, and there was the grave; mine whenever I so chose. And what would the world say? Did it matter much to me what the world might say about that, or indeed about anything? *Felo de se*, perhaps. But what a trifle would alter that view of the case! Say I went over the parapet, holding a jug or a can in my hands. My death would then be called a fatal accident. It would be explained that I had been tending the few trumpery plants I keep upon my roof, and that in so doing I had missed my footing, or turned suddenly giddy, and fallen over the side. Possibly I should be pitied, lamented; many people might even profess to be shocked! So much for the fallibility of human judgments!

The knocking had continued; had, indeed, increased. There now, indeed, seemed to be an intention to hammer the door down. The noise had become unbearable. Who could this persistent person be? What did he mean by disturbing me in this shameful manner? It was necessary for me to go to the door, if only to remonstrate with him, or to take measures for punishing him for his outrageous conduct.

Reluctantly—for I had long disliked action of any kind; I interfered with none, and naturally objected to being interfered with—I went to the door and opened it. Forthwith a stout, stern-looking, middle-aged man, dressed in a rough great coat, buttoned up to his chin, entered, with great abruptness. Immediately he closed the door after him, and clapped his back against it.

“Your name is Owen Gorton,” he asserted, rather than inquired.

I admitted that I was Owen Gorton.

“You will consider yourself in my custody.”

“In your custody?”

“I am a police-officer. I hold a warrant for your arrest.”

“For my arrest? Absurd! On what charge, pray?”

“Murder!”

It was very strange. Yet, somehow, I did not feel much surprise, or anything like alarm, I remember. It was so clear

to me that the man was mad, or that there had been some extraordinary mistake.

"Who has been murdered, may I ask?"

"James Thorpe, sugar broker."

"When, pray?"

"The night before last."

"And where?"

"At his house, near Chalk Farm."

"James Thorpe, sugar broker," I said, musingly. "I know him—or rather I used to know him—but I've not seen him for some years past."

"It's my duty to inform you, Mr. Gorton, that anything you say may be used against you."

"At Chalk Farm—last night? Why, I have not stirred outside my door these eight and forty hours."

"So much the better for you—if you can prove it."

I was impressed by his words. Living alone as I did, in so retired a fashion, it would perhaps be difficult to prove anything in regard to my movements abroad, or my staying at home. Still the charge brought against me was really of so monstrous a character that I could not regard it with anything like alarm. The whole thing was so palpably absurd. Annoyed I might well be; but, as yet, I was certainly not alarmed.

"I must trouble you to come with me, sir," said the constable.

"You will let me finish dressing? I am hardly equipped for going out."

"Certainly. Only I can't lose sight of you. You'll excuse me, sir; mine is a painful duty, but I must discharge it. You can see my warrant if you wish."

"It's not necessary," I said; "I shall be ready to accompany you in two minutes."

I entered my dressing-room to change my coat, doff my slippers, and put on a pair of boots, the officer closely following me the while.

"That leads to the roof, perhaps?" he inquired, pointing to a door in the dressing-room.

"Yes; it opens on to a narrow staircase; there's a trap-door at the top."

I could not but observe that he was careful to place himself between me and the door. Moreover, I noticed that, whenever I approached the open window, he stood close to me with his hand upraised, ready, as it seemed to me, to clutch at my coat collar.

"This is certainly the strangest mistake that ever was made, officer," I said.

"Maybe so, sir," he answered. "Mis-

takes are made sometimes, of course. Let us hope that this is one."

"But you must see yourself, officer, that the thing is absurd."

"I can't help that, sir. I can only act upon the information I've received. I haven't to deal otherwise with the case. It will come before the magistrate in the regular way."

"But this James Thorpe was a friend of mine years ago. I used to know him very well indeed."

He was silent, but I could see that he was mentally registering all I said.

"We disagreed at last; downright quarrelled, indeed; I don't mind saying as much. I was sincerely attached to him at one time; but I got to hate him at last. Still, as to murdering him——"

I paused. I so plainly read in the constable's face a renewal of the caution he had given me, that anything I said might be used against me.

"How was he murdered?" I inquired abruptly.

"He was stabbed in the back by some sharp instrument."

"The night before last, you say. At what hour?"

"At nine o'clock, or thereabout. At least that's as I understand the matter."

There was a strange look in the man's face as he said this. As I interpreted it, it seemed to import, "Why ask all these questions? You know more about the matter than I do."

"I am ready now. Where's my hat?"

I proposed to ring the bell for the housekeeper, who lived on the basement, to come upstairs. I desired to inform her of the circumstances under which I was quitting the house.

"Better not, sir," said the officer. "It will only make a disturbance. Let's keep the thing quiet. That's always the pleasantest way. She'll hear of it all fast enough. Here's your hat."

Still I was reluctant to go without leaving a message for my housekeeper. Yet it would be difficult to explain the matter to her in a few words. She would surely misunderstand me. She would perceive that I was in custody, and perhaps hasten to the conclusion that I deserved my fate.

"You won't be seen, sir," the officer went on. "I've a cab at the door. Besides, if there's, as you say, a mistake, the business won't take long. You'll be free again almost immediately."

He said this rather coaxingly, I thought; not as though he really believed it. Still it was reasonable enough.

"And you're not a gentleman as would give trouble, I'm sure," he said. "But this is a serious charge, you know, and a man in my position has his duty to perform. There."

He had handcuffed me, with curious quickness and dexterity.

"Now we're ready, and all complete. Stay!" With great considerateness he pulled down the cuffs of my coat so as to hide my wrists and their fetters, as much as possible. I had, of course, never been handcuffed before. The sensation was of a painful kind; and the cold iron rings, pressing against my wrists, sent, at first, a strange thrill through me. But this soon wore off as the metal grew warmer. Still the whole thing was degrading and distressing; especially to one who, as I did, hated anything like publicity, and was accustomed to live a life of solitude and strict seclusion.

On the landing outside my door stood two policemen, in uniform.

"Cab ready, Wills?" inquired Bligh. "That's all right. You'll stay here, Cobbett; you understand. Now then, sir, please."

Wills mounted to the box. Bligh took his seat beside me in the cab; Cobbett we left behind. I am not sure whether any of my neighbours in the street saw my removal in custody. I did not glance right or left, but kept my eyes fixed on the ground. I might be observed, but I did not want to know that I was observed.

My companion said nothing to me in the cab. He released my arm, whistled, made some brief entries with a very blunt pencil in a large black pocket-book he carried, and every now and then, I remember, he took a rapid yet acute survey of me, as though noting my air, expression, manner, and appearance.

We drove to the Bow-street police station. Bligh interchanged some few words with a constable on duty at the entrance. He ascertained that the magistrate was still sitting in the court on the other side of the street.

"Lucky," I overheard him say. "We can get a remand at once." And then he whispered some instructions to the policeman. I heard the word "witnesses," but little more.

There were not many people in the street, but they seemed to be talking to-

gether rather excitedly. They pressed forward to look at me. They were kept at a few yards' distance, however, by the constables in attendance.

I stood at the prisoners' bar in the police court.

The magistrate was informed by someone—I am not clear by whom—that my name was Owen Gorton, and that I was charged with the wilful murder of James Thorpe. There was a buzz of excitement. The court was very crowded.

Then some one—again I know not whom—stated that it was only proposed to offer that day sufficient evidence to justify my being remanded for further examination on some future occasion.

CHAPTER II.

I WAS as a man in a dream. All was so strange and new to me, that I felt greatly perplexed and bewildered. I could not yet bring myself to understand fully the situation I occupied, or the nature of the proceedings in which I was involved. That I was a prisoner accused of murder; that evidence was forthcoming in substantiation of the charge; that there was already a prevalent disposition, on the part of those about me, to regard me as guilty—all this was hopelessly inconceivable to me. Even now, my recollection of these painful experiences is curiously blurred and vague. I am naturally shortsighted, and my infirmity has been much increased by long poring over books and writings. Unfortunately, in my hurried departure from my chambers, I had forgotten to bring with me the spectacles I usually assumed whenever I wished to view objects at any little distance from me. The faces of the people about me, as I stood at the prisoners' bar in the police court, were therefore presented to me in an indistinct form, like pale blots upon a dark ground. I could not define with certainty their features or expressions, but I was assured that I was an object of general curiosity, of highly-excited observation on the part of all present. Still I could discover no one that I knew among the crowd. For friends—well, I had no friends. For years I had disbelieved in the existence of friends—real friends. I would have given much, however, if I could have perceived but one ordinary acquaintance near me. It would have been as a kind of link, uniting me to reality and every-day life—an evidence in some sort that I had not been borne to an imaginary world, or

fallen a victim to some extraordinary hallucination. But I was encompassed by strangers on every side, or by even worse, as I judged—by enemies.

Of the presiding magistrate, I could only see that he was a pale, bald-headed man; his face to me was as a blank white oval. When he spoke, I noted that his voice was very calm and distinct.

I listened to the evidence, but I was in too confused a state to comprehend its purport fully, or to follow it very closely. My head ached cruelly. My mind wandered, too. I was still occupied with marvelling over the strangeness of my position; its danger I did not yet appreciate. And yet curious thoughts, having no sort of relation to the charge brought against me, engaged me at intervals, almost in an absorbing degree. At one time I distinctly remember I was busy with a calculation of great complexity, involving long lines and columns of figures, and having for its object something—I know not what. It was altogether meaningless, perhaps, and yet I seemed constrained to devote myself to it, as though it had been a matter of singular importance and value.

A witness, a domestic servant in the employ of the late Mr. Thorpe, gave evidence in regard to the discovery of the murder. She stood within a few feet of me. She was a middle-aged woman, coarsely dressed and homely of bearing, as it seemed to me, yet altogether of respectable appearance. She was much affected, and sobbed audibly. She had entered the back dining-room late at night, and discovered the body of her master lying upon the floor, face downwards. He had been wounded in the back; blood had been flowing copiously. He did not speak or move. He was quite dead. The gas had been extinguished. The window was open. It looked into a garden. It was easy to obtain access to the house by means of the garden and the window of the back parlour. Mr. Thorpe was a widower, she believed. She had left the house for a short time to do some shopping for herself and to fetch the supper beer. She could not be quite sure how long she had been absent. She had been detained. She had stayed to converse with a friend. She was quite sober; of that she was certain. She had not been absent, she was sure, for more than an hour and a half at the outside. It was perhaps half-past ten when she returned.

Her fellow servant had gone away for a week into the country, owing to ill-health. On that account she had been living alone in the house with her master. He gave little trouble. He usually dined in the City, she believed; at any rate away from his house. She spoke to him when she saw him lying upon the floor. He did not move; he did not answer. She went to him and tried to raise him. She touched his hand and found it nearly cold. She was much frightened, and felt very faint. She hurried out and gave the alarm. The house was semi-detached, and the adjoining premises were unoccupied. She informed the opposite neighbours, and by their advice went for the medical man, who resided about a hundred yards off, at the corner of the Terrace. Returning from the doctor's, she met a policeman, and went back with him to the house. She found everything as she had left it.

In reply to a question addressed her by the magistrate, she stated that, to the best of her belief, she had never before set eyes upon me—the prisoner at the bar. She had been rather more than three years in the service of Mr. Thorpe.

A policeman confirmed her evidence. So far as I could make out, he was not one of the constables I had seen at my chambers at the time of my arrest. He produced a knife, found upon the floor, close to the body. I saw it glitter and flash in the sunlight streaming into the court from an upper window. The shape of the weapon, however, I could not distinguish, save that it seemed to be of considerable length.

The doctor then entered the box. He described, with medical particularity, the nature of the wound inflicted upon Mr. Thorpe. Death must have been instantaneous. The blow must have been one of extraordinary force, and could not possibly have been self-inflicted. The weapon produced was a likely instrument to have been employed. The orifice and depth of the wound corresponded with the dimensions of the blade. He had probed the wound. The blow had severed the spinal cord. The deceased had not been a patient of his; knew him well by sight, however, as a neighbour. Deceased was probably about fifty. He was of robust proportions and of middle height. Death could only be ascribed to the wound in the back. Mr. Thorpe had been dead an hour and a half, or two hours, perhaps, when he (the doctor) first saw the body.

As yet there was nothing to connect me

with the crime in any way. But now came evidence as to footprints in the garden. These were proved to correspond exactly with the soles of a pair of boots of mine, conveyed from my chambers, and produced in court. A witness also deposed that he had met a man running from the direction of Mr. Thorpe's house. The man had passed him as he stood beneath a gas lamp. The light had fallen full upon the face of the man running. His dress was disordered, and his manner betrayed great agitation. Witness could not fail to know him again. Witness was prepared to swear that the man he had seen running from the direction of Mr. Thorpe's house, on the night of the murder, was none other than the prisoner at the bar. This strange evidence was confirmed by the statement of another and, as it seemed, altogether independent witness, who professed to have seen me beyond all doubt, on the night of the murder, immediately in the neighbourhood of Mr. Thorpe's residence.

I cannot pretend that I have set forth the evidence against me fully or exactly as it was adduced in court. I was so disturbed and distressed at my strange position, that many minor points and details, no doubt, escaped me. Its purport and general effect was, however, very much as I have stated.

The magistrate decided that there was quite enough evidence before him to justify a remand. The question of bail was not entered upon. Whom could I ask? What friends had I to undertake to be bail for me? Besides, the case was too grave to admit of my being released temporarily in that way. I was informed that I was remanded for a week.

That night I lodged in Newgate.

CORDELIA ON THE GARONNE.

In the course of our frequent studies of folk-lore, we have found several favourites of the nursery taking up their abode in strange places, and associated with strange companions. The number of popular tales, of which versions differing more or less from each other are not to be found in many lands, is small indeed. Comparatively small, consequently, is the number of those tales which differ from each other in essentials, however they may vary in their details. Very commonly, stories which are mutually independent in one country, are incorporated with one another else-

where. Of this sort of combination we have a remarkable instance in a tale current at Angers, on the banks of the Garonne, and communicated to M. J. F. Blade, a French antiquary, by oral tradition. It identifies Cinderella with Cordelia.

A certain king, whose chief peculiarity seems to have been an extraordinary predilection for salt, and who was moreover a widower, had three marriageable daughters, and a priceless valet whom he consulted on every matter of importance. The valet was a man of exceeding discretion, and when his royal master told him that he was about to intrust him with an important secret, he was by no means gratified, but remarked that if the king had another confidant, and this confidant betrayed his trust, he (the valet) would run the risk of being suspected of a breach of faith. The king having promised that the valet should be his sole confidant, the latter consented to become the depository of the secret, which was to the effect that his master not only desired to retire from the throne, but also to divide his lands equally among his three daughters, reserving to himself nothing but a small annuity.

The valet remonstrated, advising the king to retain his lands, and content himself with settling something handsome on his daughters; but his counsel was not followed, and the three princesses were summoned into the presence of their father, who thought he would begin by testing the affection with which they regarded him. The elder sisters, on being questioned, both professed that they loved him better than anything in the world; but the third confined herself to the assertion that she loved him as well as he loved salt.

Now, though we are told that the king loved salt better than anything else, and that consequently the assertion of the youngest daughter was virtually the same as that of the others, one cannot avoid the reflection, that the way she expressed herself was most infelicitous, seeming not only to indicate a lack of affection, but to be somewhat satirical. That the old king ordered her to retire to her chamber was but natural; when, however, on the suggestion of his elder daughters, he came to the conclusion that she was worthy of death, he certainly went a little too far.

Nor was his wrath transient. Hurrying to the bakehouse, where it appears the indispensable valet was always to be found in the act of kneading dough, he ordered

him instantly to fetch a notary, who would effect a legal division of the kingdom between the two elder daughters, and an executioner, who would inflict capital punishment on the youngest.

We have an old maxim, which teaches us that actions speak more plainly than words; and the same doctrine is handed down among the Gascons, in a very ungallicant proverb, according to which, words are female and actions male—*las paraulos soun de femèlos, mès las actions soun de mascles*. Of this proverb the sagacious valet made use when his master told him what had occurred, and he advised him not to be too hasty. The king, however, was one of those nervous persons, whose fondness for seeking advice is fully equalled by a determination not to follow it, and he plainly told the valet that he would cudgel him soundly if he did not at once obey orders and hold his tongue.

Reference to corporal punishment seemed to produce a marvellous change in the sentiments of the valet, who not only professed his readiness to fetch the notary, but even declared that he would be extremely happy to take the office of executioner upon himself. Yes, he would conduct the youngest princess into the forest, and there put her to death, and he would bring back her tongue as a proof that his task had been duly performed.

The king applauded the zeal of the valet, and accepted his offer. The notary, on his arrival, was instructed to marry the young ladies (civilly, of course), and to apportion the kingdom equally between them, with the reservation that the king should reside for six months in the year with one daughter, and for an equal term with the other. Bribed by the young ladies, he, however, artfully contrived to omit all mention of the reservation.

The ceremony ended, the valet, with the sanction of the king, whistled for his dog, girded on his sword, brought the youngest princess from her chamber, put a chain round her neck, and dragged her to the forest, overwhelming her with opprobrious language, so long as he was within ear-shot of the king. But no sooner was he out of hearing than he changed his tone, and told her, in the most courteous language, that all that he had done was for the sake of preserving her life. He had packed up her royal vestments; had provided her with the humble garb of a peasant girl; and had even secured her a place of refuge, as keeper

of turkeys, under the queen of a neighbouring king, whom he had served before he waited on her father. This plan was carried out. The queen gladly engaged the princess as keeper of the royal turkeys, and allowed her to sleep in a small room under the staircase. As for the valet, he killed his dog, cut out its tongue, and presented it to the king his master.

Counterparts of this valet are to be found in many tales, but he had one characteristic which distinguished him from his compeers—namely, a very keen eye to the main chance. Therefore, when the spiteful old king, on receiving the tongue, gave him a hundred pieces of gold, he said that the sum was too small, whereupon he received another hundred from the king and as much from each of the daughters. Thus recompensed, he could go to sleep, with the satisfactory feeling that he had done a deed which was extremely virtuous, and very profitable into the bargain.

The elder daughters lost no time in taking advantage of their position. On the very day after the events just recorded, they appeared, each accompanied by her husband, before the king, and desired him to quit the premises forthwith. Half the palace belonged to the eldest princess, half to the second; and, as there are only two halves even in the largest building, it was clear that the old gentleman was nowhere.

The unkindness of his children did not altogether banish his presence of mind. He loudly reproached them for their ingratitude; but in more business-like tones he referred to the document prepared by the notary. When he was informed that this was valueless, his spirit was broken, and he could only stammer out:—

“*Lou notari es tan canaillo como vous.*”
(The notary is as arrant a scoundrel as yourselves.)

The poor old king left the palace, and the very first person he met was the valet, who, for a wonder, was not occupied with kneading dough in the bakehouse. He would rather have met anybody else, for he thought he could detect something like a triumphant chuckle in the man's face. But he told his dismal story, and bore, as well as he could, those remonstrances with which an excellent friend is sure to be liberal when you have neglected to follow his advice, and have come to grief in consequence. Patience was heightened into

gratitude when the valet informed him that he would not only wait on him for nothing—the only wages at the king's disposal—but that he had saved enough to maintain them both. And the man was as good as his word, for he laid out the money he had received the day before in the purchase of a small farm, which he presented to his master, who had only to eat, drink, and sleep, while his faithful companion attended to the vineyards and the fields.

In the meantime the king's youngest daughter went through a series of adventures which we shall very rapidly recount. The son of the other king, under whom she served as keeper of the royal turkeys, was so extremely handsome, that it was considered a matter of etiquette for all the young women in the domain, high or low, to fall in love with him, and she was not behind the fashion, though in her humble capacity she remained unnoticed. She resolved within herself that her obscurity should not last for ever.

During the time of the Carnival, which soon arrived, the young prince was in the habit of mounting his horse every evening after supper, and of riding to one of the neighbouring châteaux, where he danced till break of day. On one of these occasions the disguised princess took advantage of the costly garments which had been brought with her from home, dressed her hair with a golden comb, put on white stockings and red morocco shoes, and covered all with a sky-blue gown. Thus equipped, she rode on a horse, which she had surreptitiously borrowed from the royal stables, to the château where the prince was expected to dance; astonished everybody by the brilliancy of her appearance; danced with the king's son; and disappeared at the stroke of midnight. When, on the following day, the prince passed as usual the keeper of the turkeys, he could not help remarking that she bore a strong resemblance to his partner on the previous evening. On the two following evenings the same process was repeated, with this difference, that on the second the gown was of the colour of silver, and on the third of the colour of gold, and that on the third—have our readers guessed as much?—she left one of her slippers behind her. Of course the slipper was found by the prince, who vowed that he would never marry anyone but the lady whose foot it fitted; of course it was tried without success upon every beauty

of the court; of course a herald was sent about offering a reward for its proper owner; of course the keeper of the turkeys responded to the summons, and, of course, the slipper fitted her like a glove, to the utter confusion of all rivals.

When, however, the triumphant beauty had put on her fine clothes and appeared at her best, her adherence to the well-known path once trodden by Cinderella came to an end. Thus, when the king had told her that she must marry his son, far from jumping into compliance with the order, she said she would obey him, when he had obtained her own father's consent, and that in the meanwhile she would continue her duties as keeper of the royal turkeys.

Let us return to the exiled king, who was still at the farm with his valet, lamenting the wickedness of his two daughters and the shabbiness of his sons-in-law. He now regretted that the valet had put his younger child to death, reflecting, with tears in his eyes, that she would have been so very useful in stitching his shirts, and mending his clothes. Besides, she would have been something of a companion, whereas the conversation of the valet, admirable fellow as he was, began to grow rather monotonous.

Cheered, though not flattered, by his master's present sentiments, the valet confessed the truth, and off they went together to the palace of the other king, who courteously asked them what they wanted. The reply of the fallen monarch was not without dignity.

"King," said he, "I have been a king like yourself, and once had a palace which, to say the least of it, was quite as handsome as yours. With my daughters, on the other hand, I have not been fortunate. Two of them turned me out of doors, and the third has a place here, as a keeper of turkeys. To her alone my business refers; I have simply come to claim her."

"Really," replied the other, "it is not easy to comply with your request. My son has fallen so deeply in love with her, that he can neither eat nor drink—"

"That was never a fault with my two elder girls," interrupted the exile.

"However," continued the more fortunate king, "if you will consent to the marriage of your daughter with my son, I think we may come to a good understanding."

"Possibly," answered the exile, with some hesitation; "but I am no tyrannical

parent" (here the valet suppressed a whistle), "and I am the last person in the world to force my child's inclination. Let her express her own views in the matter."

The lady was brought into the royal presence accordingly, and, as the Gascon historian elegantly expresses himself, the prince trembled like a cow's tail (*trambalaba coumo la caùio d'uno vaco*), and was as white as meal, while awaiting her answer to the question, whether she would accept him for a husband. Happily, her decision was in his favour, but she insisted that the wedding should not take place until he and his father had restored the royal exile to his former state.

Her wish was granted. The king and his son assembled all the men of the country, set out at night, and took possession of the palace, before the sisters knew that they were attacked. Victory was followed by summary justice. The princesses were both hanged, and likewise their husbands, who possibly thought that they were hardly used; and the bodies of all four were cast into the fields as food for beasts and birds. The exile was, of course, reseated on his throne.

Of course, too, the prince married the youngest sister, and Gascony still remembers the splendour of the nuptials. Brilliant above the rest was the virtuous valet, who stood behind the bride's chair, and who was ordered by his grateful master to choose a handsome wife, and live on an equality with his quondam betters for the remainder of his days.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK III. CHAPTER VI. LAST WORDS.

CLEMENT BURTON was a man of the time. In these days, he who would succeed in any secular profession must not content himself with mastering its details; he must have some knowledge, however superficial, of everything that is passing round him; must be seen here and there; must be known and spoken of. There is a touch of charlatanism in all this, perhaps, which may be distasteful to the earnest and the thoughtful; but it is essential to their welfare and success, and they do well to give in to it, and to glide easily along with the current. After leaving Miss Middleham's that evening, Clement Burton had made his bow to a great lady

of fashion, who was entertaining the political world and its hangers-on, and had been seen later on at a club frequented by the better portion of the gilded youth of the period; but he was up the next morning betimes, and by nine o'clock had made his round of the patients in his immediate neighbourhood, had swallowed his breakfast, and was skimming the contents of the various newspapers preparatory to receiving the visitors, whose knocks were already resounding through the house. When he had dismissed the last of his patients, he started off to meet Miss Middleham, by appointment, at St. Vitus's, looking in for a few minutes at the private view of a picture exhibition on his way; and with all this he was as fresh and unwearied, on his arrival at the hospital, as though he had just risen from his bed.

Grace Middleham was punctual to the time, though the night had been to her a sleepless one. The news brought by Mr. Burton on his return, that the sufferer was the father of the friend whom she had once so tenderly loved, and whose disappearance she constantly deplored, affected her very deeply. There seemed to be a kind of fatality connecting her with the Studleys, and the only bright gleam in Grace's dark thoughts was caused by a ray of hope that, through this accidental rencontre, she might once more be brought into communication with Anne. A slight ray indeed, when she remembered that, at the time of their inhabiting the German household together, Anne could not say positively whether her father was or was not alive; but yet Grace had a kind of presentiment that out of this evil good would come, and she went to her appointment with Clement Burton in a hopeful spirit, the reason for which she could have explained to none, and scarcely could understand herself.

Mr. Burton received her at the door of the hospital, and conducted her to the house-surgeon's room. "My friend Channell wishes us to stop here, Miss Middleham," he said, "until he has finished his rounds; he will be done in a few minutes, and will bring us the last report about the patient."

"How is the poor man doing?" asked Grace.

"About as badly as possible," replied Mr. Burton. "There is no use in concealing from you, Miss Middleham, what Channell has just told me; the old man's life is to be counted by hours. Do not

shrink; he could have lived but a very little time, even if this accident had not occurred to him. He has been for a long time in a deep decline, and the end was very close at hand."

"Does he suffer much?" asked Grace, to whose eyes the tears had risen.

"Scarcely at all," said Mr. Burton; "the injury done yesterday was to the spine. I have heard no particulars from Channell or the nurses, but he is probably lying in a comatose state, not knowing that his life is ebbing away."

"I have a strong desire to see and speak to him," said Grace; "do you think it would be possible?"

"We can ask Channell when he comes," said Mr. Burton. "There can be no objection to your seeing him; but, as to the speaking, I doubt whether he would be found in a state for much conversation."

At this point Mr. Channell, a bluff, practical young man, entered the room. Introduced to Miss Middleham, he immediately began to prove his practicality by offering sherry, and produced a black bottle from a cupboard, the open door of which revealed glimpses of a large assortment of railway literature, a pair of boxing-gloves, and a choice collection of briar-root pipes.

"And how is the patient, Channell?" asked Burton, when the proffered refreshment had been declined.

"Case of hooks, sir," replied Mr. Channell, who had helped himself. "You will excuse me taking a toothful of sherry and a biscuit, Miss Middleham, but I have been at it since five A.M., when I was knocked up by a compound fracture, and I have been on the grind ever since—to say nothing of taking my turn with a man who has had an overdose of laudanum, and who has been run up and down the backyard between two fellows for the last three hours."

"Tell us about this man whom I brought in last night, Channell," said Burton, marking the look of astonishment on Grace's face. "Which of the nurses is in attendance on him?"

"Well, my boy, not your particular pet, Mrs. Gaynor," said Mr. Channell, still with his mouthful. "You have stolen her away for that special case which you are keeping so snug in the suburbs. Oh, I don't want to interfere with you, old man," he continued, noticing, but misunderstanding a motion of the hand which Burton made. "She would be thrown away, I

know, in a case like this. Mrs. Oliver, who is the 'surgery' just now, has got this old gentleman in hand, and is taking very great care of him."

As Mr. Channell again turned to the cupboard for refreshment purposes, Clement Burton, lowering his voice, said to Grace: "The case which he mentioned in the suburbs is a very sad one, which I have intended bringing under your notice, and of which I will speak to you some other time. By-the-way, Channell," he continued, in a louder tone, "Miss Middleham is anxious to see the patient, and to talk with him; I suppose there would be no objection?"

"Not the least in the world, so far as I am concerned," said Mr. Channell. "Of course, Miss Middleham knows what to expect—not a very lively sight, the Accident Ward—but there is no accounting for taste."

"This is not a mere gratification of idle curiosity, my good fellow, you may take my word for that," said Mr. Burton, in a sharp tone. "Miss Middleham doubtless has her reasons for what she proposes. Is Mr. Studley wandering still?"

"Not the least; sensible as a judge and patient as Job," said the house-surgeon. "He won't be able to talk much; but, in regard to his senses, he is as fit as a fiddle."

"We will go to him then, please," said Mr. Burton, and they started forth, Mr. Channell leading the way.

The "sister" in charge of the ward came out at their entrance from the little sanctum partitioned off for her use in one corner of the room, and after exchanging a few words with the house-surgeon, accompanied them to the bedside which they were seeking. As they passed down between the rows of beds, the poor patients gazed at them with their sunken eyes in wonder. To such as had any connection with life still left, to those whose glazed looks were not fixed upon the ceiling, Grace's presence there was a matter of astonishment. It was not the regular visiting-day—they knew that—or their friends would have come to see them; but they were too weak to look long or to speculate at all; and the poor pinched faces—more masks than faces for the most part, so completely had the usual expression faded out of them—sank back upon the pillows, and the poor feeble brain busied itself no more.

"This is my case," said the house-surgeon, as he stopped at the bedside.

"Mr. Studley, here is a lady come to see you."

The old man started, and raised himself as rapidly as his injury would permit. Grace, as she seated herself in the chair close by, heard him murmur "Anne," and marked the look of disappointment which came over him as his eyes fell upon her. Then he muttered, "No; Anne's dead!" and relapsed into quiet.

"I am the lady by whose horses you were knocked down yesterday, Mr. Studley," said Grace, in trembling tones, "and I am come to tell you how grieved I am at the accident, and to express my earnest wish that you should be supplied with everything that can possibly be of any service to you."

"You are very good," said the old man, with a ghastly endeavour to throw something of his former tone of gallantry into his piping voice. "You are very good, but there is really no occasion for you to trouble yourself; it was an accident, due, I daresay, as much to my own stupidity as to anything else; and as to being cared for, the good people here let me want for nothing."

"Are you in any pain just now, Mr. Studley?" asked the house-surgeon.

"No, sir, no," said the old man. "I cannot, as you are aware, move from this position, but I feel no actual pain."

"Would you like me to read to you?" asked Grace.

"You are very kind," said the captain, with some hesitation, eying the Bible which the nurse had handed to the visitor; "and I shall be very much obliged to you. Your voice is soft and sympathetic, and I am sure to enjoy it."

The house-surgeon hurried off to his other engagements, and Mr. Burton also took his leave, promising to meet Miss Middleham at the hospital the next day.

So soon as they were alone together, Grace opened the book and commenced reading from the Gospel of St. John. The old man listened, at first carelessly, then eagerly. The light, worldly expression which he had endeavoured to assume died out of his face, which for some time bore in its place the reflex of strong emotion; gradually the eyes closed, and the sharp-outlined features sank into repose. Then Grace took her leave, telling Sister Oliver to expect her the following day.

The next morning Mr. Burton was in attendance, and received Grace as she alighted from her carriage at the hospital-

door. In answer to her question as to how the patient was progressing, he said, "I am sorry to say that he is decidedly worse. From what Sister Oliver tells me, he seems to have been greatly excited by your visit. After you were gone he inquired your name, and when he learned it was much troubled, and expressed the greatest anxiety to see you again. This morning, although much weaker, he is somewhat sustained by excitement, and has already once or twice asked if you had arrived."

"That is quite intelligible," said Grace, quietly. "I am acquainted with some passages in this poor man's life, as he doubtless knows—matters which I will explain to you hereafter, Mr. Burton, and take your advice upon. Now, perhaps, we had better go to him at once."

When they reached the bedside, Grace noticed a great change in the aspect of the patient: his face looked thinner and more pinched, and there was an eager, restless light in his eyes, and a quivering motion of the lips, which it seemed impossible for him to control. He struggled to raise himself as his visitors approached; but his strength was unequal to the effort, and he lay helpless on the pillow. Still his lips moved, and Grace bent over him, to catch what he said.

"Alone—all alone!"

"Not so," said Grace, kindly. "We are here with you; we—" But an impatient movement of his hand interrupted her.

"Go—go—away," were his broken words; his finger pointing, at the same time, to Clement Burton, who stood by the bedside.

"He has something to say to you which I am not to hear," whispered Mr. Burton to her. "I will withdraw, but shall remain within call; he is merely kept up now by unnatural excitement, and might swoon at any moment."

"We are alone now," said Grace, bending over the bed; "if there is anything you wish to say to me."

"Closer—closer," he said, with a downward motion of his hand. Grace bent her head until it almost touched the pillow, bringing her ear to the old man's mouth. Then he whispered, "Are you the Miss Middleham who went to school with my daughter Anne?"

"Yes," replied Grace, in the same tone, "I am; she was my dearest friend."

"A good girl," he moaned. Then, a sharp spasm sweeping over his face, "I killed her! I drove her to her death."

"Stay," said Grace, remembering her old suspicions, which Anne would never verify or speak about. "Whatever you may have done, you are, as I believe, wrongfully accusing yourself now. So far as I know, Anne is not dead."

"Oh yes," he moaned, feebly. "Hunted out of life, she drowned herself—long ago, at Boulogne."

"Not so," said Grace, quickly; "she escaped thence to Paris, where she met me. For more than a year afterwards we lived together in Germany; she all the time in dread of discovery by you, or some one who had known her in former days."

"Anne alive!" the old man cried, with another fruitless attempt to raise himself. "She is not with you now, or she would be here." Then, his voice sinking to the faintest whisper, "Or, perhaps—perhaps—she won't forgive me?"

"Do not think that," said Grace, eagerly, "do not think that. If she knew of the position in which you are placed, she would be here at your bedside; but she is not living with me now; I have not seen her for months."

"You—you did not desert her," he muttered, with an imploring look; "you are too much of an angel for that."

"No," said Grace, "she left me; I will tell you how. I came to England without her, and, all unknown to her, was engaged to be married to a Mr. Heath—George Heath."

A sharp cry broke from the old man's lips, and rang through the ward. Mr. Burton hurried to the bed; but Studley, recovering himself, signed that he should retire. "I will fetch him a cordial," whispered the surgeon. "And, see, my good friend," he added, addressing the patient, "you must not speak again until you have swallowed a draught which I will bring you."

"I could not help it," murmured Studley, when they were alone together. "That villain's name—Tell me more."

"Hush!" whispered Grace; "you must mind the doctor's orders." And with a childlike obedience he held his peace, and fell a-thinking.

It had come to him at last, then! He was dying, he knew that. Dying in a hospital bed, he, Ned Studley, who had once—That was a strange fate that sent his death to him through the means of the niece of the man he had helped to rob. Old Middleham—and Loddonford—and

Anne's face at the window! What did they say about Anne?—that she was not dead. He was glad to hear that. It was a relief to think that her self-destruction could not be laid to him. And yet, what could have become of her? How could this fair young girl at his bedside be associated with that villain Heath?—He must know all!

The cordial came just in time, and restored the consciousness which was fast ebbing. As soon as Mr. Burton had administered it he retired, and again left Grace alone with the patient. "Do you wish me to tell you more about Anne?" she said. "Are you sure you are strong enough to hear it?"

"Yes," he muttered, "go on—let me know all."

"I told you that I was engaged to Mr. Heath," Grace continued. "At first, I did not mention the fact to Anne, but there was no necessity that I knew of for keeping the matter secret, and I wrote to inform her of it. She was then living in the German home which we had made for ourselves with my old aunt, but within a week of my writing she appeared before me in my London house. She told me that my aunt, who had long been ill, was in a dying state, and desired particularly to see me; and her pleadings had such effect on me, that I consented to return with her to Germany. We started, but when we were arrived at Brussels, she confessed that she had been deceiving me, and that the real object of her taking me away from London was to break off my engagement with George Heath, and place me beyond his power."

A sigh of relief broke from the old man, and a smile played over his lips.

"She told me she had seen Mr. Heath," Grace continued, "and by some influence, which was to me inexplicable, and about which she would say nothing, she had induced him to give up all claim to my hand—nay, more, she showed me a letter in which he voluntarily abandoned the engagement."

"Good girl!" murmured the old man; "always brave—always true!"

"Yes," said Grace; "I have come to think since, that by that act Anne rendered me the greatest possible service, and prevented my life from becoming a burden and a misery to me. But I did not think so then; I was utterly annoyed with what I chose to consider her interference with my plans. She confessed that, during the

time when she and you were together after her leaving school, she had known Mr. Heath, and been engaged to him, and this knowledge rendered me doubly angry. I vainly endeavoured to hide my feelings, but it was impossible. Anne saw that I was hurt and wounded, and a coldness grew up between us which both felt was unbearable. One morning she disappeared, leaving behind her a letter informing me that she could endure the existing state of things no longer, and that search for her would be useless, as she had determined henceforth to be alone in the world. From that day to this, though I have taken every possible means to learn her whereabouts, I have heard nothing of her."

Before she ceased speaking, Grace's voice was broken, and her cheeks were wet with tears. The old man, too, was strongly moved. Bending her ear close towards him, Grace could catch the words, "My poor Anne! my brave girl!"

"Shall I call the doctor?" said Grace, looking with alarm at the change in his face, over which an ashy grayness was spreading.

"No," he muttered, "not yet; listen to me; I can tell you the secret of Anne's influence over that villain, and where she had the power of making him desist from his plan. Anne—my poor Anne, is George Heath's wife."

"His wife?" repeated Grace, almost inarticulately, her tongue and lips becoming suddenly parched. "Anne married to George Heath? When was this brought about? Was it of her own free will? Tell me, I implore you."

But the excitement of the news which he had heard, combined with the effort of speaking, had been too much for the old man, and he lay back upon the pillow, seemingly without the power of utterance. Once or twice his lips parted and his eyes opened, but the attempt to rouse himself was ineffectual, and with a deep sigh he swooned away.

Grace beckoned to Mr. Burton, who was by her side in an instant. His glance at her betrayed some astonishment at finding her so much distressed, but his attention was at once absorbed by the patient, to whom he administered restoratives.

After a time the old man revived, and seeing Grace still seated at his bedside, made a further effort to speak to her.

But here Clement Burton intervened. "I must assert my authority now," he whispered, "my dear Miss Middleham, and

you must go away," he said. "This poor creature is in a most critical state, and perfect repose is essential to him."

"May I not ask him one question?" said Grace.

"Not one," said Mr. Burton. "If you do not mind confiding it to me, I will promise you that, should he at all be in a fit state to reply, it shall be put to him."

"I want to know two things from him," said Grace. "When was Anne Studley married to George Heath, and where?"

"You may rely upon my asking him," said Mr. Burton. "I do not suggest that you should come here to-morrow, as I think these interviews are somewhat exhausting to the poor man, but I will call at your house and let you know the result."

The news which Grace had heard affected her very strongly; the idea that Anne had been married to George Heath had never entered her mind. When her friend had confessed she had been engaged to Mr. Heath, Grace thought the explanation of the circumstance was to be looked for in the close business alliance which, as she had learned from Anne, existed between Heath and Captain Studley. But it was scarcely likely that Anne would have gone the length of permitting herself to be married, and thus bound down for life to this man, unless something of vital importance was dependent on the fulfilment of the contract. Anne, herself, had more than once allowed that her father was utterly unscrupulous, and it was probable that he would shrink very little where the advancement of his own interest was concerned. What could have prompted such a step? Grace thought. However, she would know the next day, when Clement Burton came.

Grace was, however, doomed to disappointment. Mr. Burton arrived according to promise, but from his first words she learned that, for the present at least, she was destined to remain in ignorance of what she so much desired to know.

"I should have executed your commission," he said, "if I had had the chance, but you will have to go to some one else for your information. Poor old Studley died last night, tranquilly and without pain; but also without ever having been sufficiently conscious, since your departure, to understand anything that might have been said to him."

Grace Middleham was greatly distressed at this news. Though she had pretty well

known that the old man's recovery was impossible, it was yet a shock to her to hear of his death. All chance of getting any news of Anne was now as far from her as ever, and she must bear the bitter self-reproach which her wayward conduct towards her friend had imposed upon her, without any opportunity for confessing that she had at last learned to estimate Anne's devotion and self-sacrifice in their proper light.

Clement Burton had marked the tears stealing down Grace's cheeks, and was moved, as most men would be, at such a sight.

"I am afraid, Miss Middleham," said he, "that your not getting the information you sought for is of more importance than it seems, and that you are really distressed for want of it."

With all her wealth and position, Grace had no one throughout the whole of her acquaintance ranking as a friend, and there was something in Clement Burton's voice and manner which invited confidence.

"You are right, Mr. Burton," said Grace; "the information which I hoped to obtain from that poor dead man would have been very valuable to me, for by it I should probably have been enabled to make amends for an error, and to make restitution in a matter which has long weighed on my conscience. As it is, I do not know how to act."

"If my advice, as a practical man of the world not unaccustomed to facing difficulties, would be of any use to you," said Clement, "I need scarcely say it is heartily at your service."

He spoke with greater warmth and earnestness than he had intended. The sight of Grace in tears, and apparently in mental distress, had touched him to the quick. Hitherto, he had only known her in the sunshine and heyday of her happiness; and, even then, his interest in her had been warm and eager. He had not the remotest notion of avowing it, however, or even of hinting at its existence; he knew too well the difference between their fortunes, and he was far too independent and self-reliant to give himself—to say nothing of others—cause for suspecting that he was endeavouring to marry the handsome heiress. But these tears had taken him unawares, and he spoke more naturally and less guardedly than he had heretofore.

"You are very good," said Grace, look-

ing at him frankly. "I have need of an adviser, and I do not know where I should find one who would be not merely as sympathetic but as trustworthy as yourself. You must prepare yourself to listen to a long and somewhat complicated story."

Without further preface, Grace commenced her narration. She told Mr. Burton of her first making acquaintance with Anne Studley, when they were quite little children together, at Chapone House, and of the affection which had sprung up between them, and ripened and endured until the day of saying farewell to the Misses Griggs, and going on their separate errands into the world. Then Grace alluded to the advertisement in the Times, the sight of which brought her from Bonn to Paris, and described her meeting with Anne at the Hôtel de Lille. She did not disguise from Clement Burton that Anne had given no explanation of her life during the interval, and it always seemed desirous that no allusion should be made to it. Then came the description of the days passed in the German home, and of the admirable manner in which Anne had assumed the character of Waller, and had devoted herself to the invalid. The episode of Grace's London life was but lightly touched on; but, knowing the necessity that her intended adviser should be aware of all that had happened, she dwelt upon the fact of her engagement with Mr. Heath, though admitting that the regard which she imagined to have for him could not stand subsequent analysis. Then came the story of Anne's sudden arrival; of the avowal made at Brussels; and of the letter found after her departure from Bonn.

"You will now see, Mr. Burton," said Grace, as she concluded, "the bearing of the two questions which I asked you to put to the poor old man who died last night. It is most important that I should know where Anne Studley is. Having heard my story, can you suggest any means likely to produce the information?"

"Why not repeat the Tocsin advertisement in the Times?" said Mr. Burton.

"I have done so on several occasions," replied Grace, "within the last few months, but all without effect."

Mr. Burton was silent for a few moments, deep in thought. Then his face lighted up as he said, "I have it! Why not advertise at once, and boldly, for George Heath's wife?"

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

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A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCIS ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XI.

IN how few cases would the power to "see oursel's as ithers see us" be other than a very malevolent and wicked fairy-like gift! And, perhaps, the discovery of the real reasons why our friends like us, would not be the least mortifying part of the revelation.

Now, the Bodkins liked Miss Chubb. But they did not like her for her manners, her knowledge of the usages of polite society, her highly respectable clerical connections, or the little gummed-down curls on her forehead; on all of which Miss Chubb prided herself.

Dr. Bodkin liked her principally because she was an old acquaintance. It pleased him to see various people, and to do and say various things daily, often for no better reason than that he had seen the same people, and done and said the same things yesterday, and throughout a long, backward-reaching chain of yesterdays. Mrs. Bodkin liked her because she was good-natured, and neither strong-minded nor strong-willed enough to domineer over her. Minnie liked her because she found her peculiarities very amusing.

"Miss Chubb has the veriest rag-bag of a mind," said Minnie, "and pulls out of it, every now and then, unexpected scraps of ignorance as other folks display bits of knowledge, in the oddest way!" She could often endure to listen to Miss Chubb's chatter, when the talk of wiser people irritated her nerves. And Minnie would speak with Miss Chubb on many

subjects more unreservedly than she did with any other of her acquaintance.

"What Minnie Bodkin can find in that affected old maid, to have her so much with her when she is so reserved and stand-offish to—quite superior persons, and nearer her own age, I am at a loss to understand!" Violet McDougall would say, tossing her thin spiral ringlets. And Rose, the bitterer of the two, would make answer, raspingly: "Why, Miss Chubb toadies her, my dear. That's the secret. Poor Minnie! Of course one wishes to make every allowance for her afflicted state; but there are limits. Miss Chubb is almost a fool, and that suits poor dear Minnie's domineering spirit."

Unconscious of these and similar comments, Minnie and Miss Chubb continued to be very good friends.

There sat Miss Chubb in Dr. Bodkin's drawing-room one Saturday about noon; her round face beaming, and her fat fingers covered with huge old-fashioned rings, busily engaged in some bright-coloured worsted work. She had come early, and was to have luncheon with Mrs. Bodkin and Minnie, and was a good deal elated by the privilege, although she did her best to repress any ebullition of her good spirits, and to assume the languishing air which she chose to consider peculiarly genteel.

Minnie and Miss Chubb were alone. Mrs. Bodkin was "busy." Mrs. Bodkin was nearly always "busy." She superintended the machinery of her household very effectively. But she was one of those persons whose labours meet with scant recognition. Dr. Bodkin had a vague idea that his wife liked to be fussing about in kitchen and store-room, and that she did a great deal more than was necessary, but, "then you see, it amused her." He

very much liked order, punctuality, economy, and good cookery; and since it "amused" Laura to supply him with these, the combination was at once fortunate and satisfactory.

"My dear Minnie," said Miss Chubb, raising her eyes to the ceiling with a languishing glance, which would have been more effective had it not been invariably accompanied by an odd winking up of the nose, "did you ever, in all your days, hear of anything so extraordinary as the appearance of those Methodist people at church on Sunday?"

"It was strange."

"Strange! My dear love, it was amazing. But it ought to be a matter of congratulation to us all, to see Dissenters embracing the canons of the Church! And the Methodists, especially, are such dreadful people. I believe they think nothing of foaming at the mouth, and going into convulsions, in the open chapel. I wonder if those Maxfields felt anything of the kind on Sunday? It would have been a terrible thing, my dear, if they had had to be carried out on stretchers, or anything of that sort. What would Dr. Bodkin have said?"

"I don't think there's any fear of papa's sermons throwing anybody into convulsions."

"Of course not, my dear child. Pray don't imagine that I hinted at such a thing. No, no; Dr. Bodkin is ever gentlemanlike, ever soothing and composing, in the pulpit. But people, you know, who have been used to convulsions—they really might not be able to leave them off all at once. You may smile, my dear Minnie; but I assure you that such things have been known to become quite chronic. And, once a thing gets to be chronic——"

Miss Chubb left her sentence unfinished, as she often did; but remained with an expressive countenance, which suggested horrible results from "things" getting to be chronic.

"It seems an odd caprice of Fate," said Minnie, who had been pursuing her own reflections, "that, no sooner do I make Rhoda Maxfield's acquaintance, for the sole reason that she is a Methodist, than she and her family turn into orthodox church people."

"People will say you converted her, my dear."

"I daresay they will, as it isn't true."

"Now, I wonder who did convert them."

"If you care to know, I think I can tell

you that the real reason why Maxfield left the Wesleyans, was a quarrel he had with their preacher. My maid Jane has a brother who belongs to the society; and he gave her an account of the matter."

"Dear, dear! You don't say so! Of course, the preacher is furious? Those kind of Ranters are very violent sometimes. I remember, when I was quite a girl, a man on a tub, who used to scream and use the most dreadful language. So much so, that poor papa forbade our going within earshot of him."

"No; David Powell is not furious. I am told that he astonished some of the more bigoted of his flock, by reminding them that they ought to have charity enough to believe that a man may worship acceptably in any Christian community."

"Did he, really? Now, that positively was very proper of the man, and very right. Quite right, indeed."

"So that I think we may assume that he is on the road to Heaven, Methodist though he be."

"Oh, Minnie!"

"Does that shock you, Miss Chubb?"

"Well, my dear, yes; it does, rather. My family has been connected with the Church for generations. And—one doesn't like to hear Dr. Bodkin's daughter talk of being sure that a Dissenter is on the road to Heaven."

Minnie lay back on her sofa, and looked at Miss Chubb complacently bending over her knitting. Gradually the look of amused scorn on Minnie's face softened into melancholy thoughtfulness. She wondered how David Powell would have met such an observation as Miss Chubb's. He had to deal with even narrower and more ignorant minds than hers. What method did he take to touch them? To Minnie it all seemed very hopeless, so long as men and women continued to be such as those she saw around her. And yet this preacher did move them very powerfully. If she could but meet him face to face, and have speech with him!

There was one person to whom she was strongly impelled to detail her perplexities, and to express her fluctuating feelings and opinions on more momentous subjects than she had ever yet spoken with him upon. But there were a hundred little counter impulses pulling against this strong one, and holding it in check.

Miss Chubb's voice broke in upon her meditations by uttering loudly the name that was in Minnie's mind.

"My dear, I think it's quite a case with Mr. Diamond."

Minnie's heart gave a great bound; and the deep, burning blush which was so rare and meant so much with her, covered her face from brow to chin. Miss Chubb's eyes were fixed on her knitting. When, after a short pause, she raised them to seek some response, Minnie was quite pale again. She met Miss Chubb's gaze with bright, steady eyes, a thought more wide open than usual.

"How do you mean 'a case'?" she asked carelessly.

"I mean, my dear, a case of falling, or having fallen, in love."

The white lids drooped a little over the beautiful eyes, and a look, partly of pleasure, partly of fluttered surprise, swept over Minnie's face, as the breeze sweeps over a corn-field, touching it with shifting lights and shadows.

"What nonsense!" she said, in a little uncertain voice, unlike her usual clear tones.

"Now, my dear Minnie, I must beg to differ. I might give up my judgment to you on a point of—of—" (Miss Chubb hesitated a long time here, for she found it extremely difficult to think of any subject on which she didn't know best)—"on a point of the dead languages, for instance. But on this point I maintain that I have a certain penetration and coo-doyl. And I say that it is a case with Mr. Diamond and little Rhoda—at least on his side. And of course she would be ready to jump out of her skin for joy, only I don't think the idea has entered into her head as yet. How should it, in her station? Of course—. But as to him—! If I ever read a human countenance in my life, he admires her—oh, over head and ears! To see him staring at her from behind your sofa when she sits by Mrs. Errington—! No, no, my dear; depend upon it, I am correct. And I don't know but what it might do very well, because, although educated, Mr. Diamond is a man of no birth. And the girl is pretty, and will have all old Max's savings. So that really—"

Thus, and much more in the same disjointed fashion, Miss Chubb.

Minnie felt like one who is conscious of having swallowed a deadly but slow poison. For the present there is no pain; only a horrible watchful apprehension of the moment when the pain shall begin.

Some faculties of her mind seemed

curiously numb. But the active part of it accepted the truth of what had been said, unhesitatingly.

Miss Chubb paused at last breathless.

"You look fagged, Minnie," she said. "Have I tired you? Mrs. Bodkin will scold me if I have."

"No; you have not tired me. But I think I will go and be quiet in my own room. Tell mamma I don't want any lunch. Please ring for Jane."

Mrs. Bodkin came into the room in her quick, noiseless way. She had heard the bell. Minnie reiterated her wish to be wheeled into her own room, and left quiet. She spoke briefly and peremptorily, and her desire was promptly complied with.

"I never cross her, or talk to her much when she is not feeling well," whispered Mrs. Bodkin to Miss Chubb; thereby checking a lively stream of suggestions, regrets, and inquiries which the spinster was beginning to pour forth in her most girlish manner.

"There, my darling," said her mother, preparing to close the door of Minnie's room softly. "If any of the Saturday people come I shall say you are not well enough to see them to-day."

"No!" cried Minnie, with sharp decisiveness. "I wish to come into the drawing-room by and by. Don't send them away. It will be Algy's last Saturday. I mean to come into the drawing-room."

CHAPTER XII.

MINNIE, during the hour's quiet solitude which was hers before the Saturday guests began to arrive, got her thoughts into some clear order, and began to look things in the face. She did not look far ahead; merely kept her attention fixed on that which the next few hours might hold for her. She pictured to herself what she would say, and even how she would look. Cost what it might, no trace of her real feelings should appear. Her heart might bleed, but none should see the wound. She could not yet tell herself how deep the hurt was. She would not look at it, would not probe it. Not yet! That should be afterwards; perhaps in the long dim hours of her sleepless night. Not yet!

She put on her panoply of pride, and braced up her nerves to a pitch of strained excitement. And then, after all, the effort seemed to have been wasted! There was no fight to be fought, no struggle to be made. The social atmosphere among her visitors

that Saturday afternoon was as mildly relaxing as the breath of a misty woodland landscape in autumn, and Minnie felt her Spartan mood melting beneath it.

Whether it were due to the influence of Dr. Bodkin's presence (the doctor usually spent the Saturday half-holiday in his study, preparing the morrow's sermon; or, it may be, occasionally reading the newspaper, or even taking a nap)—or whether it were the shadow of Algernon's approaching departure, the fact was that the little company appeared depressed, and attuned to melancholy.

Rhoda Maxfield was not there. She had privately told Algy that she could not bear to be present among his friends on that last Saturday. "They will be saying 'good-bye' to you, and—and all that," said the girl, with quivering lip. "And I know I should burst out crying before them all." Whereupon Algy had eagerly commended her prudent resolution to stay at home.

No other of the accustomed frequenters of the Bodkins' drawing-room was absent. The doctor's was the only unusual presence in the little assembly. He stood in his favourite attitude on the hearth, and surveyed the company as if they had been a class called up for examination. Mr. Diamond sat beside Miss Bodkin's sofa, and was, perhaps, a thought more grave and silent than usual.

Minnie lay with half-closed eyes on her sofa, and felt almost ashamed of the proud resolutions she had been making. It seemed very natural to be silently miserable. No one appeared to expect her to be anything else. If she had even begun to cry, as Miss Chubb did when Algernon went to the piano and sang "Auld Lang Syne," it would have excited no wondering remark.

Pathos was not Algy's forte in general, but circumstances gave a resistless effect to his song. The tears ran down Miss Chubb's cheeks, so copiously, as to imperil the little gummed curls that adorned her face. Even the Reverend Peter Warlock, who was a little jealous of Algy's high place in Miss Bodkin's good graces, exhibited considerable feeling on this occasion, and joined in the chorus "For au—auld la—ang syne, my friends," with his deep bass voice, which had a hollow tone like the sound of the wind in the belfry of St. Chad's.

Here Mrs. Errington's massive placidity became useful. She broke the painful

pause which ensued upon the last note of the song, by asking Dr. Bodkin, in a sonorous voice, if he happened to be acquainted with Lord Seely's remarkably brilliant pamphlet on the dog-tax.

"No," replied the doctor, shaking his head slowly and emphatically, as who should say that he challenged society to convict him of any such acquaintance.

It did not at all matter to Mrs. Errington whether he had or had not read the pamphlet in question, the existence of which, indeed, had only come to her own knowledge that morning, by the chance inspection of an old newspaper, that had been hunted out to wrap some of Algy's belongings in. What the good lady had at heart was the introduction of Lord Seely's name, in whose praise she forthwith began a flowing discourse.

This brought Miss Chubb, figuratively speaking, to her legs. She always a little resented Mrs. Errington's aristocratic pretensions, and was accustomed to oppose to them the fashionable reminiscences of her sole London season, which had been passed in an outwardly smoke-blackened and inwardly time-tarnished house in Manchester-square, whereof the upper floors had been hired furnished for a term by the Right Reverend the Bishop of Plumbunn. And the bishop's lady had "chaperoned" Miss Chubb to such gaieties as seemed not objectionable to the episcopal mind. As the rose-scent of youth still clung to the dry and faded memories of that time, Miss Chubb always recurred to them with pleasure.

Having first carefully wiped away her tears by the method of pressing her handkerchief to her eyes and cheeks as one presses blotting-paper to wet ink, so as not to disturb the curls, Miss Chubb plunged, with happy flexibility of mood, into the midst of a rout at Lady Tubville's, nor paused until she had minutely described five of the dresses worn on that occasion, including her own and the bishopess's, from shoe to head-dress.

Mrs. Errington came in ponderously. "Tubville? I don't know the name. It isn't in Debrett."

"And then the supper!" pursued Miss Chubb, ignoring Debrett. "Such refinement, together with such luxury—! It was a banquet for Lucretius."

"What, what?" exclaimed the doctor in his sharp, scholastic key. He had been conversing in a low voice with Mr. Warlock, but the Latin name caught his ear.

"I am speaking of a supper, Dr. Bodkin, at the house of a leader of tong. I never shall forget it. Although I didn't eat much of it, to be sure. Just a sip of champagne, and a taste of—of— What do you call that delightful thing, with the French name, that they give at ball suppers? Vo—vo— What is it?"

"Vol-au-vent?" suggested Algy, at a venture.

"Ah! vol-o-vo. Yes; you will excuse my correcting you, Algernon, but that is the French pronunciation. Just one taste of vol-o-vo was all that I partook of; but the elegance—the plate, the exotic bouquets, and the absolute paraphernalia of wax-lights! It was a scene for young Romance to gloat on!"

"But what had Lucretius to do with it?" persisted the doctor.

Miss Chubb looked up, and shook her forefinger archly.

"Now, Dr. Bodkin, I will not be catechised; you can't give me an imposition, you know. And as to Lucretius, beyond the fact that he was a Roman emperor, who ate and drank a great deal, I honestly own that I know very little about him."

This time the doctor was effectually silenced. He stood with his eyes rolling from Mr. Diamond to the curate, and from the curate to Algy, as though mutely protesting against the utterance of such things under the very roof of the grammar school. But he said not a syllable.

Mr. Diamond had looked at Minnie with an amused smile, expecting to meet an answering glance of amusement at Miss Chubb's speech. But the fringed eyelids hung heavily over the beautiful dark eyes, which were wont to meet his own with such quick sympathy. Mr. Diamond felt a little shock of disappointment. Without giving himself much account of the matter, he had come to consider Miss Bodkin and himself as the only two persons in the little coterie, who had an intellectual point of view in common on many topics. The circumstance that Miss Bodkin was a very beautiful and interesting woman, certainly added a flattering charm to this communion of minds. He had almost grown to look upon her attention and sympathy as things peculiarly his own—things to which he had a right. And the unsmiling, listless face which now met his gaze, gave him the same blank feeling that we experience on finding a well-known window accustomed to present gay flowers to the passers-by,

all at once grown death-like with a down-drawn ghastly blind.

Mr. Diamond looked at Minnie again, and was struck with the expression of suffering on her face. He knew she disliked being condoled with about her health; so he said gently, "I think Errington's departure is depressing us all. Even Miss Bodkin looks dull."

Minnie lifted her eyelids now, and her wan look of suffering was rather enhanced by the view of those bright, wistful eyes.

"I think Errington is an enviable fellow," continued Mr. Diamond.

"So do I. He is going away."

"That's a hard saying for us, who are to remain behind, Miss Bodkin! But I meant—and I think you know that I meant—he is enviable because he will be so much regretted."

"I don't know that he will be 'so much' regretted."

"Surely—— Why, one fair lady has even been shedding tears!"

"Oh, Miss Chubb? Yes; but that proves very little. The good soul is always overstocked with sentiment, and will use any friend as a waste-pipe to get rid of her superfluous emotion."

"Well, I should have made no doubt that you would be sorry, Miss Bodkin."

"Sorry! Yes; I am sorry. That is to say, I shall miss Algernon. He is so clever, and bright, and gay, and—different from all our Whitford mortals. But for himself, I think one ought to be glad. Papa says, and you say, and I say myself, that his journey to London on such slender encouragement is a wild-geese chase. But, after all, why not? Wild geese must be better to chase than tame ones."

"Not so easy to catch, nor so well worth the catching, though," said Mr. Diamond, smiling.

"I said nothing about catching. The hunting is the sport. If a good fat goose had been all that was wanted, Mr. Filthorpe, of Bristol, offered him that; and even, I believe, ready roasted. But—if I were a man, I think I would rather hunt down my wild goose for myself."

"You had better not let Errington hear your theory about the pleasures of wild-geese hunting."

"Because he is apt enough for the sport already?"

"N—not precisely. But he would take advantage of your phrase to characterise any hunting which it suited him to under-

take, and thus give an air of impulse and romance to, perhaps, a very prosaic ambition, very deliberately pursued."

"I wonder why——," said Minnie, and then stopped suddenly.

"Yes! You wonder why?"

"No, I wonder no longer. I think I understand."

"Miss Bodkin is pleased to be oracular," said Mr. Diamond, with a careless smile; and then he moved away towards the piano, where Mrs. Bodkin was playing a quaint sonata of Clementi, and stood listening with a composed, attentive face. Nevertheless, he felt some curiosity about the scope of Minnie's unfinished sentence.

The sentence, if finished, would have run thus: "I wonder why you are so hard on Algernon!" But with the utterance of the first words an explanation of Diamond's severe judgment darted into her mind. Might he not have some feeling of jealousy towards Algernon? (Miss Chubb's words were lighting up many things. Probably the good little woman had never in her life before said anything of such illuminating power.) Yes; Diamond must be jealous. Algernon had unrivalled opportunities of attracting pretty Rhoda's attention. Nay, had he not attracted it already? Minnie recalled little words, little looks, little blushes, which seemed to point to the real nature of Rhoda's feeling for Algernon. Rhoda did not—no; she surely did not—care for Matthew Diamond. Minnie had a momentary elation of heart as she thus assured herself, and at the same time she felt an impulse of scorn for the girl who could disregard the love of such a man, as though it were a valueless trifle. But, then, did Rhoda know? did Rhoda guess? And then Minnie, suddenly checking her eager mental questioning in mid-career, turned her fiery scorn against herself for her pitiful weakness.

As she lay there so graceful and outwardly tranquil, whilst the studied, passionless turns and phrases of old Clementi trickled from the keys, she had hot fits of raging wounded pride, and cold shudders of deadly depression. The numb listlessness which had shielded her at the beginning of the afternoon had disappeared during her short conversation with Diamond. She was sensitive now to a thousand stinging thoughts.

What a fool she had been! What a poor, blind fool! She tried to remember all the details of the past days. Did others see what Miss Chubb had seen in Diamond's

face? And had she—Minnie Bodkin, who prided herself on her keen observation, her cleverness, and her power of reading motives—had she been the only one to miss this obvious fact? She had been deluding herself with the thought that Matthew Diamond came and sat beside her couch, and talked, and smiled for her sake! Poor fool! Why, did not his frequent visits date from the time when Rhoda's visits had begun, too? It was all clear enough now; so clear, that the self-delusion which had blinded her seemed to have been little short of madness. "As if it were possible that a man should waste his love on me!" she thought bitterly.

At that moment she caught Mr. Warlock's eyes mournfully fixed upon her. His gaze irritated her unendurably. "Am I so pitiable a spectacle?" she asked herself. "Is my folly written on my face, that that idiot stares at me in wonder and compassion?"

Minnie gave him one of her haughtiest and coldest glances, and then turned away her head.

Poor Mr. Warlock! It must be owned that there are strange, cruel pangs unjustly inflicted and suffered in this world, by the most civilised persons.

The little party broke up sooner than usual. The dispirited tone with which it had begun continued to the end. Algernon made his farewells to Miss Chubb, Mr. Warlock, Mr. Diamond, and Dr. Bodkin. But to Minnie he whispered, "I will run in once more on Monday to say 'good-bye' to your mother and to you, if I may."

The rest departed almost simultaneously. Matthew Diamond lingered an instant at the door of the drawing-room, to say to Mrs. Bodkin, "I hope this is not to be the last of our pleasant Saturdays, although we are losing Errington?"

It was an unusual sort of speech from the reserved, shy tutor, who carried his proud dread of being thought officious or intrusive to such a point, that Minnie was wont to say, laughingly, that Mr. Diamond's diffidence was haughtier than anyone else's disdain.

Mrs. Bodkin smiled, well pleased. "Oh, I hope not, indeed!" she said, in her quick, low accents. "Minnie! Do you hear what Mr. Diamond is saying?"

Minnie did not answer. She thought how happy this wish of his to keep up "our pleasant Saturdays" would have made her yesterday!

EARLY EASTERN TRAVELLERS.

A TRAVELLED MOOR.

LONG before General Othello discoursed of "antres vast and deserts idle," of the "anthrophagi, and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders," the Arabs had become celebrated for their long and varied travels. To the Arab, the wander-life, deemed by others a curse, was a purely natural state. To "keep moving" was a simple instinct. Long before the rise of the crescent, the habits of the Arab had been formed by the conditions of his existence. In years of drought, the want of water and pasturage drove the children of Hagar to traverse the length and breadth of the Arabian peninsula; while a desire for the productions of Syria and Irâk, and a curiosity to visit the court of Cæsar, or of Chæroes, impelled caravans and solitary individuals to wander far from the arid land which gave them birth. Islamism gave a fresh impulse to these native tendencies. The pilgrimage to Mecca produced yearly a vast crop of caravans; which, setting out from Syria, Persia, and the extremities of Mohammedan Africa, met at the birthplace of the prophet. These long journeys were rendered easy by the remarkable temperance of the Arab race, and Oriental hospitality also contributed to smooth the road to Mecca; while the fatalist dogma—profoundly rooted in the Mussulman mind—induced a thorough contempt for privation and danger. Piety and profit thus acted strongly on the masses; while persons of superior enlightenment, students of jurisprudence and theology, eagerly turned their steps from Spain and Morocco towards the schools of Tunis and Cairo, Damascus and Baghdad. The wide diffusion of the Arab language and of Islam by the sword of the prophet and his followers, afforded an additional inducement to enlightened travellers to extend their wanderings in the interest of learning and science—especially geography. Exchanging his native desert for the more treacherous sea, and his trusty camel for a crazy craft, the Arab, eager for knowledge and gain, boldly ventured upon unknown waters, destined to remain for long centuries unfurrowed by European keels.

Records of these voyages extend as far back as the ninth century of the Christian era, and, allowance being made for a certain Oriental tendency to long-windedness, and a painful redundancy of superstitious

trash about the miracles of Mohammedan saints, the works of Arab travellers are interesting enough. Intermingled with pious ejaculations are many acute observations, and descriptions remarkable for their accuracy. Beyond all question the most noteworthy of these Oriental voyagers is Ibn Batuta—a learned theologian of Tangier. Within a few years of the date at which Sir John Mandeville set out on his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the Tangerine started also on a devotional journey. On a Thursday—the second of the month of Redjeb in the year of the Hegira 725 (14th June, A.D. 1325)—the sheikh Abu-Abd-Allah, &c., &c., generally known as Ibn Batuta, forsook the city of his birth, with the intention of making a pilgrimage to Mecca, and visiting the tomb of the prophet. Aged twenty-two, and skilled in the Arabic learning of his time, the Moor entertained a liberal notion of the uses of a pilgrimage, and, accordingly, saw the world very thoroughly. On his direct way to Mecca and Medina he traversed part of Morocco, Algeria, Tunis, Tripoli, Egypt, and Arabia Petrea. Remaining in the East for several years, he made many pilgrimages to Mecca, and remained for nearly three years near that focus of Islam. At various times he explored the provinces of Arabia, Syria, Persia, Irak, Mesopotamia, Zanzibar, Asia Minor, and the Kiptchak, or southern Russia, then ruled over by the descendants of Chinghiz Khan. He also made an excursion to Constantinople, and travelled by an overland route through Bokhara, Badakshan, and Afghanistan to the court of the Sultan Mohammed Ibn Toghloak, at Delhi. Here he exercised the functions of *cadi* for two years, and was afterwards intrusted with a mission to the Emperor of China. Making his way to Calicut, then the great emporium of commerce between India and other countries of Asia, he found that the junk on which his slaves and other effects were embarked had already set sail; and he accordingly went to the Maldivé islands, where he administered justice for about a year and a half. He then recommenced his travels, visited Ceylon, the Indian Archipelago, and a part of China—and, finally, after a truly Oriental grand tour which occupied the twenty-four years between 1325 and 1349—returned to his native country. Like those modern tourists, whose first inquiry, on arriving anywhere, is, "When does the next train leave?" he had hardly

reached home when he started anew for the Mussulman kingdom of Granada, in 1351 set out from Fez on a journey through Soudan, and returned in 1354, having seen the two capitals of Soudan, Melly and Timbuctoo. Ibn Batuta was thus the earliest traveller into the interior of Africa who has left any record of his observations.

While engaged on his first pilgrimages to Mecca, the youthful divine met with few adventures of a stirring character; and the early part of his book is an example of more than common Oriental prosiness. I am aware that a small—a very small—halo of romance still clings to the East, but am well assured that much of this is due to the Arabian Nights' Entertainments; a book which may have been extracted from Oriental sources by a Frenchman, but to which no Arab ever put his prosy paw. If the quick-witted Frank really picked up the backbone of his admirably told tales from Arabian sources, all I can say is, I pity him sincerely, and thank him more than ever for his charming version. No Arab could possibly have told a story, even with the bowstring round his neck, in the clear, simple style of the Arabian Nights. The most commonplace narrative must needs be interlarded with pious ejaculations, ridiculous saints and miracles, poetry of the Catnach school, and indescribable twaddle and tedium of all kinds—compared with which the humblest penny-a-lining is graphic and brilliant. Benjamin of Tudela is sadly deficient in literary ability: but the Jew has an immense advantage over the Mohammedan, owing to his freedom from superstition, while it is almost impossible to get Ibn Batuta past a town without being wearied with miracles, and made semi-idiotic with the so-called poetry of the East.

This furiously devout traveller often went far out of his way to visit sheikhs of peculiar sanctity.

At Damietta he hunted up a celebrated sheikh of the Kalenders, who shave their chins and eyebrows. The account given of the origin of this custom is curious. The sheikh, it appears, was an exceedingly well-made and handsome man—a great inconvenience to a pious anchorite, for one of the women of Sawah presently fell in love with him. Being severely smitten, the lady proceeded to persecute the worthy sheikh, and to render life a burden to him. She was perpetually sending messages to him, lying in wait to

meet him in the street, and otherwise setting her turban at him; but the sheikh was not moved by these blandishments, and resisted all her advances like a stoic. At last the lady became weary of laying siege to the handsome sheikh, and not having read Virgil, was of course unaware that she ought to have hated the scorner of her charms. She loved on hopelessly, till she took counsel with an aged female, and laid a little plot. One morning, as the sheikh was on his way to the mosque, he was stopped by an old woman bearing a sealed letter in her hand. As the sheikh passed by her she said, "Master, can you read?" "Yes," replied he. Then said the old woman, "Behold this letter has been sent to me by my son; I wish you would read it for me." And he answered, "I will." But when she had opened the letter, she said, "Master, my son has a wife, who is in yonder house; might I pray you to be good enough to read the letter in the portico, between the two doors, so that she may hear." To this arrangement the obliging sheikh assented; but, when he had got through the first door, the old woman closed it, and the young lady who loved him came out with a troop of slaves. The sheikh was seized upon, and carried into an inner apartment, where the lady declared her intention of marrying him forthwith. The holy man tried to escape matrimony with an ingenuity and perseverance which reflect infinite honour upon his memory, but the damsel would not be denied. Finding there was no hope of escape, the sheikh said, "If it must be so, 'tis well. I will marry you at once; but, while the wedding-feast is preparing, allow me to retire to a sleeping room, that I may say my prayers and attire myself as a bridegroom." The lady granting this reasonable request, he retired, taking with him some water for his ablutions, and, so soon as he was alone, drew forth a razor which he had with him, and shaved off his beard and both his eyebrows. Presenting himself thus to his ardent bride, he was received exactly as he expected and wished. The lady was utterly disgusted with him, and, detesting both his person and his deed, ordered her servants to drive him out of the house. Having, by his heroism, escaped wedlock, this bright example to bachelors ever after preserved the same appearance; and every one of his sect also submitted to the shaving off

of his beard and eyebrows. The name of this great man, which should be written in letters of gold, was Jamāl Oddin El Sāwi.

Going on to Cairo, Ibn Batuta visited the Mīnyet of Ibn Khasib, and, after his manner, stops to tell a story about it, the point of which appears to be that a poet was once known to refuse the gift of a large ruby. It is pleasing, however, to hear that he was ultimately prevailed upon to accept it, and then walked straight off to the jewel dealers to sell it. These acute persons, knowing the man to be a poet, declared that he could not have come honestly by so large a stone, and hauled him before the sultan, a proceeding which caused Khasib, the giver of the ruby, to be restored to high honours.

It is not until the Moor gets to Mecca and Medinah, that he becomes really tedious, but among the holy places he is downright unbearable. He is more cheerful at Damascus, where he indulges in many poetical quotations. At Constantinople, he was dreadfully shocked to see that the Queen of the Bulgarians, when on a visit to her father, the Greek Emperor, gave evidence of backsliding from Islamism by eating the flesh of swine. Hence he journeyed to Serai on the Volga, and thence across the desert to Khaurism (Khiva), then the centre of a powerful state. Praising the melons of Khiva, and dallying a while at Bokhara, our sheikh pursued his way through Afghanistan and the Punjab to Delhi.

Like most Orientals, and many western people, our Arab wanderer mingled devotion and superstition with a keen love of juggling, whereof he narrates many wondrous particulars. He was much impressed with the feats of the Indian Jogis—a peculiar race of conjuring fanatics. He describes them as living sometimes in a “cave underground for a whole year, without eating or drinking;” but puts the saving clause “I heard,” before this powerful statement. Next he comes to what he actually saw for himself. “I saw, too, in the city of Sanjarur, one of the Moslems, who had been taught by them, and who had set up for himself a lofty cell, like an obelisk. Upon the top of this he stood for five-and-twenty days, during which time he neither ate nor drank. In this situation I left him, nor do I know how long he continued there after I had left the place. People say that they mix certain seeds, one of which is destined for a certain number of

days or months, and that they stand in need of no other support during all this time.”

While filling the post of *cadi*, the Moor had abundant opportunities for observing these Jogis, who were credited with extraordinary power, especially for evil. “Some of them will kill a man with a look: but this is most frequently done by the women. The woman who can do so, is called a *Goftār*. It happened, when I was judge of Delhi, and the emperor was upon one of his journeys, that a famine took place. On this occasion, the emperor ordered that the poor should be divided among the nobles for support, until the famine should cease. My portion, as affixed by the vizier, amounted to five hundred. These I sustained in a house which I built for the purpose. On a certain day during this time, a number of them came to me, bringing a woman with them, who, as they said, was a *Goftār*, and had killed a child which happened to be near her. I sent her, however, to the vizier, who ordered four large vessels to be filled with water, and tied to her. She was then thrown into the river Jumna. She did not sink in the water, but remained unhurt, so they knew that she was a *Goftār*. But if she had sunk, they would have taken her out of the water, knowing her to be innocent. And the vizier ordered her to be burnt, which was done.”

The vizier, like another well-known historical personage, evidently tried to please the public—a proceeding to which our worthy Tangerine would not descend. This excellent man, when not at his devotions, or occupying the judgment-seat, was much with the Emperor Mohammed Toghloek, who, on one occasion, treated him to a sight of the Jogis's juggling. “Then came two of these, wrapped up in cloaks, with their heads covered (for they take out all their hairs with powder). The emperor caressed them and said, pointing to me, ‘This is an illustrious stranger from afar off. Show him what he has never yet seen.’ They said, ‘We will.’ One of them then crouched down and presently raised himself from the earth, still retaining the posture of a man stooping down, until he floated in the air above our heads.”

This was a little too much for Ibn Batuta, and he was so astonished and terrified that he “fainted and fell to the earth,” whereat the emperor ordered him “some medicine which he had with him.”

“Upon taking this, I recovered and sat

up, the crouched-up man still remaining in the air just as he had been. His companion then took a sandal belonging to one of those who had come out with him, and struck it upon the ground as if he had been angry. The sandal then ascended until it was above the neck of the man in the air. It then began to strike him on the nape of the neck, while, little by little, he came down to the ground, and, at last, reeled in the place he had left. The emperor then told me that the man who doubled himself up into a cubic form was a disciple to the owner of the sandal, 'and,' continued he, 'had I not feared for thy reason, I should have ordered them to show thee greater things than these.' From this, however, I took a palpitation at the heart, until the emperor ordered me a medicine which restored me."

During his visit to Khansa (the Kinsay of Polo—Hangchaufu) Ibn Batuta was present at a great entertainment, at which jugglers were introduced at the conclusion of the repast, and our Moor's description of the marvels that ensued may be commended to the careful consideration of the ingenious Dr. Lynn, and the equally astute Mr. Maskelyne. "That same night, a juggler, who was one of the Khan's slaves, made his appearance, and the Amir said to him, 'Come and show us some of your marvels.' Upon this he took a wooden ball with several holes in it, through which long thongs were passed, and laying hold of one of these, slung it into the air. It went so high that we lost sight of it altogether. (It was the hottest season of the year, and we were outside, in the middle of the palace court.) There now remained only a little of the end of a thong in the conjuror's hand, and he desired one of the boys who assisted him to lay hold of it and mount. He did so, climbing by the thong, and we lost sight of him also. The conjuror then called to him three times, but getting no answer, he snatched up a knife, as if in a great rage, laid hold of the thong, and disappeared also! By and by he threw down one of the boy's hands, then a foot, then the other hand, and then the other foot, then the trunk, and last of all the head! Then he came down himself, all puffing and panting, and with his clothes all bloody, kissed the ground before the Amir, and said something to him in Chinese. The Amir gave some order in reply, and our friend then took the lad's limbs, laid them together in their

places, and gave a kick—when the boy got up and stood before us! All this astonished me beyond measure, and I had an attack of palpitation, like that which overcame me once before, in the presence of the Sultan of India, when he showed me something of the same kind. They gave me a cordial, however, which cured the attack. The *cadi* Afkharuddin was next to me, and said, 'Wallah! 'tis my opinion there has been neither going up nor coming down, neither marring nor mending, 'tis all jugglery!'"

Let us compare with this, which Ibn Batuta the Moor says he saw at Hangchau in China, in 1348, the account given by Edward Melton—an English gentleman, who wrote his "Zee-en-Land-Reizen," in low Dutch—of the performances of a Chinese troop of jugglers, which he witnessed at Batavia, in December, 1676. What gives this account an extraordinary circumstantiality, is that Melton's book, profusely adorned with plates, has a remarkable one, in which the Chinamen aforesaid are depicted performing the "perche," well known in London streets; the famous basket-murder trick, known for ages in India, and recently performed in Europe; and the wonderful trick which Melton, after giving a vivid account of the basket-murder trick, proceeds to describe thus: "But now I am going to relate a thing which surpasses all belief, and which I should scarcely venture to insert here, had it not been witnessed by thousands before my own eyes. One of the same gang took a ball of cord, and grasping one end of the cord in his hand, slung the other up into the air with such force that its extremity was beyond reach of our sight. He then immediately climbed up the cord with indescribable swiftness, and got so high that we could no longer see him. I stood full of astonishment, not conceiving what was to come of this; when lo! a leg came tumbling down out of the air. One of the conjuring company instantly snatched it up, and threw it into the basket whereof I have formerly spoken. A moment later a hand came down, and immediately on that another leg. And in short all the members of the body came thus successively tumbling from the air, and were cast together into the basket. The last fragment of all that we saw tumbling down was the head, and no sooner had that touched the ground, than he who had snatched up all the limbs and put them

in the basket, turned them all out again topsy-turvy. Then straightway we saw with these eyes all those limbs creep together again, and in short form a whole man, who at once could stand and go just as before, without showing the least damage. Never in my life was I so astonished as when I beheld this wonderful performance, and I doubted now no longer that these misguided men did it by the help of the devil."

In the plate illustrating this extraordinary passage, the juggler is shown, firstly, throwing up the ball of rope; secondly, climbing up a rope, the superior end of which disappears in the clouds; and, thirdly, in the act of coming down by instalments, which his confederate is picking up and putting into a basket. There can, therefore, be no possible doubt as to the exact meaning of the Anglo-Dutch voyager.

It is curious to find a similar story in the Memoirs of the Emperor Jehangire. Seven jugglers, from Bengal, exhibited before his majesty. "After performing the feat of cutting a man to pieces, scattering the limbs over the floor, covering them with a sheet, and then bringing him out safe and sound, they produced a chain of fifty cubits in length, and, in my presence, threw one end of it towards the sky, where it remained, as if fastened to something in the air. A dog was then brought forward, and, being placed at the lower end of the chain, immediately ran up, and, reaching the other end, immediately disappeared in the air. In the same manner a hog, a panther, a lion, and a tiger were successively sent up the chain, and all equally disappeared at the upper end of the chain. At last they took down the chain, and put it into a bag; no one ever discovering in what way the different animals were made to vanish into the air in the mysterious manner above described."

The varieties of this vanishing trick impress the reader with the truthfulness of the several narratives. Although one describes a leather thong, another a rope, and the third a chain, all agree that the line was hooked on to the sky. Modern visitors to juggling séances are well aware, from the experience of Pepper's ghost, that almost any kind of illusion can be produced on a stage, or in an enclosed space, by skilfully-arranged mirrors; but all the accounts cited agree in this Chinese feat being performed in the open air. Edward Melton draws a large, open square,

or market-place, surrounded by shops and filled with a crowd of people, who are standing all round the jugglers—a liberty by no means permitted by modern professors.

Nothing is more strange to a modern traveller than to find that the wandering Moor—who had penetrated into many far countries, from Timbuctoo to Tartary, and from Barbary to Bengal; had stood on Gibraltar, and exulted that the position of the crescent there was the keenest thorn in the side of the infidel; had served in India both as judge and soldier, from the shores of the Hindoo Koosh to the Coral Islands, which lie under the equator; had eaten the water-melons of Khiva, and the grapes of Malaga; drunk koumiss with the Tartars of the Kiptchak, and samshu'd with the Chinese, should have been a highly-domesticated person—a much married man. He was always getting married, and certainly possessed one great virtue in a husband, the art of tackling his wives' relations. On his first journey he had gone no farther than from Tangier to Tripoli when he got married, so far as he tells us, for the first time. No sooner had he rejoined the caravan than he had a first-rate "row" with his father-in-law, separated from his wife, and married another girl—the daughter of a tālib of Fez. He celebrated this event by a great banquet, to which he invited the whole caravan for the space of a day. At Delhi the sheikh had the misfortune to lose a daughter, and was much comforted by the splendid ceremonies decreed on that occasion, and the kindness shown by the emperor's mother to that Mrs. Batuta who was the mother of the child. I say this advisedly, as, in his chapter on the Maldivé islands, he refers to a king of Malabar as having "married a sister to one of my wives when I lived at Delhi." Residing at the Maldives for the space of a year and a half, he not only accumulated a choice collection of Mahratta, Coromandel, and other female slaves—notably one Gulistan (the flower-bed), a Mahrattese—but four regular legitimate wives. It seems that he was "run after" by the managing fathers of the country. He began by proposing to marry the daughter of one vizier, but the grand vizier refused his permission, as he wanted our Moor for his own daughter, for whom Ibn Batuta had no liking, "for she was unlucky. Two persons had already been betrothed to her and died." Like a prudent man he tried to "bolt" altogether, but the Mal-

divians would not hear of it, and promised him the girl of (part of) his heart. At the last minute the lady sent to say she was ill, whereat the grand vizier took the Moor apart and said, "His daughter evidently dislikes the marriage, and she is mistress of her own actions. But here are the people all gathered together. Something must be done. You must marry somebody. Will you marry the mother-in-law of the Sultana, widow of the father of my son's wife?" This was settled at once, the Mussulman profession of faith read, and the dowry paid over. "A few days after, my wife was handed over to me, and proved one of the best women that ever lived. So excellently good was she, that, when I was her husband, she anointed me with sweet unguents and perfumed my garments, laughing sweetly all the while."

As *cadi*—an office to which he was appointed in consequence of this marriage—he undertook to enforce (by whip) a due observance of the laws relating to marriage and divorce, and tried to thrash the men into devotion and the women into clothing themselves decently. In the latter attempt he broke down completely. Meanwhile he married the daughter of another vizier, descended from a sultan, and a third, a widow of a sultan, and built three houses for these ladies in the garden the vizier had given unto him. "As for my fourth wife, the daughter-in-law of the Vizier Abd Allah, she lived in her own house, and was the wife whom of all I cherished the most." These royal alliances made our friend too powerful to be endured by the Maldivian authorities, who got rid of him, and allowed him with great difficulty to take two of his wives away with him (for, by law, no man could take away a Maldivienne), and one of these was compelled to sacrifice her property. However, she was taken ill, and was left behind, after all; and the other wife was handed over to her father in the Moluccas. In those beautiful islands the redoubtable Moor married two more wives, an indisputable proof of the naturally domestic habits of this celebrated wanderer.

THE STORY OF OWEN GORTON.

IN SIX CHAPTERS. CHAPTER III.

AND here let me state that I am moved to write this record by two considerations. In the first place, I am anxious that the world should possess my own account of the very grave events which have attached

to my name a most painful notoriety. Secondly, I cherish a hope, that the act of deliberately setting forth this narrative may tend to my own clearer apprehension of much that is at present involved in a strange obscurity. By uncoiling, as it were, and examining as carefully as I can, the chain of circumstances entangling me, I trust I may be able at any rate to note such of its links as are defective or insecure. For I may freely state there are, even now, passages in the story of my adventures and sufferings which are to me most unaccountable and mysterious.

I appeared before the magistrate upon some three or four occasions, and I was also brought before the coroner's jury, who returned against me a verdict of "Wilful murder." Upon almost the same evidence the magistrate in Bow-street duly committed me, to take my trial at the approaching sessions of the Central Criminal Court.

I will not dwell upon these preliminary proceedings. That they were to me wearisome and painful beyond measure I need hardly state. There was much repetition of evidence; but new witnesses appeared upon each occasion, strengthening, after a manner that was to me most inexplicable, the proofs of my guilt. There was great public excitement. The newspapers were full of details concerning the Chalk Farm Tragedy, as it was called. I could see that artists were hard at work taking sketches of me as I stood at the prisoners' bar in the police court. Upon my passage to and from the court, I was greeted by the bystanders with fierce yells and menaces. The world had quite decided that I was the murderer of James Thorpe. I could read this judgment in the eyes of all who came near me. They regarded me as doomed to death at the earliest possible opportunity.

I was supported by a sense of my own perfect innocence. And more; there now came to me a feeling of apathy that I find it difficult to account for. I was, in truth, indifferent to the consequences attendant upon my position. A sensation of numbness had stolen over my faculties. I was content that men should do with me what they listed. They might even, if they would have it so, put me to death. I had scarcely patience now to listen to the witnesses appearing in court against me, and fortifying, little by little, but very surely, the proof of my guilt. I preferred to think of other things; to indulge in day dreams; to busy myself with

recollections of the books I had been studying just before my arrest. And then, sometimes, I must confess, it happened that I could not, even when I tried my utmost, bring myself to understand what was passing. It was as though a half-veiled vision was before me. I could see but indifferently. Sounds struck upon my ear, but in a muffled kind of way; and then an extravagant but irresistible conviction occupied me, that what I saw and heard did not in truth concern me, but some other one, a stranger to me in every respect, whose fate, whatever it might be, was no sort of affair of mine.

Something—with a view to the information of the reader—it behoves me to relate concerning myself and my earlier days. I promise to be as brief as I may. In truth, the past interests me very little.

My life had been a failure; I was well assured of the fact. To every man, I think, there comes a time when he feels constrained to take account of himself and his doings; to note his advance upon the journey of life; to look back upon the road he has travelled. The result is generally disappointing. Success is for the few; failure for the many. I had so appraised my experiences, and was convinced of the result. I had failed beyond all question.

Still my discomfiture did not involve serious consequences. The question of subsistence, at any rate, was not affected by my failure. I was in receipt of an independent income—small but secure. I could not live luxuriously, but food and raiment were mine surely enough.

I had been called to the bar, and made considerable study of the law. It interested me, and I regarded my profession, at one time, almost with affection. Yet suddenly I found myself turning from it with loathing. This was due, in part, to the discovery of my unfitness to act as an advocate, owing to a constitutional nervousness I have never been able to overcome. I was deficient in presence of mind, in alertness of intellect and speech. I was too sensitive—too readily abashed. An unexpected obstacle in my path—a pert answer from a witness, a word of disapproval from a judge, or a flippant remark from a fellow-barrister—discomposed me painfully. A strange tremulousness seized me; my colour rose; the blood seemed to rush to my head. I lost command of my temper; the power of distinct utterance departed from me. My retirement from

active practice became unavoidable. And then I persuaded myself that the law, after all, was but a web of fraud and chicanery, especially contrived for the escape of the guilty and the punishment of the innocent—an odious imposture far removed from the sympathies of the right-minded; worthier, indeed, of their scorn and repudiation.

To another matter I must also refer, though I may not—I cannot—dwell upon it. I was an unsuccessful lover. I wish to express myself with all moderation and forbearance upon this head. But I was unfairly used; I was trifled with, duped, betrayed. I bring no charge against her I loved. I am content to hold her blameless of all but the light fault—in one so young, and fair, and inexperienced—of indecision, of ignorance of the real state of her feelings towards me. Her name there is no need for me to reveal. She became the wife of James Thorpe.

He had professed himself my intimate comrade and friend. He well knew—he was the confidant of—the story of my love. He was profuse in his offers of service; in his expressions of anxiety for my happiness. Meantime, he played a traitor's part; he became, in secret, my rival. By his arts the affection, that once seemed mine, was withdrawn from me. My love was disregarded—my suit was rejected. A trivial disagreement was made the excuse for a life-long separation. Fault was found with my temper—with what was called the eccentricity of my ways and views of life. This was but a pretext invented by Thorpe for parting me from her I loved.

She became his wife. The marriage, as I have heard, was far from a happy one; but of this I cannot speak with certainty. Rumour reached me, however, that Thorpe proved a harsh, exacting, and yet a negligent husband. Her health failed her; her beauty faded. She felt acutely the misery of her life. She died, three years after her marriage, bringing into the world a still-born child.

This had happened long since. I never saw her after her marriage. It seemed to be agreed between us, that thenceforward we were to be as strangers to each other. Nor did I hold any sort of communion with Thorpe. Now and then I may have met him by chance; but no word passed between us on those occasions. I knew that he lived in the neighbourhood of Chalk Farm, though I am now at a loss to state how I came to be possessed of that

scrap of information, unless it was that I first learnt this from the announcement in the newspapers of the death of his wife.

I do not attempt to deny, that the perfidy of which I had been the victim wounded and angered me extremely. Against her I cherished no ill-feeling. I regarded her with pity—with compassion—with deep regret—always most tenderly. I did all I could to find excuses for her—to constrain myself to think as lightly as I might of the wrong she had done me. No doubt my faith in her had suffered grievous wreck, and with it had gone under and perished my faith in humankind. For Thorpe—I loathed him; I viewed him with the bitterest scorn. He was to me the most despicable of men. All ties between us were severed at a blow. We had been schoolboys together; constant companions; the closest of friends in after life. But now we were the bitterest foes. There could be no terms between us. Upon the ruins of betrayed friendship we stood, severed by hatred the most implacable. I was to him a miserable dupe. He was to me a liar, a trickster, a thief. I could not speak, I could not think of him with common patience. The mention of his name even incensed me almost to frenzy. I avoided, as much as I could, every chance of meeting him. I even prayed that we might never meet again.

But this, let it be understood, was in the first fever of my grief and wrath. True, my state of wild excitement endured for a considerable period. But I could not but yield to the healing influence of time. The years passed; I grew old; my hair became streaked with grey; the lines deepened in my face. My great trouble seemed now a thing of long ago. My wound had healed. She had died, poor child. My passion might well be interred with her—be stilled for ever in her grave. For Thorpe—well, I hated him still; but out of confirmed habit that I could not rid myself of, rather than for any more vital reason. My anger against him was not dead, perhaps, but it slept very soundly; it had slept for a long time. Once it had stirred and arisen, when, by some chance, rumours reached me that he had behaved ill to his wife; undervalued her; neglected her; treated her even with more active cruelty. But, again, a sense of rest returned to me when I learned that she had passed for ever out of his reach; I could be grieved no more by word, or look, or deed, or thought of his.

And then I had sought and found solace and forgetfulness in close study. I lived a life of seclusion, surrounded by books—friends that cannot betray, that never fail. I was ignored in the present. I looked for recognition at the hands of posterity. I designed to leave behind me a work that should, at least, meet with applause at the hands of the thoughtful and studious. I contemplated the expansion and elaboration of this work, so that it might really constitute a monument of my industry and learning. I had resolved that I would not always, nor should the world either, judge my life to be in truth the arrant failure it had seemed to be.

CHAPTER IV.

THAT it was acute pain to be torn from the labour I loved, from the privacy and solitude that were as necessities of existence to me; to be thrust into the glare of publicity; and to be charged with a crime of a most dreadful nature, I need hardly say. But I have not yet done justice to the violence that was in this way inflicted upon my method of life. The reader has yet to be informed of the condition of complete isolation in which I lived. No doubt I had carried to excess my love of study and seclusion. I passed days and nights at my desk, reading, writing, or reflecting. I rarely quitted my chambers. When it seemed to me that I stood in need of fresh air, I sought and found it, usually at night, on the roof of the house. At intervals, however, I treated myself to a few hours' holiday at some pleasant and retired spot on the outskirts of London. It was only upon these occasions that I found the faculty of speech of service to me; but I made the fewest words possible serve my turn. At home I never spoke. Such instructions as I required to give my house-keeper I wrote upon a slate, hanging in the lobby of my chambers. She communicated with me in the same way. For months together I never saw her. She appeared to understand my whim in this respect, and took pains to consider and humour it, avoiding my presence as much as possible. She placed my meals ready for me in a small room used only for that purpose; this done, she quitted the apartment, returning to it only when I had vacated it. I did not need her presence or attendance, and I had taken care to reduce my daily wants to a minimum. I ate sparingly of very simple food, and drank water only. I received no visits.

My door was fast closed against chance callers. Friends I had none. After my experiences, the very name of friendship was odious to me. I had resolved upon leading a life of complete severance from the world. I had no one to please but myself. Why should I not please myself in this matter?

But the system of life I had adopted, however suited to my individual tastes, no doubt placed me at a considerable disadvantage now that action was demanded of me; now that I seemed to be an object of attack; and that it behoved me to resist, as strenuously as I could, what really looked like a conspiracy to overwhelm and destroy me. I can well understand that my aspect, as I stood in court, was somewhat eccentric, and, with my manner, conveyed an air of bewilderment, amazement, and distress, even in excess of the truth.

It was probably from some well-intentioned jailor or constable that I received advice to place myself in communication with my friends, and secure the services of a solicitor. As I have already stated, I had no friends. Had I any acquaintance with a solicitor?

Well, yes. I knew that a young man named Sherson occupied chambers immediately beneath my own. I had met him now and then upon the staircase, when he had courteously made way for me to pass him, and had otherwise, as I fancied, evidenced a kindly disposition towards me. I had never interchanged a word with him, however. I was not, indeed, clear that I distinctly remembered his personal appearance; but I had certainly understood that he was an attorney. I resolved, therefore, to send to him, requesting that he would act on my behalf, and adopt all necessary measures for my defence.

He came to me in Newgate very promptly upon my writing to him. I noted that his manner betrayed uneasiness. He was nervous; his fingers toyed incessantly with his watch-guard, and he spoke hurriedly. He expressed, as I gathered, deep sympathy with me in the very painful position I occupied, and hopes for my speedy release from confinement, and from the horrible charge brought against me.

I then begged him to undertake my defence. He hesitated, and his face flushed as he answered: "There is this difficulty, Mr. Gorton; indeed, this insuperable obstacle. I have been required by the crown to attend as a witness in the case."

"As a witness!" I exclaimed.

"For the prosecution. There is no reason why you should not be fully informed on the subject, Mr. Gorton. Indeed, the depositions will tell you all I am about to state. I have to give evidence in court, to the effect that, on the evening of the murder, I heard you shut the door of your chambers, descend the staircase, and go out into the street!"

"You heard this?"

"Undoubtedly."

"But I am as certain as that I am standing here, that on the evening of the murder I never once quitted my room. I stayed indoors, according to my ordinary custom, the whole evening."

"I can but say what I believe to be true."

"And you believe you heard this?"

"I do indeed—and more. I am required to state that, some hours later, I heard you return home, ascend the stairs, and re-enter your chambers."

"There must be some mistake."

"Indeed, I trust so," he said, but in so low a tone that he was scarcely audible.

"But supposing that you heard footsteps upon the staircase, why should you take for granted that they were mine?"

"I know your step, of course; I have so long resided upon the same premises."

"But you may be mistaken."

"That is possible, of course. As I said before, I can but speak according to my belief. And then the noise of opening and shutting the door of your chambers. As to that, I could hardly be mistaken."

"And you are positive as to the night?"

"I am positive as to the night. I know that I cannot be mistaken in regard to the date. It was the night of the murder."

"Can you, then, possibly believe me guilty of the murder?"

"I must decline answering the question. I don't know what to believe."

I was silent; what, indeed, could I say? For some reason, inexplicable to me, Sherson had joined in the conspiracy against me!

Of course, supposing me to be admitted as a witness in the case, I could contradict him. I could affirm—what was the absolute fact—that I had never quitted my study on the night of the murder, and that any supposition of his to the contrary must necessarily be baseless. At least my voice would in that case be weighed against his, and it would be for the jury to decide which had the greater authority. But the English law, in its wisdom or unwisdom,

has decided that a prisoner shall be debarred from uttering a word of explanation or defence. I must hear Sherson's evidence, and remain perfectly silent, as though admitting its validity, and accepting his extraordinary story, that I had been absent from my chambers for some hours of the evening of the murder. Of course, living alone as I did, I could not adduce evidence of my presence in my chambers. I was in this respect at the mercy of the first false witness who chose to tender himself to be sworn.

I was much disappointed with Sherson; and, failing his assistance, I was left without a solicitor. I did not care to call in the aid of a stranger, although, in truth, Sherson was but a stranger to me after all. I resolved to wait as patiently as I might the issue of events. I was conscious of my own innocence. I was convinced that the charge against me could not be maintained; that it must dissolve altogether when it came to be tested by a judge and jury. Still, the hours I passed in prison inflicted torture upon me. What must captivity be, I demanded, by way of fortifying myself, to those unpossessed of subjects for meditation, of mental resources, of stores of memory, observation and experience? It was bad enough to me—Heaven knows—accustomed, as I was, to seclusion from the world; but to the uneducated, the hewers of wood and drawers of water, unused to self-examination and reflection, dependent upon intercourse with their fellows, and accustomed to the fresh air blowing freely about them—to these it must be cruelly insupportable. I saw no one during the weeks of captivity preceding my trial, with the exception of Sherson and certain of the prison functionaries, including the chaplain, the governor, and one or two medical men, required to attend, as I understood, to the health of the prisoners, and to visit them at stated intervals. With these visitors I held but little conversation. They always avoided, I noticed, the subject of the crime of which I was accused.

The trial duly came on at the Old Bailey, before a judge whose name I cannot now call to mind; but he was, I know, of distinguished reputation. The court was crowded to excess. A thick fog prevailed throughout the day. Candles had been lighted, which seemed, however, but to interrupt here and there, and feebly, the tawny darkness with patches of orange-

coloured light. I could note that the judge wore spectacles, which reflected the flames of the candles placed upon his desk. Otherwise, I could see little of what passed in court; the fog was so dense and my sight so infirm.

I pleaded "Not guilty," speaking as loudly as I could. I was resolved that about my denial of the charge there should be no mistake, at any rate.

I then discovered that an advocate of some eminence had been engaged to appear on my behalf, and conduct my defence. His services had been secured, as I understood, by certain distant relatives of mine; I had neither seen nor heard of them for many years past, and had almost forgotten the fact that they had ever existed. Their intervention was due, without doubt, less to concern about me than to regard for themselves. They desired to refute the charge brought against me, lest it should affect injuriously their own fair fame as my kindred.

The counsel for the crown addressed the jury at considerable length, fully narrating the case against me. He spoke for about two hours. I listened with interest and surprise. My attention was enlisted by his clear and concise setting forth of the story of the murder. To me it was as a novel; not the less absorbing because I well knew its untruth, so far as I was concerned. But I was amazed at his ingenuity in connecting me with the crime. The evidence he was about to adduce, according to his description of it, proved my guilt beyond a doubt. The statements of the witnesses seemed to be constrained by him to take one shape—to point in one direction only. Still, he confessed that the evidence against me was not always of a direct kind, but must sometimes be regarded constructively. He dwelt, however, upon the cumulative force of circumstances telling against the accused; explained how one circumstance might signify little, till supported by a second, when, at any rate, suspicion was warranted; but how, when to these were added circumstances three, four, and five—all fairly susceptible of one interpretation—proof was fortified and increased as by a system of geometric progression, and guilt was surely brought home to the guilty. He omitted to mention, however, that one error in this fabric of evidence would result in the toppling down of the whole; and that, after all was said, the

strength of his chain of circumstances was not stronger than its weakest link.

He discussed at length the motive of the crime, while admitting that the search for motive in every such case might easily be over-valued: great crimes had oftentimes been committed for very small motives. But here there was no lack of motive: it was discoverable upon the surface of the case. Between the murdered man and the accused there had long been enmity, the more bitter and inflamed in that they had once been friends. The prisoner had admitted as much to the constable arresting him, who would be called as a witness. My own words were quoted. "We disagreed at last," I had said. "Downright quarrelled, indeed. I was sincerely attached to him at one time, but I got to hate him at last." It was true that, recollecting myself and the peril in which I stood, I had gone on to deny all knowledge of the murder; all complicity with it. But, at any rate, the motive inducing me to the crime had been disclosed. It was hatred simply; hatred resulting, as it so often did, from jealousy. The suit of the deceased had been referred to mine, and I had determined upon revenge—had brooded long upon it—for years, even; then, at last, I had carried my fell project into execution. It would be shown that I had threatened the life of the deceased on more than one occasion. (This part of the counsel's address was unintelligible to me.) And convincing proof would be forthcoming of my presence in the neighbourhood of Mr. Thorpe's house on the night of the murder, and otherwise of my connection, beyond all manner of doubt, with the crime of which I stood accused.

In this brief statement of its general purport, I am conscious that I have not done justice to a speech of singular ability, impressive both from its ingenious and lucid arrangement, and also from the skill with which it was delivered.

A LITTLE PARIS RESTAURANT.*

IN a corner of those magnificent markets of Paris, called the Halles Centrales, you may behold a strange sight every morning between six o'clock and noon. Half a dozen large stalls there, bright with gilding and varnish, luxurious with marble, well-furnished with lusty shop-girls, display the

remnant of yesterday's banquet—plates of soup; bits of fish half picked, with the sauce still round them; remnants of pâtés and sweets; liquefied ices; fragments of game; and costly viands formless heaped together. These are the leavings of a grand restaurant, or a ministerial dinner, sold by the officier to whom such perquisites belong. Too proud is he to touch them himself, but round the counter you will see a few workmen, mostly red-nosed and shaggy, the wives of many more, and a crush of threadbare individuals of that class one would rather see by daylight than by dark. It is not that these broken meats, so far as I have noticed, are particularly cheap. Five pennyworth of beef would give more strength than ten plates of melted ice and sauce congealed. But the worn-out stomachs of such people crave high seasoning and strong taste, which the beef would not give them. So they take away, in bits of newspaper, a franc's worth of wretched dainties, and eat them with a scowl and curse against "the rich." One thing I know: every man who haunted this corner of the Halles before '71, is either shot or transported to New Caledonia, or scowls and hates the rich upon a foreign shore.

This profitable commerce in broken meats is alluded to with disgust by Parisians, who, if they pursued the investigations which have led me to write this paper, might admit their horror to be somewhat misplaced. He who buys a plate of soup, or even of game, at the Halles, knows at least what he is buying, and may depend that, however dirty, it really is, in substance, what it pretends to be. In the small restaurant affectioned by this scoffer, certainty lies all the other way. At home we know nothing, thank Heaven, of the small restaurateur's cuisine, nor of his culinary art.

I do not, by this magniloquent expression, mean what we roughly call cooking. I mean literally an art; that is, a means of producing the appearance of some object which is not really set before you. Time was, in Paris as in England, when you must catch your hare before you cooked him. That time is very ancient; so long passed that even days succeeding, when man had found the means to serve a hare without procuring one, are now looked upon as primitive and rude. Art has made great strides of late!

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 13, p. 323.

There are, in fact, eating-shops in Paris where no single article is what it pretends to be.

Let us suppose that an habitué of one amongst such places has made his little hit upon the Petite Bourse, that perambulating crowd which meets each night on the Boulevard des Italiens, and does its business in walking, like a school of peripatetic philosophers, and celebrates the occasion by giving a dinner to his friends. He orders it beforehand, of course. Let us say the menu is: Bisque soup, an expensive dish made of crayfish stewed down; filets of sole; a vol-au-vent Financière; a roast leg of mutton; ortolans; an omelette with jam; fruit. A very neat little dinner, for which he will pay roundly. The master of the house takes his order with gusto. The gentleman may depend that it will be in every respect satisfactory. He will see to it himself. He does. From the nearest chemist he buys as many ounces as are needful of "bisque powder," a substance obtained, I believe, by chemically dissolving lobster shells, and evaporating the acid; it is sold openly. At a penny each he buys as many crayfish as there are guests, fills the head with forcemeat, and duly sets one afloat on every plate, as the fashion is. So much for soup. You think that filets of sole cannot possibly be imitated. Great is your mistake. Take salt cod, soak it in lukewarm water till the brine is all extracted; comb out, with a small steel instrument, the flakes; parboil it; fry; add sauce, and see if it will not pass muster. Vol-au-vent Financière should have a light patty crust, and that is given it, for flour is cheap. Inside should be cockscombs, but they run much too dear. Take what is called a "shape" of tin. Bring out the palates which, of course, you have preserved when serving that favourite dish of France, calf's head. Spread them flat, and with your shape cut out as many cockscombs as you want. No one can tell the difference, and thus your vol-au-vent, which might cost shillings, costs you just nothing at all. What is the next article? Oh, a roast leg of mutton. Roasting in France, mark you, is all done on the spit. A great deal of fuel, of trouble, and of space is needed to cook a joint in this way. Of course your restaurateur is not going to expense and inconvenience. The leg of mutton is baked like a pudding. When it is done, the cook takes his biggest spit and

bravely runs it through. With a brush he dabs some burnt sienna round the "bumps," powders them with meat reduced to charcoal, withdraws the spit, warms again in the oven, and serves up. His assistant pours into the dish a half-pint of Liebig's extract diluted, and two spoonfuls of the juice of beetroot; with a syringe he spirits of boiling fat sufficient. Will any man find courage to dispute that is roast mutton? No one, and art triumphs.

Ortolans? Oh, to make an ortolan is childish work if you possess a sparrow or a linnnet, value three halfpence. Cook the bird slightly, for your ortolan should be half raw. When done, make a hole above the tail. Draw up boiling suet in a little tube—taking care not to scald your mouth—insert the tube, and blow the fat beneath the skin. Nothing more simple! By the time it has reached the salle, a connoisseur alone could doubt you. Omelette aux confitures has mysteries in its jam which I have not investigated; you may know something about that in England. But the omelette itself is rarely made with common honesty. They give you but one yolk for each four whites of egg; the yolk is too valuable for wasting upon omelettes. And so much for this luckless man's dinner, which, nevertheless, he eats with the greatest gusto.

I could tell more of the culinary art, but I think you must have had enough. Only one other instance. It is almost a proverb that eggs defy adulteration. In one sense they do; but what is the value of an art if it have no difficulties to overcome? Eggs cannot yet be adulterated, but they can be made to seem what they are not. There is a trick played in those cheap restaurants, where you dine and breakfast at a price which common sense declares to be impossible, well worthy of note for its ingenuity, and for the skill displayed in its manipulation. There one is invited to take eggs sur le plat, two of them, for three-pence or fourpence, a sum utterly impossible in Paris, even though the eggs be not very fresh. The feat is to make two eggs out of one. Taking a glazier's diamond, the cook delicately scores his egg all round. Then, furnished with his plate, duly filled with butter boiling, he takes the egg in either hand, whilst a comrade smartly slices it in two with a knife well oiled. Quick as thought the cook drops one half the shell on either side, the boiling butter fixes it, and there

lie your two eggs sur le plat, made out of one!

Snail-fattening is not the least strange of the industries connected with the culinary art as practised in Paris. It is carried on outside "the barriers," since it is clearly not worth while to pay octroi upon a gross of game, whereof great numbers may be prematurely dead. Most of the snails are turned into tanks to fatten, but some large breeders keep them in the open air. And what sort of fence do you think they erect to prevent their slimy flocks escaping? Walls they could climb over, were they lofty as those of Babylon; ditches they could crawl through. But a line of sawdust, four inches broad, fresh laid each morning, is beyond their skill to cross. Eight or ten parks thus walled in make the snailmaster's preserve. He turns loose his daily consignment into one of them, where it finds nothing to eat during forty-eight hours. In two days the creatures are removed to another park, where they find cabbages, lettuces, endive, a little thyme, and a few vine leaves. Purified by two days' fasting, they attack this provander with fury, and eat and eat until they grow as fat as classic snail could ever be. Between eight and ten days of this luxurious regimen fits them for the kitchen, whither I don't care to follow them. The importance of the industry is shown by figures adduced in the municipal council upon a proposition to raise the tax upon fatted escargots, now very small. Supporters of the increase proved that, if escargots were charged but one quarter the rate levied on oysters, counting fifty of one to be worth a dozen of the other, Paris would take a revenue of two hundred thousand francs a year. And the consumption is growing enormously. I believe it a fact established, that eating escargots reduces a man's flesh till, in fact, nothing is left but bones and muscle. Fantees told me the same thing of their snail soup, a hideous compound. The edible snail of the Gold Coast has a shell quite three inches long and two inches high. From it he thrusts a pair of monstrous wings, four inches in length, beneath which his vast head protrudes. These wings are the grand dainty, and they are served whole in the soup. I have tasted that also—we were not particular in the late campaign—but shuddering memory forbids me to decide whether escargot of France or Fantee snail be the more horrible repast.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK III. CHAPTER VII. CLEMENT BURTON'S PATIENT.

WHEN fickle fashion flies away from a neighbourhood which she at one time had delighted in as her head-quarters, the effect of the desertion is shown, not merely by the difference in the class of occupants by whom the huge mansions in the squares and terraces are tenanted, but is plainly perceptible throughout the entire neighbourhood. The comfortable roomy houses in the adjacent streets, which were found so handy by well-to-do attorneys and retired tradesmen, when abandoned by this respectable class of tenants, fall rapidly in the social scale, and if they do not take in boarders, have no other resource than letting themselves out in lodgings. This is essentially the case in the good old-fashioned neighbourhood of Bloomsbury. When the salt of the earth removed westward from the great, open, healthy squares, which had been thought slices of Paradise by their grandfathers, their places were supplied by the leading lawyers and the fashionable physicians; the names of their residents yet had handles, and carriages—not perhaps so grand or so well appointed as their predecessors, but still carriages—rolled round the pleasant inclosures. But now the worthy knights of the lancet and the brief have followed in the train of their more distinguished forerunners, and the vacancies thus caused are filled by denizens of another style, among whom the Hebraic element preponderates. The smaller streets have suffered in the same way, and there are but few of them which are not occupied as temporary homes by clerks in the City, or newspaper writers, whose enforced late work renders a proximity to their offices desirable; indeed, the neighbourhood being, as it is, almost within hail of the great arteries of commerce, while in itself wonderfully quiet, and secluded, and tolerably airy, is so popular and so much sought after, that the landladies of the quarter have but seldom occasion to announce their rooms as empty.

In the front room on the second floor of a small dull house in one of these streets, which was itself small and dull, and which led out of a cramped, and dull, and dusty square, a woman lay reclining in what ought to have been an easy-chair, and

what was, at all events, larger, softer, and less angular than the rest of the furniture in the apartment. An invalid this by her manner, which was weary and listless, save when she roused herself from time to time to look out of the window, with a sharp, irritable, expectant glance; a woman who has been handsome in her time, and who, with her bright eyes and soft curling hair, is handsome still, despite the worn and haggard look which suffering has imprinted upon her face—suffering of an acute kind, too, bodily as well as mental. The woman lying there, subdued and almost helpless, in that dull but clean and orderly second-floor room, at the mercy of the nurse by whom she has just been dressed and guided to the chair by the window, where she sits in anticipation of the doctor's visit, is Lydia Walton, otherwise the "fascinating Mrs. W.," otherwise "Stunning Lydia," erst the star of the Miranda Music-hall, and the object of adoration of myriads of small clerks and office boys. A month ago, as she tripped lightly off the stage after giving, in response to the third encore, the last verse of her celebrated song, "Follow me, lads, to the Guadalquivir," the end of a loose gauze veil with which her head and arms were encircled, caught fire from one of the side-lights, and instantly flared into a blaze. She was not yet out of view of some of the audience when this occurred, and a great terror spread among them. Shouts of "Fire!" were raised, people rose from their seats, and a stampede seemed likely to ensue, when Mr. McGaff, the spirited proprietor, presented himself before the curtain, hat in hand, and assured his kind friends that the fire had been put out, and that all danger was over. All danger to the building he should have said, and to his own property. As for the poor woman who was the original cause of the disaster, she had been thrown down and wrapped in cloaks, but the blaze by which she was surrounded was not extinguished until she had been badly burned, so badly that McGaff, who, on the whole, was a kindly man, determined she should have better advice than could be obtained from the neighbouring apothecary, who had been fetched on the spur of the moment; and, after he had had Mrs. Walton removed to her lodgings, sent a message to Mr. Clement Burton, whom he knew well by repute, and with whom he had a slight personal acquaintance, begging he would call upon the sufferer.

This was just one of those cases which

Clement Burton was pleased to attend. His practice was so large that, although he would not readily have refused any addition to it, he would unwillingly have accepted a charge of a grave and attention-requiring nature in a respectable family, where his fees would have been large and sure; but the dash of Bohemianism in his blood made him feel an interest in the misfortune that had happened to this poor woman—an interest which was not abated when he came to know more of her. He found her to be a woman of strong passions, with which was mingled a singular amount of self-control; a strange woman, naturally very clever, but only half-educated—outspoken and bitter, railing against men for their selfishness and hypocrisy, but grateful to him and submissive to his treatment. The pain which she suffered was always sharp—at times intense. The fire had played around her like a serpent; and the back of her neck, her shoulders, and her arms were badly burned—her right arm and hand so badly, that she scarcely could move them. It was a case that required constant and skilful nursing; and the amount of interest felt by Mr. Burton in the patient was shown by his asking Sister Gaynor to undertake it. Sister Gaynor was a widow. Trouble had come to her early—for she was not more than four or five and twenty—and had left its impress on her face, which had a grave and careworn though marvellously sweet expression. There was a good deal of chaff amongst the students, and some of the surgeons, attached to St. Vitus's, about Sister Gaynor, with whom Mr. Burton was supposed to be desperately in love; but no one, save the outspoken Mr. Channell, dared say anything about it, and even his hints were of the mildest kind. There was not, of course, the remotest ground for such a report. Clement Burton was too busy a man to fall in love as a pastime, and his affection—so much of it as he dared allow himself—was centred elsewhere; but he had a great personal regard for Mrs. Gaynor, on account of her ladylike manner and a respect for the way in which she performed her duties. He had some hesitation, at first, in asking her to attend upon Lydia Walton; but the sister undertook the charge with cheerful alacrity, and the patient, odd and irritable though she was, could not find words to express to the surgeon her appreciation of her nurse's kindness.

"I wonder whether Mr. Burton is ever

coming this morning?" said Lydia Walton, falling back in her chair again, after another glance through the window.

"It is scarcely his time yet, I think," said Mrs. Gaynor, who was moving noiselessly about the room, dusting here and there, and making the best of the few cheap ornaments. "He told us he should be later this week, you know; he is very much engaged."

"Yes, I know," said Lydia, in a tone of irritation; "but that does not prevent my wanting him to come."

"And it is a very little time since that you feared his visit," said Mrs. Gaynor, with a quiet smile.

"Yes, because he used to hurt me when he took off these bandages; and I hadn't grown accustomed to him then. He hurts now, sometimes. It seems as though this wretched right arm would never get well; but, I don't know, his visit seems a sort of break in the day—a kind of fill-up to us poor dull creatures."

"Speak for yourself," said Mrs. Gaynor, with a smile; "I never know what it is to have a dull moment."

"Don't you," said Mrs. Walton; "well, I suppose not; you don't seem to have, for you are always trotting about the room and busying yourself with something; but, lor' bless you, I feel that dull sometimes that I am ready to cut my throat. I often used to wonder how people managed to get through the day—I never used to get up till two, don't you know, and then someone would come in for a chat, or I would go out and pay a call, and there was dinner, and before you knew it was time to be off to the Hall; but now the hours drag and drag, and there is nothing to look forward to. I wonder what they are doing at the Miranda now. What paper is that on the table?"

"This?" said Mrs. Gaynor, taking it up—"the Daily News."

"Just look among the theatrical advertisements, and see what they are doing at the Miranda, will you. I shouldn't wonder if it was closed. Ted Atkins told me that business had fallen off dreadfully since my illness."

"The place seems to be still open," said Mrs. Gaynor, quietly, looking through the newspaper. "Madame Belinda Bonassus appears to be the great attraction just now. The advertisement states that she is encored four times every night in her 'Ranz des Vaches,' with Alpine accompaniment."

"Ranz des Vaches," repeated Lydia

Walton, with flashing eyes and scornful voice, "that's that Swiss thing she does with the jödling lulliety business; and as for the Alpine accompaniment, it is only that fellow she calls her brother, blowing through a cow's horn. I know all that old Bonassus can do, though she has been at it a quarter of a century. Bless your soul, she isn't a patch upon me!"

"Very likely not," said Mrs. Gaynor, coming quietly up, and laying her hand lightly on her patient's head; "but you must not excite yourself, you know, or you won't be ready so soon to go back and take your place."

"Well, it was stupid for me to get into a pet about that old Bonassus," said Mrs. Walton, "but I can't bear to see her puffed like that. They scarcely did more for me; and I know I was worth three pounds a night to them more than that old cat. And as for excitement, I love it, and I can't get on without it."

"You will have to get on without it now," said Mrs. Gaynor, "for it is just the very worst thing that could happen to you."

"It is the only thing that keeps you up when you are in the profession," said Lydia Walton, not heeding her; "it is just like a dram—better, because it does what is wanted, and does not leave any headache behind. It is an awful life, I can tell you, that being before the public—not in the theatrical way, where you go regularly every night and play a round of parts, and haven't to move out of the building; but I mean a singer's life, where you have to take a turn at three or four halls in the course of a night—some of them a long way from each other—and scuttle across as hard as you can go in a cab, and arrive only just in time to shake out your gown before you are wanted on the stage."

"Yes, that's hard work," said Mrs. Gaynor, who was cutting the newspaper.

"Oh, it isn't the work I mind so much as the worry," said Lydia. "I worked hard enough when I first took to the profession down at Sunderland—played singing-chambermaid in the melodrama, danced the cachuca between the pieces, then first fairy in the opening of the pantomime, and on afterwards in the comic singing. But that was the regular drama, you know; there was none of that filthy tobacco, or smell of spirits and beer, that you get in a music-hall. It is that, and the quality of the audience, that makes the life so detestable."

"Yes," said Mrs. Gaynor, absently, "I should think so."

"Not but what I should think such a life, with all its drawbacks, fifty times pleasanter than yours," continued Lydia Walton, tossing her head. "How anybody can be a sick nurse surpasses my imagination; but how you, of all people, can have taken to it, is what puzzles me. What with your nice looks and your pleasant ways and manners, there is no reason that I can see why you should be a widow any longer than you like, and should not have some rich husband, or, at all events, someone to work for you."

"I am quite contented as I am," said Mrs. Gaynor, coldly. "I do not desire——"

"Oh yes, I know," interrupted Lydia Walton; "there never was such another nurse—so kind, so considerate, and so skilful; and, I suppose, when you do a thing well, you get in time to like it. Not that it would ever suit me," she continued; "I mean, to make a profession of it as you do. There is nothing I could not do for a person I love, if I had anyone to love; but to have to be at the beck and call of anyone—to dress their wounds, and to give them their medicine, and bear their ill-temperances—lor', nothing would induce me to do it. I would sooner be a singer with five turns in different halls every night."

Mrs. Walton's face was flushed when she had finished speaking, and she sunk back in her chair as though fatigued.

"I told you you were over-exciting yourself," said the nurse, sitting down by her and soothingly laying her hand on the patient's. "There are some compensations even in this life," she said, pursuing the train of thought which the other had started. "It is something to be able to give ease to those who are in pain, and to help the weary to their rest; it is something to be able to forget one's own self in administering to the dire necessities of others, and in—— I think you had better sit quietly now," she said, checking herself, "and not worry yourself any more about Mr. Burton; depend upon it, he will come as soon as he is free."

"It is all very well for you to talk about sitting down quietly," said Lydia Walton, with asperity; "you have been bustling about all the morning, and are tired and like to rest yourself; but I have done nothing but look blankly out of this window, like sister Anne, waiting for somebody to come, and I want to be amused."

"Shall I read the paper to you?" said Mrs. Gaynor, cheerfully. "I have no doubt I can find something to interest you in it."

"I should doubt it very much indeed,

and I won't trouble you," said the patient. "I do not care a bit about politics, and the funds, and what the swells are doing; such matters never amused me, even when I knew something about them. If we had the Era now, you might find something in it, as I like to hear about what is going on in the profession—but there, never mind, don't trouble yourself."

Mrs. Gaynor had had sufficient length of training as a nurse to know that in her patient's irritable state any further attempt to sooth her would be useless; so she refolded the newspaper which she had opened, laid it on the table, and took up some sewing, with which she silently occupied herself. In about ten minutes a light foot was heard on the stair, and Clement Burton appeared in the room. His presence was so genial, and his smile of salutation so sweet, that it was customary for his patients to say that he brought sunshine with him. Even poor Lydia Walton, "cranky," as she often described herself, was not exempt from this pleasant influence, and greeted Mr. Burton's advent with a smile.

"You have come at last, doctor," she said, looking up at him.

"At last!" repeated Clement Burton. "It is almost worth while incurring the implied rebuke to know that I have been expected."

"Not much of a compliment, when you are the only person whose coming breaks the dreadful dulness of one's life," said Lydia Walton, with a smile which lit up her face, and gave those who saw it a faint notion of her former beauty; "but I forgive you."

"You would do more than forgive me if you knew all," said Mr. Burton. "Though I have not been with you, I have been talking about you a great deal, and I am going to ask your permission to bring a good friend of mine, a lady, to see you."

"Oh, Lord!" said Lydia Walton, in comic horror, "I don't want any ladies to come and see me."

"Why just now you were complaining of the dulness of your life," said Clement, laughing at the intensity of her expression.

"Yes; but one had better be dull than have one's lodgings invaded by some old frump, who only comes to stare at what a music-hall singer is like, and who has a lot of tracts dribbling out of her pocket."

"The lady of whom I am speaking cannot be well called an old frump," said Clement Burton, continuing to laugh, "as she is young and very good-looking."

However, since you seem to have taken fright, I won't bring her to you, at all events, for the present.—Well, Mrs. Gaynor, and how is the arm?"

"Making daily progress, I think," said the nurse; "though Mrs. Walton was disappointed when she tried to use it yesterday, and found it impossible."

"What do you ask her about my arm for?" said Lydia. "Surely I ought to know most about it, though nurse Gaynor takes as much care of it as though it were her own. But, I say, doctor, time is running on, you know, and you must begin to think about patching me up and sending me out again. Mr. McGaff is very good, but I cannot expect him to pay my half salary much longer; and I want to show that old Bonassus that we are not going to let her have it all her own way."

"Mrs. Gaynor is right," said Clement Burton, who had unrolled the bandages and inspected the arm; "the wound is progressing very favourably, and will be well quite as soon as I anticipated, but you must not attempt to use it yet," he added, replacing the covering; "if you do, recollect," he said, laughingly, shaking his admonitory forefinger at her, "you only delay the delight of the public, and the discomfort of Madame Bonassus at your return. I will write a prescription for a change in the lotion before I go. Meantime, Mrs. Gaynor, I want to say a word or two with you about another case, if you will step with me into the next room."

Mr. Burton had a good deal to say to Mrs. Gaynor about the doings at St. Vitus's, and about other patients in his private practice with whom she was acquainted. A quarter of an hour elapsed before the doctor took his leave, and when the nurse returned to the sitting-room she found that Lydia Walton had shifted her position, having turned her chair to the table, and having somehow managed, with her more useful arm, to unfold the newspaper, in the perusal of which she seemed to be deeply engaged.

"You have forgotten Mr. Burton's instructions already," Mrs. Gaynor said gently; "you know he told you to keep quiet, and you must have used a considerable amount of exertion to do what you have done. And all to read the newspaper—the poor newspaper which you scouted so, when I offered to read it to you just now."

"I was quite right," said Lydia, pushing it away; "there is nothing in it."

"There is even less than there was when it left the printer's hands," said Mrs.

Gaynor, smiling; "for, see, here is a corner torn off—how very careless of the people who supply it."

"It doesn't make much matter," said Lydia Walton, shortly; "it is only a bit of the advertisement-sheet. Mr. Burton's gone, has he?" she added. "Now then, nurse, I am going to speak seriously to you. You are looking very pale and tired this morning; do you know that?"

"I daresay," said Mrs. Gaynor; "I have a bit of a headache."

"No wonder, when you never move out of these two stivey rooms," said Lydia. "Now I am going to insist upon your going out for half an hour. I am perfectly comfortable and easy, and you shall walk two or three times round Russell-square, and come back to me with a spot of colour in your cheeks. I insist upon it."

"I am half disposed to do as you bid me," said Mrs. Gaynor. "I feel as if a breath of air, even such as is to be found there, would do me good."

"Then go and take it at once," said the imperious Lydia; "and recollect I shall not expect you back again for fully half an hour."

Mrs. Gaynor left the room, and returning with her bonnet and shawl on, settled her patient's wraps, and took her leave. When she left the room, Lydia Walton listened attentively; she traced the receding footsteps down the staircase, and heard the street-door opened and shut. Then, with great effort, she drew from the pocket of her dressing-gown a half sheet of note-paper, on the top of which was pinned a printed scrap, evidently torn from the newspaper. The lines of it ran thus:—

"George Heath's wife is earnestly requested to communicate with G. M., at the Hermitage, Campden Hill. G. M. has most important intelligence to convey to her."

Lydia Walton read this through twice. "G. M.!" she muttered to herself; "who in Heaven's name can G. M. mean? I have gone through the whole lot that we used to know in the old time over and over again, and I cannot think of any G. M. amongst them; however, there it is, and now to answer it."

With infinite pain and trouble she succeeded in pulling towards her the blotting-book and the pen and ink which Clement Burton had used in writing his prescription, and with still greater pain and trouble she succeeded in tracing the following words upon the half sheet to which the printed scrap was pinned:—

"G. M. is entreated to withdraw this advertisement and to wait for a week. At

the end of that time the required information shall be furnished."

Lydia Walton folded up this paper, placed it in an envelope, and addressed it to "G. M., the Hermitage, Campden Hill."

"That will gain a little time," she muttered; "and that was all I could hope for just now. It has come upon me so suddenly, that I do not know what to think, or how to act. In a week, perhaps, I shall be able to do something with this wretched arm; not that what I have done just now will improve its condition."

She pulled a string, the loop of which hung round the arm of her chair, while the other end was attached to the bell, and waited for the answer. Presently, the woman of the house appeared—an unmistakable lodgings' landlady, with a flushed face and a carying manner.

"What, all alone, dear?" she cried, as she entered the room. "What has become of that sweet Sister Gaynor, who is supposed to be so attentive?"

"She has gone out for a few minutes, Mrs. Frost," said Lydia Walton. "She looked so pale and pecky, that I insisted upon her trying the effect of a little fresh air, and I have persuaded her to walk round Russell-square for half an hour."

"Such a kind soul you are," said the landlady; "always thinking of those about you. Now, what can I do for you?"

"Do something for yourself first, Mrs. F.," said Lydia, with a smile. "Take this key and open that cupboard, where you will find a decanter, and help yourself to a glass of that old port which you like so much."

"Just what I said," murmured the landlady, doing as she was bid; "always thinking of the comfort of others."

"And, now then, do something for me, or rather for Mrs. Gaynor, who wrote this letter before she went out, and has left it behind her. I know she was particularly anxious that it should be posted at once, and that she would be sorry when she found she had forgotten it. Do you mind sending your girl with it now?"

"Too delighted to oblige, dear," said the landlady, taking the letter from her. "I will send it off at once; and if Sister Gaynor does not come in soon, don't you mind ringing again; and I will come upstairs and sit with you, if you are anyways dull."

"She won't mention anything about it to nurse Gaynor," said Lydia Walton to herself, after the woman had left the

room. "That glass of wine will make her sleepy and she will take a nap, the lazy old wretch; and even if she did mention the letter, she would not recollect the address of it. G. M. eh! and the Hermitage! What a queer name for a place. I wonder what it all means."

Late that afternoon the letter reached its destination. Miss Middleham had a small dinner-party, and she and her guests were strolling in the grounds when it arrived. She took it up with a number of others from the hall-table, and running her glance over them, said, in a low tone, to Clement Burton, who happened to be close by her: "The advertisement has borne fruit already; here is a letter for 'G. M.'"

"Don't be too excited about it," he whispered.

"That is a useless injunction," she replied. "Make yourself agreeable to these people while I step aside and read it."

In a few minutes Grace rejoined her guests. As she approached, Clement Burton eagerly looked for the expression on her face. There was no flush on it; no triumph; no excitement; and she shook her head with a disappointed air. As soon as they could exchange a word, she said to him:

"It is a mistake, after all. George Heath is, perhaps, a common name; at all events, the wrong person has answered the advertisement."

"The letter is not from Miss Studley, then?" asked Clement Burton.

"No, indeed," said Grace. "I knew from the first glance that the address was not in Anne's handwriting, but I hoped the inclosure might be. Look at it, however," she said, withdrawing the note from her pocket. "This is not Anne's hand; it is not even the writing of an educated person—the whole thing is sprawling, and the letters are badly formed."

"I do not quite agree with you," said the surgeon, after a pause, during which he had narrowly looked at the letter; "the writing is not that of an uneducated woman, but rather that of a person who has attempted it with a hurt or maimed hand."

"You may be right," said Grace, "but it evidently does not come from Anne, and there my interest in it ends. There is nothing to be done now but to obey the injunctions of the writer—to withdraw the advertisement, and to wait for a week."

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 336. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, MAY 8, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE manifestations of maternal vanity are apt to appear monotonous to the indifferent spectator; but, in Mrs. Errington such manifestations were, at least, not open to that reproach. Beethoven himself never surpassed her in the power of producing variations on one simple theme. And this surprising fertility of hers prevented her from being a mere commonplace bore. She never told a story twice alike. There was always an element of unexpectedness in her conversation, albeit the groundwork and foundation of it varied but little. In the overflowing gratification of her heart at Algernon's prospects, and under the excitement of his imminent departure, she would fain have bestowed some of her eloquence even on old Max, with whom her relations had been decidedly cool, since the outbreak of rude temper on his part which has been recorded. But old Max continued to be surly and taciturn for a while; he had been bitterly mortified by Mrs. Errington's talk about the marriage her son would be able to make, whenever it should please him to select a wife.

But then, after that, had come Miss Bodkin's frequent invitations to Rhoda, which had greatly mollified the old man. And presently it appeared as if Mrs. Errington had forgotten all about General Indigo's daughters, and the heiress of the eminent drysalter. At all events, she said no more on the subject of those ladies. And old Max gradually, and not

slowly, recurred to his former persuasion that the Erringtons would be very glad to secure Rhoda's hand for Algernon, being well aware that her money would balance her birth and connections. True, the young man had, as yet, said nothing explicit. But, of course, he would feel it necessary to have some settled prospect, before asking permission to engage himself formally to Rhoda.

"He is connected with the great ones of the earth, to be sure!" reflected Mr. Maxfield, with some exultation. "And he is a comely young chap to look upon, and full of all kinds of book-learning and accomplishments—talks foreign tongues, and sings, and plays upon instruments, and draws pictures!"

An uneasy thought crossed his mind at this point, that David Powell would consider these things as leading to reprehensible frivolity and worldliness; and that, moreover, most of his (Maxfield's) old friends would agree with the preacher in so deeming. It was not to be expected that the thoughts and habits of a lifetime could be so eradicated from old Max's mind, by the mere fact of going to worship at St. Chad's, as to leave his conscience absolutely free on these and similar points. But the ultimate effect of such inward feelings was always to embitter the old man against Powell, and to make him clutch eagerly at any circumstance which should tend to prove that Powell had been wrong and himself right, in their differing views of the Erringtons' intentions. He was inexpressibly loath to consider himself mistaken. Indeed, for him to be mistaken seemed to argue a general dislocation and turning topsy-turvy of things, and a terrible unchaining of the powers of darkness. If, after walking all his life

in the paths of wisdom and prosperity, he were to find himself suddenly astray, and blundering on a point which nearly concerned the only tender feelings of his nature, such a phenomenon must clearly be due to the direct interposition of Satan. However, as he stood one morning in his storehouse, tying up a great parcel of sugar in blue paper, Jonathan Maxfield was feeling neither discontented nor self-distrustful. Mrs. Errington had just been speaking to Rhoda in his presence, and had said :

"Well, little one, you have quite made a conquest of Mrs. Bodkin, as well as Miss Minnie. She was praising you up to me the other day. She particularly remarked your nice manners, and attributed them to my influence——"

"I'm sure, ma'am, if there is anything nice in my manners, it was you who taught it to me," Rhoda had said simply. Upon which Mrs. Errington had been very gracious, and, without at all disclaiming the credit of Rhoda's nice manners, had mellifluously assured Mr. Maxfield that his little girl was wonderfully teachable, and had become a general favourite amongst her (Mrs. Errington's) friends.

Now all this had seemed to Maxfield to be of good augury, and an additional testimony—if any such were needed—to his own sagacity and prudent behaviour.

"It'll come right, as I foresaw," thought he triumphantly. "Another man might have been over hasty, and spoiled matters like a fool. But not me!"

Some one pushed the half-door between the shop and the storehouse, and set the bell jingling. Maxfield looked up and saw Algernon Errington, bright, smiling, and debonair, as usual.

The ordinary expression of old Max's face was not winning; and now, as he looked up with his grey eyebrows drawn into a shaggy frown, and his jaws clenched so as to hold the end of a string which he had just drawn into a knot round the parcel of sugar, he presented a countenance ill-calculated to reassure a stranger or invite his confidence. But Algy was not a stranger, and did not intend to bestow any confidence, so he came forward with the graceful self-possession which sat so well on him, and said, "How are you, Mr. Maxfield? I have not seen you for ever so long!"

"It doesn't seem very long ago to me, since we spoke together," returned old Max, tugging at the string of his parcel.

"You know I'm off to-morrow, Mr. Maxfield?"

The old man shot a hard keen glance at him from beneath the shaggy eyebrows, and nodded.

"I go by the early coach in the morning, so I must say all my farewells to-day."

Maxfield gave a sound like a grunt, and nodded again.

"It's a wonderful piece of luck, Lord Seely's taking me up so, isn't it?"

"Ah! if he means to do anything for you in earnest. So far as I can learn, his taking you up hasn't cost him much yet."

Algernon laughed frankly. "Not a bit of it, Mr. Maxfield!" he cried. "And, after all, why should he do anything that would cost him much, for a poor devil like me? No; the beauty of it is, that he can do great things for me which shall cost him nothing! He is hand and glove with the present ministry, and a regular big-wig at court, and all that sort of thing. The fact of my having good blood in my veins, and being called Ancram Errington, is no merit of mine, of course—just an accident; but it's a deuced lucky accident. I daresay Lord Seely is a stupid old hunk, but then he is Lord Seely, you see. I don't mind saying all this to you, Mr. Maxfield, because you know the world, and you and I are old friends."

It was certainly rather hard on Lord Seely to be spoken of as a stupid old hunk by this lively young gentleman, who knew little more of him than of his great-grandfather, deceased a century ago. But his lordship did not hear the artless little speech, so it did not annoy him; whereas old Max did hear it, and it gratified him considerably for several reasons. It gratified him to be addressed confidentially as one who knew the world; it gratified him to be called an old friend by this relation of the great Lord Seely. And, oddly enough, whilst he was mentally bowing down before the aristocratic magnificence of that nobleman, it gratified him to be told that the bowing down was being performed to a "stupid old hunk," altogether devoid of that wisdom which had been so largely bestowed on himself, the Whitford grocer.

Pleasant and unaffected as was the young fellow's manner to his landlord, there was a nonchalance about it which conveyed that he was quite aware of the social distance between them. And this assumption of superiority—never coarse or ponderous,

like his mother's, but worn with the airiest lightness—was far from displeasing to old Max. The more of a gentleman born and bred Algernon Errington showed himself to be, the higher would Rhoda's position be, if—but old Max had almost discarded that form of presenting the future to his own mind; and was apt to say to himself, "when Rhoda marries young Errington." And then the solid advantages of the position were, so far at least, on old Max's side. Wealth and wisdom made a powerful combination, he reflected. And he was not at all afraid of being borne down or overwhelmed by any amount of gentility. Nevertheless, his spirit was in some subjection to this patrician youth, who sat opposite to him on a tea-chest, swinging his legs so affably.

There was a pause. At length Maxfield said, "And how long do you think o' being away? Or are you going to say good-bye to Whitford for evermore?"

"Indeed I hope not!"

"Oh! Then there is some folks here as you would care to see again?" said Maxfield slowly, beginning to tie up another parcel with sedulous care, and not raising his eyes from it.

"Of course there are! I—I should think you must know that, Mr. Maxfield! But I want to put myself in a better position with the world before I can—before I come back to the people I most care for."

"Very good. But it's like to be some time first, I'm afraid."

"As to seeing dear old Whitford again, you know I mean to run down here in the summer; or at least early in the autumn, when Parliament rises."

"Oh, you do?"

"To be sure! And then I hope to—to settle several things."

"Ah!"

"To a man of your experience, Mr. Maxfield, I needn't say how important it is for me to go to Lord Seely, ready and willing to undertake any employment he may offer me."

"Ah!"

"I mean, of course, that I should be absolutely free and unfettered, and ready to—to—to avail myself of opportunities. You see that, of course?"

Maxfield looked sage, and nodded. But he also looked a little glum. The conversation had not taken the turn he expected.

"Once let me get something definite—a government post, you know, such as my cousin could get for me as easily as you could take an apprentice—and then I may please myself. I may consider myself on the first round of the ladder. And there won't be the same necessity for deferring to this person and that person. But I don't know why I'm saying all this to you, Mr. Maxfield. You understand the whole matter better than I do. By Jove, I wish I'd some of your ballast in my noddle. I'm such a feather-headed fellow!"

"You are young, Algernon, you are young," returned old Max, from whose brow the frown had cleared away entirely. "I have had a special gift of wisdom vouchsafed to me, for many years past. It has been, I believe, a peculiar grace, and it is the Lord's doing, thanks be! I am not easy deceived."

"I shouldn't like to try it on, that's all I know!" exclaimed Algernon, pleasantly smiling and nodding his head.

"Albeit there is some as mistrust my judgment; young and raw men without much gift of clear-headedness, and puffed up with spiritual pride."

"Are there, really?" said Algernon, feeling somewhat at a loss what to say.

"Yes, there are. I should like such to be convinced of error. It would be a wholesome lesson."

"Not a doubt of it."

"I should like such to know—for their own soul's sake, and to teach 'em Christian humility—as you and I quite understand each other, my young friend; and as all is clear between us."

Algernon had a constitutional dislike to "clear understandings," except such as were limited to his clear understanding of other people. So he broke in at this point with one of his impulsive speeches about his prospects, and his conviction of Mr. Maxfield's wisdom, and his regrets at leaving Whitford, and his settled purpose to come back at the end of the summer and have a look at the dear old place, and the one or two persons in it who were still dearer to him. And he contrived—"contrived," indeed, is too cold-blooded and Machiavelian a word to express Algy's rapid mental process—to convey to old Max the idea that he was on the high road to fortune; that he had a warm and constant attachment to a certain person whom it was needless to name, seeing that the certain person could be no other than his playmate, pretty Rhoda; and that Mr.

Jonathan Maxfield was so sagacious and keen-sighted a personage as to require no wordy explanations such as might have been needful for feebler intelligences. And then Algy said, with a rueful sort of candour, and arching those fair childlike eyebrows of his: "I say, Mr. Maxfield, I shall be awfully short of cash just at first!"

The two hands of Jonathan Maxfield, which had been laid open, and palm downwards, on the counter before him, as he listened, instinctively doubled themselves into fists. He put them one on the top of the other, and rested his chin on them.

"I don't bother my mother about it, poor dear soul, because I know she has done all she can already. Of course, if I were to hint anything to my cousin—to Lord Seely, you know—I might get helped directly. But I don't want to begin with that, exactly."

"H'm! It 'ud be a test of how much he really does mean, though!"

"Yes; but you know what you said about Lord Seely's doing great things for me which shall cost him nothing. And I felt how true your view was, directly. By George, if I want any advice between now and next August, I shall be tempted to write and ask you for it!"

Maxfield gave a little rasping cough.

"Of course I know the manners and customs of high-bred people well enough. A fellow who comes of an old family like mine seems to suck all that in with his mother's milk, somehow. But that's a mere surface knowledge, after all. And some circumstance might turn up in which I should want a more solid judgment to help my own."

Maxfield coughed again, a little less raspingly. One of his doubled-up hands unclasped itself, and he began to pass it across his stubbly chin.

"By-the-by—what an ass I was not to think of that before—would you mind lending me twenty pounds till August, Mr. Maxfield?"

"I—I'm not given to lending, Algernon; nor to borrowing either, I thank the Lord."

"Borrowing! No; you're one of the lucky folks of this world, who can grant favours instead of asking them. But it really is of small consequence, after all; I'll manage somehow, if you have any objection. I believe I have a nabob of a godfather, General Indigo, as yellow

as a guinea and as rich as a Jew. My mother was talking of him the other day, and, perhaps, it would be better to ask such a little favour of one's own people. I'll look up the nabob, Mr. Maxfield."

It must not be supposed that Algy, in bringing out the name of General Indigo, had any thought of the three lovely Miss Indigos in his mind. He was quite unconscious of the existence of those young ladies; if, indeed, they were not entirely the figments of Mrs. Errington's fertile fancy. Algy had laid no deep plans. He was simply quick at seizing opportunity. The opportunity had presented itself, of dazzling old Max with his nabob godfather, and of—perhaps—inducing the stingy old fellow to lend him what he wanted, by dint of conveying that he did not want it particularly. Algy had availed himself of the opportunity, and the shot had told very effectually.

Old Max never swore. Had he been one of the common and profane crowd of worldlings, it may be that some imprecation on General Indigo would have issued from his lips; for the mention of that name made him very angry. But old Max had a settled conviction of the probable consignment to perdition of the rich nabob—who was doubtless a purse-proud, tyrannous, godless old fellow—which far surpassed, in its comforting power, the ephemeral satisfaction of an oath. He struck his clenched hand on the counter, and said, testily, "You have not heard what I had it in my mind to say! You are too rash, young man, and broke in on my discourse before it was finished!"

"I beg pardon. Did I?"

"I say that I am not given to lending nor to borrowing; and it is most true. But I have not said that I will refuse to assist you. This is a special case, and must be judged of specially as between you and me."

"Why, of course, I would rather be obliged to you than to the general, who is a stranger to me, in fact, though he is my godfather."

"There's nearer ties than godfathers, Algernon."

Algernon burst into a peal of genuine laughter. "Why, yes," said he, wiping his eyes, "I hope so!"

Old Max did not move a muscle of his face. "What was the sum you named?" he asked, solemnly.

"Oh, I don't know—twenty or thirty pounds would do. Something just to keep

me going until my mother's next quarter's money comes in."

"I will lend you twenty pounds, Algernon, for which you will write me an acknowledgment."

"Certainly!"

"Being under age, your receipt is valueless in law. But I wish to have it as between you and me."

"Of course; as between you and me."

Maxfield unlocked a strong-box let into the wall. Algernon—who had often gazed at the outside of it rather wistfully—peeped into it with some eagerness when it was opened; but its contents were chiefly papers and a huge ledger. There was, however, in one corner a well-stuffed black leather pocket-book, from which old Max slowly extracted a crisp, fresh Bank of England note for twenty pounds.

"I'm sure I'm ever so much obliged to you, Mr. Maxfield," said Algernon, taking the note. He spoke without any over-eagerness, but the gleam of boyish delight in his eyes would not be suppressed.

"And now come into the parlour with me, and write the acknowledgment."

"I say, Mr. Maxfield," said Algernon, when the receipt had been duly written and signed, "you won't say anything to my mother about this?"

"Do you mean to keep it a secret?" asked the old man, sharply.

"Oh, of course I don't mind all the world knowing, as far as I'm concerned. But the dear old lady might worry herself at not being able to do more for me. Let it be just simply as between you and me," said Algernon, repeating Maxfield's words, but, truth to say, without attaching any very definite meaning to them. The old man pursed up his mouth and nodded.

"Aye, aye," he said, "as between you and me, Algernon; [as between you and me."

"Upon my word, that formula of old Max's seems to be a kind of open sesame to purses and strong-boxes and cheque-books! 'As between you and me.' I wonder if it would answer with Lord Seely? Who'd have thought of old Max doing the handsome thing? Well, it's all right enough. I do mean to stick to little Rhoda, especially since her father seems to hint his approbation so very plainly. But it wouldn't do to bind myself just now—for her sake, poor little pet! 'As between you and me!' What a character the old

fellow is! I wish he'd made it fifty while he was about it!"

Such was Algernon's mental soliloquy as he walked jauntily down the street, with his hand in his pocket, and the crisp bank-note between his finger and thumb.

UNDER THE HAMMER.

CHRISTIE'S.

ON VIEW.

FROM gloomy old Italian cities, cradled in the Apennines; from spruce Dutch towns, smelling frouzily despite eternal scrubbing; from dingy Flemish streets and high-peaked houses; from the full-flavoured Jews' quarter of Frankfort-on-the-Main; from Parisian bric-à-brac shops and humbler stalls; from the Hôtel Drouot; from gilded Moscow and dusty Madrid; from the Venice of the North and her great prototype, washed, though scarcely cleansed, by the Adriatic; from the workman's garret and the "decayed gentlewoman's" long-treasured china closet; from the studio of the needy artist and the snug bar-parlour of the roadside inn; from ransacked tombs and pillaged convents; from Holborn and the Hague; from Florence and Wardour-street; from Piccadilly and Peking; from Rome, and even from Rag Fair, comes the "celebrated collection" on view this afternoon—any afternoon in the height of the season will do—in the famous rooms of Messrs. Christie, Manson, and Woods, in King-street, Piccadilly. All is fish that comes to the net in King-street. Pictures, ancient and modern; water-colour drawings by famous masters; Roman and Oriental bronzes; choice enamels; dainty marquetry and old Buhl work; reliquaries gleaming with gold and precious stones; ivory triptyches; black jacks, ancient plate, and curious jewels; Sèvres and Dresden, Oriental and old English porcelain; armour rich with niello; morions adorned with repoussé work; swords forged by the redoubtable Andrea Ferrara himself; blades tempered by the cunning smiths of Toledo; daggers of Milan steel; scymetars fashioned with silken grain in peerless Damascus; bonbonnières in choice enamel; angular Byzantine saints in glowing mosaic; quaint little boxes of fragile porcelain, holding red, white, and blue pigments and tiny brushes of sable hair; rare cameos in onyx and sardonyx; apostle spoons; patriotic beer-jugs; mighty tankards of

quaint old German glass; facetious puzzle-jugs; sollerets fitting like a lobster-shell over knightly feet; modals of cathedrals in silver flagree; vases of jasper and malachite; Bristol teapots; cross-bows inlaid with ivory; snuff-boxes of every choice material—bloodstone, gold, sardonyx, and jasper—glittering with diamonds; an authentic portrait of Mary Stuart; a breakfast service once the property of Madame de Pompadour; and a complete suit of armour said to have belonged to Francis the First—the fatal hammer has stomach for them all.

Armed with catalogues, in which these very numerous and discordant elements are classed in groups, so far as this object can be achieved, the various visitors proceed to view them with very different eyes. Dealers and commission agents are on the qui vive to point out the tid-bits to their patrons, and know to a hair's-breadth their peculiar fancies. Lambkin, for instance, who does a large business in the pictorial line, knows perfectly well that it would lose him a valuable customer if he were thoughtless enough to draw Lord MacScumble's attention to any pictures save those by the old masters, and that he would get the rough side of Jack Wallsend's tongue if he missed a good bit of modern landscape, Jack caring for nothing older than Turner and David Cox; while Delphington, who is making so very good a thing out of the prevalent chinamania, is well aware that it would be sheer waste of time to point out a prime Chelsea dish to old Lord Cracklington, who cares for no china but the true Oriental; or suggest the purchase of a rare bit of old Bristol to Lady Rongemore, who loves nothing but Sévres; or to Mrs. Powderham, whose soul is in Bow statuettes. For the last craze of connoisseurs is, in the slang of the day, "to go in for a specialty"—hence the fancy prices paid for specimens required to perfect a series. The chinamanics do not appear to care vastly about the look of the old English porcelain, for which they pay an immense price. The first thing they do to a plate—you may see them at it all day long when a "celebrated collection" is on view—is to turn it over in quest of the mark, for, as the readers of this Journal have been already informed, there is much virtue in a blue cross, a crescent, or a golden anchor. Reassured on this vital point, they consult their catalogue as to whether the particular

piece under consideration has been engraved in Marryat or Chaffers, and mayhap pull Mrs. Bury Palliser's book out of their pocket. Mighty conferences are held over a pair of Plymouth vases; an excited group is discussing the merit of a hideous teapot, "said to have been presented to Lord Nelson by the ladies of England after the battle of Trafalgar;" notes are scrawled on the margins of catalogues; resolutions are made to buy or die; and commissions are freely given to fashionable agents, as the crowd disperses to talk over the crockery at congenial kettledrum.

GOING.

THOSE who recollect Homburg and Baden in the old days of wickedness, before the Prussian broom had made a clean sweep of roulette and trente-et-quarante, croupiers and punters, zeros and martingales, may be able to conjure up in their mind's eye the simulacra of those unquiet spirits for whom the conversation carried on in the great saloons never began early enough. Long before the appointed hour of eleven these restless creatures, whose dreams must have been of numbers and series, might be observed walking up and down with a fidgetty manner, a lean and hungry look, and fingers busied with tiny books of systems, ready to rush in, as soon as the police-agent, with cocked hat and sword, had seen the roulette-table properly balanced, and the bank, which paid such excellent dividends, was fairly opened. In like manner may be observed the true amateurs of auctions dropping in betimes on sale days, eager to secure a seat at the green table laid by Messrs. Christie, Manson, and Woods. In place of spotted cards and glass-headed pins, these harmless folk bring with them their catalogues, well thumbed and pencilled by this time, and anon to be posted up with the prices realised. A green table, formed of two narrow slips, is closed towards the door, but open at the upper ends, at one of which is installed a clerk, and at the other the auctioneer, hammer in hand, occupies the species of pulpit called by common consent his "rostrum;" why so I am at a loss to imagine, as the only "beaks" around it are those owned by keenly critical and speculative members of the Caucasian race. Between the two slips of table is a narrow passage, the use of which is to allow the assistant holding the "lot"

for sale to pass freely up and down between the double rows of front seats at the table, and expose, if required, the picture or vase to the closer inspection of an intending bidder. At great picture sales the biddings for important lots are mostly made by impassible commissioners, who buy the sensation lots for their clients at Manchester, Sheffield, or Birmingham, Leeds, Glasgow, or Liverpool, and the scene is wanting in variety and animation. A David Cox may bring its two thousand, or a Turner its seven thousand guineas, without producing any very particular excitement. Big business is, as a rule, done quietly everywhere, especially at auctions, where big figures soon throw all but two or three big fish out of the race; but it is quite otherwise with the small fry fighting over the crumbs which fall from the rich collector's table. There is a mighty splashing and dashing over these odds and ends, I promise you.

That old lady, who was one of the first to occupy a seat at the table, has come hither to-day with a fixed design to purchase certain tid-bits of china if they come within the value at which, after long thought and consideration, she has appraised them. She sits like an ancient *Patience on a Monument* as one after the other passes away from her. At last a couple of *Bow sphinxes* are put up, and the gleam of battle flashes in her bright grey eye. Five pounds are bid—six—seven—seven ten, fifteen. Eight pounds bids the dame, thinking she will secure the prize at her estimated ten guineas; but, no! Fate is against her. Eight five, ten, fifteen—repeats Mr. Woods—nine pounds, nine pounds ten, fifteen, ten pounds. Guineas, bids the old lady, nervously twitching her pencil. Ten guineas—t-e-n g-u-i-n-e-a-s. The victory is almost won; our friend, with eyes fixed upon the darling sphinxes, in imagination already hugs them to her bosom. But, alas! her delight is premature. Ten fifteen, resumes Mr. Woods; eleven pounds. Reason now rocks upon its throne. Shameful to be outbid in this way. One bold coup will crush them. Twelve pounds; twelve pounds (ecstasy); twelve pounds five, ten, fifteen; thirteen pounds (despair! all over now), ten, fifteen. Knocked down at thirteen fifteen. Fatal indecision to halt at such a moment!

This protracted struggle has proved exhausting; the vanquished one pauses awhile, and then makes a bold dash for a

Bristol coffee-cup, which drives her wild again, by fetching eight pounds, and escaping her at the last moment. At last she becomes reckless. She has fallen in love with a beautiful large Chelsea cup and saucer, with the precious gold-anchor mark, and feels that, to obtain it, she must loose her purse-strings. Why not, after all, buy one piece as good as gold, instead of frittering money away on trifles? The bidding is fierce for the pretty cup and saucer with the gold anchor at the bottom. Nineteen pounds are bid; nineteen pounds, ten—a lull; twenty pounds—the old lady springs to the front; guineas—twenty guineas; rap goes the hammer, and the cup and saucer are secured. Heavy fighting now occurs over a Fulham mug; light skirmishing among the *Lowestoft*, and, anon, the heavy guns are brought up when Bristol figures, Chelsea vases, and Worcester royal plates are to be disposed of. But my interest in the sale is over, more particularly as I always feel uncomfortable under the eye of an auctioneer, dreading that some inadvertent movement on my part may lead him to suppose that I have made a bid, and that I shall, then and there, either become the purchaser of a Japanese monster, a Dresden dog, or some equally useful article, or have to explain the mistake, and confess myself a very fraud and sham slinking about auction-rooms on false pretences. I therefore wander listlessly about the rooms till I drift to the door, and find my old lady getting into her brougham, her features beaming with the smile of triumph peculiar, for some inscrutable reason, to people who have just bought, for a good deal more than its value, something they don't in the least want.

GONE.

THE vast collection of catalogues preserved by Messrs. Christie, Manson, and Woods commences on December 5th, 1766, and it is curious to note the prices paid for china—then, as now, a fashionable weakness. At this period the celebrated works of *Sèvres*, *Dresden*, *Chelsea*, and *Derby* were in full blast, and producing their finest work; but then, as now, prices took a wide range, although many articles were evidently sold for less than one-tenth of their present value. In 1767, two white Chelsea groups of the four quarters of the world went for a guinea, and twenty-six crimson and gold Chelsea plates, enamelled in birds, for two pounds

six shillings; and in the following year, at the sale of the stock of Mr. Thomas Turner, chinaman, deceased, a white Chelsea group of Hercules and Omphale sold for half a guinea, while a Chelsea figure of Apollo brought two pounds fourteen shillings, and four small statuettes realised only five shillings among them. In 1769, at the sale of the effects of a "person of distinction," a Worcester tea equipage fetched but two pounds twelve shillings and sixpence, while a "complete service of Chelsea porcelain" was knocked down at twenty-five pounds fourteen shillings and sixpence; a dessert service of the same make for twenty-five pounds four shillings, the exact sum realised for a "Nankeen blue and white table service." Urns and vases of Sèvres went for comparatively low sums—ten, fifteen, or eighteen guineas. In 1770 we find four Chelsea "compoteers" fetched but twelve shillings; and it would appear, from records of numerous auctions, that "blue and white Nankeen" was the china without which no gentleman's table was complete, and that "old Japan" was held in considerable favour. During this year the effects of a celebrated, or rather notorious, person were sold off. Captain O'Kelly—the man who "placed" the horses in a race at Newmarket by naming his own Eclipse first, and the rest "nowhere," and won the bet and many thousands of pounds by instructing his jockey to "come away" and "distance" the field—removed from his house in Dover-street, Piccadilly, to a smaller house at the corner of Marlborough-street and Poland-street, and his collection came to the hammer. Perhaps the great O'Kelly's "map of his estates," which he always carried about him in the shape of a roll of bank-notes of a thousand pounds each, had shrunk somewhat, and his care to state that this "removal to a smaller house" was the cause of the sale favours this belief, for O'Kelly was far too clever a man to be poor and look poor. Among his effects were a tea and coffee equipage of Dresden china, knocked down at seventeen pounds seventeen shillings; a complete dessert service of "old Japan," at nineteen pounds nineteen shillings; and a china service of Dresden, at fourteen pounds, with various other fine china—notably a two-gallon punch bowl. In 1771 we find a large table service of Dresden going for fifty-nine pounds seventeen shillings, and the year is marked by china-maniacs as that in which the new produce of Chelsea and Derby was first submitted

to public competition. The catalogue announces for sale the "last year's produce (the first public sale) of the Chelsea and Derby 'porcelain' manufactories, and also a few select pieces of the rich Ultramarine and Blue Celeste which Mr. Duesbury has with great labour brought to a state of perfection equal to the French." At this and subsequent sales of the same character, prices were realised which, although ridiculous when compared with those paid for the same articles to-day, yet appear high when compared with those of Sèvres and Dresden, and still more so when it is considered how much bread, meat, and wine might have been got for the money in A.D. 1771. Small jars brought from ten to twelve guineas per set; statuettes from a guinea to thirty shillings per pair (among those figures frequently the "Welch taylor with his wife riding on a goat"). Large jars fetched twenty-five guineas; a "complete tea and coffee equipage of the much-admired crimson ground, painted in natural flowers," thirty pounds; a Mazarine blue jar, eighteen pounds; a "dessert service of blue celeste enamelled with groups and festoons of flowers, sixty-five pounds; a crimson ditto, sixty-five pounds; and a dinner service, fifty pounds.

Under the management of the second Christie—who was originally educated for the Church, possessed considerable classical attainments, and wrote valuable works on Etruscan and Greek vases—the catalogues of the house assumed a descriptive and critical character, and the great vendor undertook the task of guiding the taste of purchasers. But even his seductive arts failed to bring pictures to anything approaching the prices of to-day; and it is curious to note that the works of English artists—with the exception of Sir Joshua—went at vile prices, compared with those commanded by the old masters, and that the highly-finished productions of the Dutch school realised considerable sums during the early part of this eminently practical and realistic century.

In the comet year, an Ostade brought three hundred guineas; a Wouwermans four hundred, a Teniers two hundred, a Carl du Jardin three hundred, and a Nicolo Poussin six hundred, guineas. Wines, of choice quality, brought large sums. East India Madeira, "of the highest flavour and matchless quality, the property of a man of fashion from the East," was knocked down at figures ranging from

seven pounds ten shillings to seven pounds eighteen shillings per dozen. In the beginning of the century, as now, a great deal depended upon the reputation of the collector. A lot of Morland's best pictures fetched but little over eight hundred pounds; Edmund Burke's pictures went for two thousand and eighteen pounds twelve shillings and sixpence; while the wines and "fashionable plate" of the Duke of Roxburgh, deceased, realised thirty-three thousand six hundred and forty-six pounds eight shillings — the greatest sale up to 1812. In 1816 came the sale of Mr. Henry Hope's pictures for over fourteen thousand pounds; and in 1821 a considerable number of the finest works of Sir Joshua Reynolds sold for a little over fifteen thousand pounds. Two years later, however, a portrait of Nelly O'Brien, by Sir Joshua, was sold for only thirty pounds nine shillings, and a fine picture, by the same master, for two hundred and seventy-three pounds; while the Grand Landscape, by Rubens, with a Rainbow, which had been one of the greatest ornaments of the Balbi Palace at Genoa, was bought by Lord Oxford for two thousand six hundred pounds. David Garrick's choice collection sold for the small sum of three thousand five hundred and four pounds thirteen shillings and sixpence, of which the famous four Election pictures, by Hogarth, brought sixteen hundred and fifty guineas. Another noteworthy sale took place in 1823. Thirteen Italian pictures, of the highest class, "lately the property of Madame Murat, ex-queen of Naples, and brought to this country by a distinguished nobleman," sold well for that day: A Holy Family, by Raffaello, for five hundred and fourteen pounds ten shillings; a Titian, The Enamoured Physician, for seven hundred and thirty-five pounds; and an Annibale Carracci, Cupid Asleep, for nine hundred and forty-five pounds. In 1825 were sold the "pictures and fine old Dresden china of the late Henry Fauntleroy," for a little over two thousand pounds; and, later on, "the Original Cup from Shakespeare's Mulberry Tree, which was presented to David Garrick by the mayor and corporation at the time of the Jubilee at Stratford-on-Avon," was sold for one hundred and twenty-one guineas. In 1827 the silver and silver-gilt plate of H.E.H. the Duke of York, deceased, sold for twenty-two thousand four hundred and thirty-eight pounds ten shillings and elevenpence; and the famous collection

of Oriental and European weapons fetched nearly nine thousand pounds. In 1830 the "splendid and costly dress-sword, set with diamonds and coloured stones of great beauty, of Robert Coates, Esq. (Romeo Coates), which was worn by this amateur of the stage in his many benevolent essays on behalf of public and private charities," found its way to Christie's. In the following year, the chased plate, silver and silver-gilt, of Edward Ball Hughes, Esq. (Golden Ball of "more curricles" fame), went for less than two thousand pounds; and the drawings and pictures of Sir Thomas Lawrence were sold for prices then deemed high. We next find Stothard's Canterbury Pilgrimage going for one hundred and fifty pounds; and Bone's exquisite collection of enamels, seventy-one in number, producing but two hundred and fifty-eight pounds six shillings—about one-fifteenth of the sum they would fetch to-day. At the sale of Mr. Nieuwenhuys' pictures, in 1836, some high prices were realised: an Adrian Van de Velde fetched nearly five hundred, a Wouwermans nearly a thousand, and a Rembrandt over six hundred pounds; but a couple of Hobbimas were the lions of the collection. One of these, A Landscape in the Dreuthe Country, sold for seven hundred and ninety-eight pounds, and the Watermills for one thousand and eight pounds. English pictures were not yet appreciated. Gainsborough's Broken Pitcher, a Cleopatra by Guido, and a miscellaneous lot, only brought three hundred and eighty-four pounds fifteen shillings and sixpence. In 1836 was sold, for fifteen hundred and twenty-seven pounds, the celebrated Clifford collection of MS. State Papers. The Kynaston collection of rare Oriental, Sèvres, and Dresden porcelain, pictures, and bronzes went for thirteen hundred pounds, and the remaining portion of Bone's enamels for three hundred and twenty-four pounds. A year later, ETTY'S Cleopatra embarking on the Cydnus produced but two hundred and ten guineas.

In the next decade we find that a sale of Bone's enamels—he being dead—brought in one thousand five hundred and one pounds five shillings and sixpence, and many other things also greatly increased in value. The works of art belonging to Samuel Rogers brought over forty-two thousand pounds, and among these were several highly-priced English pictures. Leslie's Sancho and

the Duchess sold for one thousand one hundred and twenty guineas; Sir Joshua's Mob Cap for seven hundred and eighty, and the famous Strawberry Girl, for two thousand one hundred guineas. In 1857 the magnificent contents of Alton Towers were sold by order of the executors of the late Earl of Shrewsbury, and realised forty-two thousand pounds—only two-thirds of the sum brought by the Bernal collection, sold two years before. Passing again from celebrities to notorieties, I may observe that the effects of Leopold Redpath, the forger, a great patron of art, were sold in May, 1857, by Christie, and brought over nine thousand pounds.

The great sales of recent times are remarkable as affording landmarks in the history of bric-à-brac. At a sale of the Strawberry-hill collection, in 1842, which was not actually conducted by the Messrs. Christie, although they prepared the catalogue; at the Beckford sale, at Fonthill, in 1845; and at the great sale of the late Duke of Buckingham's effects, at Stowe, in 1848, the prices for rare furniture and choice china were ridiculously low—probably not one-third of those ruling at present. At the Stowe sale, the pictures, china, and furniture of what was generally considered the finest house in England, brought something under a hundred thousand pounds. It was indeed only at the great Bernal sale at Christie's rooms, in 1855, that the value of artistic relics became apparent, and government agents competed with private collectors for painted platters and odds and ends of repoussé work.

A hundred years ago Christie's rooms were already celebrated. Mr. John Taylor, the author of *Monsieur Tonson*, in his *Records of My Life*, a book full of delightful reminiscences, gives many interesting particulars concerning the founder of the great house of Christie. "Besides being possessed of an excellent understanding, which would probably have enabled him to make a distinguished figure in any walk of life, I should venture to say that he was peculiarly fitted for the profession which he adopted. There was something interesting and persuasive, as well as thoroughly agreeable, in his manner. He was very animated and, it may be justly said, eloquent in his recommendation of any article that he announced from his 'rostrum,' as well as in effusions of genuine humour. He

was courteous, friendly, and hospitable in private life, and was held in great esteem by his numerous friends, among whom there were many of high rank." From his auction-rooms, founded as long ago as 1762, in Pall Mall, this agreeable gentleman must have drawn an ample revenue; but his liberality on one occasion cost him dear, as he suffered to the extent of five thousand pounds, by his confidence in Mr. Chace Price, "a gentleman well known in the upper circles of his time, and more admired for his wit and humour than for the strictness of his moral principles." On this occasion Garrick came gallantly to the front, and offered to forward Mr. Christie the full amount of his loss. It is not clear that this liberal offer was accepted, but it is certain that Mr. Christie enjoyed the friendship of many notable persons, among whom was the famous Lord Chesterfield, who never lost an opportunity of testifying his regard for the popular auctioneer and connoisseur. On one occasion Christie had to dispose of a valuable collection of pictures, rather of European than of insular reputation. Anxious that this collection should receive the notice it deserved, he asked the great Chesterfield to condescend to come to his rooms and view the pictures, many of which had become familiar to him during his travels abroad. A gracious consent was accorded; his lordship promised to come in state, and permitted Mr. Christie to announce his visit.

Let us try, by the help of historic telescope and biographic lens, to catch a glimpse of Christie's rooms in Pall Mall on a summer morning, some hundred and five years ago—when George the Third was king. The day is bright, and Christie's rooms do not depend entirely for colour upon the goods on sale; for man has not yet discarded the privilege of other male animals to appear in dazzling raiment. Groups of court beauties, sumptuously arrayed in all the glory of hoops and high heels, patches, powder, and paint—for no lady is considered to have made her toilet unless she is rouged up to the eyes—are not relieved by sombre groups of sadly-attired men, but contrasted with butterflies as gaily decked as themselves. Faces of young dandies, gorgeous in silk and velvet and glittering with diamonds—and paste—are this morning of the palest, for there was a masquerade, under distinguished patronage, last night at Soho, at the rooms of the excel-

lent Madame Cornelys, who is herself to the fore this morning, looking out for an eligible investment of a portion of the profits of last night's entertainment. She would do better—poor woman—to keep her money in her pocket, for the new Winter Ranelagh, destined in time to become successively a bazaar and a wine-store, is fast growing in the Oxford-road, and will soon overshadow poor Cornelys and drive her to selling asses' milk hard by Hyde-park, little thinking that her once-famous rendezvous will ultimately be devoted to jams and pickles. An overdressed copper-captain is entertaining her with an account of how the great character at the masquerade, the Man in the Iron Mask, with a mask made to represent Jack Wilkes, with an exaggerated squint and mouth awry, was stopped in his carriage by a mob shouting, "Are you for Wilkes," till a bystander quieted matters by saying, "D— Wilkes, what has he to do with a masquerade?"

A stupendous dandy in sky-blue silk coat, with a half-guinea nosegay in the buttonhole, and waistcoat embroidered with a complete flower-show—young Lord Stavordale, eldest son of My Lord Ilchester—is busy telling a gay knot of young bloods how the game went a night or two ago at Almack's, which has recently supplanted White's as the greatest gambling club in London; how he, not yet of legal age, lost eleven thousand guineas, but recovered it all by one great hand at hazard.

"Now," cries his lordship, swearing a mighty oath befitting a person of quality, "if I had been playing deep I might have won millions." Near this promising youth is another of similar character, plus genius—Charles Fox, his cousin, who shines with equal brilliancy at Almack's and in the House of Commons. He only came of age the other day, is already one of the best speakers in the House, and was made a Lord of the Admiralty a week ago. Fox was at the masquerade with the other "bloods," having come back in hot haste from Newmarket, and made a dashing oration in the House between whiles. The Middlesex election being still a burning question, all eyes are turned on Beckford, with Jack Wilkes, just out of prison, on his arm. As lord mayor, Beckford has been endeavouring to keep the public peace; but, as Beckford, has shown all vigour in supporting the Medmenham

candidate. Jack knows everybody, and is hail-fellow-well-met with all.

The fame of the pictures to be sold, and, still more, the announcement that the famous diplomatist and arbiter elegantiarum, my Lord Chesterfield, who, now very old and deaf, is about to forsake his retirement in order to identify the pictures he has seen abroad, and otherwise do Mr. Christie a good turn, have drawn from Leicester-fields, Covent-garden, and other classical localities, not a few of the then called literati and cognoscenti.

Prominent among these is Dr. Goldsmith, resplendent in his famous plum-coloured coat—pockets of the same well lined with the hundred guineas he has just received for the Deserted Village. Near them, but hardly of them, is a slight youthful figure—soon to pass out of this gay and giddy Bohemia—Chatterton, the apoeryphal Rowley who has electrified the town by a slashing satire on Lord Bute and the Princesses of Wales. Now drops in Garrick the bright-eyed, a skilled connoisseur, famous actor, and successful manager, light of heart and ready of tongue, chatting pleasantly with his friend Mr. Christie. Among the gay crowd are figures of men unlovely to look upon but famous withal. David Hume, with his broad flat face, wide mouth, and vacant eyes—looking more like a turtle-eating alderman than the philosopher that he is—discourses in measured phrase with the ingenious Edward Gibbon—not yet the historian of the Roman Empire, but a simple ex-colonel of militia, and an agreeable writer of philosophic dissertations. Burly old Johnson now rolls in—puffing and blowing—with wig awry, brought hither much against the grain, for he loves not overmuch the courtly Chesterfield, by Joshua Reynolds, whose ear-trumpet collects the sounds which exude from "blinking Sam," while his eyes are engaged on the "Raphaels, Correggios, and stuff," which he affects to condemn, but in his heart reveres.

Horace Walpole is, of course, present, both as a collector and a man of fashion. He is very busy scandalmongering with an ancient but still handsome dame, the eccentric Duchess of Queensberry, Prior's "Kitty," who

at Heart's desire,
Obtained the chariot for a day,
And set the world on fire.

Walpole has been somewhat cut out of

the grand old lady's graces for some time past, but has recently made it up with her by adding a stanza to Prior—

To many a Kitty, Love his care
Will for a day engage,
But Prior's Kitty, ever fair,
Obtained it for an age!

Her Grace is quite old enough to be pleased with the compliment, and is listening delightedly to the scoffing raconteur. He is full of the latest news from Paris, and has trippingly on the tongue the last squib against the Dabarry, and the last naïveté of Madame de Mailly. An old friend and neighbour of Walpole's now drops in—Mrs. Catherine Clive; not at this moment like the excellent housewife she is, preparing a feast of venison "up to the elbows in currant jelly and gratitude," but looking every inch the "fine lady," much complimented by the company, who express their sorrow at her retirement from the stage. Kitty Clive is not quite so over fine in manner as in appearance, being somewhat rough of speech and ready of tongue. The crowd now thickens, for auctions are all the rage among persons of quality. Breakfasts and auctions wear the morn away, and many fair dames have defrauded themselves of their beauty-sleep to be present at Christie's this morning. Their beauty, however, has not perceptibly suffered—their cheeks have received the last layer of red, and they look as handsome as crimson can make them. At last arrives the great Lord Chesterfield, who now lives retired on account of his deafness and failing health, but has consented to appear on this occasion in state, in his lordship's coach drawn by six horses. As he enters the great room, leaning on the arm of Mr. Christie, every eye is bent upon one who was once the glass of fashion. Richly dressed in sombre colours, and wearing what can only be designated as a French rather than English expression on his finely-cut features, Philip Dormer Stanhope, speaking loudly after the manner of deaf people, favours Mr. Christie and the company with his opinion of the pictures on view, and his recollections of the more important of them. The words of the great connoisseur are carefully treasured by the listeners, who will bid briskly enough to-morrow. Caring little for recognition by his old friends, Chesterfield makes the tour of the room, and then drives off, Mr. Christie gratefully reconducting him to his coach-and-six. Those who have come to Christie's this morning

have done well; for they will look no more upon this famous lord. Once more he will assert his proud pre-eminence among well-bred men and, with dying breath, command his servant to "give Mr. Dayrolles a chair;" but he will appear no more in the giddy haunts of men, disdaining to be tolerated, on account of his infirmity, where he once reigned by his brilliancy and, let it be added, his good nature. At the departure of my Lord Chesterfield the room is left to lesser connoisseurs. Youthful fashion cares more for originals than portraits; gay demoiselles, accomplished in every "high-bred floor," glide into Pall Mall; and the members of the Macaroni Club—the travelled young men, who wear long curls and spying-glasses—try to engage these titled nymphs to make a party to Vauxhall this evening, to mince chickens and stew them in a china bowl, to the astonishment and admiration of the bystanders. At last the cognoscenti drop off and the rooms are left to their silent tenants. Statesmen, diplomatists, authors, and painters are gone. Gone indeed are they—buried deep under the ruins of a century, but the pictures have revisited Christie's "many a time and oft." Some of them were sold there the other day.

HOPE.

THE plant's first shoot was fresh and fair,
We tended it with loving care,
But keen the breath of April air,
It chilled the frail new comer.
We said, "The days roll onward fast,
The east wind's reign will soon be past,
We'll fence it from the bitter blast,
Our bud will blow in summer."

But June had half her smile forgot,
And August suns blazed fierce and hot,
And tired of their earthly lot,
The soft leaves drooped and faded.
We said, "When heat and glare pass by,
Beneath October's tranquil sky,
The bloom will blossom quietly,
By Autumn's calm wings shaded."

But ah! the dead leaves heaped the plain,
And rotted 'neath the ceaseless rain,
With, like a weary soul in pain,
The winds amid it sighing.
We heard the Winter's coming tread,
The low skies darkened over head,
"Love, Faith, and Truth are vain," we said,
"Our treasure lies a-dying."

And slowly with reluctant feet,
We left the snowdrift's winding-sheet,
Where lay the promise, pure and sweet,
To youth's gay morning given.
Then, angel-like, Hope whispered low,
"Life lingers 'neath yon saving snow,
On through the seasons patient go,
God keeps your flower in Heaven."

THE STORY OF OWEN GORTON.

IN SIX CHAPTERS. CHAPTER V.

THE witnesses were then called. I cannot now recollect the exact order in which they appeared, or the method by which an air of logical sequence was given to their evidence. But it soon became clear that the case against me had been very carefully prepared, even to its most minute particulars. Certain relatives of the murdered man were called, with a view not merely of satisfying the jury as to his identity, but also of proving that, although intimate at one time, we had of late been on unfriendly terms, and of stating the cause of our enmity. The counsel for the crown elicited that they had heard James Thorpe state that he had been threatened by me; that I was very angry with him, and counted upon wreaking my vengeance upon him. There was some dispute as to whether this could or not be received as evidence. I forget how the judge decided.

The witnesses admitted, upon cross-examination, that my quarrel with James Thorpe happened many years since. They had but little personal acquaintance with me. James Thorpe had not expressed himself as in any fear of me. The lady referred to as the cause of quarrel had been dead some years. As to the quarrel, whatever they might have heard, they had seen nothing.

The evidence first given in the police court was then reproduced.

The constable who arrested me described my conduct and speech upon that occasion. My housekeeper was also called. Her evidence chiefly related to my handwriting. I was wondering as to the import of this, when a document was placed in her hand. She declared it to be written by me. Her evidence in this respect was supported by other witnesses, clerks in a banking establishment at which I had kept an account for a considerable period.

A letter was then handed in and read by an officer of the court.

It was couched in violent terms; it was indeed both abusive and menacing. It censured in the most unmeasured fashion the conduct of James Thorpe, to whom it was addressed. He was plainly designated a villain and a traitor. The threats it contained were less explicit. He was informed, however, that a day of reckoning and retribution would surely arrive sooner

or later; and that when he little looked for it vengeance would overtake him, and he would experience himself no less suffering than he had inflicted upon others. My signature followed.

The reading of this letter produced some excitement in court. The judge was the first to note that the document bore no date, and that it did not appear to have been written recently. If it had passed through the post it was without trace of a postmark.

It seemed to be agreed that the jury must take the document for what it was worth. That it was written by me was accepted as a fact beyond all question. It had been found among the papers of the deceased. He had endorsed it with the words—"A Fool's Threats." The prosecution described it as a threatening letter. There was discussion as to whether it implied that personal and physical violence would be attempted by the writer, or whether it did not rather intend to convey, as a general statement, that punishment of necessity, and as a matter of religious truth, surely attended upon wrong-doing.

For my part, the letter took me completely by surprise. Had I written it? I cannot say. Was it rather a cruel and shameful forgery effected with a view to my ruin? I hesitated, I hesitate even now, so to denounce it. But if I had in truth ever written such a letter, certainly I had forgotten it entirely—the thing had passed altogether from my mind. I could not conceive myself writing such a letter. There was something of vulgarity in its tone that I judged to be alien to my nature. And yet certain of its terms expressed fairly enough my sense of the treatment I had experienced at the hands of James Thorpe.

I collected from the remarks of bystanders I could not fail to overhear, that the production of the letter had injuriously affected my case. A witness, however, who was called shortly afterwards, and upon whose evidence the prosecution obviously placed reliance, was so far of assistance to me, that he failed to justify the account of his testimony, contained in the opening speech for the crown.

His name was Richard Jeffrey, I think. He was by trade a cutler, in Oxford-street. He identified the knife produced. That knife had been formerly in his possession—had formed part of his stock-in-trade.

He had sold it some months since. The sale, with its date, was duly entered in the book kept for that purpose. He produced the book, which was examined by the jury. The knife was the last of a set of knives of similar pattern which had been in his possession. It was of English manufacture, but what he should describe as a foreign pattern. He called it a foreign hunting-knife. Such knives were rarely required in England. He was quite positive as to the date of the sale. It was some weeks before the murder. He was quite positive about that. The sale took place in the evening. The purchaser was altogether a stranger to him. His shop was well lighted. The purchaser had some conversation with him upon the subject of cutlery, examined several knives, testing with his finger their point and edge. Seemed particular as to the knife he required. Observed no excitement in his manner. Was a well-spoken, what he should call a gentleman-like man. Did not notice his dress particularly. He was dressed in dark clothes. Could say nothing further on that subject. Should know the man again.

Here he was asked to look round the court and see if he could point out the man. There was dead silence while he fulfilled this requirement. But he failed to find the purchaser.

Mention was made of the fog and the darkness, and he was asked to look round again. But again he failed.

He was then asked to describe the man to whom he had sold the knife. Middle-aged, he thought, with iron-grey hair and round shoulders. In truth, this description fitted me fairly enough. Yet he hesitated to declare that I was the man. He would say that I resembled the man—but he declined to swear that I was he. This was the more remarkable that he had on a former occasion selected me from a number of others, ranged before him by the police, and asserted positively that I was the purchaser of the knife.

Here then was a weak point in the case against me. The cutler was obtuse somewhat—a man of inferior mental quality; yet indisputably honest. His failure to identify me told in my favour. It had been an important object with the prosecution to trace the possession of the knife to me. In this respect they had been unsuccessful; otherwise there was no lack of witnesses—absolute strangers to me—persons upon whom I had never before

set eyes—whose testimony connected me closely with the murder.

The evidence of a respectable-looking man of the artisan class, who gave his name as Joseph Mills, was certainly remarkable.

On the night of the murder he had been proceeding by omnibus from the City to Haverstock-hill. It was between eight and nine o'clock. There were very few passengers. After reaching the Hampstead-road, he found that himself and one other were the only persons in the vehicle. He had been sitting opposite this other passenger, but found it necessary to move away, his conduct was so extraordinary. He talked to himself, ground his teeth, threw about his arms, and presently produced a knife, with which he went through the pantomimic action of cutting and stabbing. Thought he was play-acting, or drunk, or out of his mind—couldn't say which. The knife produced was very similar to the one brandished in the omnibus, but he could not swear that it was the same. This strange passenger alighted at the railway bridge. That would be the nearest point to Chalk Farm. Was not exactly frightened at the man, but was glad when he quitted the omnibus—thought he meant mischief. The prisoner at the bar was the man. Had no doubt of it. Would swear to it. Could pick him out among a thousand. Had picked him out from among a good many. It was a dark night, but there was a lamp in the omnibus. Had noticed the man particularly, having been attracted by his strange conduct. Was certain of the date. It was his father-in-law's birthday; had gone to Haverstock-hill on purpose to see him and congratulate him upon the occasion.

Nor was this man's extraordinary testimony at all shaken upon cross-examination. He adhered to his story. His manner was composed, and he spoke distinctly. It was difficult to question his sincerity. It seemed clear that he was stating simply what he believed to be true. And his evidence was supported by the statements of those witnesses who professed to have seen me in the neighbourhood of Thorpe's house on the same evening. Sherson, too, was called, to prove my absence from my chambers a sufficient time to have enabled me easily to journey to Chalk Farm and back.

I should mention that all these witnesses

underwent a searching cross-examination at the hands of the counsel acting on my behalf. He dealt with them very patiently and temperately, never raising his voice above a conversational tone. Yet I could not but note admiringly his promptness in discovering flaws in the case, and the art with which he dwelt upon these, widening them as much as possible, and turning them to my advantage. But although he succeeded in reducing the strength of the evidence considerably, he was scarcely enabled to demolish it.

I had thought at one time of repudiating his interference altogether. A desire possessed me to undertake my own defence. But then came to me thoughts of my old difficulties in attempting to address the court. I knew that I should lose control over myself, my voice, my ideas; that I should do myself injustice and my cause injury; should probably, indeed, in my confusion, be utterly unintelligible and talk the merest nonsense. I was convinced that I was safer in the hands of the advocate my relatives had provided me, while I resented their presumption in so doing. And now a desire for life influenced me. I had been apathetic and indifferent before, careless as to what my fate might be. But I had become roused as the case proceeded. It interested me. I did not feel fear as to the result exactly, but an intense longing occupied me that the defence should succeed rather than the prosecution: because with the defence I was concerned, the prosecution being the work of my foes. Still, my desire in the matter was not, after all, much in excess of that felt by an enthusiastic schoolboy bent upon the success in the cricket-field of his own side in preference to that of his opponents.

CHAPTER VI.

THE speech for the defence took me very much by surprise. It was divided into two parts. The hypothesis of my absolute innocence was first dealt with. The weakness of the case against me was exposed. There was an absolute failure of evidence. The story was monstrous—incalculable. The motive for the crime suggested by the prosecution was ludicrously insufficient. An old love affair; forsooth! Why, the lady who had been the object of this love was dead and buried long since. Did the jury ever hear of such a motive for a crime so heinous? They were bidden to contemplate me. Did I look like a lover?—like a murderer?

I was already an old man—grey, furrowed, bent. My position was one of indisputable respectability. I was a barrister of many years' standing. My character was absolutely irreproachable. I was engaged in literary pursuits—in study of a most worthy kind. I was a recluse; a student; a man of books; living in an unusual condition of solitude and retirement. Was I a likely man to sally forth, like a bravo at night, armed with a dagger, for the purpose of assassination? It was incredible. What evidence was there of ill-feeling between the murdered man and myself? No witness had ventured to depose that he had seen us quarrel; that he had heard angry words pass between us. There was the letter, which had been called a threatening letter. As his lordship had pointed out, it bore no date. When was it written? Not recently, that was clear. And what did it threaten after all? Why, it but pointed out that wrong could not prosper; that punishment waited upon sin; that time would avenge the misdeeds of James Thorpe. No doubt it was a violent, abusive, rather vulgar letter, written by some one in a passion; but it was not more or worse than that. To suppose that it pointed to murder was absurd. Then the question of identity was discussed. The witnesses had been positive, no doubt, and there was no desire to cast a slur upon their honesty; but they were really unacquainted with the prisoner at the bar; they had made no study of his physical aspect. Unquestionably they were mistaken. Why not? Such mistakes were common. The records of the law courts teemed with them. What other evidence was there affecting the prisoner? The knife produced in court had not been traced to his possession. Jeffrey, the cutler, had failed completely to identify him as the purchaser. The evidence of Joseph Mills might be dismissed as sheer delusion. He had been planning to celebrate the birthday of his wife's father, and had perhaps drained a glass or two to the old gentleman's health before setting out on his journey. No wonder he had seen such strange things in the omnibus. What other proof was there of the prisoner's guilt? Had blood been found upon his clothes? With all their diligence, the police had not been able to discover one single spot, or stain, or trace of blood upon him or upon anything belonging to him. Had his demeanour been that of one guilty of murder? Much had been made of the

fact that, upon his arrest, he had frankly and unhesitatingly avowed all he knew about the deceased. Why, it was the conduct of an innocent man, who knew that his safety consisted in a disclosure of the truth—of every fact touching his connection with the deceased. He sought to conceal nothing. Why? Because he was guiltless of James Thorpe's blood.

The second portion of the speech I listened to with exceeding indignation. The advocate presumed me guilty, and claimed my acquittal on the score of my infirm intellect; in other words, he ventured to describe me as insane. My anger was so great that I lost patience, and failed to follow his statement very closely. I desired, indeed, to interrupt him; to renounce his advocacy of my cause; and to protest the perfect healthiness of my mental condition; but amazement and anger kept me speechless. I hardly know what he said. But he spoke again of my appearance—bid the jury note my looks—much learning had made me mad. Could they not see as much for themselves? And he had medical witnesses to bring before them who would duly inform them on the subject.

Thereupon certain physicians entered the witness-box, and ventured to state that, in their judgment—and they had made insanity a special study—my mind was affected; I was suffering from aberration of intellect. They were strangers to me—or nearly so. A suspicion haunts me that, upon some pretext, and disguising their object, they had visited me in Newgate.

I will dwell no further upon the trial. I have already, perhaps, entered into more than needful particulars regarding it.

After the summing-up of the judge the jury retired, and were absent nearly an hour, when they returned with a verdict of—"Guilty, the prisoner being at the time insane."

"Then, as I understand," said the judge, "you find him guilty but for his insanity?"

"Yes, my lord, that is our intention."

"Then the verdict will stand thus: 'Not guilty, on the ground of insanity.'"

It was monstrous!

I write this in confinement during her Majesty's pleasure, and under strict supervision. The reasons moving me to the task I have already set forth.

I have nothing more to add, but this.

The reader may be surprised that I have given expression to no feeling of regret at the cruel death of James Thorpe. The plain truth is, that I have experienced no such feeling. He deserved his fate. I would not have saved him from it, even if I could. I hated him living; I hate him dead; so I dismiss him from my mind. At least I try to, for I find I cannot really forget him. It is curious, indeed, how often my mind turns to him; how often I find myself speculating as to the real history of his murder, and as to the strange evidence against myself: especially at night, about the hour when he was struck down. At times the thing makes me, in spite of myself, quite frightened and tremulous.

Otherwise, my health has much improved. I have access to books and writing materials at certain hours in the day, and altogether pass my time not uncomfortably. Indeed, I occasionally permit myself to hope that I may live to complete my studies upon the Philosophy of Intuition, and even my elaborate work dealing with the History of Inherent Ideas.

LEFT-HANDED PEOPLE.

WHEN a few folks do not follow the same course, adopt the same habits, or express the same opinions, as the majority of their neighbours, the latter look upon them as strange if not reprehensible, and imply that the sooner they mend their ways the better. This is the case in the peculiarity known as Left-handedness, which is occasionally seen in all ranks of life. Most of us hold the dinner-knife and the pen-knife, the pen and the pencil, the cricket-bat and the trap-bat, the croquet-mallet and the billiard-cue, the saw and the axe, the file and the awl, the needle and the scissors, in the right hand; and it appears to us very ungainly to employ the left hand instead. Indeed, many workmen's tools are fashioned in direct submission (so to speak) to right-handedness. In claiming that we do the proper thing, and that the minority are in the wrong, we only indulge a proneness which is ever present with us. Indeed, there really is much to be said on this side of the argument. So great is the prevalence of right-handedness all over the world, that a left-handed race is not (so far as we are aware) known in any country.

This subject was treated in a general way in one of our former volumes, but without much notice of the arguments which have been adduced to show that left-handedness is, to a great degree, curable by judicious means steadily employed. Moreover, recent inquiries into the effect of brain-action on the movements of the hands and arms have led to the promulgation of a theory as to the probable cause of this peculiarity. The theory is not well established. It has the usual ordeal of severe scrutiny to pass through; but it is well that we should say something about it.

In cases where both-handedness is essential to success in life, we know that it can be acquired. A Liszt and a Von Bülow would not have risen to distinction as pianists unless the left hand had been equally agile in its movements with the right; nor would a grand church organ put forth all its grandeur, unless the left foot of the player did its full share of work upon the pedals. So, in the muscular exercises of tennis, racket, and fives, a man with an inert left hand would not score well in the game. Unless Esmeralda or La Sylphide could pirouette on the left tiptoe as well as on the right, she would be found wanting. Unless those really hard-working men who imperil their lives, day after day, in performing feats of rope dancing, rope swinging, trapeze performances, aerial leaping, globe climbing, and the like—unless such men could use the left arm and leg as rapidly and as firmly as the right, their lives would not be worth many months' purchase in the estimation of an insurance office actuary. And so the juggler, who tosses up his balls, cups, plates, and knives, does just as much work with the left hand as with the right. We therefore know that, whatever Nature did or did not intend, training will, to some extent, bring about equi-handedness and equal action in the two feet or legs.

Until recently, not much seems to have been done in investigating the causes, or probable causes, of left-handedness. A few physicians and physiologists, however, think they see a glimmering of light in connection with the curious inquiry—Have we Two Brains? The late Sir Henry Holland, Dr. Wigan, Dr. Brown-Séguard, and the physicians who direct most of their studies to mental derangement, have dwelt upon the strange phenomena of double consciousness, and the possibility (if nothing

more) that we may have two half brains—the left acting almost independently of the right. A duplication of organs is familiar enough to us—two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, two arms, two hands, two legs, two feet; and this duplication may perchance extend farther than we generally imagine.

Double-consciousness came under consideration in a former volume of *ALL THE YEAR ROUND*,* in which numerous instances are recorded of persons who seemed to have a kind of double life, remembering things and persons in one state and forgetting them in the other.

Now, the theory of a double brain is claimed as offering a possible solution of such singular phenomena as these; not the only explanation, perhaps not the true one in the long run, but meanwhile worthy of attention. A recent writer in the *Cornhill Magazine* has cited many similar examples from the physicians already named, and from other authorities. We will briefly touch upon a few of them. In what way they bear upon our subject of left-handedness will be seen presently.

A lunatic sometimes knows that he has two brains, or at least two selves; and his sane self knows that his other self is more or less insane. A whimsical case is that of an American, who declared himself to be General Jackson. "I had my head shot off at Buony Visty. But the new one that grewed on isn't right so good as the old one; it's tater on one side. That's why they took advantage of me to shut me up. People don't believe I am General Jackson; but I am. I know some things. My head is tater on one side, but all right on the other; and when I know a thing in the left side of my head, I know it." The word "tater" here seems to mean bad, weak, insane. A case somewhat similar was that of a crazy pauper, who appeared before a magistrate to give information on a somewhat disputed point. He refused, however, to be sworn, on the ground that, although one side of his head was "as sound as a nut," the other side was unreliable. "When a fellow's got one side of his head tater, he's mighty onsertain like. You don't swar me, for I can't tell what minnte the tater side 'll begin to talk. I'm talking out of the left side now, and I'm all right; but

* *ALL THE YEAR ROUND*, March 14th, 1874, "Forgetting a Language."

you don't swar me. But if you'll send some of your constables out to the barn at the poorhouse, and look under the hay-mow at the north-east corner, you'll see some things maybe as has been a missing for some time; and that ain't out o' the tater side neither." The half-crazy fellow was right about the missing things, and had a well-grounded confidence that it was not his "tater" side that was at work when he gave the information.

There was a boy at Notting-hill who appears to have had two mental lives. Usually about a certain hour every day his better or normal self became oblivious; he was dull, motionless, and quiet. Presently the other self woke up, bright and wide-awake, remained dominant for an hour or two, and then in its turn became oblivious. In his normal state he recognised persons whom he had formerly known when in a similar state, but not those whom he had known only when in the abnormal state, and vice versa. He thus really had two sets of acquaintances, each belonging to a particular period of the day, but each strangers to him at the other period. This double-brained or double-minded character was exhibited by a drunken messenger, who left a parcel in a place which he could not recollect when sober, but which came to his memory when next drunk: his honesty was more reliable than his sobriety. A French sergeant was wounded at the terrible affair of Bazeilles, during the late Franco-German war, and ever since then has had fits of life number one and life number two (if we may so term them) alternately. His second or abnormal life is very inferior to the first or normal; it is little more than animal existence; he eats, drinks, smokes, walks (a little), dresses, and undresses; but he does not talk, nor apparently think; while he will steal anything from anybody without the slightest idea that he is doing wrong. In his normal condition, which succeeds the abnormal at intervals, he is intelligent and honest, but knows nothing of his other self, or of his other life.

A curious case occurred in a court of law, relating to an accident whereby sense had been driven into a man instead of driven out. Alleged carelessness had led to an accident, and an action for damages resulted. A verdict was obtained, we believe; but the counsel for the opposite side endeavoured to make something out of the curious fact that the injured man,

somewhat insane before, had recovered his sanity by a blow he had received in the head during the accident.

Whether double-brained or not, we know that most persons see about as well with one eye as with the other; and that, when exceptions to this rule occur, the right eye is almost as likely to be the bad one as the left. At any rate, there are reasons why an equality of power between the two eyes is of much importance to us in our daily life. Sir Charles Wheatstone has shown, by his beautiful researches on Binocular Vision, that our estimate of distances depends greatly on the use of two eyes. This is the secret of the stereoscope, for a one-eyed person cannot fully appreciate those charming pairs of pictures. A thought suggests itself to us, whether one-eyed men ever arrive at distinction as billiard-players? We should suppose not, owing to their deficiency of power to estimate distances, angles of impact, and angles of rebound. Perhaps the Duftons and Bennetts, the Cooks and Robertses, could throw a little light on this matter. The same remark applies to cricket, croquet, and many other games and sports, indoor and outdoor—Could Polyphemus, the one-eyed Cyclops, have been A 1 at any such exercises?

It is, however, the opinion of those who hold the double-brain theory, that one brain takes charge, as it were, of different parts of our daily doings in a greater degree than the other; and this view leads us speedily to the question of left-handedness. The left brain, or the left side of the head, is claimed as having most to do with speech, writing, and gesture—the three principal modes of expressing our thoughts; while the right brain is, in like manner, credited with governing locomotion and other movements; moreover, that each brain gives motive power to the organ on the opposite side. It is an undoubted fact, as we have already said, that all nations, in all ages, have been right-handed; and this is the reason why left-handedness appears to us so strange and awkward. There may be only one brain instead of two; or, if there be two, each may or may not possess powers and functions different from those of the other; but certainly it is difficult to account in any other way for the almost universal prevalence of right-handedness. Nevertheless, a double-handed power would certainly be useful to us in a variety of ways;

while left-handed persons would get rid of a marked peculiarity, if they could be taught to use the right hand like other folks.

Now, it is asserted that such a change can be effected.

Dr. Brown-Séquard insists that children ought not to be permitted to adopt left-handedness, or a helpless degree of any kind of one-sidedness. He points out that when one side of the head has been injured, and some of the organic movements of the limbs thereby affected, it has been found possible so to strengthen and cultivate the other side as to restore the active moving power, though not on the same side of the body as before.

Is it difficult to get rid of left-handedness? We are told not. "One day, or one week, it would be one arm which would be employed for certain things—such as writing, cutting meat, putting a spoon or fork into the mouth, and so on; and on the next day, or week, the other. In this way it would be easy to obtain a good deal, if not all. We know that even adults can come to use the left arm. A person who has lost the right arm can learn to write—with difficulty, it is true; because in adult life it is much more difficult to produce these effects than in children. The left arm can be taught to be used in a great variety of ways by persons who wish to make use of it."

On the theory that the left side of the brain is connected with the control of speech and gesture, Dr. Brown-Séquard mentions some curious results of his experiences: "Even in adults, who have lost the power of speech from disease of the left side of the brain, it is possible to train the patient to speak, and mostly by the use of the right side of the brain. So also as regards gestures and other ways of expressing ideas. I have trained some patients to make gestures with the left arm, who had lost the power of gesture with the right, and who were quite uncomfortable because the left arm, when they tried to move it at times, moved quite in a contrary way, and by no means in harmony with their intentions." When applied to the hands, he claims something more than the analogy of substituting one hand-power for the other, viz., the similar training of both: "As we know that we can make a child who is naturally left-handed come to be right-handed, so we can make a child who is naturally right-handed come

to be left-handed as well." The same authority states, in regard to hand-writing, that a similar tuition will bring about similar results; but we think he must be speaking rather of drawing than of writing; because no writing would be regarded as good except that which has the slope of the letter in one particular direction—a thing, we presume, almost impossible to insure by mere training of the left hand; though, on this point, we must leave writing-masters to decide.

The advantage of being able to use the two hands with equal or nearly equal facility, is similarly insisted on by other authorities. "Some persons are too right-handed; we question, indeed, whether one-handedness, whether right or left be chiefly employed, does not in all cases involve a loss of power. In such instances it is probable that careful training, especially if begun in early life, by tending to equalise the work of both members of each pair of organs, might add considerably to the general powers of the body." If this be so, we may perhaps outlive Archbishop Trench's explanation of the word "left," given in his Study of Words. He submitted that the left hand, as distinguished from the right, is the hand which we leave unused; inasmuch as for twenty times we use the right hand, we do not once employ the left; and the name thus arises from the left hand being left unemployed so much. It should be mentioned, however, that this view is in some quarters disputed; the word "left" being regarded as a corruption of *lævus*.

We are bidden to imagine a race of men possessing limbs and organs such as we possess, but, through some defect in their method of training the bodily powers, using only or chiefly one member of each pair. To such a race it would be a new doctrine, and a very important one, that both members of every pair could be used with nearly equal efficiency. "The theory, at first startling by its novelty, would, before long, be established in a practical manner; and the race would find their powers much more than doubled by this duplication of their limbs and organs." And even without imagining any special race, men and women, as we now know them, might, if the above views are correct, become a more handy (that is, a more two-handed) people than we are at present; nay, mental one-sidedness itself might perchance be lessened by agencies within our reach.

Left-handed folks, therefore, may have the satisfaction of knowing that they are regarded with some interest by scientific men; that there is a physiological cause for their left-handedness; that there is a still more effective physiological cause for the right-handedness of most of us; and that there is some ground for hope that all alike might become two-handed by judicious training.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK III. CHAPTER VIII. GEORGE HEATH'S WIFE.

THAT was a dull week of waiting, and Grace Middleham's patience was almost exhausted. It was not as though she had any great hope of being rewarded at the end of the appointed time; she knew that the letter which she had received was not in Anne's writing, and she felt that some one, to whom the advertisement was not addressed, and with whom it had no concern, had answered her appeal in all honesty, but under a misapprehension. George Heath was, after all, a sufficiently common name, and there was no reason why the wife of any George Heath should not be the heroine of one of those domestic complications which are constantly happening, and thus fancying herself pointedly appealed to. Clement Burton, however, was more hopeful; he said vaguely that he thought "something would come of it"—what, he did not say. Nor could he have explained, had he been pressed upon the point; but he had a kind of intuitive idea that, though Miss Middleham was possibly right in her supposition that her correspondent was not the friend of her childhood—the person she desired to see—yet that the letter written in reply to the advertisement might possibly be the means of bringing about the required end, and gaining some information as to Anne Studley's fate.

It was expedient for their purpose, Clement thought, that inquiries should be made as to what had become of George Heath himself, who, since he retired from the management of the bank, had scarcely been heard of. Miss Middleham consenting, Clement undertook to make these inquiries himself, and ar-

rived one morning at the Hermitage earlier than usual, primed with information.

"Something extraordinary must have happened to have brought you here so soon," said Grace, after the first salutation. "I suppose it would be too much to hope that you had heard anything of George Heath's wife?"

"Nothing at present," said Mr. Burton; "but, failing that, I have some news about George Heath himself. I think, if I dare say so, Miss Middleham, that you are to be heartily congratulated in having been freed from that prospective alliance, and that it would have been impossible for Miss Studley to show her real affection for you more strikingly than by breaking it off."

"Your words convey the reproach which I have long since admitted to myself," said Grace; "but what have you heard about Mr. Heath?"

"In the City, everything to his favour," replied Clement Burton; "he is spoken of as a marvellously clever man of business, and the greatest wonderment is expressed at his having retired, when at the height of his prosperity, and in the zenith of his career. But success in the City does not mean everything, dear Miss Middleham; and, as I said before, I fancy you are well out of the connection."

"Has he wholly relinquished business?" asked Grace. "I had a notion that, in giving up the management of the bank, he was merely desirous of extending his operations. Mr. Hillman told me, that Mr. Heath's talents were considered quite thrown away in such a comparatively small business."

"Either his desires were limited, or his longing for rest was great," said Mr. Burton; "for when he gave up the management of the bank, he retired finally from all business, and, so far as I learn, has scarcely been seen in the City since."

"You would think it scarcely possible for a man, who had led such a busy life, to exist without excitement under some form or other," said Grace.

"And yet, to the best of my belief, Mr. Heath does so wholly," said Clement Burton. "As soon as his resignation had been accepted, and he had seen his successor installed, he went abroad and travelled about Europe for several months; indeed, he only returned some three weeks since."

"He is not in London?" asked Grace, hurriedly.

"Oh no," said Clement Burton; "and even if he were, there would be no chance of your seeing him. He is in bad health, and has established himself, oddly enough, in a village called Loddonford. Ah, you start! It is the same then—the place where, as you have told me, your uncle lived. From what I learn, Mr. Heath resides there quite alone, in a lonely little house in the midst of a jungle-like garden, all dreary and desolate."

"Has he no acquaintance?" asked Grace.

"Apparently none. He discouraged the polite advances made to him, on first taking up his residence, by the people in the village, and no strangers ever come to see him."

"What an awful, solitary life," said Grace. "And he is ill, too, you say?"

"So my informant judges, from his never moving from the house, though that may be from choice, not necessity; but it is certain that, when last seen, he was considerably broken in health. And that reminds me that there are several sick people waiting for me, and that I must hurry off to them."

"Tell me first about the poor woman whose case you mentioned to me the other day; how is she getting on?"

"Not quite so well within the last few days," said Mr. Burton; "she is irritable and uncomfortable to a degree, and keeps herself in a state of feverish excitement, which seriously militates against her progress."

"Is the same nurse still with her—she of whom that rough man, Mr. Channell, spoke so warmly?"

"What, Sister Gaynor? Oh yes, she is still there, and she merits all the good things said of her, although the other day, though you seemed to think them rather exaggerated, I scarcely know anyone else who would have remained with poor Mrs. Walton and put up with her temper and exaction."

"Have you any idea of the cause of this disturbance?"

"None, beyond that it is mental, and not physical. She is extremely close and secretive; most patients with a grievance take their nurse, if not their doctor, into their confidence; but she has never said a word to Mrs. Gaynor on the subject. I will bring you to see her one day if you will come; I have a notion that your practical common sense might work a good effect upon her."

"I have my doubts," said Grace, smiling; "but I will go for all that;" and Mr. Burton took his leave.

That morning, when the surgeon paid his daily visit to Lydia Walton, Mrs. Gaynor met him on the stairs. "I think you must speak to her," she said, "for she is getting beyond my control."

"Any fresh symptom?" he asked.

"No," said Sister Gaynor; "just the same, restless and irritable to a degree. Yes! one new symptom—a notion that she will not be 'kept a prisoner any longer.'"

"I will see what I can do with her," said Mr. Burton, "for your sake as well as for hers. This worry must be put a stop to; you are looking thoroughly worn out."

"Well, doctor," said Mrs. Walton, as Mr. Burton entered the room, "when are you going to give me my ticket-of-leave? I am all right, you know; and I don't want to be bothering on your hands any longer."

"You would have been all right; but you are going the very way to make yourself all wrong," said Mr. Burton. "Your excellent nurse, who, as you must allow, has borne with you with the greatest patience, tells me that lately you have become almost unmanageable. I myself have noticed your irritability and excitement, and it is my duty to tell you plainly, that by all this you are doing yourself irreparable injury."

Lydia Walton was silent for a moment. Then she spoke, her voice shaken by passion, which found its relief in tears. "I know it," she said; "I know I am a brute, and have been behaving like one to you and that dear, good soul, when I owe both of you so much; but I cannot help it. I have bothers and worries enough to upset a woman in good health, let alone a poor wretch like me, that is tormented with this wound and tied up with these bandages."

"If you would tell us the cause of these worries, we could do something to help you; but you won't."

"Not I," said Lydia. "I keep everything to myself. That has been my game through life. I might have done better if I had spoken out and asked for things; but I have got a bit of pride which prevents me and keeps my mouth shut."

"Well, if you won't speak, it is impossible to give you any help," said the doctor.

"Oh no, it is not," said Lydia. "You

can do that without my saying a word. Just you give me leave to get out; that's all I want."

"To get out?" echoed Clement Burton; "when you have been kept so carefully secluded for six weeks!"

"That increases the necessity," said Lydia. "I must go out, and I will—there!"

"Oh, if you will, there is an end of the matter," said Clement Burton, shrugging his shoulders.

"What a rude brute I am!" she cried, putting up her hands, appealingly; "but I really didn't mean it; and if you only knew how important it is to me to get out, you would forgive me. Look here," she continued, bending forward and sinking her voice to a whisper, "I want to go out and see some one on an errand—it may be—of life or death."

"You are not fit to go out," said Mr. Burton. "Cannot the person come to see you? There would be less risk in that, though you ought to avoid every kind of excitement."

"No; that would be quite impossible," said Lydia. "Oh, do let me go; it isn't far—only to Kensington!"

"Is this person you want to see a man or a woman?" asked the surgeon.

"I do not know," replied Lydia, suddenly.

"You do not know?" he echoed.

"No, I do not know," she said; "and there you have got it. It seems very strange, I daresay, and very suspicious; but I am not going to tell a pack of lies about it—and there it is—I don't know!"

There was a pause for a few moments. Then Clement Burton said, shrugging his shoulders, "All I can say is, that I cannot sanction your going out in your present state. Under different circumstances it might be otherwise; but you have failed to satisfy me of the urgency of the necessity, and I, therefore, give a strictly professional opinion."

"All right," she said, in a kind of desperation. "Your professional opinion has no power, I suppose, to turn a lock on me against my will, and, therefore, out I go."

"Just reflect for a minute, Lydia," said Clement Burton, laying his hand upon her arm. "What motive could I possibly have for wishing to prevent your going out, except my knowledge that it would do you harm. You must give Sister Gaynor and myself the credit of having been tolerably patient with you throughout your

illness, and you must not do away with the high opinion we have formed of your powers of endurance by turning restive, when you were so far advanced on the high road to recovery."

"I know all you have done for me, and I am grateful for it," she said; "but you are not kind to me now. I must get out—I will go out!"

"You are like Sterne's starling, Lydia," said Mr. Burton, with a pleasant smile; "you must go out, and you must go out, but you will not give me the reason for the 'must.' Why tell me a rigmarole story about some mysterious 'person,' whom you want to see, and of whom you know nothing? Why not trust me fully?"

"I will trust you," she said, after a moment's hesitation; "but, though it may seem a rigmarole story, I have not been telling you any lies—I will swear that. I know you are to be trusted; and I was a fool to attempt to hide anything from you. But I won't any longer; so here goes. I saw an advertisement the other day, addressed to a person—well, a woman; I don't want to say 'person' this time—addressed to a woman whom I know something about. It is in answer to that advertisement I want to go out now. The place is at Kensington, and the advertiser is G. M.—and that is all I know about it."

Clement Burton was completely staggered at this intelligence. Not for one moment had he connected the desire manifested by his poor patient in Bloomsbury for permission to go out with the anxiety under which Miss Middleham was labouring. Now he saw a link between the two; the spark which, at his suggestion, Miss Middleham had attempted to light, had kindled into flame in a direction totally opposite from that which they had imagined, and the whole process had gone on under his eyes without his being conscious of it. There had been nothing to give him the slightest clue to the existence of such a connection. In her conversations with him about Anne Studley, Miss Middleham had more than once described her friend's appearance and manners, and from what he remembered of their talk, Mr. Burton was sure that his Bloomsbury patient was not Anne Studley. The woman at whom he was then looking, while all these thoughts were revolving in his mind, must be considerably older than any school companion of Miss Middleham's. There was some further extraordinary mystery about the

matter of which he had not yet got the key. It was obvious that the only plan of action open to him now, by which he could calm Lydia Walton's excitement, although he did not know that it would have any effect in satisfying Miss Middleham's curiosity, was to bring the women together. Possibly, Lydia, believing the sincerity of the motives by which Miss Middleham was actuated, might be induced to make confidences to her which she otherwise would refuse to impart.

"What have you got into your head, doctor, that you stand staring at me without ever saying a word?" said Lydia, after a pause. "Your face is so grave, that you must be thinking of something very serious."

"I will tell you what I was thinking of," said Clement Burton, with a smile—"how I could best do what is always done by clever lawyers when they have intractable people to deal with—that is to say, arrange a compromise. You are obstinate, and so am I. You want to get out, and I daren't give you permission; but I will meet you half way—I will go myself to Kensington to this 'G. M.,' explain the state of the case, and persuade him or her, or whoever it is, to come here with me and see you."

"Will you?" said Lydia, cheerfully. "Then you are a good dear, and that is all one could possibly expect of you. I don't want to go out, bless you. To tell truth, I am rather frightened at the notion. I have been here so long, that I am quite dazed and stupid; but it was most important that I should see this 'G. M.,' and I will tell you why some of these days; and if you will bring him or her here, and let me find out how much is known, and what is wanted, you will be doing me a service I can never repay. Now call that dear good nurse Gaynor in; tell her I am as mild as milk, and that I won't worry her any more."

"Have you said anything to the sister about the cause of your excitement?" asked Mr. Burton.

"No; and be sure you don't open your lips to her about it either," said Lydia, earnestly. "I had trouble enough to write that letter without her knowing it, and very likely nothing will come of it after all, so she had better not be worried. She has got quite enough to think of without any 'G. M.'s,' or any nonsense of that kind."

"Very well," said Mr. Burton; "then,

if I have any luck, you may look out for me to-morrow, about my usual hour, and may be pretty certain that I shall not come alone."

For more reasons than one, Clement Burton thought it better to leave Miss Middleham in ignorance that his Bloomsbury patient and her correspondent in reply to the advertisement were one and the same person; so that, when he called at the Hermitage that afternoon, he merely inquired of Grace whether she had any engagement for the morning, and learning that she was free, proposed to take her to call upon Mrs. Walton, "about whom he had so often spoken to her." Grace consented, and the appointment was accordingly made. "You will gain a new experience of life," he said to her. "I suppose it has never happened to you to be thrown amongst any of those people who are called 'public characters'—actors, singers, and so forth?"

"Never," said Grace. "When I lived in Baton-place, under Mrs. Crutchley's chaperonage, I several times met in society the Blanks and the Dashes, who, you know, were leading people upon the stage; but my tribute of admiration was paid from afar off, and I do not think I ever spoke to either of them."

This reply still left the matter shrouded in mystery. Clement Burton had put the question with a vague idea that Lydia Walton might be an elder sister of Anne Studley's, or in some more distant way related to her. If such were the case, which now he very much doubted, it was plain that Miss Middleham had never heard of her.

The next day the surgeon was in waiting at the door of the lodging-house, when Grace drove up. "I have not been upstairs yet," he said, assisting her to alight, "but no doubt we are expected, as I said we should arrive about this time. And now," he said, ringing the bell, "you will see the 'fascinating Mrs. Walton,' as she used to be called, though, of course, very much altered by the sickness and suffering she has undergone."

"Ay," said Grace, archly; "and I shall see some one else who, if Mr. Channell is to be believed, is still more fascinating. Of the two, I am far more anxious to make the acquaintance of Sister Gaynor."

"She is the best creature in the world," said the surgeon, as they ascended the stairs.

When they reached the second-floor

landing, Mr. Burton knocked gently at the door. It was quickly opened by Mrs. Gaynor, who, advancing with her usual pleasant smile of welcome, started back on catching sight of Miss Middleham, and uttered an ill-suppressed scream. Nor was Grace less affected. As soon as she saw nurse, she cried out, "Anne! Anne, at last!" and, rushing past Mr. Burton, clasped her long-lost friend to her breast.

That part of the mystery then was patent at once to Clement Burton. Under the disguise of Sister Gaynor, the hospital nurse, Anne Studley, the deeply lamented, the long searched for, had been living under his eyes for months, and now, by the merest accident, had been discovered by the friend to whom she was so dear. It was a marvel to him then, that the knowledge that Sister Gaynor's previous history had an element of mystery in it, which she desired to preserve intact, had not given him the clue to her identity as Anne Studley; but such an idea had never for an instant entered into his mind; and even now—when that was explained, as it had been simply by the mutual exclamations and the embrace, in which the friends were still locked—Lydia Walton's connection with the history yet remained to be elucidated. That the recognition between Anne and Grace was wholly unintelligible to her, was evident by the expression on her face. She sat staring from one to the other, with knitted brows and puckered cheeks, and long before the friends would willingly have relaxed their grasp upon each other she burst forth.

"What is the meaning of all this, may I ask? Do you know?" she cried, looking up to Clement Burton. "It is at your instance, I suppose, that this—this lady, who seems so delighted in hugging my nurse, has been brought here, and perhaps you can give me some explanation about it?"

"Pray do not excite yourself," he commenced; but she interrupted him at once.

"Excite myself! Don't attempt to put me off with any such paltry fribble. You profess yourself full of all sorts of friendliness to me; you won't let me go out, but you will bring to me the person whom I want to see; and when she comes, without so much as 'with your leave,' or 'by your leave' to me, she flings herself into

nurse Gaynor's arms and commences a scene."

"Let me explain," said Anne, gently moving towards the invalid's chair, "at least, so far as I can. This lady is the dearest friend I have in the world, from whom I have been separated for a very long time, and who has now accidentally discovered me. It is not to be wondered at that we should be glad to see one another!"

"Oh, of course not," said Lydia Walton, "that's all right and proper, though it's curious how such accidents happen. What I want to know is, is she G. M.?"

"Certainly her initials are G. M.," said Anne, in astonishment, after a pause, "but——"

"Perhaps I had better explain this matter," said Clement Burton, gently restraining Grace, who was about to speak. "If you had only placed any confidence in me," he continued, turning to Anne, "I might have helped you, for Miss Middleham had long since told me your story. Knowing you as I have, however, I can fully understand your reticence. Events have occurred of which you are in ignorance, and the narration of which will necessarily be very painful to you."

"I felt that there was some impending trouble," said Anne, calmly, "and I am prepared to bear it as best I may. What is it?"

"Your father, Captain Studley, is dead," said Clement Burton.

"Dead!" echoed Anne, covering her face with her hands.

"I was with him almost at the last, my darling," said Grace, putting her arm round her friend. "He knew me—knew how fond we had been of each other, and told me many things—told me, above all, that you were George Heath's wife!"

"He lied!" cried Lydia Walton, who had been listening attentively to this dialogue. "With or without a purpose he lied! I am George Heath's wife! and no one else!"

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SATURDAY, MAY 15, 1875.

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A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XIV.

DAVID POWELL sat in his garret chamber. The fast-waning light of a February afternoon fell on him, as he sat close to the lattice in the sloping roof. He had placed himself there to be able to read the small print of his pocket-bible. But the light was already too dim for that. It was dusk in the garret. The strip of grey cloud, visible from the window, was beginning to turn red at its lower edge as the sun sank. It was the angry flaring red, which is often seen at the close of a cold and cloudy day, and had no suggestion of genial warmth in its deep flush. Such a snow-laden, crimson-bordered wrack of fleecy cloud, as Powell's eyes rested on, might have hung over a Lapland waste. There was no fire in the room, nor any means of making one. It was bitterly cold. The preacher's face looked white and bloodless, as if it were frozen. But he sat still, staring out at the red sunset light on the strip of sky within his view. From his seat on an old chest, which he had drawn close under the window, he could see nothing but the sky. Not one of the roofs or chimneys of Whitford was visible to him. A black wavering line moved slowly across his field of vision. It was a flight of rooks on their way home to the tall leafless elm-trees in Pudcombe-park. Nothing else moved, except the red flare creeping upward by slow and imperceptible degrees.

Suddenly the little bible fell from Powell's numbed right hand on to the

carpetless floor, and, with a start, he turned his head and looked around him. By contrast with the wintry light without, the garret appeared quite dark to him, and it was not until after a few seconds that his eye became sufficiently accustomed to its gloom, to perceive the book lying almost at his feet. He picked it up, and began to chafe his numbed fingers, rising at the same time, and walking up and down the room.

His thoughts had been straying idly, as he sat at the window, with his eyes fixed on the sky. They had gone back to the days of his boyhood, and in memory he had seen the wild Welsh valley where he was born, and heard the bleat of sheep from the hills, as he had listened to it many a summer morning, sitting ragged and barefoot on the turf. And with these recollections the image of Rhoda Maxfield was strangely mingled, appearing and disappearing, like a face in a dream. Indeed, he had been dreaming open-eyed in his solitude, unconscious of the cold and the gathering dusk.

Now such aimless, vagrant wanderings of the fancy were considered reprehensible by earnest Methodists; and by none were they more strongly disapproved of than by David Powell himself. His life was guided, as nearly as might be, in conformity with the rules laid down by John Wesley himself for the helpers, as his first lay-preachers were called. And among these rules, diligence—unflagging, unflinching diligence—and the strenuous employment of every minute, so that no fragment of time should be wasted, were emphatically insisted upon. Powell had ceased to read when the daylight waned, and remained in his place by the window, intending to devote a few minutes of the

twilight to the rigid self-examination which was his daily habit. And instead, behold! his mind had strayed and wandered in idle recollections and unsanctified imaginings.

Presently he began to mutter to himself, as he paced up and down the chill bare room.

"What have I to do with these things," he said aloud, "when I should be about my Master's business? Where is the comfortable assurance of old days—the bright light which used to shine within my soul, turning its darkness to noon-day? I have lost my first love; * I have fallen from grace; and the enemy finds a ready entrance for any idle thoughts he wills to put into my mind. And yet—have I not striven? Have I not searched my own heart with sincerity?"

All at once, stopping short in his walk across the garret floor, he threw himself on his knees beside the bed, and, burying his face in his hands, began to pray aloud. The sound of his own voice rising ever higher, as his supplications grew more fervent, hid from his ears the noise of a tap at the door, which was repeated twice or thrice. At length, the person who had knocked, pushed the door gently open a little way, and called him by his name, "Mr. Powell! Mr. Powell!"

"Who calls me?" asked the preacher, lifting his head, but not rising at once from his knees.

"It's me, sir; Mrs. Thimbleby. I have made you a cup of herb tea accordin' to the directions in the Primitive Physic,† and there is a handful of fire in the kitchen grate, whilst here it is downright freezing. Dear, dear Mr. Powell, I can't think it right for you to set for hours up here by yourself in the cold!"

The good widow—a gentle, loquacious woman, with mild eyes and a humble manner—had advanced into the room by this time, and stood holding up a lighted candle in one hand, whilst with the other she drew her scanty black shawl closer round her shoulders.

"I will come, Mrs. Thimbleby," answered Powell. "Do you go downstairs, and I will follow you forthwith."

"Well, it is a miracle of the Lord if he don't catch his death of cold," muttered the widow as she redescended the steep,

narrow staircase. "But there! he is a select vessel, if ever there was one; and a burning and a shining light. And I suppose the Lord will take care of His own, in His own way."

Mrs. Thimbleby sat down by her clean-swept hearth, in which a small fire was burning brightly. The little kitchen was wonderfully clean. Not a speck of rust marked the bright pewter and tin vessels, that hung over the dresser. Not an atom of dust lay on any visible object in the place. There was no sound to be heard save the ticking of the old eight-day clock, and, now and then, the dropping of a coal on to the hearth. As soon as she heard her lodger's step on the stairs, Mrs. Thimbleby bestirred herself to pour out the herb tea of which she had spoken.

"I wish it was China tea, Mr. Powell," she said, when he entered the kitchen. "But you won't take that, so I know it's no good to offer it to you. Else I have a cup here as is really good, and came out of my new lodger's pot."

"You do not surely take of what is not your own!" cried Powell, looking quickly round at her.

"Lord forbid, sir! No, but the gentleman drinks a sight of tea. And last evening he would have some fresh made, and I say to him"—Mrs. Thimbleby's narrative style was chiefly remarkable for its simplification of the English syntax, by means of omitting all past tenses, and thus getting rid of any difficulty attendant on the conjugation of irregular verbs—"I say, 'Won't you have none of that last as was made for breakfast, as is beautiful tea, and only wants warming up again?' But he refuse; and then I ask him if I may use it myself, seeing I look on it as a sin to waste anything; and he only just look up from his book, and nod his head, and say, 'Do what you like with it, ma'am,' and wave his hand as much as to say I may go. He is not much of a one to talk, but he paid the first week punctual, and is as quiet as quiet, and—there he is! I hear his key in the door."

A quick, firm step came along the passage, and Matthew Diamond appeared at the door of the kitchen. "Will you be good enough to give me a light?" he said, addressing the landlady. Then he saw David Powell standing near the fire, and looked at him curiously. Powell did not turn, nor seem to observe the new comer. His head was bent down, and the fire-light partially illumined his profile, which

* A common expression among the early Methodists, to indicate the first fervour of religious zeal.

† A collection of receipts, published by John Wesley, under the title of "Primitive Physic; or, An easy and natural Method of Curing most Diseases."

was presented to anyone standing at the door. Mr. Diamond silently formed the word "preacher?" with his lips, at the same time nodding towards Powell, and raising his eyebrows interrogatively. Mrs. Thimbleby answered aloud with alacrity, well pleased to begin a conversation with her taciturn lodger.

"Yes, sir; it is our preacher, Mr. Powell, as is one of our shiningest lights, and an awakening caller of sinners to repentance. You've maybe heard him preach, sir? A many of the unconverted—ahem!—a many as does not belong to the connexion has come to hear him, in Whitford Wesleyan Chapel, and on Whit-meadow. And we have had seasons of abundant blessing and refreshment."

Powell had turned round at the beginning of Mrs. Thimbleby's speech, and was looking earnestly at Mr. Diamond. The latter, who had seen the preacher only in the full tide of his eloquence and the excitement of addressing a crowded audience, was struck by the change in the face now before him. It was much thinner, haggard, and deadly pale. There were lines round the mouth, which expressed anxiety and suffering; and the eyes were sunk in their orbits, and startlingly bright. Diamond was, in fact, startled out of his usual silent reserve by the glance which met his own, and exclaimed, impulsively, "I'm afraid you are ill, Mr. Powell!"

"No," returned the other at once, and without hesitation, "I have no bodily ailment. I have seen you at the house of Jonathan Maxfield, have I not?"

"Yes; I have been in the habit of going there to read with a young gentleman. My name is Diamond—Matthew Diamond."

"I know it," answered Powell. "I should like, if you are willing, to say a few words to you privately."

Diamond was a good deal surprised, and a little displeased, at this proposition. He had been interested in the Methodist preacher, and the thought had more than once crossed his mind that he should like to see more of the man, whose whole personality was so striking and uncommon. But Mr. Diamond had felt this wish just as he might have wished to have Paganini with his violin all to himself for an evening; or to learn *vivà voce* from Edmund Keen how he produced his great effects. To be the object and subject of a private

sermon from this Methodist enthusiast (for Diamond could conceive of no other reason for the preacher's desiring an interview with him than zeal for converting) was, however, a different matter; and Diamond had half a mind to decline the private communication. He was a man peculiarly averse to outspokenness about his own feelings. Nor was he given to be frank and diffusive on topics of mere intellectual speculation; although, occasionally, he could exchange thoughts on such matters with a congenial mind. But he knew well enough that, with the Methodists in general, an excited state of feeling, which might do duty for conviction, was the aim and end of their teaching and preaching.

"This man is ignorant and enthusiastic, and will make himself absurd and me uncomfortable, and I shall have to offend him, which I don't wish to do," thought Mr. Diamond, standing stiff and grave with the candle in his hand. But once more the sight of Powell's haggard, suffering face and bright wistful eyes touched him; and once more the resolute Matthew Diamond suffered himself to be swayed by an impulse of sympathy with this man.

"Oh," said he, "well, you can come into my sitting-room."

The invitation was not very graciously given, but Powell did not seem to heed that at all. Mrs. Thimbleby stood in admiring astonishment as her two lodgers left the kitchen together.

The two young men, so strangely contrasted in all outward circumstances, entered the small parlour, which served as dining-room, sitting-room, and study to Matthew Diamond, and seated themselves at a table almost covered with books, one corner of which had been cleared to admit of a little tea-tray being placed upon it.

"Will you share my tea, Mr. Powell?" asked Diamond, as he filled a cup with the strong brown liquid.

"No; I thank you for proffering it to me, but I do not drink tea."

"I am sorry for that, for I am afraid I have no other refreshment to offer you. I don't indulge in wine or spirits."

Diamond threw into his manner a certain determined commonplaceness, as though to quench any tendency to excitement or exaltation which might show itself in the preacher. Although he would have expressed it in different terms, Matthew Diamond had at the bottom of his mind a feeling akin to that in Miss

Chubb's, when she declared her dread of the Maxfield family "going into convulsions" in the parish church of St. Chad.

"I will take a cup of tea myself, if you have no objection," said Diamond, suiting the action to the word, and stretching out his legs, so as to bring them within reach of the warmth from the fire. "Won't you draw nearer to the hearth, Mr. Powell?"

Powell sat looking fixedly into the fire with an abstracted air. His hands were joined loosely, and rested on his knees. The firelight shone on his wan, clearly-cut face, but seemed to be absorbed and quenched in the blackness of his hair, which hung down in two straight, thick locks behind his ears. He did not accept Mr. Diamond's invitation to draw nearer to the warm hearth, but, after a pause, turned his face to his companion, and said, "It is on behalf of the young maiden, Rhoda Maxfield, that I would speak with you, sir."

He could scarcely have said anything more thoroughly unexpected and disconcerting to Matthew Diamond. The latter did not start, or stare, or make any strong demonstration of surprise, but he could not help a sudden flush mounting to his face, much to his annoyance.

"About Miss Rhoda Maxfield?" he returned coldly; "I do not understand what concern either you or I can have, with any private conversation about that young lady."

"My concern with Rhoda is that of one who has had it laid upon him to lead a tender soul out of the darkness into the light, and who suddenly finds himself divided from that precious charge, even at the moment when he hoped the goal was reached. Her father has left our Society, and has thus carried Rhoda away from the reach of my exhortations."

"By Jove!" thought Diamond to himself, as he turned his keen grey eyes on the preacher, "this is a specimen of spiritual conceit on a colossal scale!" Then he said aloud, "You must console yourself with the hope that the exhortations she will hear in the parish church will differ from your own rather in manner than matter, Mr. Powell. There really are some very decent people among the congregation of St. Chad's."

"Nay," answered Powell, with simple gentleness, "do you think I doubt it? It has been the boast of Methodism that it receives into its bosom all denominations of Christians, without distinction. The

Churchman and the Dissenter, the Presbyterian and the Independent, are alike welcome to us, and are free alike to follow their own method of worship. In the words of John Wesley himself, 'one condition, and one only, is required—a real desire to save their souls. Where this is, it is enough; they desire no more. They lay stress upon nothing else. They ask only, Is thy heart herein as my heart? If it be, give me thy hand.'"

"Methodism has changed somewhat since the days of John Wesley," said Diamond, drily.

"Not Methodism, but—perhaps—Methodists. But it was not of Methodism that I had it on my mind to speak to you now."

Diamond controlled his face and his attitude to express civil indifference; but his pulse was quickened, and he hid his mouth with his hand. Powell went on: "I have turned the matter in my mind, many ways. And I have sought for guidance on it with much wrestling of the spirit. But I had not received a clear leading until this evening. When I saw you standing in the doorway, it was borne in upon me that you could be an instrument of help in this matter. And the leading was the more assured to me, because that to-day, having opened my bible after due supplication, mine eyes fell at once on the words, 'I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee.' Now these words were dark to me until just now, when you seemed to appear as the explanation and interpretation thereof."

Diamond could not but acknowledge to himself that all the scriptural phraseology, and the technicalities of sectarianism, which he found merely grotesque or disgusting in men of common vulgar natures, came from this man's lips with as much ease and propriety, as if he had been a Hebrew of old time uttering his native idiom. Indeed, the impression of there being something oriental about David Powell, which Diamond had received on first seeing him, was deepened on further acquaintance. This black-haired Welshman was picturesque and poetic, despite his threadbare cloth suit, made in the ungraceful mode of the day; and impressive, despite his equally threadbare phrases. It is possible to make a wonderful difference in the effect both of clothes and words, by putting something earnest and unaffected inside them.

"What is the help you seek? And how can I help you?" asked Diamond, with grave directness.

"You are acquainted with the daughter of the principal of the grammar school here——"

"Miss Bodkin?"

"Yes. Do you think that, if you carried to her a request that I might be permitted to see and speak with her, she would admit me?"

"I—I don't know," answered Diamond, greatly taken aback.

There was a pause. Each man was busy with his own thoughts. "Rhoda is beyond my reach now," said Powell at length. "I can neither see nor speak with her. Nor do I know of any of those who see her familiarly, who would be likely to influence her for good, except Miss Bodkin. I am told that she is a lady of much ability and power of mind; and I hear, moreover, of her doing many acts of charity and kindness. You know her well, do you not?"

"I know her. Yes."

"Would you consent to carry such a request from me?"

Diamond hesitated. "Why not prefer the request yourself?" he said. "If you have any good reason for desiring an interview with Miss Bodkin, I believe she would grant it."

"I had thought of doing so. I had thought, even, of writing all that I have to say. But, for many reasons, I believe it would be more profitable for me to see her face to face. I am no penman. I am indeed, as you perceive, a man very ignorant in the world's learning and the world's ways."

Diamond suspected a covert boast under this humble speech, and answered in his coolest tones, "The first is a disadvantage—or an advantage, as you choose to consider it—which you share with a good many of your brethren, Mr. Powell. As to the latter kind of ignorance—Methodists are generally thought to have worldly wisdom enough for their needs."

Powell bent his head. "I would fain have more learning," he said in a low voice, "but only as a means, not as an end—not as an end."

"But," said Diamond, in a constrained voice, "it seems to me hardly worth while to trouble Miss Bodkin, by asking for an interview on any such grounds. Since you are charitable enough to believe that Miss Maxfield's spiritual welfare is not

imperilled by going to St. Chad's, I don't see what need there is for you to be uneasy about her!"

"I am uneasy; but not for the reasons you suppose. Rhoda is very guileless, and I would shield her from peril."

Diamond looked at the preacher sternly. "I don't understand you," he said. "And, to say the truth, Mr. Powell, I disapprove of meddling in other people's affairs. Miss Maxfield is a young lady for whom I have the very highest respect."

For the first time a flame of quick anger flashed from Powell's dark eyes, as he answered, "Your high respect would teach you to stand aside and let the innocent maiden pine under a delusion which might spoil her life and peril her soul; mine prompts me to step forward and awaken her to the truth, never heeding what figure I make in the matter."

The sudden passion in the man's face and figure was like a material illumination. Diamond had grown pale, and looked at him attentively, and in silence.

"Do you think," proceeded Powell, his thin hands working nervously, and his eyes blazing, "that I do not understand how pure a creature she is—how innocent, confiding, and devoid of all suspicion of guile? Yea, and even, therefore, the more in need of warning! But because I am a man still young in years, and neither the maiden's brother, nor any kin to her, I must stand silent and withhold my help, lest the world should say I am transgressing its rules, and bid me mind my own affairs, or deride me for a fanatical fool! Do you think I do not foresee all this? or do you think that, foreseeing it, I heed it? I have broken harder bonds than that; I have fought with strong impulses, to which such motives are as cobwebs——" Then, with a sudden check and change of tone which a grain of affectation would have sufficed to render ludicrous, but which, in its simplicity, was almost touching, he added, in a low voice, "I ask pardon for my vehemence; I speak too much of myself. I have had some suffering in this matter, and am not always able to control my words. I have had strange visitings of the old Adam of late. It is only by much striving after grace, and by strong wrestling in prayer, that I have not wandered utterly from the right way."

He had risen from his chair at the beginning of his speech, and now sank down again on it wearily, with drooping head.

Matthew Diamond sat and looked at

him still with the same earnest attention; but blended, now, with a look of compassion. He was thinking to himself what must be the force of enthusiastic faith, which could so subdue the fiery nature of this man, and how he must suffer in the conflict. Presently, he said aloud, "I am ready to admit, Mr. Powell, that you are actuated by conscientious motives; I am sure that you are. But your conscience cannot be a rule for all the rest of the world. Mine may counsel me differently, you know."

"Oh, sir, we are neither of us left to our own guidance, thanks be to God! There is a sure counsellor that can never fail us. I have searched diligently, and I have received a clear leading which I cannot mistrust. I do not feel free to tell you more particularly the grounds of my anxiety respecting Rhoda Maxfield. But I do assure you, with all sincerity and solemnity, that I have her welfare wholly at heart, and that I would not injure her by the least shadow of blame in the opinion of any human being."

There was silence for some minutes—Diamond leant his head on his hand and reflected. Then at length he said, "Look here, Mr. Powell; I believe, if you had pitched on anyone else in all Whitford to speak to about Miss Rhoda Maxfield, I should have declined to assist you. But Miss Bodkin is so superior in sense and goodness to most other folks here, that I am sure whatever you may say to her confidentially will be sacred. And then she may be able to set you right, if you are wrong. She has the woman's tact and insight which we lack. And, besides—she is fond of Rhoda." He coloured a little as he said the name, and dropped his voice.

"You confirm all that I have heard of this lady. She is abundantly blessed with good gifts."

"Well, then, Mr. Powell, I will write to Miss Bodkin to-morrow, telling her merely that you desire to speak with her, and entreat her good offices on behalf of one who needs them."

Powell sprang up from his seat eagerly. "I thank you, sir, from a full heart," he said. "You are doing a good action. Farewell."

Diamond held out his hand, which the preacher grasped in his own. The two hands were as strongly contrasted as the owners of them. Diamond's was broad, muscular, and yet smooth—a strong young hand, full of latent power. Powell's was

slender, nervous, showing the corded veins, and with long emaciated fingers. It, too, indicated force, but force of a different kind. The one hand might have driven a plough, or written out a mathematical problem; the other might have wielded a scimitar in the service of the Prophet, or held up a crucifix in the midst of persecuting savages. As they stood for a second thus hand in hand, Powell's mouth broke into a wonderfully sweet and radiant smile, and he said, "You see, sir, I was right to have faith in my counsellor. You have helped me!"

Diamond sat musing late that night, and was roused by the cold to find his fire gone out and his watch marking half-past twelve o'clock. "I wonder," he thought to himself, "if Powell has any foundation for his hints, and if any scoundrel is playing false with her. If there be, I should like to shoot him like a dog!"

ENGLISH CATHEDRALS.

WORCESTER.

It is around the grave of John, undoubtedly one of the worst of our English kings—and that is saying a good deal—that the traditions of Worcester cathedral chiefly centre.

A civil war long raged among the antiquaries, as to the exact spot in the cathedral where John's body rested. The king's simple stone coffin, with its thirteenth-century effigy scarcely raised from the earth, had been removed at the Reformation to a new altar-tomb before the high altar in the present choir, King Henry wishing to honour the king whom the Papacy had once laid so low; and the site of the original tomb was marked, it was supposed, by a dark stone in the Lady chapel, which corresponded in form and length with the old part of the royal tomb in the choir. Leland mentions the renovation of the king's tomb by Alchurch the sacristan, but does not say whether the body was then removed from the original grave. Mr. Valentine Green, the historian of Worcester, was sturdy, however, in the faith that the king's body remained in the Lady chapel, between the sepulchres of the Saints Oswald and Wulstan, before the altar of the Blessed Virgin. Leland, Dr. Stukeley, Brown, Willis, Mr. Gough, and other eminent black-letter men, had been of the same opinion.

The dean at last resolved on settling the

vexed question by opening the later tomb, with the intention, if no body was found, of removing it to the Lady chapel, where the real relics lay. The tomb was accordingly opened in July, 1797, and the body found. On the removal of the effigy and the broken slab below, the workmen laid bare two partition-walls of brick, which helped to support the effigy. On taking down the side and end panels, two strong elm boards, once joined by a batten, but now loose, were seen. These boards had covered the king's stone coffin, which lay below. The skull was upside down, and the os frontis had decayed to a level with the bottom of the sockets of the eyes. The dean and chapter were instantly called together, and Mr. Sandford, an eminent Worcester surgeon, sent for to examine the ghastly relics. The two jaws had fallen apart, and there were four sound teeth in the upper jaw. A few grey hairs were visible under the cowl, which was buckled under the chin. The ulna of the left arm lay obliquely on the breast. The ribs and pelvis were hidden by dust, and the rags of the king's monkish dress. The inner robe, which had been crimson damask, had turned a mummy brown; the cuff of the left sleeve was entire, and there was embroidery remaining near the right knee. There had been a sword by the king's left side, but it had rotted away, though part of the leather scabbard remained. There were traces of ornamented boots on the feet, and the string of one still remained round the left ankle. The body measured five feet six inches.

The coffin was of white Higley stone, dissimilar to the foundation of the tomb or the effigy, and an oblique fracture ran through it. It stood on the floor of the choir, and was not sunk below it. According to an old antiquary, the tomb of John was originally Purbeck marble, painted vermilion, and ornamented with nine lions or. It was surrounded with gilt palisades, and the effigy was, in Elizabeth's time, gilt.

The graves of the two bishops and saints who originally guarded the body of King John have also been desecrated, and now contain unjust tenants. St. Oswald's grave is supposed to hold the body of Bishop Sylvester, who interred King John, and died himself in 1219. This bishop had disinterred St. Wulstan and put the relics in a new shrine, sawing some of the sacred bones asunder with his own episcopal hands. St. Wulstan's grave

is occupied by William de Blois, the successor of Bishop Sylvester. St. Oswald had been enshrined by Bishop Adulph, his successor, in 1002, and again by Bishop Wulstan, in 1089, at the opening of the present cathedral.

There seems but little doubt, and yet there is but little proof, that Worcester was one of the ancient British cities—the *Caer Guarangor* of Nennius, Alfred of Beverley, and Henry of Huntingdon. On the borders of a great forest, and commanding an important ford of the Severn, it would stand well either to start forays or to resist incursions. The Saxon name, *Weogorna Coastre*, proves that the Romans had raised either a standing camp or fort on this spot.

About the origin of the word Worcester, hogsheads of learned ink have been spilt. The general feeling now is, that Camden was right when he traced it to the Saxon word *Wich*, or brine-spring, salt-wells being common in Worcestershire. Valentine Green, however, derives it from *Wig-erne*, the Warrior's Lodge.

The British church at Worcester did not become a cathedral till A.D. 680, when Ethelred, King of Mercia, appointed Bosel bishop of the *Wiccians*. This was in the very year that Benet, Abbot of Weremouth, master of the Venerable Bede, is said to have first introduced stone houses and glass windows among the Saxons, who had hitherto built all their edifices of wood. The first cathedral was dedicated, we are told, to St. Peter; but, in the next century, it was called St. Mary's. It is uncertain now where the first cathedral stood. Bishop Oswald, following in St. Dunstan's steps, expelled the married clergy from Worcester cathedral, and in 983 founded a new and more stately cathedral in the churchyard of St. Peter's, furnishing it with twenty-eight altars, and dedicating it to the Virgin Mary. During the building, the bishop used to preach in the open area by St. Peter's church, near a cross erected over the monument of Duke Wiferd and Alta his wife, who had been great benefactors to St. Peter's. This ducal monument, which was taken down in the reign of Edward the Confessor, in order to enlarge the choir of St. Peter's, stood at the end of High-street, a mile distant from Whitestanes. This cathedral, no doubt, suffered when Worcester was burnt and sacked by the fierce soldiers of Hardicanute; and in 1084 Bishop Wulstan began a new and

grander church and monastery, which took five years building, and was consecrated as "St. Mary-in-Cryptis." This magnificent prelate laid on the altar of his new church the deeds of the manor of Alveston, in Warwickshire, which had formerly belonged to the see, and which he had recovered for a sum of money from the Conqueror; and, a short time before his death, he laid on the Virgin's altar the deeds of other lands.

It is related of Bishop Wulstan that, upon seeing the workmen employed in pulling down the old church, he wept. One of his attendants expostulating with him, and reminding him that he ought rather to rejoice, as he was preparing in the room of the old an edifice of greater splendour, and more proportioned to the enlarged number of his monks, he replied: "I think far otherwise. We, poor wretches, destroy the works of our forefathers only to get praise to ourselves; that happy age of holy men knew not how to build stately churches; but, under any roof, they offered up themselves living temples unto God, and, by their examples, excited those under their care to do the same; but we, on the contrary, neglecting the care of the souls, labour to heap up stones." On the finishing of his new church, he caused the relics of St. Oswald to be inclosed in a new shrine prepared for that purpose, and solemnly deposited them therein, on the 12th of October the same year, at the expense of seventy-two marks of silver, or about forty-eight pounds of our present money.

In 1118, when Worcester city and castle were burnt, the cathedral and monastery were much injured by fire, and two monks and fifteen citizens perished. In Easter week, 1202, it was again burnt down, and the new building was not consecrated till 1218, Bishop Sylvester dedicating it to St. Mary, St. Peter, and the Saints Oswald and Wulstan, in the presence of the young King Henry the Third, two years after his accession.

The building is a puzzle of various styles, and it is with the greatest care and labour only, that the local antiquaries have decided on what remains of Wulstan's work. They have now settled that Wulstan's principal entrance was by a porch, which now forms the great cross aisle of the nave. There were two descents into the crypt—the one under the present ascent to the north aisle of the choir, and the other through the great Saxon arch into the vestries on the south. There was another Saxon arch

at the west end of the vestry, and a third on the north side. In the last arch the sacristan is supposed to have stored the sacred vestments and the vessels for the altars. There was a small stone balcony, with glazed windows, and a flight of stone steps inside, within the wall, and a door leading into the church, now closed up. This building, which might have served as a snug, detached vestry for the bishop, was removed at the beginning of the last century. The original cathedral seems to have had three towers, two of which were blown down in a storm, and the third fell of itself.

Worcester crypt, which is Saxon, is of great antiquity, and is probably the old base of Oswald's church. It contains, however, no tombs or altars; although in a northern recess there are three coats of arms of Clare, Earl of Gloucester. There are, however, some sculptures representing a devotee, probably St. Oswald, offering the model of a church to an angel whose arms are extended to receive it. The Annunciation, the Nativity, and the Visitation are also sculptured there; and, on a west wall, the wicked are dolorously trooping into the mouth of a whale-like monster, intended to represent Hell. Over a great Saxon arch at the west end of the vestry sits a figure pensively resting its head on its hand—probably an *Ecce Homo*—and the mutilated statue of a seated bishop.

Opposite the north transept of the cross aisle of the Lady chapel there stood, in old times, a clock tower with a leaden spire and two bells, and on the clock bell was graven the old rhyming monkish inscription, seldom, says Fuller, found on one bell alone except at Worcester:

*En Ego Campana, numquam denuncie vana,
Laudo Deum verum, plebem voco, congrego clarum.*

*Funera plango,
Fulgura frango,
Obiata } pango.
Sabata }
Excito lentos,
Dissipo ventos,
Paco cruentos.*

which Fuller thus quaintly Anglicises:

*Men's deaths I tell
By doleful knell.
Lightning and thunder
I break asunder.
On Sabbath all
To church I call.
The sleepy head
I raise from bed.
The winds so fierce
I do disperse.
Men's cruel rage
I do assuage.*

Which is, indeed, an epitome of all the

attributes ascribed to bells in the middle ages. This clock tower was, tradition says, reared by King John, but Strype fathers it on Henry the Third. Valentine Green declares his opinion that the two lower arches of the present nave are part of St. Oswald's building, which had escaped the Danes. They are too large to have formed part of the old church of St. Peter; and as for St. Mary's monastery, it seems certain that that was entirely destroyed by Wulstan, when he transplanted the monks. It is probable, says Green, that Bishop Blois connected these remains to the present building by adding fresh arches to the nave between them and the great cross aisle, Bishop Blois's work being especially marked out by the red Ombersley stone, never used in the cathedral subsequently to his time. These arches are, then, if the conjecture be correct, one hundred and one years older than any other part of the present cathedral, though not united to it till two hundred and ninety-six years after St. Wulstan had completed his building. Wulstan's architect appears to have placed his arches in exact line with those of St. Oswald, Wulstan evidently hoping that his pious successors would complete the double cross, which is the plan of the now perfected cathedral, leaving room for the exact size of the second cross, which completed the great geometric problem of beauty. Bishop Wakefield, finding the two or three small Saxon windows insufficient to light the nave, added a great west window, united the ancient arches to Bishop Blois's work, raised the vaulting of the aisles internally, and linked them with the higher vaulting of the new nave. He also closed the inconvenient west entrance, and opened the present north porch—large, dignified, convenient to the city and the palace, and near the cemetery. The chapel of the charnel-house, built by Bishop Blois to receive the dead, was removed during the improvements.

Ten years after St. Oswald's death, many miracles were ingeniously wrought at his tomb. When Adolph translated his bones, his body was found reduced to powder, but his episcopal robe was as fresh as when woven; and so, according to William of Malmesbury, it remained till his time (the twelfth century), which at least shows that the saint knew where to buy his garments. A new shrine, bought by Bishop Wulstan for his honoured predecessor, cost seventy-two silver marks.

It was carried round the gates of the city, the choir singing before it, when the Empress Maud attacked Worcester; but, nevertheless, the empress's men forced their way roughly in, and set fire to many streets and plundered the town. According to the Abingdon M.S., King Henry the Sixth on one occasion wrote to the Worcester priory to beg that a procession might be headed by the relics of St. Osmund, to obtain rain from Heaven after a long and extreme drought; but the result is not appended.

St. Wulstan in time grew to be almost equally popular a saint. In 1201, one hundred and six years after his lamented death, about sixteen persons in a day were cured, or asserted to be cured, at his tomb, the veneration for which had increased, after the sacrilegious removal of the saint's body by Bishop de Constantis in 1196. Wulstan was canonised at Rome on the 9th of May, 1203, by Pope Innocent the Third, who had previously sent a commission of bishops and abbots to inquire into the authenticity of the asserted miracles. Bishop Sylvester placed the dust of the saint in a sumptuous new shrine, the old one having been economically melted down, two years before, to assist in paying a fine of three hundred marks, exacted from the convent for having submitted to the French Dauphin. Bishop Sylvester is said to have given one of the good man's ribs to the monks of St. Alban, who received it in solemn procession and covered it with gold. The profits of Wulstan's tomb, in the time of William de Blois, were divided pacifically between the bishop and the convent. Edward the First often resorted to this tomb, to make good resolutions, and to atone for having broken old ones; and in 1300 this warlike king, in a sudden fit of piety, sent eight candles to burn before it. St. Wulstan's head seems to have been kept in the vestry, and was shown to pilgrims for an additional fee. In 1538 the shrines of the two saints were taken down, and their bones laid in lead at the north end of the high altar, during all which time there was thunder and lightning, says a tenacious believer, and the church loudly threatened to fall in. In 1541, however, both tombs were carted away, and there was no thunder or lightning at all, though the desecration was far greater. Some writers think that the oblong squares of mosaic tiles, in the north aisle of the Lady chapel, still indicate the old

graves, once so profitable to the Worcester monks. Mr. Valentine Green mentions the curious fact that, up till a late period, Roman Catholics used to visit the cathedral, on the day of Oswald's decease, to pray at a gravestone, which has an effigy on it, in St. Mary's chapel.

The chapels in Worcester cathedral have considerable interest. A Lady chapel, at the east end of the building, was demolished by Dean Barlow in 1550. The Deans' chapel, in the south transept, is so called from containing four out of the first five deans, elected after the suppression of the monastery. The chapel in the north transept, where Bishop Parry's monument is, has no name. The chapels of St. Edward and St. George, both of which were furnished with organs, were pulled down by the ruthless Barlow. Jesus chapel is on the north side of the nave. The Charnel House chapel was dedicated to Thomas the Martyr.

But the most historical, and most beautiful of all the Worcester-cathedral chapels is Prince Arthur's chapel, near the high altar. This promising and amiable son of Henry the Seventh died at Ludlow Castle, four months after his marriage with the child-princess, Catherine of Arragon, daughter of Ferdinand. The prince, as we learn from his French tutor, André, though only fourteen, had already studied Homer, Thucydides, Tacitus, Sallust, Ovid, Cicero, and Plautus, and his loss was very grievous to his mother, who, indeed, only survived it a few months. On this monumental chapel at Worcester the king lavished all his treasure; and a beautiful network of stone it is—poor only beside the great stone casket of Westminster, which, only six years after, received the body of Arthur's father. It is, in fact, like a beautiful window-frame, its panels studded with the roses of York and Lancaster, the prince's feather, and the jewelled garter; adorned with statues of bishops and of kings; and crowned at the top by exquisite filigrees, pinnacles, and light-pierced battlements, beautiful as the steel work of Cellini. An altar once stood inside, at the east end, beneath the figure of a dead Christ, at the foot of the tomb where so much hope, joy, and fair promise lay buried. And here, no doubt, the chantry priest offered his daily prayers for the dead prince.

A very interesting discovery about this tomb was made by a shrewd antiquary in 1788. The east end of this shrine had been, from time immemorial, a blank of rude,

shapeless plastering, occupying one-third of the whole façade, and was always pointed out by the vergers with shame and regret, as the result of the brutal fanaticism of Cromwell's troops, after the rout of the Royalist army at Worcester, in 1651. The antiquary before mentioned, examining the plaster, observed that it projected to the level of the remaining canopies, and that the recesses of niches were still visible, and thought it possible, as he told Dean St. John, that some of the images were still there. The dean, as a mere experiment, took out his pen-knife and stuck it in the central niche, when he hit upon a gilt fibula, which fastened the drapery on the image of a dead Christ. On the body were red spots, to indicate the wounds, and the partly-gilt diapers were upheld by angels. The mortar being removed, disclosed five figures—a St. George trampling on the dragon, a St. Nicholas (patron saint of Henry the Sixth), Edward the Fourth, and Henry the Sixth—the latter with an animal, probably a lamb, at his feet. The union of the two houses of York and Lancaster was thus indicated.

The prince's tomb, of marble throughout, is blazoned with the arms of France and England, and the epitaph is written in the old square Gothic letter, which, with the "Orate pro anima," went out of use after the reign of Edward the Sixth. The prince's heart was buried in the chancel of Ludlow church. The silver box (a double one) was found there about 1790, and stolen by the sexton, who was detected and dismissed. There is a portrait of the prince in the north window of Jesus chapel, in Great Malvern priory.

The behaviour of Cromwell's troops in Worcester cathedral, after their great victory, was as bad as could be. They broke off all the beards, noses, and fingers of the bishops' effigies; destroyed two organs; smashed the great painted windows; tore up the church bibles and beautiful service-books; rifled the cathedral library; quartered their horses in the nave; while the dragons put on the copes and surplices, and rode, shouting, about Worcester streets in them, in triumph over the humbled church. Cromwell's officers were afraid to do anything more severe than strike the men with their hats; and, at last, the soldiers were employed in throwing up useless earthworks at a shilling a day, to keep them from pulling down the cathedral altogether.

A victim of this same cruel war lies near the altar. This is William, Duke of Hamilton. His leg was broken by a stray shot in the battle of Worcester, and he died a few days afterwards, Trappam, Cromwell's surgeon, having delayed the amputation too long, in hopes of saving the limb. The duke's dying wish was to be buried at Hamilton, but this request was refused. The duke's brother had been executed some years before.

Under an arch, beneath the east end of Prince Arthur's chapel, is a tomb generally attributed to a Countess of Surrey, though all the known Countesses of Surrey lie in Lewes abbey. The lady has a veil on her head, and on her chin a wimple, and she holds a rosary in her hands. A talbot is couchant at her feet. This tomb was long thought to be that of the Countess of Salisbury, the heroine of the old tradition of the garter dropped at the ball, and King Edward the Third's subsequent foundation of the Order of the Garter. The tomb is really that of Andela, daughter and sole heiress of Griffin de Albo Monasterio or Blanchminster, Lord of Ichtefield, in Salop, and wife of John, son of Griffin de Warren, natural son of William, sixth Earl of Surrey.

Of the same age is the adjoining fine tomb of Bishop Godfrey Giffard (died 1301). This used erroneously to be called St. Wulstan's, and was removed from the north side of the altar. The figure, mitred and in full pontificals, has jewelled shoes, and the head is covered by a Gothic canopy guarded by angels. In quatrefoils, at the sides of this grand episcopal tomb, are saints, martyrs, and apostles; and in the spandrels, the heads of angels. This is the generous bishop who added the little pillars of Purbeck marble to the columns of the choir, the Lady chapel, and the whole series of windows. These pillarets were fastened by rings of gilt copper, and still remain entire, not being, as is too often the case, cut horizontally from the quarry, and then placed perpendicularly, which ensures their splitting.

The monument of Bishop Thornborough (1627) in our Lady's chapel, erected by himself, with its arch supported by four pillars, and its recumbent effigy, has excited much curiosity from the strange inscription, "In uno 2° 3^a 4^a 10—non spirans sper," above the arch on the north side of the tomb. This is one of the huge carved "bedstead monuments," as they have been called, of the cumbrous age of James

the First. This old bishop was an alchemist, and wrote on the philosopher's stone. Some great Rosicrucian secret may perhaps lie in those few figures.

At the back of the high altar is the monument of that clever partisan, Bishop Gauden, who passed off his own book of prayers as the production of Charles the First, who only used them. The figure of the worldly-wise man, in a concave oval, holds a book supposed to be the pseudo Icon Basilike, about which, perhaps on his death-bed, he had the tardy courage to tell the truth.

Nor must we leave this building, whence so many good men's prayers have ascended, without mentioning that mysterious tombstone opposite the lower south entrance of the nave, at the west end of the cold north cloisters. The stone bears only the one touching word "Miserrimus," and many of our poets have penned pathetic elegiac verses upon the unhappy man, whose sorrow and despair could find expression only in that one deep groan. There is, however, to local antiquaries, no mystery at all about the person; he was not a traitor, suicide, atheist, or murderer; nor did he in convent cell, in the peculiar temptations of solitude and celibacy, hatch, with the devil's help, some new and unutterable crime. He was only a poor, neglected, old nonjuring parson, who lived to an extreme old age, living on that bitter bread obtained from the bounty of friends, and climbing those painful stairs that lead to the too self-conscious presence of a rich patron. The Rev. Thomas Morris, a Worcestershire clergyman, refusing to take the oath of supremacy at the accession of William of Orange, was deprived of his preferment, his only means of subsistence, and supported his venerable old age on charity, and on the chance beneficence of a few generous staunch old Jacobites. He died in 1748, aged eighty-eight. As a simple record of the chill evening of his not ill-spent life, it was Mr. Morris's last request to the friend who witnessed him shuffle off this mortal coil, that no ornamental marble should ostentatiously relate who he had been, and that the only word should be that sad but true one, "Miserrimus," pathetic memorial indeed of great misery and great humility.

It is hardly necessary to say that the Worcester bishops were like most other human beings—bad and good. Among the best of them was Reginald Brian, the personal friend of the Black Prince, who wrote him a letter after the victory at Poitiers, which is still

preserved in the Worcester archives. It is full of a true knight's modesty, courtesy, and piety, and is in French, dated October 20, 1356. This bishop died of the plague; and, before him, there was Bishop Horlefon, the wicked counsellor of Queen Isabel, who urged her on to the murder of Edward the Second. He is said to have sent to the governor of Berkeley Castle the well-known ambiguous Latin message: "Edwardum occidere: nolite timere bonum est." The stop after "nolite" changes the whole meaning, as is at once obvious. But, unfortunately for the story, it has been proved that, at the time of the king's cruel murder, the bishop was with the Pope at Avignon. One of the Medici, a nephew of Leo the Tenth, afterwards Clement the Seventh, was Bishop of Worcester for one year (1522). The martyrs Hooper and Latimer were both bishops of Worcester. Bishop Pridaux, a zealous Cavalier, who excommunicated all Cromwell's recruits, died in great poverty; and then came good Bishop Morley, so generous a man, that Charles the Second said, when he gave him the Worcester mitre, "Morley will be never the richer for it." When this bishop was once asked, by a tedious country theologian, "What the Armenians held?" he replied, to the anger of the Laud courtiers, "The best bishoprics and deaneries in England." Stillfleet, that theological giant, was another Worcester bishop of renown; and he was succeeded by good Bishop Lloyd, the great chronologer. Bishop Hugh, who held the crozier fifty-three years, occupied his episcopal throne for a longer time than any other English bishop.

The triennial meeting of the choirs of Worcester, Hereford, and Gloucester was started by gentlemen of Worcester choir in 1720; and the first performance was in Worcester cathedral, 1722. About 1749 the money was formally devoted to the use of the widows and orphans of the clergy in the three dioceses.

LILAC-BLOSSOM.

BECAUSE your face is such a flower-like thing
As might have blossomed in the Song-World's Spring;
See! I have set it midst the purple spires,
Whose fine and dew-fresh fragrance never tires,
As incense of more gorgeous blossoms may.

We wandered, yesterday,
Through your beloved lilac-walk. The sun,
Kissing the shower-spray'd clusters, seemed to run
From purple peak to peak, in leaping fire
Of amethyst and silver. As you sought,
Tiptoe, to pluck the topmost spray, methought,
In that sylph-shape and sunny face upreared,
Incarnate Spring appeared;

The happy-voiced and fairy-footed Spring,
Which is the brightest and the tenderest thing
The poor, brown, burdened earth yet beareth.
To-day the ancient year-worn world so weareth
Her fleeting robe of faint and flower-pied green,
As though grey Winter were not; but, in sooth,
The exhaustless largesse of eternal youth
Fell with the bounteous beams, whose softened sheen,
Gold-bright, tear-tender, lover-warm, will woo
The prisoned Danaë, earth, to fruitfulness.
With budding leaves, and bird-songs, and the peep
Of tinted petals everywhere, the sleep
Of Winter breaks in smiles. Shall love do less
Than burgeon with the lilac-blossoms? Home
From lands of tropic splendour am I come
To greet your pale primroses, which did smile
Welcome from every nooklet of our isle.
But yours was sweetest. Nay, withdraw it not
Because too purely prized! Dear, must I blot
The lilac from your picture? 'Tis to me
Henceforth your emblem, and speaks promise. See
The spray you plucked me! I have limned it there,
Purple against the amber of your hair.

The pictured clusters are your own, but this!—
There is no golden lure, no siren's kiss,
Should woo it from me. Faded? Yes, but, fed
With memories sweet, not even dust is dead,
While hope hath root therein. So let it rest,
A treasured gaze against a loyal breast.
Say, shall your blossom be
A fatal, or a fragrant memory?
So silent! Ah, shy flutterer, fold your wing,
Mime April love who comes to me with Spring

THE HUSHES OF HOLWYCH.

MORE than thirty years have elapsed, since the circumstances hereinafter related aroused a curiosity and interest, by no means limited to the neighbourhood of their occurrence.

The drama of life has shifted rapidly; the principal actors in this little episode have passed away; the scene itself has, with a suddenness rare even in these transforming times, assumed an aspect as dissimilar to its former self as Nature, though much-enduring, could permit. The railway that pierced Holwych to its heart, sweeping away like cobwebs picturesque old cots, and sowing "staring" "villa-residences" in their room, could not absorb its noble uplands, rich with box and fern, nor divert the course of the little river, in whose dark-green pools, ever since Cæsar's war-chariots rumbled through this vale, countless generations of trout had lurked and fattened; but it tunnelled the one and spanned the other, and, rushing on to fresh destruction, left Holwych a thriving town indeed, but with an air of having been on a visit to London, and of having brought back with it something of the gloss, swing, and swagger of metropolitan suburban life.

Such a metamorphosis, combined with the alteration of a few names, will preserve for Holwych a sufficing incognito.

For this which follows is, so to speak, a mystery. And the lovers of such narrations are sometimes—as, indeed, is the privilege of the sex that most delights in them—uncertain, coy, and somewhat difficult entirely to please. Explain your ghost, and he becomes an impostor. Don't, and, even if your veracity pass unchallenged, particulars are demanded as the price of faith, which it might be inexpedient—nay, libellous—to disclose. Perhaps a better reason than the excitement of mere wonder may be found for this description of narrative, in the fact that it has occasionally helped scepticism itself to comprehend that there may be, moving in our very midst, powers, forces, and forms of being, which all man's garnered wisdom can neither weigh nor gauge.

On a bright May morning, in 1835, Colonel Cuthbert Elderton, accompanied by his fair little newly-married wife, quitted London in search of a country home. The world—as in the case of another pair of whom we have not unfrequently heard—was all before them, where to choose; and, having no reason for especial haste, they resolved to examine at least such parts of it, as might be conveniently visited in a fortnight, and a mail-phaeton.

After being all but ensnared by the sombre charms of an old Elizabethan mansion, well clothed with wood—which proved to have been a lunatic asylum—and after declining, with thanks, a brighter-looking residence, whose latest proprietor had pushed his wife into a well (the law, however, in its ever-growing tenderness for murder, refusing to convict him), the colonel and his wife found themselves, at the end of a week, passing the pretty little cluster of cottages, and the one irregular street, which at that time represented Holwyck. With the broad sunny uplands on the one hand, and the wooded and watered valley on the other, the travellers found the scene so attractive, that they determined to halt at the village inn—the Swan—take their lunch, and make some local inquiries.

“Curious!” remarked the colonel, thoughtfully, as they presently stood together at a back window of the inn, commanding a view of the adjacent country.

“What, dear?”

“I have never, to my remembrance, passed through this place before; yet, somehow, it—it seems to know me!”

“Know you! How?” asked his wife, laughing.

“That's more than I can say!” replied the colonel, still with a puzzled look. “I can really hardly explain my meaning—but it's something like a man, making one a hesitating bow, being not quite certain that it isn't your brother.”

“William, your brother, does hunt in this neighbourhood!” said Mrs. Elderton, pertly.

“Ha! that's it, no doubt!” responded her spouse.

“But, Cuthbert, dear,” resumed Mrs. E., “don't they say that people sometimes have previsions—foreshadowings—of things and places yet to come?”

“Often. At this very moment,” replied the colonel, still at the window, “I have a prevision of certain mutton-chops about to become reality, for I can hear the waiter saying so!”

“You always laugh at such things,” said his wife, discontentedly.

“Chops? I indignantly deny it!” responded her hungry spouse, opening the door to listen.

“No. Mysteries.”

“On the contrary, I like them. I solve them, too—sometimes. For example, the sort of prevision you speak of, dear, probably means, nine times in ten, that, having formed a very definite opinion as to something you would like, when, years and years after, it suddenly presents itself, you claim it as an old friend.”

“I am certain, it is a fate. We are to live here,” said Mrs. Elderton, decisively.

At this moment the lunch appeared.

“I almost think we decided too hastily against that pretty Wilcote,” remarked the colonel, as they sat down.

“Cuthbert, dear, that well!” said his little wife, with a shiver.

“My love, I cannot bring myself to believe, that there is anything about the place, calculated to produce in every occupant an irresistible desire to push his wife into a well!”

“Nonsense. But it's no matter. I should never feel perfectly at ease—quite at home, you know—in a house where anything strange had happened.”

“He wasn't convicted, you know,” observed the colonel. “My love, another chop?”

“Now I wonder if they ever used the—well—after?” said Mrs. Elderton, thoughtfully.

"Can't say. Speaking for myself, I own," said the colonel, "I should be disposed to let that well alone.—Waiter, do you chance to know of any vacant residences in this immediate neighbourhood? I should want good stabling and out-offices, and a little land. There is nothing to suit us, I take it."

"Ye—, that is, no, sir," answered the man, with a quick glance at Mrs. Elderton.

"Which do you mean?"

"There's nothing, sir, to— to suit the lady," returned the man, hastily. "Everything in these parts, a'most, is in the occupation of families which had lived there for years. But there's a hagent, Mr. Brodgett, in the next village, as 'll tell you more."

"I am more and more attracted by this place," said the colonel, as they resumed their journey; "apart from the mysterious welcome it has given me. Nothing to be had, eh? No wonder people get attached to— Hallo! There's a vacancy, at least!"

They were passing a large mansion, about a quarter of a mile beyond the village, standing back from the road, and shielded from the latter by a large clump of fine cedars, so as to be only visible above the gates, which opened upon a broad carriage-sweep. It was built of grey stone, was long and low, and had projecting wings and a sheltered portico—altogether presenting a heavy, yet imposing frontage; while, from its elevated position, it was clear that the back windows must command an uninterrupted view of the whole of that beautiful vale, on the wooded slope of which it stood.

The colonel had checked his horses, to make a closer scrutiny. There were remnants of auctioneers' announcements still adhering to the outer walls, and the house itself displayed no signs of occupation. Doors and windows were closed throughout. No thread of smoke, issuing from any of the multitudinous chimneys, betrayed the presence of creatures who must dine; and the property, generally, appeared to be relegated to the sombre guardianship of two colossal figures—half man, half griffin—which flanked the portico.

"That house, now, looks as if it had a story," observed Mrs. Elderton.

"I wish it had another!" replied her husband, with a critical closing of the eyes. "Too heavy, by half, for such an elevation. The grounds, if there be any,

must be magnificent, dear. Shall we give them a minute or two?"

Mrs. Elderton readily assented, and the pair, alighting, walked—as the riddle hath it—round the house, and round the house, and were only deterred from looking in at every window, by the strong iron shutters which hermetically sealed the same.

"By your leave, monsters!" said the colonel, impatiently, as they returned to the portico; and he gave a stout tug to the bell, which emitted one heavy sepulchral note, and then, as if exhausted with the effort, left its handle in his grasp.

Provoked, but not discouraged, the two explorers continued to hover about the enchanted castle, till they discovered a small wicket, opening upon a lane, following which latter they came upon a gate, strong and securely locked, but with open bars, thus affording a view of the garden and grounds in rear of the mansion. These appeared to be even more picturesque and beautiful than the colonel had anticipated. Broad terraces, spacious lawns—some level, some sloping downward toward the river, whose murmur, as it rippled over some invisible weir, could be faintly heard; clumps of maple, planes, and elms; choked-up flower-beds; moss-covered fountains; everywhere a wild warfare between order and confusion, in which the former was being gradually overborne.

On the farther side of the central lawn there commenced an avenue of huge and venerable walnut trees, terminating in an alcove or open summer-house of white stone. Shut out from the house by the intervening trees, this building was so placed as evidently to command, not only the fairest portions of the garden, but the distant country beyond.

"Why, Cuthbert, it is a paradise!" exclaimed Mrs. Elderton, visions of improvement already chasing each other through her active mind.

It was, in truth, a smiling scene. The apple and pear blossoms—these must have been a hobby of some former proprietor—were absolutely dazzling; and the young May leaves, with their soft, fresh tints, completed the natural glory of the scene. The mansion itself, on this side, presented quite a cheerful aspect—the rear face being either painted red, or faced with brick, and abundantly clothed with pear and pomegranate, trained round the windows, which opened to the ground.

"The house is a humbug!" remarked

the colonel. "Who, from its frowning front, would have expected a scene like this?"

"It is just the place I should dote on!" said his wife, enthusiastically. "Vacant, too, dear. What could that man mean, by saying there was nothing in the neighbourhood?"

"The waiter? I can only account for it," replied the colonel, "by the supposition that some friend of his, just married—and ready, under those demoralising circumstances, to indulge his wife's every whim—has an eye upon it already."

"Oh, Cuthbert, does that mean—?"

"It means, at all events, that we'll make some inquiry. But how to get—hallo, you!"

A boy of loafing aspect, coated with moss, as if he had been bird-nesting up some venerable tree, had just appeared from behind a clump of elder-bushes.

"Hallo, you!" returned the boy, like a surly echo.

"Who looks after this place?"

"None but th' ushers, I'low," replied the youth, grinning.

"The ushers? It's a school, then?"

"If 'tis, there's a vacancy," responded the remarkable boy, with a second grin.

"Do these ushers receive people who wish to see the house and grounds?"

"No. They keeps 'n away," said the boy. And, pressing his hands on his bulky pockets, as though conscious of something contraband, he prowled away.

"I'll see the agent to-night, at Hatchford," said the colonel, as they regained the carriage.

The neglected mansion had, in truth, taken the fancy of both. They could talk of nothing else; and, long ere they reached Hatchford, had not only made the property their own, but transformed it into a model of perfection, wherein art and nature strove in vain for mastery.

After dinner, the colonel, with assumed indifference, thought he would stroll down to see the agent, Mr. Brodgett. He did not invite his wife's company, fearing, peradventure, that her undisguised desire to possess the mansion at Holwyeh might somewhat interfere with the bargain he hoped to effect. So he told her she was tired.

Mr. Brodgett, who was still at work in his office, readily forgave the colonel's untimely visit, and furnished all needful information. The "Mansion," as it was called, of Holwyeh was untenanted; had

been so, in effect, for some little time—a couple of years or so—the rent being high, very high (in fact, four hundred a year). Seeing that the land was limited to about a dozen acres, without shooting—for Mr. Brodgett would not allude to the right of shooting dabchicks in the Mumble as sport—the rent was high. But, then, there were reasons: the mansion was historical.

"Historical?"

"Connected with one of the most interesting periods of English history. The Lord Chancellor Jeffreys, by some writers styled the 'bloody,' is said to have resided there."

"The deuce he has!" ejaculated the colonel, thinking of his nervous little wife.

"But," resumed Mr. Brodgett, seeing his mistake, and with an indulgent smile, "this is not based on any recorded facts. Holwyeh, you must know, was formerly the assize town, and possibly his lordship, when judge on this circuit, might have passed a night at the mansion. Then, sir, the singular beauty of the grounds—"

"My good sir, the terms are simply absurd," said the colonel, decisively.

"So I ventured to tell my principal," replied Mr. Brodgett, laughing. "But he is a man who hates small transactions—petty investments, you know. 'Get me four hundred, Brodgett,' he wrote, 'or let the owls have it rent-free.' By-the-by," continued the agent, looking among his papers, "in a letter, received this very day, he intimates a willingness to sell, and that on terms that might suit you better than a lease. Here it is. I am almost ashamed to tell you, but he is eccentric. For the entire property—it is freehold, and the house in good repair—twelve hundred pounds!"

"The price is not exorbitant," owned the colonel, wishing he might draw a cheque on the spot.

"It is worth thrice the money, sir," growled Mr. Brodgett. "But I must obey orders."

An appointment was made for the next morning to inspect the mansion and grounds; and the colonel was turning to leave, when it occurred to him to remark that he understood the place had been recently occupied as a school.

"School!" said Mr. Brodgett, as if amazed.

"And is left in charge of the ushers."

"Ushers? H'm. Ushers? Nothing

of the sort, sir, I assure you," said the agent hastily.

"It is of no consequence. No doubt I was mistaken," replied the colonel. And, hurrying home, reported to his delighted wife the happy issue of his expedition.

It was noon next day when they drove up the grass-grown sweep, and found Mr. Brodgett awaiting them at the open door of the mansion. If the exterior were dark and forbidding, it only formed the greater contrast with the lofty, light, and spacious rooms thrown open to their gratified inspection. Those on the ground-floor, garden side, were en suite—a noble dining-room, drawing-room, billiard, and breakfast-room, terminating in a conservatory, and extending the promenade that might be made through the successive apartments to sixty or seventy yards. All the windows, save those of the dining-room, opened to the ground, giving access to the lawns and terraces already described. There was much massive furniture, apparently but little the worse for time; and as this was to be taken at a valuation, and the house was in all respects ready to be occupied, there was nothing to prevent the Eldertons taking possession, as soon as the legal transfer could be accomplished. And so zealously did Mr. Brodgett bestir himself on their behalf, that a very few days saw them fairly established, and already at work on their projected improvements. To the colonel's enjoyment there was indeed one slight, very slight drawback—the fear that his wife, who had so frankly avowed her dislike of a house in which anything unusual had occurred, should become suddenly apprised of the alleged visit of the "bloody judge"—nay, his possible occupancy of the very chamber they had selected as their own!

What followed it may be advisable to give in the form of the diary, letters, and depositions, in which this strange story was originally recorded.

"It was in May, 1835," (Mrs. Elderton afterwards wrote to a friend in London) "that we took up our abode at pretty Holwych. Our house, the 'Mansion,' though sombre enough outside, was the brightest, cheeriest dwelling heart could desire. The sunshine never seemed to depart from one or other of its gay well-windowed rooms, until it melted into night. Cuthbert and I were in raptures with our purchase—busy as bees, and little anticipating the strange series of

events of which, as you desire it, I will endeavour to give some particulars.

"We had been in possession about a month, during which nothing especial occurred, except that two of our maids gave warning, without—so far as I could perceive—any valid cause, and that Mrs. Ketteridge, the housekeeper, begged to be allowed to change her room in the west wing for one, much inferior, in another part of the house. But never having—as you may suppose—heard of any unaccountable circumstances in connection with the house, these incidents merely caused me a momentary surprise.

"The first thing worth recording occurred at the beginning of July. I was sitting, about mid-day, in an open alcove at the end of the walnut-tree walk, sketching designs for some flower-beds, and, as I well remember, thinking of nothing conducive to uneasiness, when I became suddenly conscious of an indescribable sense of panic, such as you might feel had some frightful scene or object unexpectedly presented itself to your view. Yet I saw nothing, heard nothing, save when some sound from the distant village made itself faintly audible through the stillness of noon. Trying to laugh at the fancy, I bent over my work, when again the panic seized me, and with such force that my pulse bounded—I felt it—and I hardly dared to lift my eyes, lest they should rest upon some horrible thing, that had noiselessly crept upon me! I did, however, look up, and the quiet sunshine and the glowing flowers seemed to rebuke my senseless terror.

"This is too absurd!" I said aloud, and took up my pencil. But once more I seemed to feel the approach of the fear; and, this time, without waiting for it, I jumped from my seat with a sort of cry, took to my heels, and never stopped till I arrived breathless in the house!

"I did not, till succeeding events seemed to give a kind of significance to this adventure, tell it to my husband. I knew I was a nervous little thing, and that he knew it; and feared that the first result would be a course of tonics, which I hate."

Extract from the diary of Colonel Elderton, August 6th, 1835.—"It is, certainly, a singular house! The odd sounds that, after the residence of only a day or two, I began to hear, become more frequent. I have hitherto been able to conceal them from Edith. Yesterday, it became impossible.

"We were sitting in the small study, at half-past nine in the evening. The windows were closed, and the door (leading into the hall) wide open.

"We were both reading, when we distinctly heard slow, measured footsteps cross the hall, coming, as it seemed, from the dining-room. They stopped at the study door—then suddenly appeared to sound more distant. Bolts were drawn and undrawn. My wife, supposing it to be the butler, merely wondered why he stayed in the hall. Finding, however, that all was again silent, I took a candle and examined every room. All was quiet; the windows closed and fastened for the night, and the doors shut. A servant coming to remove tea, we asked who had been moving about the hall, and received for answer that no one, since nine o'clock, had quitted the supper table in the servants' hall. My wife, who was sitting beside me on the sofa, nestled a little closer, but gave no other indication of alarm."

Mrs. Elderton briefly notices this incident in writing to her friend, then passes on to another of a more startling character.

"About two in the morning of the 16th August I was aroused by Cuthbert's starting up in bed, with the exclamation that an attempt was being made upon the house! I entreated him not to go down alone, but to ring first for the butler, who, that night, happened to have the pistols. We at that time slept in the drab room, west wing.

"I had, myself, heard nothing, being sound asleep; but my husband told me that the first noise that surprised him was the violent shaking of the hall door; then of the windows of the room below; after which a voice distinctly said, 'Hush!' the 'sh,' which was much prolonged, being taken up, like a watchword, by another 'hush,' and that by another, as if the house were surrounded. The noises thereupon ceased; and, on examination below, nothing was found to throw any light on the disturbance.

"During that autumn we frequently heard footsteps pass our door at night, sometimes accompanied by the rustling of a silken dress; also a noise below, as though furniture were being moved about. Invariably, if either of us were awake at two or three o'clock, we heard a sound as of a large chest violently thrown down, sometimes once, but more frequently two or three times. We tried in vain to detect the origin of this sound.

"I can scarcely account for the indifference with which we got, at last, to regard these unusual things. But, growing more and more attached to the place, which was becoming a real little paradise under our hands, we were loath indeed to confess the reality of anything to its discredit. It was only when the daytime noises were too loud that we cared to interfere. I have again and again ascribed them to the servants, and gone upstairs to request them to be more quiet; yet I have found the doors all shut, and no one in the rooms, or on the stairs. And yet the noises had made the chandelier vibrate."

Colonel Elderton's diary in September:

"But for my little wife's pluck, I would, on her account, give up this blessed house at once. These mysterious doings annoy and enrage me. I cannot in the least divine their source.

"Finding that the silk-gown rustling was of almost nightly occurrence, I laid a trap last night for the intruder, stretching a bit of black silk right across the passage. I did this without my wife's knowledge, as I knew I should have to keep awake till one or two in the morning, and did not wish her to share my vigil.

"A little before two I was conscious of the approach of the light pattering step—like that of a woman in slippers—which was always first heard. Then came the silken rustle, actually brushing our door. 'Now, my lady, we shall see!' thought I. Getting quietly up, and softly opening the door, with our veilleuse for a lamp, I ascertained that the silken thread, stretched about two feet from the ground, remained untouched!

"Sept. 23rd.—Halsewell (the butler) has given warning. He was my best ally, indefatigable in trying to trace out the cause of these alarms. His reason for leaving seems insufficient. The servants 'chaff' him as to some supposed resemblance between the ghostly footsteps and his own! He admitted, however, that there was something else, which he could never tell me until I had resolved to quit this residence."

Mrs. Elderton to her friend, in continuation:

"In November, after the departure of our butler, Halsewell, who had been very bold and watchful, the noises increased, and, as the servants declared, with a sort of mocking imitation of Halsewell's step, and manner of opening and closing doors, as he moved about the house.

"One day, at half-past one, while I was reading in my dressing-room, having had to remain upstairs for a day or two from illness, I was startled by hearing people moving about in a noisy manner on the small landing below; then loud screams. I rang the bell sharply, then opened the door. Nothing was visible; but I heard a voice say, 'Hush—sh,' three several times, becoming at each repetition more distant, and seeming to float away in a manner which I cannot describe.

"I think it was on the following night that I was awakened by a loud noise, as of a person walking very heavily on the landing below, or in one of the adjacent rooms. I never heard such walking before. It was, so to speak, a giant's walk, and seemed to shake the house from one end to the other. We had had for some days a policeman in the house at night, and, rousing my husband, I begged him to call the man. Before he could leave the room, we heard the sound of a desperate struggle on the stairs, as of two men fighting. Feeling sure that our watchman had at last pounced upon the intruder, Cuthbert dashed off to his assistance. All was still and empty! The policeman, whom Cuthbert met quietly going his rounds, had heard no unusual sound."

As the disturbances at Holwyeh continued steadily to increase, and had become notorious, Colonel Elderton reluctantly resolved to leave; but, before commencing preparations, required from the servants statements of whatever of a remarkable nature they had severally noticed. This produced a mass of testimony, which, making every deduction for nervous terrors and exaggeration, has probably no parallel in the history of "haunted houses" of our time.

It should be mentioned that, during the occupation of the mansion, five servants (the butler, groom, and three maids) had left, on divers pretexts, but really—as it now appeared—from the perpetual annoyance caused by the unaccountable sounds. Groans; sighs; footsteps; a noise (constantly recurring) like a child's rattle; doors struck and handles turned; sounds of tossing about boxes and furniture; carriages driving up the sweep when none were there; rustle of silk; screams; a voice heard to say distinctly, "All is true;" and, finally, a sound of very peculiar character, compounded of a hiss and whiz, which was of almost daily occurrence, and, commencing as described, terminated in the

word "Hush!" distinct, prolonged, and invariably taken up by voices more and more distant, till they became inaudible. One of these statements, supplied by Louisa Scrase, one of the maids, will serve as a specimen:—

"I was four months under-housemaid at Holwyeh. During the whole time I was annoyed by the strangest disturbances. I slept with a fellow-servant above the kitchen. One night, very late, we heard walking and talking below. It lasted an hour. We did not recognise either step or voice. In the morning I spoke to the rest about it, but every one denied having been in the kitchen at all. They did not tell me (I had not been long arrived) that the house was said to be haunted. After that I became accustomed to strange noises, but what happened later determined me to leave.

"I was awakened one night by a cold hand touching my face, and, looking up, saw a very tall figure by my bedside, with an arm extended. I said, 'I will know what it is, or I'll raise the house!' when the figure moved towards the window and vanished. My companion saw it also. Next day we were allowed to change our room, but I was uncomfortable after this, and left."

Recollecting that the butler, Halsewell, who had left, had offered further testimony in the event of the house being given up, Colonel Elderton wrote to him, announcing his intended departure, and received the statement hereinafter given. But, in the meantime, the following strange incident occurred to the colonel himself.

He was writing letters in the breakfast-room one forenoon, when a step came along the passage towards the open door. To save the trouble of turning to see who was about to enter, he looked in the mirror just opposite, and saw a very tall man, in a long yellow coat of some coarse material, and with his hat on, standing in the doorway.

"Well, who are you, my man? What do you want here?" was the natural question.

Without reply the man extended his arm, as pointing to the garden, and, striding across the room, passed through the window (opening to the ground) into the garden.

"A cool hand, whoever you are!" exclaimed the colonel, and, starting up, at once followed the intruder, whom he was on the point of overtaking just as the

latter turned the angle of a shrubbery, and entered the avenue of walnut trees, leading to the alcove before described. Hardly a second had elapsed, yet the walk was vacant. The man had disappeared!

The colonel rubbed his eyes in amazement. Up to that moment no idea of the supernatural had occurred to him. He had heard the man's step, and observed his features in the mirror (they were those of a young and rather well-looking man, with singularly large eyes); and a suspicion, prompted perhaps by the remarkable dress and manner, that he was an escaped lunatic, had crossed the colonel's mind. There was no place of concealment close at hand, save the shrubs, which Colonel Elderton immediately examined; nor had the gardener, whom he found at work near the alcove, been passed by the stranger.

Returning to the house, the colonel found a letter from his ex-butler, in which, after recapitulating a series of disturbances of the kind already mentioned, which he had been inclined to attribute to thieves, until he found that not only was his "silver" perfectly safe, but everything, to the smallest article, untouched, the writer dwelt upon the peculiar whizzing sound that daily—nay, several times in a day—passed directly through the room occupied by the servants. At first bearing some resemblance to the passage of a huge bird, though invisible, it terminated in the distinct pronunciation of the word "Hush!" drawled out, and then taken up by another voice, and another, as a watchword might be passed along a line of sentries. This sound—far more than any other—disturbed the hearers, and it was always some minutes before equanimity was restored, and anyone felt disposed to quit the room—alone.

Even against this, however, the butler declared his courage would have supported him, but for the occurrence he now, at his late master's request, was about to relate.

A little before dusk, one day late in August, he had occasion to pass through a gallery on the basement, leading to the servants' hall, at one end of which stood a mangle, or rather press, for the table-cloths in use. Before this press, as if examining it, stood a very tall man, clad in a long coat of yellow frieze, with a narrow peaked hat, from which long fair hair descended on his shoulders.

At the question, "Hallo! What's that?" from the surprised butler, the man turned round, and came towards him. The butler then saw that the visitor appeared to be of middle age, had very large blue eyes, and what seemed like a narrow red scarf drawn across part of his forehead. Without pausing for an instant the figure marched straight upon his questioner, who mechanically extended his arms. To his unutterable amazement, they met with no resistance, and Halsewell, as if awakening from a dream, found himself standing in the middle of the passage alone!

Notwithstanding this incident, the butler was reluctant to quit his master's service; but feeling that his story, if told, would either be disbelieved, or, if believed, greatly increase the alarms and annoyances to which his mistress was exposed, he finally resolved to leave, as mentioned.

"Hearing mysterious noises; talking of ghosts, and probably dreaming of them, would easily account for the gentleman in frieze admiring my table-cloths!" thought the colonel, as he finished the letter.

But on that very day arrived a very singular corroboration, and from a totally independent source.

"I had occasion, a day or two since," wrote a friend to him, "to mention your name at a dinner-party. 'Is that Elderton, who has taken Holwych Mansion, may I ask?' inquired a stranger who sat near me. 'Yes.' 'I was a former occupant,' the man resumed, 'and I should much like, with your permission, to ask you a question, at another moment, regarding its present condition. I have heard that your friend has excellent taste, and the place was certainly susceptible of improvement.' I assented. Later that evening we had some talk, and the result was the small note I now inclose. If, during your residence at Holwych, nothing of a strange and disturbing nature—incapable of explanation—has occurred, you are earnestly requested to destroy the note, unread; if it has, open and compare a former tenant's experience with your own."

The colonel at once adopted the latter course. The note, passing slightly over miscellaneous causes of disturbance, gave a concise, but clear, description of the perpetual "hushings," and of three several appearances of the man in yellow frieze, with the peaked hat and large blue eyes!

After this but little time was lost in preparation. But it was not without re-

gret that the Eldertons turned their backs on their cheap but uncomfortable paradise.

"So it was not a school, after all," remarked the colonel, as they drove away. "But, as that boy candidly warned us, it has its 'ushers!'"

What became of the "ushers" after the house was pulled down, to make room for railway improvements, I do not know; but it is very certain that the Eldertons were the last tenants who ventured to share Holwych mansion with them.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK III. CHAPTER IX. UNSEALED LIPS.

LYDIA WALTON'S outcry naturally caused the greatest excitement to her three companions.

Clement Burton was the first to find his tongue. "Do you know what you are saying?" he exclaimed, in his clear, matter-of-fact way; "do you know to whom you are alluding? You proclaim yourself the wife of George Heath! Who is he, and what position does he hold?"

"It did not strike me that I might have made a mistake," said Lydia, somewhat abashed; "the name sounded so familiar in my ears, that I spoke out at once, without thinking. The George Heath who is my husband was a cashier in Middleham's Bank, in Philpot-lane!"

"Tell us about him?" said Clement, with a glance at Anne's working features and tightly-clasped hands. "When did your marriage take place?"

"Years ago, when we were both young, and poor, and happy. Happy for a time," added Lydia, bitterly; "it didn't last long; that sort of thing never does, I believe."

"And then you parted from him?" asked Clement.

"Not I," said Lydia. "I would have stuck to him as long as I lived, though he treated me like a dog, and beat me sometimes. I didn't mind that; I would have remained on; the parting was his doing—he left me."

"And what has been your history since?" asked Grace Middleham, who was encircling Anne with her arms.

"Never mind my history since!" cried Lydia, fiercely; "that is nobody's business but my own. This cross-questioning that you are putting me through, shows that I was right in my first idea. George Heath,

whom I claim as my husband, is the man to whom you have referred."

"He is indeed," said Clement, "and you have rendered us the most ample service by your disclosure."

"Have I indeed," said Lydia, with a scornful laugh. "Pray do not imagine I had any such intention. And so that is how my husband has been amusing himself since he deserted me; and patient, long-suffering nurse Gaynor is Mrs. George Heath number two! He doesn't seem to have been very constant to her either, or she would not be in this position."

"He is a wicked, sinful man," cried Grace, indignantly, "bringing misery and shame wherever he goes."

"Very likely," said Lydia, coolly. "I never imagined there was much of the angel about him; but I loved him for all that—loved him with all my heart and soul; and if, after having cast me off, he had married a rich woman who loved him, I would have had my tongue cut out before I would have betrayed him, or said to you half I have."

"He must have had some strange fascination about him, truly," said Clement Burton, more to himself than to his companions.

But Lydia caught the words. "Fascination!" she cried; "I suppose you think so, because he gulled your sweet favourite, Mrs. Gaynor. Fascination I suppose he had, or I should never have been as devoted to him as I was—as I am at this moment. What do the mere name and tie of marriage signify to me! I have knocked about in the world, and am not squeamish in such matters."

"And it was you then who answered the advertisement?" asked Grace.

"Of course it was. I read it in the newspaper that morning when I sent her," pointing to Anne, "out for a walk. I wanted to be alone to think and to act. I imagined the advertisement was addressed to me, and probably by him. I thought he wanted me for some reason, and I would have gone to him at any time and at any sacrifice. He has acted like a brute to me, but there is nothing I would not do for him even now."

All this time Anne Studley stood as one dazed. She knew that the friend from whom she had been so long separated was found at last, and was then standing by her side, encouraging and supporting her. She knew that the difference which had

parted them had vanished; that Grace's eyes had been opened to the self-deception under which she had laboured; and that the reconciliation between them was complete. She knew, above all, from the strange words which had been spoken, that the fearful connection into which she had been so vilely betrayed, and which had so long been her misery and shame, was at an end; that the seal of silence, which had been so cunningly imposed upon her, was taken off her lips; and that she was, henceforth, a free agent to speak and act as she thought best. She knew all this, but the sense of relief was yet wanting; and she remained in a state of wonderment, listening vaguely, and looking on as one in a dream.

She was recalled to herself by the sound of Grace's gentle voice.

"It was from your father, dear, as I told you, that I heard you had become George Heath's wife; but he had neither time nor strength to give me any explanation of the circumstances under which you were married, and I am still wholly ignorant of them."

"Has not your friend, Mr. Burton, just spoken of the fascination which George exercised over all with whom he was brought into contact?" said Lydia Walton, sneeringly. "I do not see much to be wondered at in the fact that this lady—whom I must still call 'Nurse Gaynor,' for want of knowing her real name—was not an exception to the general rule. What astonishes me, I confess, is, that he should have chosen her; for George's fancy, at least when I knew him, did not lie at all in the mild and innocent line."

"I did not become Mr. Heath's wife of my own accord," said Anne, slowly turning towards her friend, and ignoring the last speaker. "The marriage was forced upon me."

"By whom?" asked Grace, tenderly.

"Both by my father and Mr. Heath."

"Ah, yes," said Grace; "I remember your telling me that Captain Studley and Mr. Heath were implicated together in various matters."

"They had been so for years," said Anne; "and it was to save them from the consequences of the crime in which they were both involved, and which I had witnessed, that I consented to this union."

"And thereby sacrificed your happiness, your peace of mind, and the best portion of your life," said Grace, embracing her.

"It was my duty," said Anne, simply,

"and I performed it. I could have done no less."

"What was this crime of which you speak?" asked Clement Burton. "It must have been a serious one, indeed, to call for such expiation."

"I cannot tell you," said Anne, quickly, "here and now. I must not say more; but the time may come when I can speak openly. And," she added, slowly, and solemnly raising her eyes and clasping her hands, "I thank Heaven for the revelation, which has set me free to avenge the innocent blood!"

"To avenge the innocent blood," repeated Grace, who seemed strangely moved.

"Do you talk of vengeance in connection with George Heath?" asked Lydia Walton, bending forward eagerly.

"I reiterate what I said—'to avenge the innocent blood!' There is no bar to my evidence now. I never was George Heath's wife!"

These words, spoken in measured and thrilling tones, had their effect upon all present, but on no one so quickly and so visibly as on Grace Middleham. She, usually so calm and unimpassionable, was obviously overpowered at some suggestion which, as it appeared to her, was contained in Anne's speech; the colour left her cheeks, her lips quivered, her eyes filled with tears, and it was only by the strongest self-control that she suppressed an attack of hysteria. The cause of this was the vague sense, just commencing to dawn upon her, that the revelation of the mystery of her uncle's murder was approaching. The shock which that fearful crime had brought upon her at the time of its commission had, it is true, long since subsided, but she had never been able to think of the dreadful deed without a shrinking horror, and had always lived under the idea that, at some time or other, the perpetrators of it would be discovered. The conviction of Heath's villainy conveyed by Anne's words had instantly suggested this idea; and now that she was, as she imagined, on the brink of the revelation which she had so long and earnestly desired, she felt she would have given much to postpone it until a more fitting opportunity.

It is not to be supposed that Clement Burton had not watched with the deepest interest the strange scene passing before his eyes, and in his clear-headed, common-sense way, made up his mind as to the right course to be pursued. That Lydia

Walton was fiery, impracticable, and impatient, he had known since the commencement of his attendance on her; but in her replies to Anne, and her comments in the conversation carried on before her, she had shown a depth of devotion to her brutal husband, and a power of sneering opposition to those arrayed against him, of neither of which he had imagined her capable. It was obvious that all her forces, such as they were, would be marshalled to the advancement of Heath's cause and the detriment of his enemies; and, therefore, the less she heard of their counsels, the less she was mixed up with any steps which Anne's discovery of her newly-acquired freedom might impel her to take, the better. The one thing to be done was to part these women at once, and with him remained the duty of accomplishing the task. Miss Middleham, too, must be thought of. Clement Burton's ever-watchful eyes had observed her excitement, and the difficulty she had in suppressing more marked signs of it; and he knew that the best chance of keeping her quiet was to give her emotions an outlet, in confidential conversation with her long-lost friend.

"I think," said he, taking advantage of the pause which occurred, "that it will be better this discussion should be deferred. I need scarcely tell you, Mrs. Walton, when I promised to bring to you the unknown 'G. M.' whom you so ardently desired to see, that I was unaware of the identity of Mrs. Gaynor, or of her connection with the story which has been told. I, of course, knew that this lady, Miss Middleham, had inserted the advertisement to which you responded, and, in her interest, was desirous to hear what you had to say. That has now been said with the result we have seen, and whatever explanations are to be made must be made separately."

"I must take Anne away with me, if you please," pleaded Grace, in a low voice; "having once found her, I cannot give her up for a long time; I have so much to hear, and so much to say."

"You shall do so, certainly," said Clement Burton, "if she consents, of which, I suppose, there is little doubt."

"I must not forget my patient, Mr. Burton," said Anne, "gladly though I would go with Grace; but Mrs. Walton is not in a state to be left alone, and my first duty is to her."

"Don't you trouble about me, nurse Gaynor," said Lydia Walton, quickly.

"You are a good sort, and though I spoke out just what came into my mind, and stick to all that I said, I am not one to bear malice for anything that you did, not knowing what you were doing, and under a certain amount of pressure too, as it seems. You go with your friend; I shall get along all right, I daresay."

"And you are a 'good sort' too, as you phrase it," said Clement Burton, smiling, his eyes beaming with pleasure at her words, "though somewhat difficult to manage; but you require attention still, and cannot be left alone just yet, though I think it better that nurse Gaynor—the old name is easier for both of us—should have some relief and rest after the excitement she has gone through. I suggest, therefore, that she should go away with Miss Middleham, as that lady proposes, and I will make arrangements for sending some one to take care of you."

"Just as you please," said Lydia Walton, after a thoughtful pause; "though, after nurse Gaynor, I shall find any one else precious awkward and uncomfortable, I can tell you. I think I might get on well enough by myself; but, of course, you know best."

"Be it so, then," said Clement. "Your carriage is at the door," he added, turning to Grace, "and your friend can go home with you. I will come to the Hermitage later on in the day."

"This meeting has had a very different ending to that I had anticipated," said Grace to Lydia Walton; "but assuredly the interest which Mr. Burton's account of you had inspired in me has not been decreased by all I have heard. I hope I may yet be able to serve you; I shall always be ready to do so."

"I am much obliged to you, I am sure," said Lydia, with strongly marked indifference. "I know you mean to be kind; but I have my own business to attend to, and it is not likely we shall see much of each other. And good-bye to you, nurse Gaynor; I am in your debt for all sorts of attention. I wish I was not; or, rather, I wish you had not come between me and the man whom—whom I am still fool enough to care for. However, that cannot be helped, and so good-bye."

Thus they took their leave, Anne Studley bending over her quondam patient and gently kissing her forehead, a salute which Lydia received with a stare and a shoulder-shrug of wonder, though, at the same time, the tears rose unbidden to her eyes. Mr. Burton accompanied the ladies to their

carriage; when he returned, he found Lydia Walton in a very different state from that in which he had left her; all the ferocity, all the hardness, all the vulgar swagger were gone; in their place was a passionate earnestness such as she had never yet exhibited. "That's all right," she said, pointing to him to seat himself in the chair next to hers. "Now we are alone together, and can talk like people who understand each other, and have seen the world and its ways. Those two girls know nothing of life, and could not be expected to; for, whatever they think, they have had no real experience. Mine has been pretty extensive, and it leads me to think that you won't refuse to do what I am going to ask you."

"And what is that?" he said, quietly.

"To tell me where I can find my husband, George Heath. He is my husband, you know—there is no doubt about that; and the establishment of that fact seems to get our sweet friend Gaynor out of her pretty mess, though one cannot tell exactly what it is. Now you, who take such an interest in her, ought to be grateful to me on that account, and do anything I ask you."

"I will do anything I can to help you," said Clement Burton. "We will not discuss the why and the wherefore, but I will do it."

"Tell me, then, if you know anything of George, and what?" she said, eagerly.

"I have tolerably late information of him," said Mr. Burton. "He became manager at Middleham's Bank, in which you knew him only as cashier. That position he held for some years, but resigned a few months since."

"What made him resign?" she asked.

"It was not like George to throw away a good thing unless he got a better."

"So said the people in the City," remarked Clement; "but he kept his reasons to himself. The only thing known of him was, that he resigned; and, instead of taking any other appointment, or occupying himself on his own account, he took a trip to the Continent, where he remained travelling for some months. Quite recently he returned to England, and is living in retirement."

"Where?" she asked, eagerly. "Do you know the address? Is it far away?"

"It is at a place called Loddonford," he said; "a village on the Thames, about twenty-five miles from London. He lives there in a lone house, known as Pond

"Pond Cottage"—'Loddonford,'" she said, repeating the names. "How do you get there?"

"By the Great Western Railway," he replied. "I will write down the address for you." But, as he did so, he looked up suddenly, and said, "Look here, Lydia, I have done what you asked; but you must promise me that you will not take advantage of my compliance by writing to him, or by taxing your strength in any way."

"What harm would there be in my writing to him?" she said.

"Harm to him, as well as to you. Though this excitement has given to you a seeming flicker of strength, you are physically much below par, and wholly incapable of any real exertion."

"Never mind me; what about him?"

"From all I can hear, he is very seriously ill, aged in appearance, and broken in spirit. He lives entirely alone, not occupying himself in any way, and is said, bodily and mentally, to be a complete wreck—a mere shadow of his former self."

"Is that so?" she said, with a twitching of her nether lip. "Poor fellow! poor fellow!"

"So you understand," said Clement Burton, rising, "that my injunctions are strict upon you not to attempt to exert yourself, even in so much as by writing a letter. Do you consent?"

"Needs must when—you know the rest of the proverb," she said, with a short laugh; "not that you are like that, or like anything but a most kind, good fellow, a real friend to me through all this weary, dreary time. There," she said, making a sudden dash at his fingers with her lips, "I do not think I ever kissed a man's hand before."

"And you should never have done so now if I had seen your intention," he said, laughing and blushing. "Now I will go; I will look in at St. Vitus's on my way, and select the best sister possible to replace Mrs. Gaynor. She shall come on duty before nightfall, and in the meanwhile I will speak to your landlady, to have you looked after until the nurse comes."

"All right," she said, half carelessly, "that will do very well. Mrs. Frost understands me and my ways, and can give me whatever I want."

"Good night, then," said Clement Burton; "I shall look in to-morrow morning, and hope to find you none the worse for the

She watched him out, and even when the door had closed behind him continued looking in the same direction. "Find me better!" she repeated, in a softened voice; "you will not find me at all, my kind friend—you will never look upon me again. That is a sad thought, for you have been a good fellow to me, but all my energies are now required for one whom I love dearer than my life. That Gaynor woman, or whatever her name is, has a tell-tale face, and I read it like a book; she could not hide her plans from me. She talked about vengeance—'avenging the innocent blood,' she said. I do not know what she means by that; but I do know—I felt in an instant—that it was my George who is threatened. He has ill-treated her as he did me, and it is upon him that her vengeance is to fall; but I will thwart her yet. I will go to this address which I got from Mr. Burton, and though George may be ill and broken, he will have strength enough for his own preservation, and will be able to get away before the hue and cry is after him. I wonder whether he will believe me; will appreciate the danger in which he stands and fly at once; or whether he will think it is either a trick or weakness on my part, and refuse to budge? If so, his blood be on his own head; at all events, I must make an effort."

She pulled the bell attached to her chair, and awaited the advent of the landlady. Mrs. Frost was all smiles and giggles. "I was expecting your summons, my dear," she said, "and in two minutes more I should have been up without it; for that delightful doctor of yours—what an elegant young man he is!—looked into the parlour as he passed, and told me nurse Gaynor had gone away, and that, as the other sister might be some time in coming, he would like me to come and sit with you."

"That is right, Mrs. Frost," said Lydia Walton, "you are better company than any of the nurses or sisters—or whatever they call themselves; you are one of the right sort, and so am I, and you and I know how to enjoy ourselves, which those poor creatures do not. Here, take the key, and help yourself to a glass of the old particular."

Mrs. Frost, with another giggle and the nearest attempt at a blush which she could command, took the key proffered

her, and seated herself cozily at the table with the bottle of port and a glass at her side. She was a gossiping kind of woman, who always had a great deal to say, and at first her volubility was increased by the wine which Lydia pressed upon her. Gradually, however, her eyes grew glazed, her voice husky and indistinct, and after a few feeble attempts at maintaining consciousness, she dropped into a stertorous sleep.

There was an epidemic very generally prevalent in London about that time, and the services of hospital nurses were in great request. Mr. Burton had some difficulty in finding a sister to attend to his Bloomsbury patient, and he was not particularly satisfied with the one he at last secured—a dull, heavy woman—but the best he could find. It was late in the evening before this nurse arrived at her new quarters, where the door was opened to her by a slatternly, slipshod girl, the very model of a lodging-house servant.

"I am glad you are come," said this little marchioness, after the nurse had explained her business; "for missus is tight, and I am all alone in the house with her."

"All alone?" repeated the nurse.

"Why, where is Mrs. Walton?"

"Oh, she went away more than two hours ago, in a cab which I fetched for her. I had an awful job in getting her down the stairs and helping her in; but I managed it, somehow. I expected her back before this; she said she should not be gone more than half an hour."

"She will be in soon, then, I suppose?" said the nurse, quietly. "I will go up to her room, if you will show me the way, and wait there."

The next morning, when Clement Burton arrived early, he learned that Mrs. Walton had gone out, and had not come back all night. Rushing hastily upstairs, and throwing open the door, he found the nurse calmly knitting, and waiting the return of her patient with stolid, unruffled composure.

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A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCIS ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER IV.

MINNIE and her father had been having a discussion about David Powell, and the discussion had heated Dr. Bodkin, and spoiled his half hour after dinner, which was wont to be the pleasantest half hour of his day. For Dr. Bodkin did not sit over his wine alone. When there were no guests, his wife and Minnie remained at the black shining board—in those days the table-cloth was removed for the desert, and the polish of the mahogany beneath it was a matter of pride with notable housekeepers like Mrs. Bodkin—and his wife poured out his allowance of port and peeled his walnuts for him, and his daughter chatted with him, and coaxed him, and sometimes contradicted him a little, and there would be no more school until to-morrow morning, and altogether the doctor was accustomed to enjoy himself. But on this occasion the poor gentleman was vexed and disturbed.

"It's a parcel of stuff and nonsense!" said the doctor, jerking his legs under the table.

"That remains to be proved, papa. If the man has anything of consequence to say, I shall soon discover it."

"Anything of consequence to say? Fudge! He is coming begging, perhaps—"

"I don't believe that, papa. Nor, I think, do you in your heart," returned Minnie, with a little smile at one side of her mouth.

But the doctor was too much disturbed

to smile. "Why shouldn't he come begging? It won't be his modesty that will stand in his way, I daresay. Or perhaps he wants to 'convert' you, as these fellows are pleased to call it."

"Nobody seems to be afraid of our wanting to convert him!" said Minnie.

"I don't like the sort of thing. I don't like that people should have it to say that my daughter is honoured with the confidences of a parcel of ranting, canting cobblers."

"But, papa, would it not—I am speaking in sober sincerity, and because I really do want your serious answer—don't you think it would be wrong to be deterred from helping anyone with a kind word or a kind deed, by the fear of people saying this or that?"

"Helping a fiddlestick!" cried Dr. Bodkin magisterially, but incoherently.

Minnie's face fell. It had been paler than usual of late, and she had been suffering and feeble. She never lamented aloud, nor was importunate, nor even showed weakness of temper; but her father, who loved her very tenderly, understood the chill look of disappointment well enough, and it was more than he had strength to bear.

"Of course the man can come and say his say," he added, jerking his legs again impatiently under the sheltering mahogany, "especially as you say he is going away from Whitford directly."

"Yes; but there is no guarantee that he will not come back again. I cannot promise you that, on his behalf."

This unflinching straightforwardness of Minnie's was a fertile source of trouble between her father and herself. It was certainly rather hard on the doctor to be

forced to surrender absolutely, without any of those pleasant pretences which are equivalent to the honours of war. Fortunately—we are limiting ourselves to the doctor's point of view—fortunately at this moment his eye fell on Mrs. Bodkin, who, made exquisitely nervous by any collision between the two great forces that ruled her life, was pushing the decanter of port backwards and forwards on the slippery table, quite unconscious of that mechanical movement.

“Laura, what the ——— mischief are you about? Do you think I want my wine shaken up like a dose of physic?”

This kind of diversion of the vials of the doctor's wrath on to his wife's devoted head, was no uncommon finale to any altercation, in which the reverend gentleman happened not to be getting altogether the best of it.

“I think,” said Mrs. Bodkin, speaking very quickly, and in a low tone, as was her wont, “that very likely Mr. Powell wants to interest Minnie on behalf of Richard Gibbs.”

“And who, pray, if I may venture to inquire, is Richard Gibbs?” asked the doctor, in his most awful grammar-school manner, and with a sarcastic severity in his eye, as he uttered the name ‘Gibbs,’ and looked at Mrs. Bodkin as though he expected her to be very much ashamed of herself.

“Brother of Jane, our maid. He is a groom at Pudcombe Hall, and a Wesleyan. Mr. Powell may want to recommend him, or get him a place.”

“What, is the fellow going to leave Pudcombe Hall, then?”

“Not that I know of, exactly. But it struck me it might be about Richard Gibbs that he wanted to speak, because Gibbs is a Wesleyan, you know.”

“I suppose he wants to meddle and make himself of consequence in some way. Egotism and conceit, rampant conceit, are the mainsprings that move such fellows as this Powell.”

The doctor rose majestically from the table and walked towards the door. There he paused, and turning round said to his wife, “May I request, Laura, that somebody shall take care that I get a cup of hot tea sent to me in the study? I don't think it is much to request that my tea shall not be brought to me in a tepid state!”

Mrs. Bodkin had a great gift of holding her tongue on occasions. She held it now, and the doctor left the room with dignity.

That evening Minnie wrote the following note:—

“MY DEAR MR. DIAMOND,—I shall be able to see Mr. Powell at one o'clock to-morrow. Should that hour not suit his convenience, perhaps he will do me the favour to let me know. — Yours very truly,
M. BODKIN.”

It was the first time she had ever written to Mr. Diamond. The temptation to make her letter longer than was absolutely needful had been resisted. But the consciousness that the temptation had existed, and been overcome, was present to Minnie's mind; and she curled her lip in self-scorn as she thought, “If I wrote him whole pages it would only bore him. He would prefer one line written in Rhoda's school-girl hand, out of Rhoda's school-girl head, to the best wit I could give him; aye, or to the best wit of a wittier woman than I.” Then suddenly she tore the note she had just written across, threw it into the fire, and watched it blaze and smoulder into blackness. “I will ask you to write a line for me, mamma,” she said, when Mrs. Bodkin re-entered the drawing-room, after having sent in the doctor's cup of tea to the study.

“To whom, Minnie?”

“To Mr. Diamond. Please say that I will receive Mr. Powell at one o'clock to-morrow, if that suits him.”

“I daresay it is really about Richard Gibbs,” said Mrs. Bodkin, as she sealed her note.

It was not without a slight feeling of nervousness, that Minnie Bodkin, the next day, heard Jane's announcement, “Mr. Powell is below, Miss. Mistress wished to know if you would see him in your own room?”

Minnie gave orders that the preacher should be shown upstairs, and Jane ushered him in very respectfully. Dr. Bodkin's old man-servant took no pains to hide his disgust at the reception of such a guest; and declared in the servants' hall, that the sight of one of them long-haired, canting Methodys fairly turned his stomach. But Jane, remembering her brother Richard's reformation, was less militant in her orthodoxy, and expressed the opinion that “Mr. Powell was a very good man for all his long hair”—a revolutionary sentiment which was naturally received with incredulity and contempt.

Minnie looked up eagerly when the preacher entered the room, and scanned

him with a rapid glance as she asked him to be seated. "I am a poor feeble creature, Mr. Powell," she said, "who cannot move about at my own will. So you will forgive my bringing you up here, will you not?"

Powell, on his part, looked at the young lady with a steady, searching gaze. Minnie was accustomed to be looked at admiringly, affectionately, deferentially, curiously, pityingly (which she liked least of all)—sometimes spitefully. But she had never been looked at as David Powell was looking at her now; that is, as if his spirit were scrutinising her spirit, altogether regardless of the form which housed it.

"I thank you gratefully for letting me have speech of you," he said; and his voice, as he said it, charmed Minnie's sensitive and fastidious ear.

"Do you know, Mr. Powell, that for some time past I have had the wish to make your acquaintance? But circumstances seemed to make it unlikely that I ever should do so."

"Yes; it was very unlikely, humanly speaking. But I have no doubt that our meeting has been brought about in direct answer to prayer."

Minnie was at a loss what to say. It was almost as startling to hear a man profess such a belief on a week-day, and in a quiet, matter-of-fact tone, as it would have been to find Madame Malibran conducting all her conversation in recitative, or to hear Mr. Dockett begin his sentences with a "whereas."

"You wish to speak to me on behalf of some one, Mr. Diamond tells me," said Minnie, after a slight hesitation.

"Yes; you have been kind and gracious to a young girl beneath you in worldly station, named Rhoda Maxfield."

"Rhoda! Is it of her you wish to speak?" cried Minnie, in great surprise. She felt a strange sick pang of jealousy. It was for Rhoda's sake, then, that Mr. Diamond had begged her to receive Powell!

"You are kindly disposed towards the maiden?" said Powell, anxiously; for Minnie's change of countenance had not escaped him. For her life, Minnie could not cordially have said "yes" at that moment.

"I—Rhoda is a very good girl, I believe; what would you have me do for her?"

"I would have you dissuade her from resting her hopes—I speak now merely

of earthly hopes and earthly prudence—on the attachment of one who is unstable, vain, and worldly-minded."

"What do you mean? I—I do not understand," stammered Minnie, with fast beating heart.

"May I speak to you in full confidence? If you tell me I may do so, I shall trust you utterly."

"What is this matter to me? Why do you come to me about it?"

"Because I have been told by those whose word I believe, that you are gifted with a clear and strong judgment, as well as with all qualities that win love."

"You are mistaken. I am not gifted with the qualities that win love," said Minnie, bitterly. Then she asked, abruptly, "Did Mr. Diamond advise you to speak to me about Rhoda?"

"Nay; it was I who had recourse to his intercession to get speech of you."

"But he knows your errand?"

"In part he knows it. But I was not free to say to him all that I would fain say to you."

Minnie's face had a hard set look. "Well," she said, after a short silence, "I cannot refuse to hear you. But I warn you that I do not believe I can do any good in the matter."

"That will be overruled as the Lord wills."

Then David Powell proceeded to set forth his fears and anxieties about Rhoda, more fully and clearly than he had done to Diamond. He declared his conviction that the girl was deceived by false hopes, and was fretting and pining because every now and then misgivings assailed her which she could not confess to any one, and because that her conscience was uneasy. "The maiden is very guileless and tender-natured," said Powell, softly.

"Don't you think you a little exaggerate her tenderness, Mr. Powell? Persons capable of strong feelings themselves, are apt to attribute all sorts of sentiments to very wooden-hearted creatures."

He looked at her earnestly, and shook his head.

"Rhoda always seems to me to be rather phlegmatic; very gentle and pretty, of course. But, do you know, I should not be afraid of her breaking her heart."

There was a hard tone in Minnie's voice, and a hard expression about her mouth, which hurt and disappointed the preacher. He had expected some warmth of sympathy, some word of affection for Rhoda.

"You do not know her," he said, sadly.

"And then, Mr. Powell, Algernon Errington—you know, I suppose, that Mr. Errington is a great friend of mine?"

"I would not willingly say ought to offend you, nor to offend against Christian courtesy. But there are higher duties—more solemn promptings—that must not be resisted."

"Oh, I am not offended. But, let me ask you, what right have we to assume that Mr. Errington has ever deceived Rhoda, or has ever thought of her otherwise than as the friend and playmate of his childhood?"

"I am convinced that he has led her to believe he means, some day, to marry her. I cannot resist that conviction."

"Marry her! Why, Mr. Powell, the thing is absurd on the face of it. A boy of nineteen, and in Algernon's position!—why, any person of common sense would understand that such an idea could not be looked at seriously."

Powell made himself some silent reproaches for his want of faith. This lady might not be soft and sweet; but she had evidently the clear judgment which he sought for to help Rhoda. And yet he had been discouraged, and had almost distrustd his "leading," because of a little coldness of manner. He answered Minnie eagerly:

"It is true! I well know that what you say is true; but will you tell Rhoda this? Will you plentfully declare to her the thing as it is?"

"Rhoda has her father to advise her, if she needs advice."

"Nay; her father is no adviser for her in this matter. He is an ignorant man. He does not understand the ways of the world—at least, not of that world in which the Erringtons hold a place—and he is prejudiced and stiff-necked."

There was a short silence. Then Minnie said:

"I do not see how I can interfere. I should, in fact, be taking an unjustifiable liberty, and—Mr. Errington is going away. They will both forget all about this boy-and-girl nonsense, if people have the wisdom to let it alone."

"Rhoda will not forget; she will brood silently over her secret feelings, and her thoughts will be diverted from higher things. She will fall away into outer darkness. Oh think, a word in season, how good it is! Consider that you may save a perishing soul by speaking that

word. I have prayed that I might leave behind me in this place the assurance that this lamb should not be utterly lost out of the fold."

Powell had risen to his feet in his excitement, and walked away from Minnie towards the window, with his head bent, and his hands clasping his forehead. Minnie felt something like repulsion, and the sort of shame which an honest and proud nature feels at any suspicion of histrionism in one whom it has hitherto respected. Surely the man was exaggerating—consciously exaggerating—his feeling on this matter! But, then, Powell turned, and came back towards her; and she saw his face clearly in the full sunlight, and instantly her suspicion vanished. That face was wan and haggard with suffering, and there was a strange brilliancy in the eyes, almost like the brightness of latent tears. The tears sprang sympathetically to her own eyes as she looked at him. It was impossible to resist the pathos of that face. There was a strange appealing expression in it, as of a suffering of which the sufferer was only half-conscious, that went straight to Minnie's heart.

"Mr. Powell, I am so truly sorry to see you distressed! I wish—I really do wish—that I could do anything for you!"

"For me! Oh not for me! But stretch out your hands to this poor maiden, and say words of counsel to her, and of kindness, as one woman may say them to another. I have borne the burden of that young soul; I have had it laid upon me to wrestle strongly for her in prayer; I have—have been assailed with manifold troubles and temptations concerning her. But I am clear now. I speak with a single mind, and as desiring her higher welfare from the depths of my heart."

"Good Heaven!" thought Minnie, "what a tragic thing it is to see men pouring out all the treasures of their love on a thing like this girl!" For something in Powell's face and voice had pierced her mind with a lightning-swift conviction, that he loved Rhoda Maxfield. Minnie would have died rather than utter such a speech aloud. The ridicule which, among sophisticated persons, slinks on the heels of all strongly expressed emotion, was too present to her mind, and too disgusting to her pride, for her to have risked the utterance of such a speech even to her mother. But there in her mind the words were, "Good Heaven! how tragic it is!" And she acknowledged to herself, at the same time, that Powell's

lack of sophistication and intensity of fervour raised him into a sphere wherein ridicule had no place.

"I will do what I can, Mr. Powell," said Minnie, after a pause, looking with unspeakable pity at his thin, pallid face. "But do not trust too much to my influence."

"I do trust to it, because it will be strengthened and supported by my prayers."

Then, when he had said farewell, and was about to go away, she was suddenly moved by a mixture of feelings, and, as it were, almost against her will, to say to him, "How good it would be for you to see Rhoda as she is! A shallow, sweet, poor little nature, as incapable of appreciating your love as a wren or a ladybird! I like Rhoda, and I am a poor, shallow creature in many ways myself. But I do recognise things higher than myself when I see them."

David Powell's face grew crimson with a hot, dark flush, and for an instant he grasped the back of a chair near him, like a man who reels in drunkenness. Then he said, "You are very keen to see the truth. You have seen it. Rhoda is dear to me, as no woman ever has been dear, or will be again. Once I thought this love was a snare to me. Now—unless in moments of temptation by the enemy—I know that it is an instrument in God's hands. It has given me strength to pray, courage to ask you for your help."

"But you suffer!" cried Minnie, looking at him with knit, earnest brows. "Why should you suffer for one who does not care for you? It is not just."

"Who dare ask for justice? I have received mercy—abundant, overflowing mercy—and shall I not render mercy in my poor degree? But in truth," he added, in a low voice, and with a smile which Minnie thought the most strangely sweet she had ever seen—"in truth, I cannot claim that merit. I can no more help desiring to do good to Rhoda than I can help drawing my breath. Of others I may say, 'It is my duty to assist this man, to counsel that one, to endure some hard treatment for the sake of this other, in order that I may lead them to Christ.' But with Rhoda there is no sense of sacrifice. I believe that the Lord has appointed me to bring her to Him. If my feet be cut and bleeding by the way, I cannot heed it."

"Would you be glad to see Rhoda married to Algernon Errington if he were to become a religious, earnest man—

such a man as your conscientious judgment must approve?" asked Minnie.

And the minute the words had passed her lips she repented having said them; they seemed so needlessly cruel; such a ruthless probing of a tender, quivering soul. "It was as if the devil had put the words into my mouth," said she afterwards to herself.

But Powell answered very quietly, "I have thought of that often. But I ask myself such questions no longer. I hold my Father's hand even as a little child, and whither that hand leads me I shall go safely. It is not for me to tempt the wrath of the Lord by vain surmises and putting a case. 'Yea, though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.'"

"You will come back to Whitford, will you not?" asked Minnie.

"If I may. But I know not when. That is not given me to decide. At present, I feel my conscience in bonds of obedience to the Society."

"Perhaps we may never meet again in this world!" Minnie, as she said the words, was conscious of a strong fellow-feeling for this man, so far removed from her in external circumstances.

"May God bless you!" he said, almost in a whisper.

Minnie held out her hand. As he took it lightly in his own for an instant, he pointed upward with the other hand, and then turned and went away in silence.

When Dr. Bodkin said a word or two to Minnie that evening, as to her interview with the "ranting, canting cobbler," she was very reticent and brief in her answers. But on her father shrugging his shoulders disparagingly and observing, "It is a good thing that this firebrand is taking his departure from Whitford. I've been hearing all sorts of things about him to-day. It seems the fellow even set the Methodists by the ears among themselves," she exclaimed hotly, "I do declare most solemnly that this man gives me a more vivid idea of a saint upon earth—a stumbling, striving, suffering saint—than anything I ever saw or read."

EARLY EASTERN TRAVELLERS.

BARENTZ AND HEEMSKERCK.

EARLY Arctic expeditions differed widely from those undertaken at the present day. The pursuit of science, for its own sake, was unknown to the great pioneers of progress. Piracy was the object of the ear-

liest navigators; and these were succeeded by active generations of traders, who, having mapped out the useful parts of the globe, left its ends to the enthusiasm of the learned and adventurous. Three hundred years ago men were in a state of transition, developing or degenerating,—as the reader pleases—into men of business. Folks of the Tudor period were, in fact, keenly practical, although the lapse of time has invested them with a halo of romance. Drake was an eminently practical man, and loved to “sing the King of Spain’s beard,” and, still more, to bring home his tall ships deep-laden with doubloons and pieces of eight. Admiral John Hawkins, too, was an eminent merchant in the “blackbird” trade. Martin Frobisher sought El Dorado in the north, as Raleigh had sought it in the south; while the possibility of making a quick voyage to China and the Indies through Behring’s Strait, by sailing westward round the north coast of America, or eastward round the north of Russia and Siberia, attracted many adventurous spirits. Enthusiasts entertained little doubt of finding a good easterly route, practicable during the proper season of the year; and it was only when this course was discovered to be hopeless, that the tide of exploration set almost entirely in a westerly direction. For a long while, however, the eastern and western passages were tried almost alternately; a disastrous expedition in one direction generally driving discoverers to the opposite route. It seems tolerably certain that Sebastian Cabot, whose discoveries with his father in North and South America give him a rank as a voyager second only to that of Columbus, entertained no very sanguine expectations of finding a north-west passage, for, at the mature age of seventy-three, he recommended an attempt to find a passage eastward to Cathay. This worthy old Venetian gentleman was, by a writ of King Edward the Sixth, issued in 1549, appointed grand pilot of England, with a salary for life of one hundred and sixty-six pounds thirteen shillings and fourpence, “in consideration of the good and acceptable service done and to be done by him.” He was also governor of a society of merchants associated for the purpose of making discoveries of unknown lands, dominions, islands, and other places. By the advice of Cabot, this society sent out, in 1553, three ships under the com-

mand of Sir Hugh Willoughby, Knight. The expedition met with very severe weather, the little fleet was scattered by storms, and the admiral successively lost sight of the *Edward Bonaventura*, commanded by Captain Richard Chancellor, and the *Bona Confidentia*, Captain Durforth. Authorities differ, as to whether the land, descried in the far north by this expedition, was Spitzbergen or Nova Zembla. The balance of probability appears to be in favour of the latter islands being “Willoughby’s Land.” Turning again westward, Sir Hugh endeavoured to winter in a harbour in Russian Lapland; where, being badly provided with wood for fuel, and, perhaps, being attacked by scurvy, the whole expedition perished, though it appeared, by the papers they left behind them, that they were still alive in the month of January, 1554. This expedition, although a failure in one respect, was a great success in another. Captain Durforth, it is true, returned alone to England; but Richard Chancellor found the harbour of St. Nicholas, at the mouth of the Dwina, and went on to Moscow to the Czar Ivan Wassiliwitsch, by whom he was most graciously received. The Czar, delighted at the arrival of merchants, who promised to emancipate him from his dependence on the traders from the Hanse Towns, made them ample offers, granted them great privileges, and treated them with much kindness. Chancellor had a quick eye to business, sold his cargo, and taking in other commodities in lieu of those he had disposed of, returned in the year 1554 with a letter from the Czar Ivan to the sovereign of England, where Queen Mary had succeeded her brother Edward. Her Majesty was pleased to grant to the Company of Merchant Adventurers for Discoveries in the North, North-East, and North-West, a charter with many privileges under their governor, Sebastian Cabot. Queen Mary and her consort Philip wrote likewise a letter to the Czar, and empowered Richard Chancellor and two others to treat with his highness touching commercial privileges and immunities. The voyage and mission were completely successful. The English company reaped a rich profit from their enterprise, as, although science did not advance, commerce did, and the profits of the Muscovy trade proved a substantial consolation for the lost route to Cathay. Nevertheless, the company had not quite given up the

latter project, and, after the death of Chancellor in 1556, sent out the pinnace Search-trifft, specially destined for discovery, and commanded by Stephen Burrow. Passing round the North Cape, Burrow arrived at Kola, and worked his way eastward by the island of Kolgowostrow, Waigatz Island, and Nova Zembla. It being late in the season, Burrow declined to push on to the Gulf of Obi, and, having wintered in Russia, returned to England, where he was made, in 1557, comptroller of the royal navy. After these failures the north-west passage was tried by Frobisher, but nothing valuable was effected, and the company of Russian merchants became desirous of trying once more to get to Cathay by the north-east. In 1580 they despatched two ships under the command of Arthur Pet and Thomas Jackman, who sailed from Harwich on the 30th May, and, after working through great quantities of ice, arrived at Waigatz, and passed through the straits. Finding it impossible, however, to make way through the ice, they were compelled to return.

Just as the English were beginning to wax weary of the north-east passage, a newborn nation embraced the project with ardour. Emerging independent, sound, strong, and rich from their long death-grapple with the Spaniard, the Dutch determined, in 1594, to send out an Arctic expedition. Believing that Europe and Asia could as easily be sailed round by the north as South America had been by Magellan, the government of the United Provinces equipped three vessels—the Swan, commanded by Jean Cornelis Ryp; the Mercury, by Ysbrandtz; and the Messenger, by Willem Barentz, of Terschilling, an island off the north coast of Friesland. The two first-named vessels doubled the North Cape, and penetrated as far eastward as Waigatz—described by them as an island covered with verdure and flowers. Pushing onward through the straits for some forty leagues, they returned, fully persuaded that they had found the beginning of the passage. Barentz, instead of passing south of Nova Zembla, kept a north-east course, and reached 77° 25' north latitude towards the northerly point of Nova Zembla, named by him Is-Hoek, or Icy Cape. Checked by the ice, he returned to Holland in September, 1594. The illusion that a practicable passage had been found, was shared by Cornelis and Ysbrandtz, and at their request the States-General under-

took a second enterprise. Seven ships were equipped under the command of Jacques van Heemskerck, a Dutch gentleman of good family; and Willem Barentz was appointed chief pilot. This expedition was less successful than the preceding one. It was found impossible to pass beyond the seventy-first parallel, and the fleet returned to Holland sorely discouraged. The States-General refused to vote any more public money, and confined their future patronage to the promise of a reward to the possible discoverer of the passage. The town council of Amsterdam, however, came to the rescue, and equipped two ships, giving the command of one to Heemskerck, of the other to Cornelis, and the direction of the expedition to Willem Barentz. The events of this remarkable voyage were admirably chronicled by Gerard de Veer, an eye-witness.

On the 10th May, 1596, the two vessels left Amsterdam. Sailing northward, on the 1st of June they had no night, and witnessed a wonderful figure in the Heavens. "The sun being almost south-south-east, on each side of it appeared another sun, and two rainbows passing through the three suns, and afterwards two more rainbows." This phenomenon, which, by-the-way, is not excessively rare, appears to have been taken philosophically by the Dutch, who could not quite agree as to the proper course. Barentz wished to sail eastward, thinking the ships far west of their proper course; but Cornelis's pilot, fearing to get into the Gulf of Waigatz, proved obstinate. Ultimately, concessions were made, and a north-north-east course was kept, instead of north-east or due east. The ships were now clear out of their course, but this diversion led to an important discovery. From the 5th to the 9th of June they were much incumbered by icebergs, but on the latter day found Bear Island, also called Cherry Island on old maps. After effecting a landing, Willem Barentz again vehemently insisted that they were too far to the west, which was true, and a serious altercation ensued. Here they killed a white bear, after a tremendous fight, and named the place Beeren-Eiland in consequence. This inhospitable speck of earth was, in 1603, rediscovered by Stephen Bennet, who named it Cherry Island, in honour of his patron, Alderman Cherry. No doubt, however, now exists that the honours of discovery belong to the Dutch. Keeping now a more easterly course, they, on the

19th of June, discovered the coast of Spitzbergen, and then bending westward penetrated to the eightieth degree of north latitude. Thinking this land to be a portion of Greenland, the voyagers were amazed to find grass and leaves growing so far north. "This must be so," saith Gerard de Veer, "as reindeer and other animals requiring vegetable food live there; while in Nova Zembla, at seventy degrees north latitude, no vegetable-eating creature is found." The same phenomenon was noticed by the Austro-Hungarian expedition, under Payer and Weyprecht. In the extreme north country, baptised by them Franz Josef Land, they were astonished at the plentitude of animal life, and especially at the myriads of birds. Evidence collected both on the east and west side appears to point to the fact that, about the latitude of the magnetic pole, is the belt of greatest cold, and that north of this the effect of the ceaseless sunshine of an Arctic summer is more distinctly felt. Gerard de Veer was evidently much pleased at finding the solution of the vexed question of barnacle geese. At Spitzbergen he found millions of them hatching their young, the absence of whom from lower latitudes had given rise to a curious fable.

"Some authors," saith De Veer, "have not feared to write that they grow in Scotland, on the branches of trees overhanging the waters, and that those fruits which fall on dry land come to nought, but those which fall into the water become goslings. Now the contrary is demonstrated; but it is not marvellous that until now no man should have known where they lay their eggs, seeing that nobody, so far as I know, has ever yet been so far north as the eightieth degree. It was not known that there was land in these latitudes, and still less that the barnacle geese (rotgansen) hatched their young there."

After circumnavigating nearly the whole of the Spitzbergen Peninsula, Bear Island was again reached. Here the two ships parted company, Jean Ryp going again northward; Barentz, with his companions, south-east, towards Nova Zembla. On the 17th July they made Lombsbay, and then bent northward along the coast, fighting hard against icebergs and bears. The animals appear to have been nowise afraid of them; and, judging from the long and obstinate combats which occurred, were quite justified

in their confidence. The men were ill-provided with firearms, and were clearly poor hands at bear-hunting. On some occasions it took them two hours to finish off a bear with halberds and axes. Rather recklessly they threw their bear-meat away, and thus lost a valuable article of food. On the 15th August they arrived at Orange Island, after having doubled Icy Cape, and were there beset with ice, and in great danger of losing the ship. By dint of hard work, however, they reached the island; but the shouting of the mariners awoke a huge bear, who prepared to attack them. They shot him through the body with an arquebuse, after which he took to the water. They now followed him with axes and struck at him in the water, till, after incredible labour, he was demolished. After killing this bear, who took an unconscionable time in dying, they had some terrible buffeting with huge hummocks and icebergs, and some singularly awkward ice-fields. However, they held on bravely round the northern shore of Nova Zembla, doubled Cape Desire, Cape Head, and Cape Flushing. Arrived at Icy Bay, on the eastern shore of the island, they were already feeling their hope of accomplishing their task revive within them, when a terrible storm arose, and driving over the ice from the northward, shut in their ship. One of the boats and the rudder were broken, and although the gallant Hollanders made a desperate fight for their ship, it was all in vain. The ice piled up tier upon tier and lifted the ship out of the water, and in the first days of September they were visited by a terrible snowstorm. When its violence had abated, the hardy mariners began to remove provisions and tools from the vessel, and made up their minds to winter where they were. In these days of deadly firearms, it is curious to read that these brave and patient men determined to build them a house or hut, to be better protected from the cold and "from ferocious beasts." In spite of their prudence, it is more than probable that they would, like Sir Hugh Willoughby's crew, have perished from the cold, had they not been fortunate enough to find an abundant supply of driftwood, not only for house-building but for fuel. One Sunday morning a great kettle full of meat was cooking at a short distance from the ship, when three white bears approached, and the Hollanders stood upon the defensive. One of the hungry visitors popped his head into

the kettle and seized a piece of meat, but was immediately shot through the head, and fell, somewhat to the astonishment of the arquebusier, stone dead. "Now we saw a rare spectacle: the other bear stopped, looked fixedly at his companion, as if astonished that he should remain so still, and then went up and smelt him, but finding him really dead, walked off. Meanwhile we, being armed with halberds and arquebuses, kept a sharp look-out lest he should return. Sure enough he came back, and we stood on the defensive. The bear now stood up on his hind paws to attack us, but while he stood thus one of us discharged his arquebuse and hit him through the paunch, whereat he dropped upon all-fours and fled with a loud cry. We opened the bear who was dead, and stuck him up on his two hind paws, and let him freeze in that posture, with the intention of taking him with us to Holland if the ship should be delivered from the ice. Having arranged our bear, we set to work to make a sledge to draw the wood for our house." At the heavy task of collecting and hauling wood, often through a blinding snowstorm, the gallant Dutchmen persevered through the month of September, their hearts being sad within them at the prospect of cold and darkness. The weather was already so cold and tempestuous, that they were often compelled to shut themselves up in the ship, for protection against the rigorous climate, and feared to go out unless in force, on account of the bears, who kept a sharp look-out for stragglers. By the 12th October the house was finished, except the chimney, and the men moved gradually from the ship, taking with them good store of bread, wine, and Dantiac spruce. The first barrel of this latter excellent restorative was ruined by being frozen. A few days after, the ship being very nearly clear of men, the bears proceeded to visit it, to the great terror of the three persons left behind. The two men scampered off and the boy disappeared up the rigging. However, the animals yielded to the usual argument of a musket-ball, and made off. Making the best of what daylight remained to them, the little band toiled diligently at removing all sorts of furniture, food, and necessaries to the house, well knowing that, when the long night of an Arctic winter should come upon them, it would no longer be possible to work with any effect, and that the problem of existence

resolved itself into getting safely over that terrible period.

Towards the end of October they were safely housed, and on the 27th killed a white fox "and roasted him, and found the taste of him to be like unto that of a rabbit." Early in November the sun no longer appeared above the horizon, and as the sun declined daily the white foxes increased in number, to the delight of the frozen-up voyagers, who hunted and trapped them with great industry. At last the sun disappeared altogether. To celebrate the occasion, the crew, having now established themselves in their house, had a bath all round, an operation which, says Gerard de Veer, "restored our health considerably." Their clock having stopped, it was now impossible to distinguish day from night, but no despair entered into their hearts during this dark period of storms, "for we had always trust in God, that he would give us some means of returning to our country." Shut up in their cabin, destitute of furs, finding it almost impossible to get warm, and without any means of amusement, the poor fellows had nothing to do but listen to the roaring of the tempest. Yet now and then there was a little excitement. "On the 20th November we washed our shirts, but it was so cold that, having been washed and wrung out, they froze out of the hot water so stiff that, when they were placed before a great fire, the side towards the fire thawed a little while the other side remained stiff and frozen, so that they could not be separated without tearing them; and we were obliged to put them back into almost boiling water." In the few fine intervals between the snowstorms, fox-traps were built and many animals captured, their bodies eaten, and their skins converted into comfortable caps; but during the heavy tempests, the condition of the seventeen unfortunate Dutchmen was almost unbearable. The smoke was driven back down the chimney into the house, and the poor fellows had simply a choice of being smothered or frozen to death; the cold, indeed, was so severe, that they were compelled to roll themselves up in their bunks with heated stones, to keep their feet warm. At Christmas-tide the cold was intense, and the foxes ran about on the top of the house, which was now nearly buried in snow. In spite of every effort to warm the cabin it froze hard indoors, but the hardy Hollanders consoled themselves with the thought that the sun was now

coming back to them. Utter misery had by no means deprived them of their natural cheerfulness, for on Twelfth Night they begged that they might be allowed to make merry together in the midst of their wretchedness. They drew their tiny rations of wine in advance and elected a king. "Having, moreover, two pounds of flour, we made pancakes with oil, and every man took a white biscuit, dipped it in the wine and ate it. And it seemed to us that we were in our own country, among our families and friends, and we rejoiced as if it was a mighty banquet, so good was the taste thereof. And we drew lots to make a king, and our master gunner was made king of Nova Zembla, a country inclosed between two seas and at least two hundred leagues long." Great was the rejoicing when the sun returned, bringing not only light, but hope of liberty. But the patience of the prisoners was severely tried. Intense cold prevailed till May, when the sight of some open water produced tremendous excitement, and many wished to start at once. Wiser counsels prevailed; the boats were dug out, thoroughly repaired, and carefully stored, and on the 14th of June the weary but patient men pushed off on their return voyage, leaving the ship hopelessly embedded in the ice. Partly by water, and partly by dragging the boats over packs of ice, they continued their journey, but toil and exposure now began to tell their tale. On the 20th June, 1597, as he was looking at the little map of the voyage—laid down by Gerard de Veer—the chief pilot, Willem Barentz, on being told that another of the crew was very ill, said: "It seems to me that my life will not last much longer;" and, turning round, called to Gerard to give him drink. After he had drunk he became so faint that his eyes turned in his head, and he died, so suddenly that there was no time to call the captain. Thus, like a soldier on the field of battle, died Willem Barentz, amid those Arctic wastes which he had been the first to penetrate, and which will preserve his name for ever.

After innumerable difficulties and dangers, the survivors reached Kola, in Lapland, towards the end of August, and were brought home in a ship commanded by the very Cornelis Ryp who had sailed with them the year before. On the 26th of October they entered the Meuse, and on the 1st of November arrived at Amsterdam.

"We had the same clothing that we wore in Nova Zembla, and, wearing every man a white fox-skin cap, we went to the house of Peter Haaselaer, who had been one of the curators of the town of Amsterdam, charged with presiding over the equipment of our two vessels. We arrived there in the midst of general astonishment, for we had long passed for dead, and the news of our arrival had spread through the city, reaching at last the house of the prince, who was then seated at table with the chancellor and ambassador of the illustrious king of Denmark, Norway, the Goths and the Vandals. Having been brought before them, we recounted to the ambassador and the burgomasters the history of our voyage. Then each of us retired into his own house, except those who were not of the city, who lodged in an hostelry till we received our pay." Of the seventeen men, but twelve returned. For the captain, Heemskerck, a brilliant career was reserved. He made many expeditions to the Indian seas. In 1601 he fought and took a large Portuguese carack, richly appointed and carrying seven hundred men, and brought her to Holland. In 1607 he sailed as admiral of a fleet of twenty-six ships of war, sent against the Spaniards by the States-General. On the 25th April he attacked the enemy under the guns of Gibraltar, although they were superior in numbers and supported by the fortress. In the middle of the fight his leg was carried off by a cannon-ball, but his wound did not prevent him from encouraging his men and keeping hold of his sword till he died. The Dutch achieved a complete victory.

While Gibraltar has changed hands more than once, the domain of their High Mightinesses the States-General has been split into two little kingdoms, and the deeds of Admiral Heemskerck have been obliterated by those of greater sea-captains than he, but the house built by Barentz, Heemskerck, and their followers, still remains on the bleak shores of Nova Zembla—a sign that what those doughty Dutchmen did, they did in solid, durable fashion. From 1597, when Barentz set off from the spot where he wintered, no vessel visited it till the year 1871. His famous expedition round the northern extremity of Nova Zembla stood alone, and his house remained unvisited for more than two hundred and seventy years. But on the 17th May, 1871, Elling Karlsen, a Norwegian captain, who had been long engaged in

the North Sea trade, sailed from Hammerfest in a sloop of sixty tons, called *The Solid*. He reached the Ice Haven of Barentz on the 7th of September, and on the 9th saw a house standing at the head of the bay. He found it to be thirty-two feet long by twenty broad, composed of planks one and a half inch thick, and from fourteen to sixteen inches broad. The materials had evidently belonged to a ship, and amongst them were several oak beams.

Round the house were standing several large puncheons, and there were also heaps of reindeer, seal, bear, and walrus bones. The interior was precisely as represented in the drawing in Gerard de Veer's narrative, and several articles—such as the clock, halberd, muskets, &c.—were still in their old places, where they had remained undisturbed for nearly three centuries. There stood the cooking-pots over the great fireplace in the centre of the room; the old clock against the wall; the arms and tools; the drinking-vessels; and three of the books which had helped the ice-bound mariners through that black winter of 1596. One of the books was on Navigation; the second, a History of China; the third, a History of the World. Swords and halberds were there; pewter candlesticks; scales, oft used to weigh out scanty rations; a pitcher of Etruscan shape, beautifully engraved; a drinking-cup; and a flute. Taking charge of these interesting relics, Captain Karlsen sailed from Ice Haven on the 14th September, made his way along the eastern side of Nova Zembla, and was met by difficulties similar to those which beset Barentz—a south-west gale blowing the ice off the shore, until a shift to the north-east brought it back and surrounded the ship. Towards the end of the month the position of *The Solid* became very critical, as the young ice was beginning to form; but, fortunately, a south wind set in, driving the ice away off shore, and on the 6th of October she passed through Waigatz Strait, having thus accomplished the circumnavigation of Nova Zembla. Nevertheless, as a well-informed writer in *Ocean Highways* pointed out at the time, Captain Karlsen very narrowly escaped the fate of Barentz. On the 4th November, 1871, the adventurous Norwegian completed his voyage by anchoring at Hammerfest, where he encountered Mr. Lister Kay, then on his way to Lapland, who purchased the relics

of Barentz, and also obtained a copy of Captain Karlsen's log and chart. The Dutch government having expressed a wish for the relics, Mr. Kay, on payment of the sum he himself had laid out, obligingly ceded them to the native land of the illustrious navigator. A drawing of these interesting memorials may be seen in the map-room of the Royal Geographical Society by all who feel interested in the builders of that lone house, which—fit emblem of Dutch courage in its higher and nobler sense—yet survives among the Arctic snows, standing four-square to the winds of Heaven.

PICCOLO.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

I REMAINED in Paris, in spite of the rumours of a siege of the capital, while the Prussians were beating the French more and more thoroughly, day after day; perhaps not being able to believe that any such thing would really come to pass; perhaps from an irrepressible curiosity to see as much of the terrible game as possible, which combined itself with the plea of business, and induced me to incur a foolish risk. My business was real and serious enough—its nature has no bearing upon my story—but it came to an end, for the time at least, like the business of everybody else in the doomed city; yet still I lingered. When, at length, I made up my mind that I must go, and when all doubts respecting the intentions of the Prussians had been solved by the close investment of Paris, I found it an exceedingly difficult matter to effect my departure. The exact features of my difficulties, the mode by which I overcame them, and the adventures which befell me, before I found myself on the safe side of the "silver streak," have already been recounted to the public in detail—all, save one, which I have strictly kept to myself until the present time. This discretion had for its motive a salutary recollection that the Prussians invariably received and read the English newspapers, and that the disclosure of the incidents which I am about to relate would inevitably have led to the shooting of somebody.

Time has marched on since then, and nobody can now be harmed by my narrative of an incident which remains vividly impressed upon my memory, and whose first interesting feature was the close contact of a Prussian revolver with my ear.

I left Paris, then, at last, in company with three other men, whom circumstances had forced into the imprudence of a delay as prolonged as my own. Our association, and the coincidences which led to it, are not worth recapitulation. The nationality of each one of us was different from that of the other three, and I was the only Englishman of the party, and also the oldest man. My chance companions were all under forty; one was a Russian, another a Switzer, and the third, who was the most remarkable of the three, was an Italian. The circumstances which had thrown us together; the exceptional surroundings; and the difficulties, probably dangers, which must beset our path, combined with the community of our destination—for we were all bound for England—had brought about an easy intimacy among us, and each was tolerably familiar with the occupations and the objects of the others. Familiar, that is to say, through the information imparted by the individuals themselves; not one possessed any collateral knowledge of the other. We were certainly typical of our respective nationalities. Picture to yourself a John Bull, while still in the active and "not o'ergrown bulk" period of life, and you will have as clear a notion of Edward Rumford, Esq. (myself), as you require for the purposes of my story. The Russian, whose name was Gustaf Thal, was a blue-eyed, fair-haired, big, phlegmatic man, whose only pronounced characteristics were a love of cigars and a hatred of the Germans. The latter sentiment was not cordially shared by Conrad Denner, the Switzer, a brisk, perky person, whose impartial good sense, distinctly manifest in all his conversation, ought to have availed practically to keep him out of the scrape of an imprudent delay in Paris. He "could not see" the enormity of the continuation of the war by the Germans after Sedan, and persisted in mildly remarking that "a settled government only could offer guarantees;" so that our entente cordiale might have been endangered, but for one common bond of union: he and Thal were both tremendous smokers, and Denner was quite destitute of tobacco in any form, while Thal had innumerable pockets stuffed with the precious commodity, and generously shared it with Denner. I was much too anxious about the manner and the result of our joint expedition to feel

disposed for abstract discussion; and my sentiments were participated in by the fourth member of our little society, the Italian, whose appropriate name was Piccolo.

He was a short, slight, wiry little man, with very small and slender hands and feet, betraying the nervous temperament; a head remarkably large in proportion to his figure, with a sallow complexion, restless black eyes, thin features, and a quantity of straight, dry, lustreless black hair. Piccolo attracted my attention particularly, for two reasons. One of them was, that I knew nothing at all about the Italians; I had never had any business or social relations with the nation. The other, that he was much more preoccupied and apprehensive than the rest of us, though the exigencies of the position were precisely the same for each and all, and there was nothing about the man to make me suspect him of cowardice.

It will be evident enough that we had time and opportunity for the cultivation of our chance acquaintance with each other, when I explain that we had only accomplished the distance that divides Versailles from Paris—most famous and suggestive of all suburban roads—and had just entered the Prussian lines, when the encounter between a Prussian revolver and myself, to which I have already alluded, took place. We were suddenly surrounded by a crowd of Prussian soldiery; our horses' heads were seized, our coachman was unceremoniously hauled down from his seat, and his place taken by a Prussian cuirassier. Not a word of reply was vouchsafed by an ill-looking, steel-helmeted ruffian, in command of the attacking party, to the questions and remonstrances addressed to him, in German (which I do not speak, and of which the Italian, Piccolo, was likewise ignorant), concerning this extraordinary outrage, by Thal and Denner. It was exceedingly alarming; for, though we were all en règle, and each was provided with proofs of his identity and his nationality, the Prussians were evidently on the look-out for some "suspected" persons, for whom they had mistaken us, and errors of that sort had, just then, but small chance of rectification during the lifetime of their victims. It was unpleasantly borne in upon my mind, as two brothers-in-arms of the cuirassier upon the coach-box took their places, one on each side of the carriage, and severally levelled their revolvers at

myself and Piccolo, that the probable elucidation of this blunder would be, our all being shot first and rehabilitated afterwards. A word of command was given, the horses' heads were turned in a lateral direction, and the carriage, changed thus suddenly into an ambulatory prison, was driven rapidly away, followed by an escort of eight cuirassiers, including our surveillants at the sides. A brief backward glance showed me the unlucky coachman, whose "permit" was perfectly valid, being hustled away, blindfolded, in an opposite direction.

I had no knowledge of the official purloins of Versailles; but I guessed rightly that the building, under whose portecochère we presently drove, was the Prefecture of Police. In a few minutes we found ourselves in the presence of a number of stern, and, for the most part, spectacled German personages, some military, others civil, and undergoing an interrogatory of the closest kind, pursued in a tone of needless harshness and insulting suspicion. Our papers were demanded and critically examined; we were questioned about all our movements and actions for so many days back, that I at once declared myself incapable of giving an account, which could be reasonably exacted only from a gaoler concerning a prisoner. I had not taken myself into custody, and I could not *procès-verbalise* myself after the required fashion. I hardly know how the others got through their troubles; my British blood was up, and I fumed with anger. It was useless, of course; the last subject with which our captors concerned themselves was our opinion of their proceedings. One thing only was clear to me; they had mistaken us for some other persons, whom they wanted for some reason to arrest, and they were not yet satisfied that they were in error. When at length the vain and veracious examination came to an end, we were marched out of the presence of our evidently puzzled questioners, having endeavoured, without any result, to obtain information as to the motive of our arrest, or the probable period of our detention; and were conducted to a sort of outbuilding, consisting of a vast flagged hall, with an antechamber, and a narrow and dirty vestibule. A more uninviting apartment, than that in which it was evident we were to pass, at least, one night, it had never been my fate to enter; and I could not repress a shudder of anticipatory disgust at the sight of the dirty mattresses and still

dirtier blankets which, piled up under the lofty turret window at the farther end of the hall—its filthy flags were not covered by even a scrap of matting—were, manifestly, to form our beds. A few logs of damp wood smouldered cheerlessly upon the huge open stone hearth; and a rough deal table, a few battered wooden benches, a couple of clumsy chairs, and a barrack-room rack, nailed against the wall, completed the list of the furniture of this dismal den, with one incongruous addition. This was a large looking-glass, oval-shaped, in a tarnished gilt frame, which was suspended, sloping slightly forwards, on the wall to the right of the open fireplace, and in the immediate vicinity of an iron gas-jet, with a crank, or elbow, which jutted out from the jamb of the heavy mantel-piece.

After my first discontented survey of our dreary quarters, I looked at this queer object, and wondered who were the persons, susceptible of a regard for appearances, in the habit of making their toilet by the aid of this mirror, with the handy tap of light turned on. It was the more suggestive, as there were no toilet appliances of any description in the apartment; and I may as well mention here, that the only substitutes for such necessaries supplied to us during our detention were a stable-pail full of cold water and a couple of huckaback towels. In the antechamber—a mere stone lobby, with a high barred window far up in the wall—a couple of greasy-looking men, in coarse uniforms, sat writing something, on official "forms," at a rickety table. We had time for only a passing glance at their tow-like heads and stumpy, dirty hands, adorned with the thick forefinger rings, which I regard with a special aversion, for we were hurried into the hall, and presently locked in, in a very summary manner. The next moment the tread of a sentry outside the door certified convincingly, by its horrid, remorseless regularity, to the fact of our safe imprisonment.

The circumstances of the case were highly exasperating, and the wretchedness of our position was indisputable; but, after the first fury of our wrath had calmed down, three out of the four of us were agreed, that we should need no more heroic quality than patience to enable us to pull through. As they had not shot us in the first instance, our captors could not have any reason or excuse for shooting us now, so that there was no ground

for actual fear. All our statements were true; the journey, which had had this inauspicious beginning, was a *bonâ fide* one. To make our prison comfortable was impossible; the best we could accomplish was to set its discomfort at defiance and assume the virtue of cheerfulness, if we had it not. A coarse and scanty meal—served to us with as much civility as might have been considered appropriate to the feeding of pigs—did not do much to help us in this way; but Thal and Denner fell back on the resources of the tobacco, of which our captors had, strange to say, not deprived the Russian. I don't smoke; and so I sought distraction from the weariness of our common calamity in cheering up Piccolo. The Italian had been singularly upset and nervous during the interrogatory we had undergone, though his portion of it had been briefer and less severe than that of any one of us; and, when we were locked up and left to our own devices, his silent depression formed a marked contrast to the outspoken and indignant complaints in which Denner, Thal, and myself indulged.

I need not dwell upon the physical miseries of our first night of imprisonment. I believe they did not materially interfere with the sleep of Thal, Denner, and myself, but Piccolo presented a distressing spectacle when I observed him in the morning, sitting ruefully on the side of his mattress, which was laid down alongside the wall opposite to the fireplace, and exactly facing the mirror to which I have alluded. His sallow complexion had assumed a greenish tint; his black eyes, so keen and bright when we started yesterday, were dim and sunken; and the brown thin nervous hands, with which he grasped the mattress on either side of him, were visibly trembling. He did not look at me; his fixed, troubled gaze seemed to see nothing. Thal and Denner, who had placed their respective mattresses at opposite corners of the upper end of the hall, were still sleeping when I turned out. I became immediately aware that the sentinel on duty was watching my proceedings through a grating in the door, through which we could be inspected, or fired upon, with equal convenience. The fact caused me, however, no uneasiness, and having put on a portion of my clothing I crossed the room to Piccolo's side, and asked him, in English, if he was ill.

He looked up at me, and, to my indescribable embarrassment, I saw his lips quiver and tears run down his cheeks.

"For Heaven's sake, rouse yourself," I said to him, "and tell me what's the matter with you. Are you ill?"

"Can he hear as well as see?" said Piccolo, with a slight movement of his head, which indicated the watching sentinel.

"I don't know; let us try. Sentry!" I called aloud, in English.

The grating in the door was pulled back from the outside, and the gap was filled by a flat ruddy face, with light stupid eyes. The mouth in the face opened, and emitted a monosyllabic grunt.

"This gentleman is ill," I said, "and requires attendance. Send some one here."

The face silently disappeared, the grating was slapped to, and we heard a guttural murmuring of voices in the stone lobby. Piccolo looked still more ill and wretched, as he whispered, in the lowest tones, "Unless we find he does not understand English, I dare not speak."

I was astonished and alarmed. What had the Italian to say to-day, that had not had equal importance yesterday? In what could his position differ from that of any of us? Or, was he really a poor-creature, of pitiable weakness, whose courage had failed him under circumstances which, though highly vexatious, I could not now regard as perilous?

I had hardly time to ask myself these questions, when the door opened noisily to admit a short stout man, in uniform of course, but of unmartial appearance, and whose face had rather a prepossessing expression. This person advanced towards me and addressed me.

"The sentry does not understand your language," he said. "What is it you said to him? The ordinary service will arrive presently. If you need any other, I am a doctor."

I thanked him, and explained that I had found my fellow-traveller and fellow-prisoner ill, as I thought, and he immediately turned his attention to Piccolo, whose appearance was truly deplorable, and who was by this time shaking like a man in an ague fit.

"He has a touch of fever," said the German doctor, abruptly. "Let his bed be placed near the fireplace, and keep him in it. I will order a fire to be lighted, and send him some quinine."

"I hope," I said, "we shall not be detained long. Some unaccountable misunderstanding—"

"I know nothing at all about that," said the doctor, raising his hand in peremptory interdiction of the subject. "That is not my business; this is. There is nothing seriously wrong with your friend."

He glanced at us all, with a look which took note of every feature of the scene, saluted us stiffly, and went out, being met in the doorway by the same persons—private soldiers—who had brought us our rations on the preceding evening. Not a word had been as yet exchanged between Piccolo and myself, and I now made him lie down again, and covered him with an additional blanket. The men lighted the fire, flung a heap of logs into a corner, rolled up the three mattresses—Thal and Denner having turned out on their entrance—and brought in materials for a morning meal, on a very frugal scale. The dry hard bread, and the half-cold muddy coffee, were most uninviting, but we philosophically swallowed them; we three, I mean, for Piccolo merely lay with his head hidden under a blanket, and moaned. In a few minutes the door once more opened, and gave admittance to the same individual who had inducted us into our dreary quarters the day before. He informed us in few words, and with as much severity and discourtesy as it was possible to put into them, that we were to be again "interrogated" in the afternoon, but that in the meantime our portmanteaus should be restored to us, and that we should be permitted to take exercise in the courtyard, at the rear of the building. We received this information in silence, and each bowed formally to the speaker, who left the room as abruptly as he had entered it.

"Interrogated again!" said Denner. "What's the meaning of that? We have told them all there is to tell; and, unless they're turning us into hostages for some inconceivable reason, it's impossible to guess what they're at."

"It's a good thing we are to be given even the freedom of the stone yard, especially as, I suppose, we may have a smoke there," said Thal, who accommodated himself to circumstances with admirable readiness. Then they looked after poor Piccolo a little, but he was, or pretended to be, drowsy, and they seemed to arrive at the tacit conclusion that the weak and suffering Italian was my special charge. I could

not make him out. That his condition was one much more of mental than bodily suffering I felt convinced; but I could not understand the intense anxiety he manifested to be alone with me.

"Get them to go out, and do you stay with me," he whispered; and accordingly, when one of the men from outside came to conduct us to the inner court, which was to be our exercise-ground, I declined to go out, averring that our companion was too ill to be left. When we were alone, I seated myself beside the mattress on which Piccolo lay, and, having assured him that the sentinel—whose regular tramp on the stone flooring outside the door was periodically remitted to enable him to survey us through the grating—could not understand English, even if he could hear what we said, I begged him to explain himself in that language, which was equally foreign with French to him, while his native tongue was incomprehensible to me. He looked up at me with haggard eyes, and, making a strong effort to repress the nervous trembling which shook him from head to foot, he said, eagerly, in a low voice, and, to my great surprise, in French:

"No, no, I must speak freely, and I cannot in a foreign language. I have a confession to make, as well as a revelation, and I must make them in my own tongue. I am not an Italian; my name is not Piccolo; I am not a photographic artist returning to my employers in England after winding up the affairs of an agency here, rendered useless by the war." Such were the supposed facts concerning Piccolo which we three had been informed of, and believed. "Nothing that you were told about me, when I made your acquaintance, with the ulterior object of leaving Paris in your company, is true."

"Indeed," I said, sternly enough; "and I suppose to this deception which you have practised, whatever may be its motive, we owe our vexatious detention, which might have been dangerous. There's nothing to be found out about any of us, except you."

"Might have been dangerous!" he repeated, taking no note of my concluding words. "Is dangerous, you should say; horribly, hopelessly dangerous. I have brought you all into a snare. It is possible that you may get out of it; it is impossible that I should. Let me tell you all at once, that you may consider whether there is a way of escape for you."

WONDERFUL SIGHTS IN THE ORANGE DAYS.*

Nor that the Prince of Orange went to see them, either when he was a Dutch bachelor, or when he became King William the Third of England, with Queen Mary for his consort. But although he did not, many of his newly accepted subjects did, especially in London. It was a time when indoor amusements were neither very varied nor very refined; when newspapers and magazines were all but unknown; when science and art had not much to show to the public; when lectures were few, and for the few; concert-rooms almost equally so, and theatres small in number and in size. The people had to pick up amusement as they best could; and as the intellectual and the beautiful did not come much within their reach, they took refuge in the marvellous, which always has been, and probably will continue to be, attractive to the uncultivated. Hence the prevalence of fairs, such as Bartholomew Fair and May Fair, in which wonderful exhibitions were sure to take the lead. It was also a custom in those days (somewhat less than two centuries back) to hire a room at a tavern, and be content with such small audiences as the room would hold, to see some lusus nature—real or made up, as the case might be. The taverns around Smithfield, and the taverns and coffee-houses near Charing-cross, were much given to this kind of enterprise.

Old Dryasdust collectors have preserved copies of the handbills issued by the exhibitors of such sensationalisms (as they would perhaps now be called); and from one such collection we propose to pick out a few bits, as samples of the whole.

Here is a Dwarf to begin with, having something in addition to ordinary dwarf-like merits.

"This is to give notice to all Gentlemen, Ladies, and other Admirers of Curiosities, that there is lately arriv'd from France, a Man Six and Forty years old. One Foot Nine Inches high, Yet fathoms Six Foot Four Inches with his Arms. He walks

* The materials for this article, as mentioned in the text, have been taken directly from one of the collections of hand-bills: viz., the British Museum collection. We may here remark that, so far as concerns the chief fair (not including May Fair and other localities), the subject is admirably treated in Mr. Henry Morley's volume on "Bartholomew Fair," not only "as full as a nut," but as pleasant in flavour.

naturally upon his hands, raising his Body one foot four inches off the Ground; jumps upon a Table near Three foot high with one Hand, and leaps off without making use of any Thing but his Hands, or letting his Body touch the Ground. He shows some part of Military Exercise on his Hands, as well as if he stood upon his Legs. He will go to any Gentleman's house if required; and is now to be seen at the Charing Cross Coffee House, the corner of Spring Gardens."

This long-armed athletic dwarf had a rival, who, like him, put in a claim for notice, as possessing attractions in addition to that of being shorter than the average of his fellow men:—

"These are to give notice to all Persons of Quality and others, that there is newly come to this place a Little Scotch Man, which hath been admir'd by all that hath yet seen him, he being but Two Foot and Six Inches high, and is near upon Sixty Years of Age. He was marry'd several years, and had Issue by his Wife two Sons, one of which is with him now. He Sings and Dances with his son; and has had the Honour to be shewn before several Persons of Note at their own Houses, as far as they have yet travell'd. He formerly kept a Writing School; and discourses of the Scriptures and of many eminent Histories very wisely; and gives great Satisfaction to all Spectators. He is to be seen at the lower end of Brookfield Market, near the Market House."

The competition between rival exhibitors of dwarfs, each claiming for his own particular dwarf merits superior to all others, is amusingly shown in the following:—

"At the Hart's Horn Inn, in Pie Corner, during the time of Bartholomew Fair, will be seen a Little Farcy Woman, lately come from Italy, being but Two Foot Two Inches high, the shortest that ever was seen in England, and no ways Deform'd, as the other two Women are that are carried about the streets in Boxes from House to House for some time past; this being Thirteen Inches Shorter than either of them."

Giants are seldom far off, when Dwarfs are appealing for public favour:—

"The Gyant, or the Miracle of Nature: Being that so much admir'd Young Man, aged Nineteen Years last June. Born in Ireland, of such a prodigious Height and Bigness, and every way proportionable, the like hath not been seen since the Memory of Man. He hath been several times shown

at Court, and His Majesty was pleas'd to walk under his Arm; he is grown very much since, he now reaches Ten Foot and a Half, Fathomes near Eight Foot, Spans Fifteen Inches; and is believ'd to be as big as one of the Gyants in Guildhall. He is to be seen at the sign of the Catherine Wheel in Southwark Square."

A deficiency of hands and arms, legs and feet, has always been considered a great attraction in these exhibited phenomena; and the public taste in this direction was amply supplied at the period now under notice. Here is a rare fellow, a dwarf in addition to his other merits:—

"The famous Matthew Buckinger is come to this City of London, and is to be seen at the corner house of Great Suffolk Street, near Charing Cross. The wonderful Little Man, who is but Twenty Nine Inches high, born without Hands, Feet, or Thighs, performs such wonders, the like never done by any one but himself. He plays on the Hautboy, and has improved himself in playing on the Strange Flute in consort with the Bagpipe, Dulcimer, and Trumpet. He is also famous at Writing, Drawing of Coats of Arms and Pictures to the Life, with a pen. He also plays at Cards and Dice, and performs tricks with Cups and Balls, after a more extraordinary and surprising manner than ever yet shown; and his playing at Skittles is most admirable. All these being done without Hands makes all that see him say he is the only Artist in the World. He likewise dances a Horn Pipe, as well as any Man with Legs."

We should certainly like to see a second Matthew Buckinger, especially if he plays four musical instruments "in consort" at once.

In some respects similar to him was another wonder-worker, who, if we judge from the language of the announcement, must have been of earlier date. He was—

"In height but Three Foote, had never a good Foote, nor any Knee at all, and yet would he daunce a Galliard; he hadde no Armes, but a Stumpe to the elbowe or little more on the right side, on the which, Singing, he would dance a Cup, and after tosse it three or four times, and every time receive the same on the sayde Stumpe; he would shoote an arrow neere to the Marke, flourish with a rapier, throw a bowl, beate with a hammer, hew with an axe, sound a trumpet, and drinke every day ten quarts of the best beere if he could get it."

This latter "if" is capital.

Still another of these handless and armless people:—

"This is to certify all Gentlemen and Ladies and other curious enquirers into the Miracles of Nature and Art, that he is come to this place what may justly be reckon'd the Eighth Wonder of the World. A Young Man about the Twenty-four Year of his Age, who (though he was born without Armes) performs all manner of Martial Exercises with his Feet; In the first place he beats the Drum, and sounds the Trumpet, at one and the same time; he flourishes colours, plays at Backsword, charges and fires a Pistol; he plays at Cards and Dice, and can also comb his Head and shave his Beard; he uses a Fork at Meat; he will take a Glass in one foot and a Bottle in the other, and so fill the Glass and genteelly drink a Health to the company; Moreover he can thread a Needle, Embroider, and play upon several sorts of Musick."

And, to show that these marvels were not all confined to one sex, here is a further example:—

"These are to give notice to all Gentlemen and others, that here is newly come to this place a High German Woman, that has neither Hands nor Feet; yet she performs a Hundred several things to admiration, viz., she Sews, threads the needle as quick as any one can with Hands; cuts out Flowers; Writes very well; Spins as fine thread as any Woman can do; she charges and discharges with Pistol or Carbine as quick as any Man can do; she makes Bone Lace of All Sorts. Several other things might be mentioned, which for brevity is omitted."

If it be a merit to have fewer limbs than other people, so (it would appear) is a deficiency of bones generally; as we learn from the following announcement, in which punctuation is dispensed with altogether:—

"At Mr Groomes at the Sign of Shoe and Slap neer the Hospital Gate in West Smithfield is to be seen the Wonder of Nature viz A Girl about Fifteen Years of Age and not much above Eighteen Inches long having never a perfect Bone in any part of her only the Head Yet She has all her Senses to admiration and Discourses Reads very well Sings and Whistles and all very pleasant to hear."

This phenomenon, we are further told, shed her teeth seven several times; pos-

sibly (though we do not see how) this made all the bones in her body imperfect.

Equally attractive, we presume, must have been a phenomenon whose wrists and other joints were a good deal out of the common:—

“At Young Man’s Coffee House, Charing Cross, a Little Man Fifty Years of Age, Two Feet Nine inches high, and the Father of Eight Children; born without any joints in his Wrists, and notwithstanding has the use of both Hands to great Perfection; his feet are double jointed, and he has two Pan-bones to each Knee. He performs the Beat of a Drum to a very surprising degree, and Sings with a good Voice at the same time. When he sleeps, he puts his Head between his two feet to rest on by way of a Pillow, and his great Toes one in each Ear.”

A pretty figure he must have looked when sleeping, if we understand this description aright.

Another aspirant for public favour was distinguished by attenuation or leanness, and also by the characteristic of being a Fairy Child. The belief in Fairy Children has so nearly died out—even among the most ignorant rustics—that we have to rummage up a little, in order to find out what the designation means or meant. Be it known, then, that there are some kinds of fairies, or elves, prone to mischief, even to the extent of stealing away young children from their cradles, and substituting changelings for them; the changeling bears some resemblance to the stolen infant, but is, nevertheless, an ugly little creature, and seldom thrives. Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, founded one of his ballads on a legend of an infant who was carried from her cradle to Fairyland, whence she returned to her parents in the course of a few years. Now we will go to our exhibited phenomenon:—

“A Changeling Child to be seen the next door to the Black Raven in West Smithfield, during the time of the Fair, being a living skeleton, taken by a Venetian Galley from a Turkish vessel in the Archipelago. This is a Fairy Child, supposed to be born of Hungarian parents, but chang’d in the nursing; Aged nine Years and more, not exceeding a Foot and a half high. The legs, thighs, and arms so very shrivel’d that they scarce exceed the bigness of a man’s thumb, and the face no bigger than the Palm of one’s Hand; and seems so grave and solid as if it were Threescore Years old. You may

see the whole Anatomy by setting it against the sun. It never speaks; and when Passion moves it, then it cries like a Cat; it has no teeth, but is the most voracious and hungry creature in the world, devouring more victuals than the stoutest man in England.”

This, we presume, was not the pretty infant taken out of the cradle by the Fairies, but the ugly infant put into it as a substitute. Poor thing! it would hardly have sung, “If I be I, as I do hope I be;” for it would rather have been the alter ego, if it had any choice in the matter.

Another Fairy (male) positively declared himself, or was declared by his exhibitors, to be something like a centary and a half old:—

“In Bridges Street in Covent Garden, over against the Rose Tavern, is to be seen a Living Fairy, supposed to be a Hundred and Fifty Years old; his Face being no bigger than a child’s of a month; was found Sixty Years Ago; look’d as old then as he does now. His Head being a great piece of curiosity, having no skull, with several Imperfections worthy your observation.”

No question that a very little old man without a skull must have been a “curious imperfection.”

Boys covered with a very un-boylike integument were not unknown:—

“Now to be seen at any Hour of the Day at Mr. William Barton’s, a Milliner, next door to His Royal Highness Coffee House at Charing Cross, a Monster Child, born in the kingdom of Naples, about Ten Years of age, the like whereof was never seen in the World. He hath a very sharp Eye, a good comely Face and Neck, and no unusual colour; yet from the Neck to the Feet is his Body covered all over with Scales like unto a Fish, and somewhat Hairy like a Sea Monster; the inside of his Hands and the bottom of his Feet are white, like unto the Shells of a Sea Tortoise; he speaks Italian, French, and Low Dutch, to the Admiration of the Spectators.”

Exchange fish scales for hedgehog quills, and we have the following:—

“To be seen by one or more (in so decent a manner that Ladies may have the opportunity of seeing so great a Curiosity as well as Gentlemen) without loss of time, at the sign of the Prince and Princess of Orange, over against the Opera House in the Haymarket, a Curiosity which exceeds everything that was ever

seen or heard of; being a fresh lively country lad, just come from Suffolk, who is cover'd all over his Body with Bristles like a Hedgehog, as hard as Horn, which shoot off yearly."

These abnormal births have always been objects of wondering attraction to the more ignorant class of sightseers; and proofs are not wanting of the existence of such a taste among persons who would be very much offended at being called ignorant. A child, for instance, with an enormous head:—

"At the next door to the sign of the Greyhound in Smithfield is to be seen (by her Majesty's Order) a wonderful & miraculous sight, a man child which was born in Guernsey, being but Thirty months old, with a prodigious big Head being above a Yard about."

The poor little creature, who was thus so greatly honoured by being exhibited at the "order" of her Majesty (presumably Queen Mary, Consort of William the Third) was in all probability a victim of hydrocephalus. There was another marvel that must speak for itself, as it goes far beyond the poor limits of ordinary language:—

"Over against the Mews Gate at Charing Cross, is to be seen a Strange Monster Creature that was taken in the Woods in the Deserts of Ethiopia, in Prester Johns Country, in the remotest parts of Africa, being brought from Cap Bon Esperance alias Cape of Good Hope, from her Head downwards she resembles Humane Nature, with a long Monstrous Head, no such Creature was ever seen in this part of the World before, she showing many Strange and wonderful Actions which give great satisfaction to all that ever did see her."

On what ground this satisfaction was felt, we are left to infer as best we may. In companionship with this wonderful creature was—

"A strange Monster Creature brought from the Coast of Brazil, having a Head like a Child, Legs and Arms very wonderful, with a long face like a Serpent, wherewith he feeds himself as an Elephant doth with his Trunk."

This is a poser; a head like a child, a face like a serpent, and feeding like an elephant—the combination may be handed over to Lord Dunsyre to solve.

One child appears to have been a sort of Ursa Minor, a little of the bear with a little of the boy. The announcement of

the Exhibition is worthy of note, not so much on its own account, as for the insight it gives into the condition and occupation at that time of a district now one of the most fashionable at the West-end of London:—

"Near Hyds Park Corner, during the time of May Fair, near the sheep pens over against Mr. Penkithman's booth, is to be seen the Wonder of the World in Nature, being a Mail child born with a Bear growing on his Back alive, to the great admiration of all Spectators, having been shown before most of the Nobles of the Land."

Here is a man turned savage, one of the Wild Men who have, from time to time, appealed to the wonderment of an admiring public:—

"At the Ram's Head, Fenchurch Street, the Bold Grimace Spaniard, supposed to have been taken out of his cradle when an Infant by some Savage Beast, and wonderfully preserved Fifteen Years among wild creatures in the mountains Till some Comedians accidentally passed through those parts, pursued him to a cave, caught him in a net, and took him to Spain, Italy, &c. He lolls out his tongue a foot long; turns his eyes in and out at the same time; contracts his face as small as an apple: stretches his mouth six inches, and turns it into the shape of a Bird's Beak, and his eyes like to an Owl's; turns his Mouth into the form of a Hat cock'd up three ways, and also frames it into the manner of a four-square buckle; licks his Nose with his Tongue, like a Cow; rolls one Eyebrow two inches up, the other two inches down; changes his face to such an astonishing degree as to appear like a Corpse long buried; sings wonderfully fine, and accompanies his Voice with a Thorough Base on the Lute."

It is evident that this would-be Caliban was simply an ugly fellow, who had drilled himself as a Contortionist, with the unwonted addition of singing and playing.

One of the marvels we should not have considered "very pleasant and merry" to look at, had we not the authority of the exhibitor to that effect:—

"There is to be seen at the York Minster, by Holborn Bars, the Wonder of the Age, lately come from the West of England; a Woman about Thirty-five Years of age, alive, having two Heads one above another, the upper Face smooth; she has no Fingers nor Toes, yet can dress and undress, knit,

see, read, sing, and do several sorts of Work; very Pleasant and Merry in her Behaviour, and gives an Intire Satisfaction to all that ever see her."

At the George, "against the steps of Upper More Fields," was a "Man-Tiger, taking a glass of ale in his hand, like a Christian, and drinking it, and also playing at quarter-staff." And in the same show, "the Hand of a Sea Monster, nothing more of him, but said to be Seventy feet long, and weigh at least fifty tons; the upper part like a Man, the lower like a Fish." Black Princes were among the attractions of the day. One, to be seen at the Golden Lion, in Smithfield, for Twopence, was "The full Black called the Indian King, who was betrayed on board of a pyrate, and sold in Jamaica as a slave." Another was "Prince Giolo, Son to the King Moangis in Gilolo;" he was sailing to a neighbouring island, to see his sister married to the prince of that island; they were wrecked; a barbarous chief took the princess to wife, and sold the prince into slavery, whence, after many adventures, he found his way to England, and exhibited at "The Blew Boar's Head in Fleet Street."

One more, which we may believe if we like. At the Golden Lion, near the Maypole in the Strand, was a boy from Finland, born with the Latin inscription—"Deus Meus" on the right eye, and the same words in Hebrew on the left eye. "He has been seen by most of the Kings and Princes of Europe, who all look upon him to be the only Wonder of the present Age."

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK III. CHAPTER X. A STEP ON THE GRAVEL WALK.

THE information which Clement Burton had obtained about George Heath was, in the main, correct. The ex-bank-manager had returned to England, and had settled down in the little cottage at Loddonford erst inhabited by Studley, and the scene of Walter Danby's fate. He was ill, too, as gossips had said; but his illness was of a character which they did not dream of, and of an intensity of which they had no idea. He kept himself solitary and secluded, and allowed himself to be seen

by none. Had any one had such opportunity, they would have said that he was mad; and they would not have been far off the truth.

Day after day he spent in the silent, lonesome cottage, surrounded by the ghastly garden—more rank, more neglected, more jungle-like than ever. He never left it, he never passed through the gate. Something was there that had a horrible fascination for him—the pond! It was visible from the house, or rather its outline was so marked by a break in the coarse vegetation that, standing at the windows, he could tell exactly where it was. He passed the greater part of his time at those windows; he could not tear himself away from them. He would stand there for hours together, his teeth set, his hands tightly clasped, so that the nails dug into the palms, motionless, and watching—only watching. Sometimes, in his feverish state, he would notice that the birds would accidentally pause in their flight and hover round the spot. Something, he thought, must have attracted their attention; the body must have risen to the surface. It was of his crime and its discovery that the great solemn rooks were telling each other in discordant cawings, as they started on their homeward flight. It was bad to hear in the daytime, but it was worse at night; for the nights were passed in fitful dreams, from which he would wake sweat-bedabbled and trembling; dreams in which all the events of that fearful day would pass in review before him; where he saw the bright, handsome boy bound to the chair helpless, with a certain knowledge of his doom, but yet brave and defiant; where he felt himself again staggering towards the pond, and once more saw the slow, broad ripple, like a sullen smile, spread over the face of the stagnant water which concealed the dead. But there was a dream which was even worse than these—a dream, in which he seemed to recognise that all the events of that dreadful day were but themselves the figment of a dream—to wake to the stern reality of what was agony indeed.

Strange how the memory of the murder of that handsome, fair-haired boy clung to and haunted the murderer, when other crimes of equal magnitude never gave him an uneasy moment. He had passed years of his life in the house, and from time to time had been in the very room where the old banker had pleaded to him for his life, and died by his hand; he had paid his

court to his victim's niece, by whom the dead man's memory was religiously cherished, and had almost succeeded in securing her for his wife, without compunction and without remorse. But these things never troubled him one jot; while the death of Danby was for ever before his eyes, and the pond and its contents exercised over him a terrible spell.

If he could have spoken to anyone about it—if he could have told what he suffered, and talked of the fascination under which he lay—it would have been some relief; he felt that, but he knew its impossibility. There was but one man in the world to whom he could have opened his mouth—his old associate Studley; and he was dead. Heath knew that; he had seen the account of the captain's accident, and its result, in the newspaper, and, at first, had experienced a sensation of relief to think that the one man who shared with him the knowledge of the crime was silenced for ever, and there was no possibility now of the confidence being broken. But that feeling soon passed away, and to it succeeded an inexplicable terror. He would have given anything that his old accomplice had lived; anything to have had him there to talk to, and to consult with, to rouse him up and fortify him, no matter how deceptively, to break into the hell of gloom and silence, in which his days and nights were passed. It was not to be. Studley was gone, and he, though a much younger man, would follow soon—he knew that, he felt it; his nerves were shattered, his health was breaking down, and the end was at hand.

It was night; the night when, in the quiet Bloomsbury lodging, the newly-arrived nurse sat expecting the return of her patient. Deep, dead silence, broken now and again by the staggering footstep, or the hiccuping song of some roisterer rolling homeward from the taverns, reigned over the village of Loddonford; deeper, more dead than anywhere else, was the silence in the jungle-like garden of the cottage. Sitting at the open window of the room in which Danby had met his death was George Heath, his head resting on his hand, his eyes fixed straight before him; an early moon had risen, and its pale wan gleam was shining over the accursed spot, where, as he knew, lay the pond. The fascination of that spot for him seemed stronger than ever that night; he could not take his eyes from it, but sat, waiting for nothing truly, expecting nothing, but

finding it impossible to turn away. There were lighted candles in the room, but he had put them far away from him, on the mantelpiece, and was sitting enshrouded in the gloom. Suddenly he raised his head from his hand and bent it eagerly forward. He was not mistaken then, but had heard the creak of the garden-gate, which, by some mischance, had been left unlocked. What visitors could come at such a time, save those whose advent he was always expecting and guarding against? The sweat stood in beads upon his forehead, and his breath became short and thick. Silence! No; that was not a man's tramp—the heavy boot of a policeman would awake a different sound; the footfall on the gravel was light and swift, it came quickly towards him; a female figure glided across the intervening strip of moonlight, and was at the open window, facing him.

George Heath started back and pressed his hands upon his eyes. In his fevered state he thought himself the victim of an optical delusion, but, on looking again, there was the figure still. Its hands, he noticed, were outstretched in an imploring attitude, and one of them was enveloped in bandages. Then a soft voice said, "George!" and he started, as though from the cut of a whip, or the blow of a knife. Hard work, hard living, illness, and bad treatment had not altered that tone; it was as soft and musical as it had been in the far-off years of innocence and honest poverty, and he recognised it instantly.

"Hush!" it said. "Do you know me? It is I—Lydia."

"I knew it," he muttered, staring at her in a dazed way. "What do you want?"

"I have come to warn and save you," she whispered; "let me in at once, or I may be too late. What," she continued, after a moment's pause, "do you hesitate—do you doubt me? You ought to know me better, George, than to think for a moment that I could sell you. Let me in!"

"You are right," he muttered, "and I was a fool to think it. The door is on the right, and I will go and open it. Keep as quiet as possible, the servant sleeps just overhead."

She came in, and sank half exhausted into a chair. As she sat there, with the candle-light shining on her, Heath remembered where he had seen her last—in the

midst of the crowd coming out of the music-hall; but she looked very different now, so wan, and worn, and feeble.

"You have had an accident, I see," he said, pointing to her bandaged hand, "and look as if you were going to faint. Let me get you some wine."

"No," she said, stopping him; "not yet, not for a few minutes, at least. Hear first what I have got to say. I have come to save you, I tell you—to warn and save you!"

"What from?" he asked.

"What from?" she repeated, with a short, forced laugh; "from a woman, of course. I heard—no need to tell you how or where—a woman threaten vengeance on you."

"A woman! What woman?" he asked, rapidly.

"I never heard her real name," replied Lydia; "that which I knew her under was, of course, assumed. She called herself your wife; but I knew that was a lie, and I told her so!"

"The devil!" said Heath, between his set teeth. "What sort of a woman—describe her!"

"Are there so many of them that you are puzzled?" said Lydia, bitterly. "This one was tall and dark, clear-headed, and quick with her tongue. Her friend called her Anne—that much I heard."

"It is so," said Heath, with his head sinking on his breast. "Tell me, what did she say?"

"Not much that I could understand," replied Lydia. "They talked between themselves of matters which had gone before, of which I had no clue; but I did hear this woman—this Anne—say, when she found I was really your wife, that the seal was taken off her lips at last, and that she could now proceed to avenge the innocent blood."

"She said that, did she?" said Heath. "And you told her that she was free to do this?"

"I did," she replied; "but without knowing I was doing any harm. If it was wrong, and you are angry, you can kill me. We are here alone, and it would not matter much; but I came to save you."

"You are right," he said, moodily; "it does not matter much. What you did was done in ignorance, and nothing could have stayed off the end, which is fast approaching. And you have come to save me—have come through the night, all

maimed, and sick, and broken as you are; have come to save me, whose words to you were curses, and whose actions blows. You always were a staunch one, Lydia."

"I came because I love you, George," she murmured, "and I"—quickly changing her tone—"I am all right. I got burnt like this," she said, holding up her bandaged hand, "in a fire at the place where I was singing, and I have had to lay up, and give up beer, and wine, and things, and I am rather low, that's all. I shall be all right again by-and-by, if I know you are safe. What is that noise?"

"Rain," he said, looking out of the window and stretching out his hand; "the moon has gone, and the night is as dark as pitch. So much the better," he muttered to himself. "Low, are you?" he said, turning to her. "I shouldn't wonder, if you have been cut off your stimulants; but you have evidently overdone yourself to-night, and must take some wine, or you will die."

"As I said before," said Lydia, "that wouldn't much matter."

"Oh yes it would," said Heath, looking at her kindly; "staunch, loyal people like you are not too common in the world. Now let me attend to you."

He went out of the room, but returned quickly, bringing food and wine, which he placed upon the table. Although she had managed to keep up a tolerable appearance, Lydia, in truth, was almost exhausted, and she ate and drank with relish. Heath watched her curiously, walking round and round the table with his hands deeply plunged in his pockets, and stopping from time to time, apparently buried in thought.

"Was I right?" she asked, looking up at him, as he started on his round again after one of these pauses; "was I right in coming to you? There was danger in that woman's threat, wasn't there?"

"The greatest danger," he said, quickly stopping and looking at her. "In what she threatens she will do, and my only chance of avoiding instant ruin and death—and death," he repeated, laying curious accent on the word, "is by acting on your warning, and flying from this place at once."

"It is so, then," said Lydia. "Thank God I had the sense to understand her, and the power to come. I wonder what the new nurse is doing now, and what Mr. Burton will say when he finds I am gone. And you have yet time to save yourself?"

"Yes," he said, "if I start at once. I

have but few preparations to make, and can get clear off before the morning. But what of you?"

"What of me?" she repeated; "nothing—nothing, at least, that could be of any consequence to you. I shall manage to get on somehow, to live in the future as I have lived in the past—unless, indeed," and then she hesitated, and a faint blush tinged her wan cheeks, "unless, indeed, you would like me to join you somewhere abroad, now that you can no longer brave it before the world."

He looked up quickly. There was a mist before his eyes and a thick knot in his throat, as he muttered to himself, "By heavens, she cares for me still!" After a pause, he made an effort to master his emotion, and said, in a broken tone, "Do you mean that—do you mean to say that, remembering the way in which I have treated you; knowing me to be what I am, an admitted criminal, whose life is now only to be secured by flight—you would come back to me?"

"Oh yes," she replied, quite calmly, looking straight into his eyes, "most certainly I would. What do I care! Am I not an admitted criminal of another sort? I have loved you for many years, George, and no matter what you are or may be, to be with you is my idea of happiness."

He took her unmaimed hand and pressed it tightly between his own—tightly, quietly, and without any theatrical show. "I believe you, Lydia," he said. "I have heard about returning good for evil, but never saw it practised before. I ill-treated and deserted you, and now you have saved my life at the risk of your own. Nothing can be more certain than that you shall join me some day, my girl. Now you must have some rest, for I see you are dropping with fatigue."

"Oh no," she said, feebly. "I am all right—I shall do well enough."

"Nonsense," he replied; "I insist upon your trying to sleep while I make my preparations. I will rouse you when the moment for farewell arrives."

"Very well," said Lydia; "under those conditions I will lie down, for I think a little sleep would do me good."

Heath pushed the sofa to the wall, and, going upstairs, quickly returned with some pillows and blankets which he threw upon it, and made into a tolerably comfortable bed. Lydia was already nodding in her chair; but before she lay down

Heath insisted on her taking another large glass of wine, which he had poured out for her. As soon as she had swallowed it, she fell back upon the sofa, and in a few moments was thoroughly unconscious.

George Heath seated himself on the low chair by the side of the couch, and remained for some minutes staring at its occupant with a strange, unflinching gaze. As he looked at her, the intervening years seemed to roll away like a mist, and he was once more the young clerk with his eighty pounds a year, and she the milliner's apprentice, with her pretty face, and trim figure, and irrepressible love of dancing. He had scarcely thought of that time since, but he remembered it all now—the gardens and supper taverns which they frequented, the cheap amusements they patronised, the zest with which they enjoyed everything they did. It was curious, he thought, that those scenes should have come back to his memory now; that the recollection of those bright days of happiness should have recurred to him just when the curtain was about to fall. Strange, too, that she, who had partaken of the pleasures of his life, should be present at that critical period; and that he should owe to her, whom he had treated worse than any one else on earth, the opportunity of escape from his impending doom. He was glad she had come, he thought, as it gave him an opportunity of proving, in one way, at least, that he appreciated her devotion.

He rose as this thought crossed his mind, and going to an old bureau which stood in the corner of the room, opened it with a key which was on his bunch, and took out a compact roll of bank-notes, amounting in value to several hundred pounds. With this packet in his hand he approached the couch, and bending over the prostrate figure, ascertained beyond doubt that Lydia was sound asleep. Convinced of this, he opened the front of her dress, and, placing the roll of bank-notes inside, secured it with a pin, and fastened the dress again. Lydia remained motionless; and so heavy was the combined state of sleep and stupor into which she had fallen, that she never felt the touch of George Heath's cold lips, as he pressed them on her forehead. As he raised himself his eyes were wet; but he brushed the tears hastily away, and striding to the window, opened it softly. The rain had ceased, the dawn was faintly breaking; and the fresh morning air

blowing in, caused the guttering candles to leap fitfully in their expiring agony. Heath turned round and extinguished them, cast one more lingering look at the unconscious figure on the sofa, then, bare-headed, stepped out from the low window-sill, beneath which Anne Studley had fallen down insensible, and walked away into the dim morning, the first twitter of the waking birds breaking the silence as his foot fell upon the gravel path.

Late that afternoon, Banks's fly drew up at the garden-gate of Pond Cottage. The old horse, who had not gone at such a pace since the last race-meeting, shook his smoking sides, and tucked his trembling legs more than ever under him, while the driver touched his hat to his fare, and requested something extra for himself on the strength of the speed at which he had driven. Clement Burton, the gentleman appealed to, was in no humour to dispute any price which might have been asked, so, flinging the man a coin, he jumped out of the vehicle, and tore at the garden bell. A country wench, with a round red face, on which was a general expression of astonishment, opened the gate, and from her Clement Burton speedily learned that a strange lady, "all out of sorts like," with one of her arms tied up in bandages, was in the cottage at that moment, though how or when she arrived was more than the girl could say. "All I know is, sir," she said, "that there she be, dozing off now and then, then waking up sudden and staring straight before her, until it seems impossible for her to keep her eyes open any longer, and then off she goes again."

"Is your master with her?" asked Clement, hurriedly.

"No, sir, that's just the worst of it," said the girl; "master bain't nowhere to be found. I have been here with him ever since he came back from furren parts, and he never moved out once; but now he's gone out somewhere, and all I can get out of this strange woman that I found in the place this morning is, that he has gone away. Come in and see her yourself, sir. Lord love yer, I am twittered out of my wits, being left with her all alone."

Then Clement Burton followed the girl into the house, and there, half reclining on the couch from which she had ~~started~~ to rise, he found Lydia. An examination of the pupils of her eyes and her tongue showed the surgeon, at once, that she had been drugged. Indeed, she failed to recognise him, and, in reply to all his questions, gave but one answer, that "Mr. Heath was gone away." Between long lapses of silence and stupor she uttered those words, but would make no other avowal. Clement Burton recognised at once the fact, that Lydia had comprehended sufficiently of what had been said by Anne to understand that Heath was in danger; that she had fled to warn him; and that, profiting by her readiness, he had escaped. A hasty glance round the house, however, made it evident that Heath had taken nothing with him; and Mr. Burton was debating within himself the possibility of the criminal's return, as soon as he imagined the storm had blown over, when the village constable, whom he had called in to assist him in his search, reported that, on examination of the garden, he had found footmarks in the soft earth on the margin of the pond. A sudden light broke upon Clement Burton's brain. The idea that Heath would have committed self-destruction had never before occurred to him, and, even now, such a step could only be accounted for by the supposition that in his recent illness his mind had become unhinged. There was, however, but one thing to do. The hue and cry was raised throughout the village, the services of some of the fishermen were secured, and the pond was thoroughly dragged. The men worked with a will, and before the shades of evening fell they had found, not merely the body of George Heath, but the ghastly remains of Walter Danby!

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AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XVI.

ARRIVED in London, with an influential patron ready to receive him, and twenty pounds in his pocket, over and above the sum his mother had contrived to spare out of her quarter's income, Algernon Errington considered himself to be a very lucky fellow. He had good health, good spirits, good looks, and a disposition to make the most of them, untrammelled by shyness or scruples.

He did feel a little nervous as he drove, the day after his arrival in town, to Lord Seely's house, but by no means painfully so. He was undeniably anxious to make a good impression. But his experience, so far, led him to assume, almost with certainty, that he should succeed in doing so.

The hackney-coach stopped at the door of a grimy-looking mansion in Mayfair, but it was a stately mansion withal. In reply to Algernon's inquiry whether Lord Seely was at home, a solemn servant said that his lordship was at home, but was usually engaged at that hour. "Will you carry in my card to him?" said Algernon. "Mr. Ancram Errington."

Algy felt that he had made a false move in coming without any previous announcement, and in dismissing his cab, when he was shown into a little closet off the hall, lined with dingy books, and containing only two hard horsehair chairs, to await the servant's return. There was something a little flat and ignominious in this his first appearance in the Seely house,

waiting like a dun or an errand-boy, with the possibility of having to walk out again, without having been admitted to the light of my lord's countenance. However, within a reasonable time, the solemn footman returned, and asked him to walk upstairs, as my lady would receive him, although my lord was for the present engaged.

Algernon followed the man up a softly-carpeted staircase, and through one or two handsome drawing-rooms—a little dim from the narrowness of the street and the heaviness of the curtains—into a small cosy boudoir. There was a good fire on the hearth, and in an easy-chair on one side of it sat a fat lady, with a fat lap-dog on her knees. The lady, as soon as she saw Algernon, waved a jewelled hand to keep him off, and said, in a mellow, pleasant voice, which reminded him of his mother's, "How d'ye do? Don't shake hands, nor come too near, because Fido don't like it, and he bites strangers if he sees them touch me. Sit down."

Algernon had made a very agile backward movement on the announcement of Fido's infirmity of temper; but he bowed, smiled, and seated himself at a respectful distance opposite to my lady. Lady Seely's appearance certainly justified Mrs. Errington's frequent assertion that there was a strong family likeness throughout all branches of the Ancram stock, for she bore a considerable resemblance to Mrs. Errington herself, and a still stronger resemblance to a miniature of Mrs. Errington's grandfather, which Algy had often seen. My lady was some ten years older than Mrs. Errington. She wore a blonde wig, and was rouged. But her wig and her rouge belonged to the

candid and ingenuous species of embellishment. Each proclaimed aloud, as it were, "I am wig!" "I am paint!" with scarcely an attempt at deception.

"So you've come to town," said my lady, fumbling for her eye-glass with one hand, while with the other she patted and soothed the growling Fido. Having found the eye-glass, she looked steadily through it at Algernon, who bore the scrutiny with a good-humoured smile and a little blush, which became him very well.

"You're very nice-looking, indeed," said my lady.

Algy could not find a suitable reply to this speech, so he only smiled still more, and made a half-jesting little bow.

"Let me see," pursued Lady Seely, still holding her glass to her eyes, "what is our exact relationship? You are a relation of mine, you know."

"I am glad to say I have that honour."

"I don't suppose you know much of the family genealogy," said my lady, who prided herself on her own accurate knowledge of such matters. "My grandfather and your mother's grandfather were brothers. Your mother's grandfather was the elder brother. He had a very pretty estate in Warwickshire, and squandered it all in less than twelve years. I don't suppose your mother's father had a penny to bless himself with when he came of age."

"I daresay not, ma'am."

"My grandfather did better. He went to India when he was seventeen, and came back when he was seventy, with a pot of money. Ah, if my father hadn't been the youngest of five brothers, I should have been a rich woman!"

"Your ladyship's grandfather was General Cloudesley Ancram, who distinguished himself at the siege of Khallaka," said Algernon.

Lady Seely nodded approvingly. "Ah, your mother has taught you that, has she?" she said. "And what was your father? Wasn't he an apothecary?"

Algernon's face showed no trace of annoyance, except a little increase of colour in his blooming young cheeks, as he answered, "The fact is, Lady Seely, that my poor father was an enthusiast about science. He would study medicine, instead of going into the Church and availing himself of the family interest. The consequence was, that he died a poor M.D. instead of a rich D.D.—or even, who knows? a bishop!"

"La!" said my lady, shortly. Then,

after a minute's pause, she added, "Then, I suppose, you're not very rich, hey?"

"I am as poor, ma'am, as my grandfather Montagu Ancram, of whom your ladyship was saying just now that he had not a penny to bless himself with when he came of age," returned Algernon, laughing.

"Well, you seem to take it very easy," said my lady. And once more she looked at him through her eye-glass. "And what made you come to town, all the way from what-d'ye-call-it? Have you got anything to do?"

"N—nothing definite, exactly," said Algernon.

"H'm! Quiet, Fido!"

"I ventured to hope that Lord Seely—that perhaps my lord—might——"

"Oh, dear, you mustn't run away with that idea!" exclaimed her ladyship. "There ain't the least chance of my lord being able to do anything for you. He's torn to pieces by people wanting places, and all sorts of things."

"I was about to say that I ventured to hope that my lord would kindly give me some advice," said Algernon. As he said it, his heart was like lead. He had not, of course, expected to be at once made secretary of state, or even to pop immediately into a clerkship at the Foreign Office. He had put the matter very soberly and moderately before his own mind, as he thought. He had told himself that a word of encouragement from his high and mighty cousin should be thankfully received, and that he would neither be pushing nor impatient, accepting a very small beginning cheerfully. But it had never occurred to him to prepare himself for an absolute flat refusal of all assistance. My lady's tone was one of complete decision. And it was in vain he reflected that my lady might be speaking more harshly and decisively than she had any warrant for doing, being led to that course by the necessity of protecting herself and her husband against importunity. None the less was his heart very heavy within him. And he really deserved some credit for gallantry in bearing up against the blow.

"Advice!" said my lady, echoing his word. "Oh, well, that ain't so difficult. What are you fit for?"

"Perhaps I'm scarcely the best judge of that, am I?" returned Algernon, with that childlike raising of the eyebrows which gave so winning an expression to his face.

"Perhaps not; but what do you think?"

"Well, I—I believe I could fill the post of secretary, or—— What I should like," he went on, in a sudden burst of candour, and looking deprecatingly at Lady Seely, like a child asking for sugar-plums, "would be to get attached to one of our foreign legations."

"I daresay! But that's easier said than done. And as to being a secretary, it's precious hard work, I can tell you, if you're paid for it; and, of course, no post would suit you that didn't pay."

"I shouldn't mind hard work."

"You wouldn't be much of an Ancram if you liked it; I can tell you I know that much! Well, and how long do you mean to stay in town?"

"That is quite uncertain."

"You must come and see me again before you go, and be introduced to Lord Seely."

"Oh, indeed, I hope so."

Come and see her again before he went! What would his mother say, what would his Whitford friends say, if they could hear that speech? Nevertheless, he answered very cheerfully:

"Oh, indeed, I hope so!" And, interpreting my lady's words as a dismissal, rose to go.

"You're really uncommonly nice-looking," said Lady Seely, observing his straight, slight figure, and his neatly-shod feet as he stood before her. "Oh, you needn't look shame-faced about it. It's no merit of yours; but it is a great thing, let me tell you, for a young fellow without a penny to have an agreeable appearance. How old are you?"

"Twenty," said Algernon, anticipating his birthday by two months.

"Do you know, I think Fido will like you!" said my lady, who observed the fact that her favourite had neither barked nor growled when Algernon rose from his chair. "I'm sure I hope he will; he is so unpleasant when he takes a dislike to people."

Algernon thought so too; but he merely said, "Oh, we shall be great friends, I daresay; I always get on with dogs."

"Ah, but Fido is peculiar. You can't coax him; and he gets so much to eat that you can't bribe him. If he likes you, he likes you—voilà tout! By-the-way, do you understand French?"

"Yes; pretty fairly. I like it."

"Do you? But, as to your accent—I'm

afraid that cannot be much to boast of. English provincial French is always so very dreadful."

"Well, I don't know," said Algernon, with perfect good humour, for he believed himself to be on safe ground here; "but the old Duc de Villegagnon, an émigré, who was my master, used to say that I did not pronounce the words of my little French songs so badly."

"Bless the boy! Can you sing French songs? Do sit down, then, at the piano, and let me hear one! Never mind Fido." (Her ladyship had set her favourite on the floor, and he was sniffing at Algernon's legs.) "He don't dislike music, except a brass band. Sit down, now!"

Algernon obeyed, seated himself at the pianoforte, and began to run his fingers over the keys. He found the instrument a good deal out of tune; but began, after a minute's pause, a forgotten chansonette, from *Le Petit Chaperon Rouge*. He sang with taste and spirit, though little voice; and his French accent proved to be so surprisingly good, as to elicit unqualified approbation from Lady Seely.

"Why, I declare that's charming!" she cried, clapping her hands. "How on earth did you pick up all that in—what's-its-name? Do look here, my lord, here's young Ancram come up from that place in the West of England, and he can play the piano and sing French songs delightfully!"

Algernon jumped up in a little flurry, and, turning round, found himself face to face with his magnificent relative, Lord Seely.

Now it must be owned that "magnificent" was not quite the epithet that could justly be applied to Lord Seely's personal appearance. He was a small, delicately-made man, with a small, delicately-featured face, and sharp, restless dark eyes. His grey hair stood up in two tufts, one above each ear, and the top of his head was bald, shining, and yellowish, like old ivory. "Eh?" said he. "Oh! Mr.—a—a, how d'ye do?" Then he shook hands with Algernon, and courteously motioning him to resume his seat, threw himself into a chair by the hearth, opposite to his wife. He stretched out his short legs to their utmost possible length before him, and leant his head back wearily.

"Tired, my lord?" asked his wife.

"Why, yes, a little. Dictating letters is a fatiguing business, Mr.—a—a—"

"Errington, my lord; Ancram Errington."

"Oh, to be sure! I'm very glad to see you; very glad indeed. Yes, yes; Mr. Errington. You are a cousin of my lady's? Of course. Very glad."

And Lord Seely got up and shook hands once more with Algernon, whose identity he had evidently only just recognised. But, although tardy, the peer's greeting was more than civil, it was kind; and Algernon's gratitude was in direct proportion to the chill disappointment he had felt at Lady Seely's discouraging words.

"Thank you, sir," he said, pressing the small thin white hand that was proffered to him. And Algy's way of saying "Thank you, sir," was admirable, and would have made the fortune of a young actor on the stage; for, in saying it, he had sufficient real emotion to make the simulated emotion quite touching—as an actor should have.

My lord sat down again, wearily. "Bush has been with me again, about that emigration scheme of his," he said to his wife. "Upon my honour, I don't know a more trying person than Bush." When he had thus spoken, he cast his eyes once more upon Algernon, who said, in the most artless, impulsive way in the world, "It's a poor-spirited kind of thing, no doubt; but, really, when one sees what a hard time of it statesmen have, one can't help feeling sometimes that it is pleasant to be nobody."

Now the word "statesman" applied to Lord Seely was scarcely more correct than the word "magnificent" applied to his outer man. The fact was, that Lord Seely had been, from his youth upward, ambitious of political distinction, and had, indeed, filled a subordinate post in the cabinet some twenty years previous to the day on which Algernon first made his acquaintance. But he had been a mere cypher there; and the worst of it was, that he had been conscious of being a cypher. He had not strength of character or ability to dominate other men, and he had too much intelligence to flatter himself that he succeeded, where success had eluded his pursuit. Stupid men had done better for themselves in the world than Valentine Sackville Strong, Lord Seely, and had gained more solid slices of success than he. Perhaps there is nothing more detrimental to the achievement of ascendancy over others than that intermittent kind of intellect, which is easily blown into a flame by vanity, but is as easily cooled down again by the chilly suggestions of common

sense. The vanity which should be able to maintain itself always at white heat would be a triumphant thing. The common sense which never flared up to an enthusiastic temperature would be a safe thing. But the alternation of the two was felt to be uncomfortable and disconcerting by all who had much to do with Lord Seely. He continued, however, to keep up a semblance of political life. He had many personal friends in the present ministry, and there were one or two men who were rather specially hostile to him among the opposition; of which latter he was very proud, liking to speak of his "enemies" in the House. He spoke pretty frequently from his place among the peers, but nobody paid him any particular attention. And he wrote and printed, at his own expense, a considerable number of political pamphlets; but nobody read them. That, however, may have been due to the combination against his lordship which existed among the writers for the public press, who never, he complained, reported his speeches in extenso, and, with few exceptions, ignored his pamphlets altogether.

Howbeit, the word "statesman" struck pleasantly upon the little nobleman's ear, and he bestowed a more attentive glance on Algernon than he had hitherto honoured him with, and asked, in his abrupt tones, like a series of muffled barks, "Going to be long in town, Mr. Ancram?"

"I've just been asking him," interposed my lady. "He don't know for certain. But—" And here she whispered in her husband's ear.

"Oh, I hope so," said the latter aloud. "My lady and I hope that you will do us the favour to dine with us to-morrow—eh? Oh, I beg your pardon, Belinda, I thought you said to-morrow!—on Thursday next. We shall probably be alone, but I hope you will not mind that?"

"I shall take it as a great favour, my lord," said Algernon, whose spirits had been steadily rising, ever since the successful performance of his French song.

"You know Mr. Ancram—I mean Mr. Errington—is a cousin of mine, my lord; so he won't expect to be treated with ceremony."

Algernon felt as if he could have flown downstairs when, after this most gracious speech, he took leave of his august relatives. But he walked very soberly instead, down the staircase and past the solemn servants in the hall, with as much nonchalance as if he had been accustomed to

the service of powdered lackeys from his babyhood.

"He seems an intelligent, gentlemanlike young fellow," said my lord to my lady.

"Oh, he's as sharp as a weasel, and uncommonly nice-looking. And he sings French songs ever so much better than that theatre man that the Duchess made such a fuss about. He has the trick of drawing the long bow, which all the Warwickshire Ancrams were famous for. Oh, there's no doubt about his belonging to the real breed! He told me a cock-and-a-bull story about his father's devotion to science. I believe his father was a little apothecary in Birmingham. But I don't know that that much matters," said my lady to my lord.

PLAYGOERS.

THE man who, having witnessed and enjoyed the earliest performance of Thespis and his company, followed the travelling theatre of that primæval actor and manager, and attended a second and a third histrionic exhibition, has good claim to be accounted the first playgoer. For recurrence is involved in playgoing, until something of a habit is constituted. And usually, we may note, the playgoer is youthful. An old playgoer is almost a contradiction in terms. He is merely a young playgoer who has grown old. He talks of the plays and players of his youth, but he does not, in truth, visit the theatre much in his age; and, invariably, he condemns the present, and applauds the past. Things have much degenerated and decayed, he finds; himself among them, but of that fact he is not fully conscious. There are no such actors now as once there were, nor such actresses. The drama has declined into a state almost past praying for. This is, of course, a very old story. "Palmy days" have always been yesterdays. Our imaginary friend, mentioned above, who was present at the earliest of stage exhibitions, probably deemed the second and third to be less excellent than the first; at any rate, he assuredly informed his friends and neighbours, who had been absent from that performance, that they had missed very much indeed, and had by no means seen Thespis at his best. Even nowadays, middle-aged playgoers, old enough to remember the late Mr. Macready, are trumped, as it were, by older playgoers,

boastful of their memories of Kemble and the elder Kean. And these players, in their day and in their turn, underwent disparagement at the hands of veterans who had seen Garrick. Pope, much as headmired Garrick, yet held fast to his old faith in Betterton. From a boy he had been acquainted with Betterton. He maintained Betterton to be the best actor he had ever seen. "But I ought to tell you at the same time," he candidly admitted, "that in Betterton's time the older sort of people talked of Hart's being his superior, just as we do of Betterton's being superior to those now." So in that old-world tract, called *Historia Histrionica*—a dialogue upon the condition of the early stage, first published in 1699—Trueman, the veteran Cavalier playgoer, in reply to Lovewit, who had decided that the actors of his time were far inferior to Hart, Mohun, Burt, Lacy, Clun, and Shatterel, ventures to observe: "If my fancy and memory are not partial (for men of age are apt to be over-indulgent to the thoughts of their youthful days), I dare assure you that the actors I have seen before the war—Lowin, Taylor, Pollard, and some others—were almost as far beyond Hart and his company as those were beyond these now in being." In truth, age brings with it to the playhouse recollections, regrets, and palled appetite; middle life is too much prone to criticism, too little inclined to enthusiasm, for the securing of unmixed satisfaction; but youth is endowed with the faculty of admiring exceedingly, with hopefulness and a keen sense of enjoyment, and, above all, with very complete power of self-deception. It is the youthful playgoers who are ever the best friends of the players.

As a rule, a boy will do anything, or almost anything, to go to a theatre. His delight in the drama is extreme—it possesses and absorbs him completely. Mr. Pepys has left on record Tom Killigrew's "way of getting to see plays when he was a boy." "He would go to the Red Bull (at the upper end of St. John-street, Clerkenwell), and when the man cried to the boys—'Who will go and be a devil, and he shall see the play for nothing?' then would he go in and be a devil upon the stage, and so get to see plays." How many boys there are who would be willing, even eager, to obtain theatrical entertainment upon like terms! In one of his most delightful papers, Charles Lamb has described his first visit to a theatre. He "was not past six years old, and the play

was Artaxerxes! I had dabbled a little in the universal history—the ancient part of it—and here was the Court of Persia. It was being admitted to a sight of the past. I took no proper interest in the action going on, for I understood not its import, but I heard the word Darius, and I was in the midst of Daniel. All feeling was absorbed in vision. Gorgeous vests, gardens, palaces, princesses, passed before me. I knew not players. I was in Persepolis for the time, and the burning idol of their devotion almost converted me into a worshipper. I was awe-struck, and believed those significations to be something more than elemental fires. It was all enchantment and a dream. No such pleasure has since visited me but in dreams." Returning to the theatre after an interval of some years, he vainly looked for the same feelings to recur with the same occasion. He was disappointed. "At the first period I knew nothing, understood nothing, discriminated nothing. I felt all, loved all, wondered all—'was nourished I could not tell how.' I had left the temple a devotee and was returned a rationalist. The same things were there materially; but the emblem, the reference, was gone! The green curtain was no longer a veil, drawn between two worlds, the unfolding of which was to bring back past ages to present a 'royal ghost,'—but a certain quantity of green baize, which was to separate the audience for a given time from certain of their fellow men who were to come forward and pretend those parts. The lights—the orchestra lights—came up a clumsy machinery. The first ring, and the second ring, was now but a trick of the prompter's bell—which had been, like the note of the cuckoo, a phantom of a voice; no hand seen or guessed at which ministered to its warning. The actors were men and women painted. I thought the fault was in them; but it was in myself, and the alteration which those many centuries—of six short twelvemonths—had wrought in me." Presently, however, Lamb recovered tone, so to speak, as a playgoer. Comparison and retrospection soon yielded to the present attraction of the scene, and the theatre became to him, "upon a new stock, the most delightful of recreations."

Audiences have always been miscellaneous. Among them, not only youth and age, but rich and poor, wise and ignorant, good and bad, virtuous and vicious, have alike found representation. The gallery and the groundlings have been

catered for not less than the spectators of the boxes and private rooms; yet, upon the whole, the stage, from its earliest period, has always provided entertainment of a reputable and wholesome kind. Even in its least commendable condition—and this, so far as England is concerned, we may judge to have been during the reign of King Charles the Second—it yet possessed redeeming elements. It was never wholly bad, though it might now and then come to very near seeming so. And, what it was, the audience had made it. It reflected their sentiments and opinions; it accorded with their moods and humours; it was their creature; its performers were their most faithful and zealous servants.

Playgoers, it appears, were not wont to ride to the theatre in coaches, until late in the reign of James the First. Taylor, the water-poet, in his invective against coaches, 1623, dedicated to all grieved "with the world running on wheels," writes: "Within our memories our nobility and gentry could ride well mounted, and sometimes walk on foot, gallantly attended with fourscore brave fellows in blue coats, which was a glory to our nation, far greater than forty of these leathern timbrels! Then, the name of coach was heathen Greek. Who ever saw, but upon extraordinary occasions, Sir Philip Sidney and Sir Francis Drake ride in a coach? They made small use of coaches; there were but few in those times; and they were deadly foes to sloth and effeminacy. It is in the memory of many when, in the whole kingdom, there was not one! It is a doubtful question whether the devil brought tobacco into England in a coach, for both appeared at the same time." According to Stow, coaches were introduced here in 1564, by Guiliam Boonen, who afterwards became coachman to the queen. The first he ever made was for the Earl of Rutland; but the demand rapidly increased, until there ensued a great trade in coach-making, inasmuch that a bill was brought into Parliament, in 1601, to restrain the excessive use of such vehicles. Between the coachmen and the watermen there was no very cordial understanding, as the above quotation from Taylor sufficiently demonstrates. In 1613 the Thames watermen petitioned the king, that the players should not be permitted to have a theatre in London, or Middlesex, within four miles of the Thames, in order that the inhabitants might be induced, as formerly, to make use of boats in their visits to the

playhouses in Southwark. Not long afterwards, sedans came into fashion, still further to the prejudice of the watermen. In the Induction to Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, performed in 1600, mention is made of "coaches, hobby-horses, and foot-cloth nags," as in ordinary use. In 1631 the churchwardens and constables, on behalf of the inhabitants of Blackfriars, in a petition to Laud, then Bishop of London, prayed for the removal of the playhouse from their parish, on the score of the many inconveniences they endured as shopkeepers, "being hindered by the great recourse to the playes, especially of coaches, from selling their commodities, and having their wares many times broken and beaten off their stalls." Further, they alleged that, owing to the great "recourse of coaches," and the narrowness of the streets, the inhabitants could not, in an afternoon, "take in any provision of beere, coales, wood, or hay;" the passage through Ludgate was many times stopped up, people "in their ordinary going" much endangered, quarrels and bloodshed occasioned, and disorderly people, towards night, gathered together, under pretence of waiting for those at the plays. Christenings and burials were many times disturbed; persons of honour and quality dwelling in the parish were restrained, by the number of coaches, from going out or coming home in seasonable time, to "the prejudice of their occasions;" and it was suggested that, "if there should happen any misfortune of fire," it was not likely that any order could possibly be taken, since, owing to the number of the coaches, no speedy passage could be made for quenching the fire, to the endangering both of the parish and of the city. It does not appear that any action on the part of Laud or the Privy Council followed this curious petition.

It seems clear that the Elizabethan audiences were rather an unruly congregation. There was much cracking of nuts and consuming of pippins in the old playhouses; ale and wine were on sale, and tobacco was freely smoked by the upper class of spectators, for it was hardly yet common to all conditions. Previous to the performance, and during its pauses, the visitors read pamphlets or copies of plays bought at the playhouse-doors, and, as they drank and smoked, played at cards. In his *Gull's Horn Book*, 1609, Dekker tells his hero, "before the play begins, fall to cards;" and, winning or losing, he is

bidden to tear some of the cards and to throw them about, just before the entrance of the prologue. The ladies were treated to apples, and sometimes applied their lips to a tobacco-pipe. Prynne, in his *Histriomastix*, 1633, states that, even in his time, ladies were occasionally "offered the tobacco-pipe" at plays. Then, as now, new plays attracted larger audiences than ordinary. Dekker observes, in his *News from Hell*, 1606, "It was a comedy to see what a crowding, as if it had been at a new play, there was upon the Acherontic strand." How the spectators comported themselves upon these occasions, Ben Jonson, "the Mirror of Manners," as Mr. Collier well surnames him, has described in his *Case is Altered*, acted at Blackfriars about 1599. "But the sport is, at a new play, to observe the sway and variety of opinion that passeth it. A man shall have such a confused mixture of judgment poured out in the throng there, as ridiculous as laughter itself. One says he likes not the writing; another likes not the plot; another, not the playing; and sometimes a fellow that comes not there past once in five years, at a Parliament time or so, will be as deep-mired in censuring as the best, and swear, by God's foot, he would never stir his foot to see a hundred such as that is!" The conduct of the gallants, among whom were included those who deemed themselves critics and wits, appears to have usually been of a very unseemly and offensive kind. They sat upon the stage, paying sixpence or a shilling for the hire of a stool, or reclined upon the rushes with which the boards were strewn. Their pages were in attendance to fill their pipes; and they were noted for the capriciousness and severity of their criticisms. "They have taken such a habit of dislike in all things," says Valentine, in *The Case is Altered*, "that they will approve nothing, be it ever so conceited or elaborate; but sit dispersed, making faces and spitting, wagging their upright ears, and cry, 'Filthy, filthy!'" Ben Jonson had suffered much from the censure of his audiences. In *The Devil is an Ass*, he describes the demeanour of a gallant occupying a seat upon the stage. Fitzdottrell says:

To-day I go to the Blackfriars playhouse,
Sit in the view, salute all my acquaintance;
Rise up between the acts, let fall my cloak;
Publish a handsome man and a rich suit—
And that's a special end why we go thither.

Of the cutpurses, rogues, and evil characters of both sexes who frequented the old

theatres, abundant mention is made by the poets and satirists of the past. In this respect there can be no question that the censure which was so liberally awarded was also richly merited. Mr. Collier quotes from Edmund Gayton, an author who avowedly "wrote trite things merely to get bread to sustain him and his wife," and who published, in 1654, *Festivous Notes on the History of the renowned Don Quixote*, a curious account of the behaviour of our early audiences at certain of the public theatres. "Men," it is observed, "come not to study at a playhouse, but love such expressions and passages which with ease insinuate themselves into their capacities On holidays, when sailors, watermen, shoemakers, butchers, and apprentices are at leisure, then it is good policy to amaze those violent spirits with some tearing tragedy full of fights and skirmishes the spectators frequently mounting the stage, and making a more bloody catastrophe among themselves than the players did." Occasionally, it appears, the audience compelled the actors to perform, not the drama their programmes had announced, but some other, such as "the major part of the company had a mind to: sometimes *Tamerlane*; sometimes *Jugurth*; sometimes the *Jew of Malta*; and, sometimes, parts of all these; and, at last, none of the three taking, they were forced to undress and put off their tragic habits, and conclude the day with *The Merry Milkmaids*." If it so chanced that the players were refractory, then "the benches, the tiles, the lathes, the stones, oranges, apples, nuts, flew about most liberally; and as there were mechanics of all professions, everyone fell to his own trade, and dissolved a house on the instant, and made a ruin of a stately fabric. It was not then the most mimical nor fighting man could pacify; prologues nor epilogues would prevail; the devil and the fool [evidently two popular characters at this time] were quite out of favour; nothing but noise and tumult fills the house," &c. &c.

Concerning the dramatist of the time, upon the occasion of the first performance of his play, his anxiety, irascibility, and peculiarities generally, Ben Jonson provides sufficient information. "We are not so officiously befriended by him," says one of the characters, in the *Induction to Cynthia's Revels*, "as to have his presence in the tiring-house, to prompt us aloud, stamp at the bookholder [or, prompter],

swear at our properties, curse the poor tireman, rail the musick out of tune, and sweat for every venial trespass we commit as some author would." While, in the *Induction to his Staple of News*, Jonson has clearly portrayed himself. "Yonder he is," says Mirth, in reply to some remark touching the poet of the performance, "within—I was in the tiring-house awhile, to see the actors dressed—rolling himself up and down like a tun in the midst of them never did vessel, or wort, or wine, work so a stewed poet! he doth sit like an unbraced drum, with one of his heads beaten out," &c. The dramatic poets, it may be noted, were admitted gratis to the theatres, and duly took their places among the spectators. Not a few of them were also actors. Dekker, in his *Satiro-mastix*, accuses Jonson of sitting in the gallery during the performance of his own plays, distorting his countenance at every line, "to make gentlemen have an eye on him, and to make players afraid" to act their parts. A further charge is thus worded:—"Besides, you must forswear to venture on the stage, when your play is ended, and exchange courtesies and compliments with the gallants in the lord's rooms (or boxes), to make all the house rise up in arms, and cry—'That's Horace! that's he! that's he! that's he that purges humours and diseases!'"

Jonson makes frequent complaint of the growing fastidiousness of his audience, and nearly fifty years later, the same charge against the public is repeated by Davenant, in the *Prologue to his Unfortunate Lovers*. He tells the spectators that they expect to have in two hours ten times more wit than was allowed their silly ancestors in twenty years, who

to the theatre would come,
Ere they had dined, to take up the best room;
There sit on benches not adorned with mats,
And graciously did vail their high-crowned hats
To every half-dressed player, as he still
Through the hangings peeped to see how the house
did fill.

Good easy judging souls! with what delight
They would expect a jig or target fight;
A furious tale of Troy, which they ne'er thought
Was weakly written so 'twere strongly fought.

As to the playgoers of the Restoration we have abundant information from the poet Dryden, and the diarist Pepys. For some eighteen years the theatres had been absolutely closed, and during that interval very great changes had occurred. England, under Charles the Second, seemed as a new and different country to the Eng-

land of preceding monarchs. The restored king and his courtiers brought with them from their exile in France strange manners, and customs, and tastes. The theatre they favoured was scarcely the theatre that had flourished in England before the Civil War. Dryden reminds the spectators, in one of his prologues—

You now have habits, dances, scenes, and rhymes,
High language often, aye, and sense sometimes.

There was an end of dramatic poetry, as it was understood, under Elizabeth. Blank verse had expired or swooned away, never again to be wholly reanimated. Fantastic tragedies in rhyme, after the French pattern, became the vogue; and absolute translations from the French and Spanish for the first time occupied the English stage. Shakespeare and his colleagues had converted existing materials to dramatic uses, but not as did the playwrights of the Restoration. In the Epilogue to the comedy of *An Evening's Love*; or, *The Mock Astrologer*, borrowed from *Le Feint Astrologue* of the younger Corneille, Dryden, the adapter of the play, makes jesting defence of the system of adaptation. The critics are described as conferring together in the pit on the subject of the performance:

They kept a fearful stir
In whispering that he stole the astrologer;
And said, betwixt a French and English plot,
He eased his half-tired muse on pace and trot.
Up starts a Monsieur, new come o'er, and warm
In the French stoop and pull-back of the arm,
"Morbieu," dit-il, and cocks, "I am a rogue,
But he has quite spoiled the Feigned Astrologue!"

The poet is supposed to make excuse:

He neither swore, nor stormed, as poets do,
But, most unlike an author, vowed 'twas true;
Yet said he used the French like enemies,
And did not steal their plots but made them prize.

Dryden concludes with a sort of apology for his own productiveness, and the necessity of borrowing that it involved:

He still must write, and, banquier-like, each day
Accept new bills, and he must break or pay.
When through his hands such sums must yearly run,
You cannot think the stock is all his own.

Pepys, who, born in 1633, must have had experiences of youthful playgoing before the great Civil War, finds evidence "afterwards of the vanity and prodigality of the age" in the nightly company of citizens, prentices, and others attending the theatre, and finds it a grievance that there should be so many "mean people" in the pit at two shillings and sixpence a-piece. For several years, he mentions, he had gone no higher than the twelvepenny, and then the eighteenpenny places. Often-

times, however, the king and his court, the Duke and Duchess of York, and the young Duke of Monmouth, were to be seen in the boxes. In 1662 Charles's consort, Catherine, was first exhibited to the English public at the cockpit theatre in Drury-lane, when Shirley's Cardinal was represented. Then there are accounts of scandals and indecorums in the theatre. Evelyn reprovingly speaks of the public theatres being abused to an "atheistical liberty." Nell Gwynne is in front of the curtain prattling with the fops, lounging across and leaning over them, and conducting herself saucily and impudently enough. Moll Davies is in one box, and my Lady Castlemaine, with the king, in another. Moll makes eyes at the king, and he at her. My Lady Castlemaine detects the interchange of glances, and "when she saw Moll Davies she looked like fire, which troubled me," said Mr. Pepys, who, to do him justice, was often needlessly troubled about matters with which, in truth, he had very little concern. There were brawls in the theatre, and tip-siness and much license generally. In 1682 two gentlemen, disagreeing in the pit, drew their swords and climbed to the stage. There they fought furiously until a sudden sword-thrust stretched one of the combatants upon the boards. The wound was not mortal, however, and the duellists, after a brief confinement, by order of the authorities, were duly set at liberty.

The fop of the Restoration was a different creature to the Elizabethan gallant. Etherege satirised him in his *Man of Mode*; or, *Sir Fopling Flutter*, Dryden supplying the comedy with an epilogue, in which he fully described certain of the prevailing follies of the time in regard to dress and manners. The audience are informed that

None Sir Fopling him or him can call,
He's knight of the shire and represents you all!
From each he meets he culls whate'er he can;
Legion's his name, a people in a man.

His various modes from various fathers follow;
One taught the toes, and one the new French wallow;
His sword-knot this, his cravat that designed;
And this the yard-long snake he twirls behind.
From one the sacred periwig he gained,
Which wind ne'er blew nor touch of hat profaned.
Another's diving bow he did adore,
Which, with a shog, casts all the hair before,
Till he with full decorum brings it back,
And rises with a water-spaniel shake.

Upon another occasion the poet writes:

But only fools, and they of vast estate,
The extremity of modes will imitate,
The dangling knee-fringe and the bib-cravat.

While the fops were thus equipped, the

ladies wore vizard-masks, and upon the appearance of one of these in the pit—

Straight every man who thinks himself a wit,
Perks up, and managing his comb with grace,
With his white wig sets off his nut-brown face.

For it was the fashion of the gentlemen to toy with their soaring, large-curved periwigs, smoothing them with a comb. Between the fops and the ladies goodwill did not always prevail. The former were, no doubt, addicted to gross impertinence in their conversation.

Fop corner now is free from civil war,
White wig and vizard-maak no longer jar,
France and the fleet have swept the town so clear.

So Dryden "prologuised" in 1672, attributing the absence of "all our braves and all our wits" to the war which England, in conjunction with France, had undertaken against the Dutch.

Queen Anne, in 1704, expressly ordered that "no woman should be allowed, or presume to wear, a vizard-mask in either of the theatres." At the same time it was commanded that no person, of what quality soever, should presume to go behind the scenes, or come upon the stage, either before or during the acting of any play; and that no person should come into either house, without paying the price established for their respective places. And the disobedient were publicly warned that they would be proceeded against, as "contemners of our royal authority and disturbers of the public peace."

These royal commands were not very implicitly obeyed. Vizard-masks may have been discarded promptly, but there was much crowding behind the scenes, and upon the stage, of persons of quality, for many years after. Garrick, in 1762, once, and for ever, succeeded in clearing the boards of the unruly mob of spectators, and secured room to move upon the scene for himself and his company. But it was only by enlarging his theatre, and in such wise increasing the number of seats available for spectators in the auditory of the house, that he was enabled to effect this reform. From that date the playgoers of the past grew more and more like the playgoers of the present, until the flight of time rendered distinction between them no longer possible, and merged yesterday in to-day. There must have been a very important change in the aspect of the house, however, when hair powder went out of fashion, in 1795; when swords ceased to be worn—for, of

course, then there could be no more rising of the pit to slash the curtain and scenery, to prick the performers, and to lunge at the mirrors and decorations; when gold and silver lace vanished from coats and waistcoats, silks and velvets gave place to broadcloth and pantaloons; and when, afterwards, trousers covered those nether limbs which had before been, and for so long a period, exhibited in silk stockings. Yet these alterations were accomplished gradually, no doubt. All was not done in a single night. Fashion makes first one convert, and then another, and so on, until all are numbered among her followers and wear the livery she has prescribed. Garrick's opinion of those playgoers of his time, whom he at last banished from his stage, may be gathered from the dialogue between *Æsop* and the *Fine Gentleman*, in his farce of *Lethe*. *Æsop* inquires, "How do you spend your evening, sir?" "I dress in the evening," says the *Fine Gentleman*, "and go generally behind the scenes of both playhouses; not, you may imagine, to be diverted with the play, but to intrigue and show myself. I stand upon the stage, talk loud, and stare about, which confounds the actors and disturbs the audience. Upon which the galleries, who hate the appearance of one of us, begin to hiss, and cry, 'Off, off;' while I, undaunted, stamp my foot so; lol with my shoulder thus; take snuff with my right hand, and smile scornfully, thus. This exasperates the savages, and they attack us with volleys of sucked oranges and half-eaten pippins." "And you retire?" "Without doubt, if I am sober; for orange will stain silk, and an orange disfigures a feature."

HELIOTROPE.

How strong they are, those subtle spells
That lurk in leaves and flower-bells,
Rising from faint perfumes;
Or mingling with some olden strain,
Strike through the music shafts of pain,
And people empty rooms.

They come upon us unawares,
In crowded halls and open airs,
And in our chambers still:
A song, an odour, or a bird,
Evokes the spell, and strikes the chord,
And all our pulses thrill.

I loitered but an hour ago,
With lagging footsteps tired and slow,
Along the garden walk:
The summer twilight wrapped me round
Through open windows came the sound,
Of song and pleasant talk.

The odour-stealing dews lay wet
 And heavy on the mignonette
 That crept about my feet :
 Upon the folded mossy vest
 That clothed the ruby rose's breast,
 It fell in droppings sweet.

It fell on beds of purple bloom,
 From whence arose the rare perfume
 Of dainty heliotrope ;
 Which smote my heart with sudden power,
 My favourite scent, my favourite flower,
 In olden days of hope !

Ah, me ! the years have come and gone,
 Each with its melody or moan,
 Since that sunny hour,
 When, for the sake of hands that brought,
 And for the lesson sweet it taught,
 I chose it for my flower.

Faint-scented blossoms ! long ago
 Your purple clusters came to show
 My life had wider scope ;
 They spoke of love that day—to-night
 I stand apart from love's delight,
 And wear no heliotrope.

Between to-night and that far day,
 Lie life's bright noon and twilight grey,
 But I have lived through both :
 And if before my paling face
 The midnight shadows fall apace,
 I see them, nothing loth.

Only to-night that faint perfume
 Reminds me of the lonely gloom
 Of life outliving hope :
 I wish I had been far to-night,
 What time the dew fell, silver-white
 Upon the heliotrope !

PICCOLO.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

"I HAD been trying to get out of France on a secret mission for some time," continued Piccolo, in the same low trembling tone, "before I made the acquaintance of Thal, Denner, and yourself; but I had reason to know that I had been watched by one of the spies who have been infesting our city and our homes, and doing their devil's work among us for years. We caught him and we shot him; but I could not find out whether he had had time to betray me to the Prussians, before his fate overtook him. The only thing to be done was to change my plan, and, while leaving them to suppose—if, indeed, they were in possession of the facts—that I was about to leave Paris as before arranged, in the disguise of an English servant in attendance on an invalid lady, detained by inability to travel sooner—this part was to be played by my wife—to look out for a party to join, which should offer the strongest contrast to these conditions. I was powerfully aided, as you will readily believe, when I tell you what my real purpose is, and I was introduced quite naturally to you and your companions. The chief precaution to be taken was to ascertain

that you and they did not speak Italian, as I am hardly at all acquainted with that language; and it was decided that I should pass for a man of that nationality, because those educated savages, the Prussians, know less of Italy and the Italians than of any other European nation. You know the rest; and——"

"Yes, yes—no need to recapitulate that. Tell me at once who you really are, and what there is to be discovered by these people in whose hands we are."

He raised himself on his elbow, and looked into my face with an expression of profound misery which I shall never forget, as he replied :

"I am Pierre Olivier Potin." (I need hardly say I do not, even now, and here, give the real name of my unfortunate travelling companion; if I did so, I should create a good deal of astonishment even among those who believe themselves, and with good reason, most thoroughly acquainted with all the details of the disastrous epoch in the history of France to which my simple story belongs.) "Ah, no wonder you start! I am bound to England on a mission to procure a large number of guns for the government of the National Defence. I have a false passport; poor Piccolo, the real holder, who was all I profess to be, died ten days ago at Passy. I have his papers; they were read yesterday at our interrogation, and his signalement is sufficiently like my own to pass without detection. But I have been obliged to take other papers with me; the instructions for the purchase and the specification of the guns, and an order on a well-known English banking firm for a very large sum of money, together with a letter of credentials to a political colleague of M. Gambetta, who is at present in London. Two of these documents, the letter of credentials and the order on the bankers, comprise my name and address—Pierre Olivier Potin, 147, Rue de Vinette, Paris, in full. These, in the most circumscribed form possible, I was obliged to carry with me."

"Of course. But are they safe? Nothing transpired yesterday."

"They were safe. I had the small packet hidden away within the lining of my hat, a very loose fit, and, as I held it in my hand whenever it was not on my head, it was quite safe until last night."

"Until last night," I repeated. "What has happened to it since? That is your hat, is it not, which hangs on the rack, beside my wideawake? I hung it there

myself, if I am not mistaken, last night; and there it is now." I half rose as I spoke, with the intention of taking the hat down; but he put his hand out eagerly, and stopped me.

"No, no!" he said; "pray don't go near it; pray don't even look near it! The sentry is watching us closely, and the only chance for any of you is to be able to feign total ignorance. Besides, it is useless; my papers are in the hands of the Prussians."

"Impossible."

"Hush! hush! That word is easily recognised in any language. Listen to me. Last night—you had all fallen asleep, but I lay awake, full of foreboding—it must have been after one o'clock, when the door opened without any noise, and a man, whom I had not seen among those in the Prefecture yesterday, came in to the room. He held a small lantern in his hand, and he stepped cautiously across the floor, in the direction of the corner in which Thal lay. He stooped down, turned the light of the lantern upon his face, and looked at him very attentively. I raised my head noiselessly, and peered at the intruder. He wore the uniform of an officer in the Prussian infantry, and though a big man, he had a singularly gentle tread; his footstep made no sound at all. Presently he approached the fireplace, and turned on the gas in the jet close by the mirror, lighted it, and extinguished his lantern, after which he again crossed the room, and was thus on a line with me, but, owing to the inclination of the mirror—you see how it slopes forward—I could observe his movements by their reflection in it, without making the least stir which could attract his attention. He inspected you minutely, turned over your clothes, emptied your pockets, and examined their contents, especially some photographs, which he carried to the gas-jet that he might admire them more at his ease."

Mentally confounding the impudence of the unscrupulous Prussian, I put my hand hurriedly into my breast-pocket. The photographs were all safe. I comforted myself with a hasty glance at one which was especially precious—and whose original is now my wife—and begged M. Pierre Olivier Potin to continue.

"He lingered a very short time beside Denner, and did not stoop over him, or touch his clothes; but came on towards my bed. I can feign sleep pretty well, and I did it, not making the mistake of

lying perfectly still, which is enough to betray one to a quick observer, but stirring slightly, with the restlessness which is always imparted to real sleep by the presence of an unexpected or unwelcome person; but the ordeal was severe. He scanned my features closely, moved to each extremity of my bed, and studied me attentively from both; he even gently fingered my hair, at the back of my head, suspecting, I suppose, that it was a wig. My pockets were turned out next; they contained a purse, a handkerchief, a pair of gloves, and a pocket flask. These things were replaced, and then the officer approached the rack; took down the coats and hats hanging there, inspected and replaced them—all but the last hat, mine. Conceive what I felt when he held it up to the light, gazed into it, fingered the lining carefully all round, and then, standing so that his movements were reflected in the mirror, skillfully ripped the lining open with his pocket-knife and drew out the precious packet of papers, whose discovery implies my ruin and death, and, I fear—I fear—these Prussians are so merciless—serious danger to all of you."

This revelation filled me with dismay. I did not feel much of the indignation which the unfortunate emissary of a desperate cause anticipated. He had made use of us, to be sure, and the "fix" was an exceedingly awkward one. But to a man who has seen so much of the world as I have, the proverbial saying, "*À la guerre comme à la guerre,*" acquires a wide and liberal signification. Besides, there really was no time to think of anything but the position; and as for the man, he was too ill to be an object of anger and reproach.

The inaction of our captors puzzled me very much. The morning was advancing, and nothing whatever had occurred to indicate that any violent measures were intended towards us. The interrogation of the afternoon might mean something serious, but I was surprised, with such perilous stuff in their possession, that the Prussians should wait until the afternoon, and I endeavoured to persuade Potin and myself that the delay was a favourable symptom. I found him, however, quite unpersuadable; the mercurial French temperament displayed the defect of its quality, and he ran down under apprehension and suspense to a pitiable state of prostration. I could not

persuade him to hope that he might not be shot; on that point his conviction was fixed, the inspiring of a hope that his rash attempt would not produce fatal results to us all was as much as I could accomplish. All this time it was evident to me that his bodily illness was gaining ground; that the touch of fever was strengthening itself; and I entreated him to be calm, in the interest of possibilities. Supposing the result of the interrogation to be the restoration of our freedom, he would be unable to move. The mere suggestion acted on him effectually. He insisted on rising at once, and I assisted him to dress. Then he began to pace restlessly to and fro, ever watching narrowly for the periodical appearance of the sentry's face behind the grating in the door; and there was silence between us for an interval, which was occupied in very painful reflections on my part. At length, Pierre Olivier Potin asked me to join him, and to allow him to lean on my arm.

"I must move about," he said, "and I must not lose this, which may be my last opportunity of speaking to you alone. I accept what you say—that to yourself, Thal, and Denner this will be only a temporary difficulty. You will get safely to England, and you will stay there till all this misery shall be overpast; until the German army shall have been destroyed around Paris, by disease, by the winter, and by the sorties of our brave troops, and driven off the sacred soil of France by the levée en masse of our outraged and indignant population. Then you will return to see Paris, in the glory of her political and social resurrection, and you will carry out, like the brave Englishman that you are, the last wishes of an unfortunate comrade."

He was ill; he was in despair; he was much more than serious; but he was dramatic. The situation demanded it, for the situation was dramatic; and Pierre Olivier Potin was not the man to fail the situation. I repressed him by a warning squeeze of his arm, and declared my fidelity to his wishes. He proceeded to give me a number of details respecting his family circumstances, which have no bearing on my narrative, and to charge me with his last words for the wife and the brother, whom he felt convinced he should never again behold. I listened attentively, and promised that every direction which he gave should be faithfully carried out, and had hardly given him this pro-

mise when Thal and Denner re-entered our prison chamber, accompanied by an officer in the uniform of a Prussian infantry corps, whom I had not previously seen. Potin and I had turned at the far end of the room, and were exactly facing the door as they entered. He started as he looked at the infantry officer, dropped his right hand from my arm, then raised it and pointed at the Prussian, swayed slightly from side to side, and, without a word, fell on the floor in a dead faint.

"This gentleman is evidently very ill," said the officer; "the doctor must see him," and he bustled out of the room, while we lifted Piccolo—who looked as if he had got his quietus without the aid of a Prussian platoon—on to the mattress, and endeavoured to restore him to consciousness. Presently the officer returned with the doctor—the same who had seen Piccolo in the morning—and the proper remedies were administered to our unfortunate travelling companion. I am bound to acknowledge that the sick man was well treated by our captors, though for us others little consideration was evinced. The doctor attached no serious importance to the patient's state, which he treated merely as an "attack of nerves," characteristic of the impatient and excitable French temperament. The business of the officer was to make a formal inspection of our prison chamber and of ourselves, which duty he fulfilled civilly enough, and then he withdrew; all our efforts to obtain from him an explanation of the causes of our detention, or the probable length of its duration, having proved useless.

We dined as coarsely as we had supped and breakfasted, and we awaited, silently watching the lethargic sleep of Piccolo, produced by a calming medicine, the interrogatory which we had been ordered to expect. The nature of my reflections differed widely from that of the reflections of my companions, who were sulky and annoyed to the last extent, but not alarmed. At the appointed hour we were conducted to the same salle of the Prefecture of Police in which we had undergone the examination of the preceding day, and there we underwent a second edition of it, which had a precisely identical result. We had told the truth before; we now told it all over again, and, to my unspeakable astonishment, none but the most formal questions were put to us respecting Piccolo. It appeared to me that he was regarded as the least im-

portant individual of the party; the one to whose identity no suspicion was attached. I thought I could perceive that our questioners had relaxed their conviction of our insincerity; certain symptoms, which one cannot define, but which one feels in every nerve, made me pretty confident that we three were safe. But about Piccolo? Had their discoveries in reference to him led them to the perception that we were entirely innocent of, and unconcerned in, the deception he had practised; and would they let us free and detain him, to be dealt with when his physical state should admit of his being called up before them?

We were marched back again and locked up. Piccolo was still sleeping; and we had to pass the long, dreary winter evening and night without any other solace than the fire—an indulgence which I regarded with surprise, but which, no doubt, we owed to the fact that we were not tenants of a common prison. My companions lighted their respective cigars and betook themselves to the uppermost end of the room, whither I followed them, and, having given them a preliminary caution to avoid any show of surprise or peculiar interest, I disclosed to them the extraordinary story which I had heard from our travelling companion, and the complication of our already troublesome affair which resulted from it. They behaved exceedingly well. The ever-recurrent sentry could not have discovered that we were discussing anything more interesting than the quality of the tobacco, which, doubtless, assisted their passivity; and it was some moments after I had concluded my story before either Denner or Thal said anything. When they did speak, it was not too charitably of poor Piccolo; but it was in confirmation of my own notion that no ill would result to us. Concerning his chances, they were of his own way of thinking. So soon as he should be sufficiently recovered to be "interrogated," he would most certainly be shot. The evening closed in very miserably; Piccolo was in a wretched, exhausted, light-headed condition, which taxed my trifling store of knowledge and experience of the art of nursing the sick severely, and we retired to such a modicum of rest as each of us respectively was likely to find, feeling as if we were passing the night with a criminal in a condemned cell. I had had sufficient forethought, during the second visit of the doctor, to request that he would apply for

permission for us to keep the gas alight all night, on account of his patient's condition, and he had done so. I turned the light down to a mere glimmer before I lay down on my mattress, which I had dragged near to that on which Piccolo lay.

The night was bitterly cold, and though the fire was permitted to amoulder, the supply of fuel was so limited that the strictest economy in the use of it was necessary. A short time after I lay down to rest, and when I was fully realizing the dreariness of the position and its accessories, a murmured complaint from Piccolo aroused me. He was "so cold," he said. Only one unappropriated article of clothing was within my reach; it was a top coat, which I had hung on the barrack-room rack with our hats. I got up, and stepped cautiously in the direction of the rack. Instantly a light streamed through the grating of the door, and I became aware that the vigilance of the sentry knew no relaxation. I took down the coat (the ray from the lantern at the grating playing about my legs as I did so), and as I gave it an awkward tug to get it off its peg, down came the four hats which hung just under its skirts, and rolled merrily off on their edges. I picked up Denner's, Thal's, and my own, but Piccolo's had rolled farther away, into the tail of the long ray cast by the sentry's lantern; and lay on its side, with its white silk lining, brand-new, and totally uninjured, distinctly visible. Actuated by an impulse as quick as thought, I lowered the coat in my hand so as to sweep the hat along in the direction of my mattress, and then, having placed the additional covering over the sick man's shoulders, I returned to my bed, and lay perfectly still until the light from the other side of the grating was removed. I allowed fully a quarter of an hour to elapse before I put out my hand and felt gently for the hat. It was close by, and between it and the light from the door, if it should be again turned on, stood a clumsy chair, on which I had placed my waistcoat and trousers; the former hanging over the seat, and nearly touching the ground. The feeble glimmer of the gas-jet was but of small service to me, but I contrived to make it of some use, and, without sitting up, to satisfy myself that the lining of M. Pierre Olivier Potin's hat had never been cut with a knife, or subjected to any rough usage whatever! What did this mean? I felt the lining and the crown of the hat

with the minutest care, thinking it just possible that the whole story might be a delusion, the first hallucination-passage of the fever which was evidently fastening on our fellow prisoner; felt it once, without result; again, and satisfied myself that there was a suspicious thickness in one spot. I slid my hand along the floor until it touched my waistcoat, and gently drew a pen-knife out of the pocket. Then I again waited, allowing several minutes to pass before I drew the hat under the sheltering bedclothes, and began to cut the lining open, with the utmost caution, at the spot where I had detected the thickness. The result of my experiment was that I found a fold of the silk skilfully turned under, and hidden in it a flat packet of paper about two inches square. To describe the suspense, the bewilderment in which I passed the hours of that night, during which Piccolo did not call me, or require any tending which would have given me a safe excuse for demanding more light, is beyond my power. When the morning dawned the fire was extinct, he and the others were sleeping quietly, and I was able, unobserved—by timing my peeps at the packet which I had held tightly in my hand all night, to the withdrawal of the sentry's face from the grating—to ascertain that it consisted of the identical papers which M. Pierre Olivier Potin had described, and which were more than enough to have procured for him a speedy death, and no shrift at all, from the powers which then were at Versailles.

I rose, put on my trousers and waistcoat, slipped the packet into my breast, dexterously tripped up the chair, and in picking it up contrived to strike the hat so that it was set spinning into a corner. I then approached the grating in the door. Instantly the sentry's face appeared on the other side.

"The Signor Piccolo is worse," I said; "he is shivering, and there is no fire. The Herr Doctor ordered that he should have warmth. Can I have any fire?"

"Yes, you can, it's the Herr Doctor's orders," said a gruff voice. "You can light it yourself."

"I have nothing to light it with."

"Your friends have not used all the wax lights they have for their good cigars," was the satisfactory reply, in an envious growl; "and you're surely not travelling without a love-letter or two."

Delicious insolence! far beyond the most

refined civility. A few moments more saw me down upon my knees before the open fireplace, coaxing the ash-covered logs to ignite by a lavish expenditure of "Vestas," assisted by the combustion of the packet, which might have been equivalent to a sentence of death. I was conscious the whole time of the sulky satisfaction with which the sentry watched my clumsy efforts to light the fire, which were, however, effectual at length.

In two days from that time we were set free. A brief intimation that we might depart—the authorities having apparently satisfied themselves that we were really the persons whom we had represented ourselves to be, and not those whose arrival their spies had prepared them to expect—unaccompanied by any explanation or apology, was made to us. In the meantime we had been again interrogated, and were more than ever closely watched. Poor Piccolo (for so Denner, Thal, and myself always called him) continued very ill, and when the order for our release came we did not exactly know what to do with him. It was evident we could not leave him at Versailles, so we determined to take him with us at any risk, short of killing him, which the doctor said we should not incur; he would pull through. He did pull through, and so did we, but he had been nearly a month in England, and had put the balance of his fever, as Denner called it, comfortably over him there, before his troubled wits cleared themselves. Then he was brought to understand that it was I who had found and destroyed the papers, which might have been fatal; and that the circumstantial story he had told me, which had guided me to their discovery, was only the merciful and mysterious warning of a dream.

UNDER THE HAMMER.

TATTERSALL'S.

THE CORNER.

NEARLY opposite to that well-known tavern, the Hercules Pillars, which then occupied the site of Apsley House, stood, a century and a quarter ago, a heavy, ugly-looking building, which once housed Pope's "Sober Lanesborough dancing with the gout," and which has since become the hospital known as St. George's. At this period Belgravia consisted of open fields, running pleasantly down to the river, and the hospital enjoyed the isolation peculiarly desirable in such institu-

tions. Thirty years later, in 1780, it acquired a remarkable neighbour—the establishment now known, wherever the English tongue is spoken, as Tattersall's. The situation then was exceptionally lonely—famous for nightingales and foot-pads—so that Tattersall's was, perhaps, not unwilling to grow up even under the shadow of an hospital—as houses, in the old feudal times, snuggled closely up under the lee of a fortalice. For a long while afterwards the famous "Corner" was almost in the country, albeit situated between the Parks; and just previous to the outcrop of bricks and mortar, which converted the "Five-fields" into a centre of fashion, the said fields were the favourite Sunday morning resort of dog-fighters and cock-fighters; and, on more than one occasion, a "turn-up," as an impromptu prize-fight was then called, "came off" where Belgrave-square now stands.

The Tattersall family and "the Corner" itself were founded by Mr. Richard Tattersall, whose portrait is yet extant—a hearty, ruddy, healthy English yeoman, looking thoughtfully out from a red waistcoat of ample proportions, and a blue coat of sporting cut, adorned with brass buttons. This original Tattersall was a noteworthy man, of the solid, English, quiet order of beings—a man evidently not of words, but of deeds; the most unlikely man, at first sight, to prosper as an auctioneer. Special knowledge, however, he most unquestionably had, having been training-groom to the second and last Duke of Kingston, husband of "the Chudleigh" of doubtful immortality. When the poor duke, who, says Leigh Hunt, "appears never to have outgrown the teens of his understanding," escaped "the Chudleigh" by dying, Mr. Tattersall renounced the idea of further service, and, sometime between 1773 and 1780, organised a business of his own. He appears to have been possessed of considerable capital, for in 1779 he bought of Lord Bolingbroke the famous horse "High-flyer," for "two thousand five hundred pounds of lawful money of Great Britain." He became so much attached to this celebrated racer, by whom he made his fortune, that he gave the name of "High-flyer Hall" to a house he built in the Isle of Ely. This English worthy died in 1795, at the ripe age of seventy-two, and was succeeded by his son, Mr. Edmund Tattersall, who, dying suddenly, left the charge of "the Corner" to his son, Richard

the second—the celebrated "Dick" Tattersall, of whom so many good stories are told. This gentleman, who died in 1858, at Dover, of exhaustion, brought on by the heat, preserved to his dying hour that family horror of dodging and roguery of every kind, which has been the corner-stone of Tattersall's. Strange to relate, Mr. Tattersall entertained a most intense dislike to professional betting, and nothing pleased him so much as keeping young men from becoming members of the Rooms. When written to by juvenile aspirants anxious to become members of Tattersall's, he was very apt to write a line in reply, setting forth the evils of betting and the risk of ruin, and advising the writer to keep his two guineas in his pocket. Still, as the Rooms were to be carried on somehow, and Mr. Tattersall's scruples gave offence in certain quarters, he found it best to hand over the management of them to a committee. For very many years Mr. Richard Tattersall's house was the London head-quarters of the Jockey Club, who had a regular cook and coffee-room there, so that racing and betting were too intimately connected with the institution to be cast off readily. The disastrous partnership between Mr. "Dick's" father and the Prince Regent, during which they were cast in damages for five thousand pounds, was only one incident of the long friendship existing between the Royal and Tattersall families. King George the Fourth, whose bust, at the age of seventeen, in a queer cocked hat and tie wig, still surmounts the pump cupola, made Mr. Tattersall his almoner when any of his old sporting friends became really out at elbows. At the word of the almoner, cheques for all amounts—from one hundred to five hundred pounds—were dispensed to the dilapidated bloods who had once upon a time played Pains to the wild prince. Like many more sturdy haters of gambling, Mr. Tattersall was an enthusiastic rider across country, and feared not at all to take long lonely rides by night through the Midlands. He was said to be "free of the road," as no highwayman would molest him, and even a pickpocket returned his handkerchief "with compliments, taken quite by mistake." Burglars, however, were less scrupulous; a "monkey" was once purloined from the office, and one "Slender Billy," a great purveyor of sport to the "Corinthians," was strongly suspected of the sacrilegious outrage. This renowned character carried on various

professions, and achieved glory in them all. The combination of an illicit still with a knacker's yard had, it was said, once brought a gauger down upon the Slender one, who was openly accused of having popped his enemy into the flesh copper. He was, moreover, implicated in a little affair about the communion-plate at St. Paul's, and had defended his crib at Willow-walk, Tothill-fields, against the Bow-street runners, by letting loose his bears upon them. Billy had always on hand a choice collection of bears, cocks, badgers, terriers, and rats, and would knock up a bull-bait or a rat-hunt at a moment's notice. Billy was also a clever hand at getting back property for a suitable reward "and no questions asked;" but, led away by ambition, he at last attempted too high a flight, and came under the operation of the Forgery Act. It was proved that he could neither read nor write; but that availed him little, and he was sentenced to be hanged. Mr. Tattersall visited Billy in the condemned cell, and urged him to make a clean breast of it and confess his associates, and received the following memorable reply: "No, master, they'll never say that Slender Billy split on his pals; if every hair on my head was alive, and had to be hung separate, I wouldn't." Die he did, and "game," as was remarked by Mr. Dan Dawson, destined himself to wear the fatal nightcap on Cambridge gaol not long afterwards.

Fond of hunting, Mr. Tattersall loved the road almost as much as the field, but confessed his inferiority in coaching work and coaching language to his great friend, John Warde. Dogs he loved greatly, and got the best one he ever had through his hasty kindness. Observing the more than half-starved creature that had wandered into his yard, he told the groom to "give the poor wretch something to eat." The man kept it for two months, when, having been tried at badgers, the animal became the cherished pet of Mr. Tattersall, and would allow no one else to touch it. One day it was challenged by its old master in Piccadilly, but the sagacious animal repudiated the connection, and the challenger did not accept the offer to "take him if you can."

Before his father's death, Mr. Tattersall commenced the famous Monday feasts, at which the Doncaster Cup, with the two horse-handles, won by Crookshanks in 1781, always held the punch; and a silver

fox-head, which held nearly a pint, was presented brimming with port to each guest, who was required to drain it to the health of John Warde and the noble science—and no heel-taps. The Derby dinner, held late in the week before Epsom, was a more important ceremonial, graced with venison from Goodwood, and prime Rhenish, presented to the host by his foreign friends. After dinner the Derby lottery, of two sovereigns each, was solemnly drawn, the elder Mathews often acting as Mr. Tattersall's deputy, in the performance of this important ceremony. Charles Young was another welcome guest, as were "Plenipo" Batson, Ormsby Gore, Captain Meynell, Jack Masters, the Duke of Holstein, the Hon. Fitzroy Stanhope, and others famous on race-course and hunting-field, who, like old Tattersall's itself, have passed away from the busy London world.

At old Tattersall's a narrow passage led to the yard and the subscription-rooms. The court-yard was adorned by a pump, covered by a domed structure of classical outline. Over the dome was the bust of George the Fourth, previously alluded to, and beneath its shelter the genius loci—the fox. As Troy had its statue of Pallas, Ephesus its Diana of olive-wood, and old Rome its lightning-scared wolf, so has Tattersall's its fox, duly enshrined and treated with all fitting reverence. An experienced fox, this familiar spirit of "the Corner." On many generations of horses and dogs, of men and books, has *Vulpes* peered sharply. Under that scrutinising glance of his have passed terribly high-bred cattle, and, for that matter, terribly high-bred men, now flushed with youth, health, and success, and anon about to send their stud to the hammer, to parry an "awful settling-day." Under his sharp nose have dawdled and chatted, sauntered and lingered, great nobles; expectant heirs; statesmen of world-wide renown; soldiers and sailors, whose names are written in big letters in English history; sturdy squires; smart younger brothers; successful butchers; sporting publicans; and bluff bettors round, who would lay my lord the odds to lose twenty, nay, forty thousand on the Derby; and, what is more, pay if they lost—the indispensable condition of remaining a member of the room. Granted this important condition of solvency, no sixteen quarterings are demanded of candidates for membership; and in one of the most aristocratic countries in the world may

be seen a perfectly democratic community, constructed on the principle, laid down by one whose own pride of birth was unequalled—"All equal on the turf and under the turf."

Let us stroll leisurely for half an hour about the old "Corner," harking back a little more than a decade, to Blair Athol's year. The Derby has been run and won, and the Oaks to boot. On the last day of the week the demand for stamped paper has been excessive, and the coffers of Israel have been greatly relieved of their plethora, for to-day is Black Monday, the "settling-day" after Epsom Summer Meeting. There is a crowd in the old narrow yard. Profane bettors, not admitted to the subscription-rooms, are lying in wait to pounce on members, as they issue from the sacred portals, and "draw" their winnings of them. A certain uneasiness is felt by the outer vulgar, for we are in the midst of the "plunging" era, and the Derby victory of a comparative outsider has sorely discomfited the general public. A bad settling is anticipated, and the croakers are as loud as usual with their dismal prophecies. Pushing through the expectant crowd we make our way into the queer old room with the circular desk, crowded with busy bookmakers, struggling hard to get through their accounts. It is dusty and hot in this temple of Plutus, and we find it pleasanter to breathe the sweet summer air on the lawn, a cheerful patch of emblematic turf, adorned with a solitary tree, under which many rich farms and fat vales, wild stretches of purple moorland and brawling trout streams, have changed hands. An iron railing keeps the tag-rag and bobtail off this pretty bit of verdure, so refreshing to eyes weary with poring over the odds. Considering what they have gone through last week, the "plungers" look remarkably well, and excite the admiration of "'Arry," who, clinging on to the railing, is giving his country cousin a treat of "gapeseed" at the magnates of the Turf. "'Arry," born within sound of Bow Bells, clad in a very horsey coat—all pockets, and flaps, and great seams—curiously adhesive "pants," blue bird's-eye scarf with a snaffle pin, ample waistcoat, ditto gold chain with horse's hoof dangling therefrom, and a "five to two" hat, is quite competent to explain to the young man from the country "who is who," even if the countryman mayhap knows better "what is what." "'Arry" is in his own

circle a great authority on turf matters. He—lucky dog—gets that peculiar "tip" said to be "straight." He is not to be caught with chaff—not he. He insists on knowing whether the "stable-money" is "right," before "dashing down" his investments. He is cautious, our friend 'Arry. He finds out about the private trials, and speaks contemptuously of racing prophets. Moreover, he stands in a bit with a waiter who makes a "hundred-pound book," and is the actual capitalist at the back of poor little Tongsley, the barber, who never refuses money, and will bet an errand-boy a hundred to three in sixpences. 'Arry knows the lords and the layers excellently well "by sight," and is much impressed by the attitude of those whom he calls the "real swells;" but his hearty enthusiasm is reserved for another manner of man, or, as they say at Jerome Park, "another breed o' cats." His heart—such as it is—bounds with noble ambition as he points out to his companion the hero of the day, that tall, strapping Yorkshireman, broad of shoulder and loud of tongue, who proclaims his wish to bet on the St. Leger. Last year he laid eleven thousand to one thousand against Lord Clifden for the St. Leger, and he has just won forty thousand on Blair Athol. He is John Jackson—Jock o' Fairfield, the "Leviathan" of the Ring, vice Davis, retired, and a man of mark indeed in the eyes of 'Arry and his like.

Business goes briskly on, heavy sums are exchanged, and no defaulters are yet hinted at. After all the croaking, the "settling" is a good one. People overburdened with money are heard to complain of the unreasonable shortness of banking hours, and there is great buttoning up of breastpockets as the crowd disperses from the last Derby settling ever held at old Tattersall's, and 'Arry walks off his country cousin to settle up with little Tongsley, who has "made his book" for the winner, and is a happy man.

NEW TATTERSALL'S.

BETWEEN the canonisation of Blair Athol and that of Gladiateur in the following year, Messrs. Richard and Edmund Tattersall the younger removed their business to Knightsbridge. Great care and much money were expended in making the new establishment perfectly commodious. Through a broad archway; past our old friend the pump, carefully removed and set up again; pig-tailed George; tutelar

fox, and all, we reach a large covered building, admirably lighted and furnished with ample stabling, a spacious gallery for carriages, and a handsome rostrum with a sounding board. At the old "Corner," bidders and bettors entered at one passage; but in the new institution the sheep are at once separated from the goats. On the right of the visitor are the offices in which is conducted the business of Messrs., or, rather, of Mr. Edmund Tattersall—Mr. Richard, third of that name, being now no more. On the left is a building like in outward appearance to that on the right, but approached by a narrow way jealously guarded, for this is the new subscription-room. A very handsome room it is, tastefully decorated and provided with convenient seats and desks; so that a man, having drawn some thousands from his bankers in the morning, has only to sit down and pay away his money as merrily as he may. The opening of this elegant room was celebrated by the members with a dinner to the Messrs. Tattersall, to express the gratitude of the sporting world for its fine new lodgings. I remember me well of that famous banquet; of the hundreds of massive race cups, lent by their owners to grace the dinner-table; of the mighty pyramids of flowers, set between the great gold and silver groups and vases, to lighten the general effect; of the asparagus and early strawberries; of the chairman and his hearty manner; of Mr. George Payne's witty oration in proposing the health of "The Ring;" and of the reply thereto by bluff "Stevey," soon to come to a sad end, poor fellow! I remember me also of a "mauvais plaisant," my neighbour, who hinted that the gathering offered a fine chance for a modern Guy Fawkes, and proposed, as an inscription to be placed over the door of the new room, Gray's line—

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,

and I also distinctly recollect avenging myself on that untimely joker by taking of him the odds against Gladiateur for the Derby. It was a cheery meeting this, of "layers" and "backers," the lion and the lamb for once lying down together. Under the ruins of that banquet we buried old Tattersall's, and poured forth plentiful libations to its memory.

As the new room came into use, the lawn of the old one was terribly regretted, and continually sighed for; and, moreover,

with the perversity of mankind, who generally throw over things just as they are made perfect, members at once showed a disposition to get through the bulk of their business elsewhere. For a long time had been growing the practice of employing commissioners, both to bet and to settle accounts, at the various turf clubs; and so swiftly did this increase after the move of Tattersall's westward, that the dealings there soon came to be considered merely supplementary to the more serious business of the morning. Tattersall's has thus become rather a fashionable than an important betting centre. The great moves are made in the morning farther east, and are only slightly checked or accelerated by the doings at Knightsbridge. Nevertheless, a crowd assembles round the gate of the Rooms on Mondays, and "outside men" find it convenient to settle hard by Knightsbridge-green. In the room itself many changes have taken place. Jackson and poor "Stevey" are gathered to their fathers, and the modern Leviathans are a much more easy-going folk. Time, too, has made sad havoc among the "upper ten." Death has claimed the unlucky prince of plungers, and the pace has told severely on many more heroes of his time. The colours, "red and white hoops," of the triple-crowned owner of Lady Elizabeth are now the property of one of the shrewdest and most popular of the new Leviathans; an excellent omen, for did not Mr. Snewing's Caractacus win the Derby in the "sky blue and white cap," which Lord George himself, the previous possessor, could never get first past the post for that race? The famous "cherry and black cap" are, at the moment of writing, vacant, by the death of their accomplished owner; but Sir Joseph's commissioner, who knows what it is to have horses in training, will possibly consider them as his legitimate inheritance.

The strict enforcement of the various Acts against ready-money betting has cleared out many "commission agents," and France has drawn heavily on the ranks of the "professionals." Many of the frequenters of old Tattersall's are established comfortably in Paris, and make their appearance at Knightsbridge only at infrequent intervals.

It is dull work looking in vain for well-known faces, so let us take a turn on the "legitimate" side and see Mr. Tattersall knocking down successive lots, brought out one by one, and exposed to the critical

eyes of vendors. Swiftly come and swiftly go—mostly “without reserve”—goodly hunters and hacks, up to all sorts of weights; winners of flat races, hurdle races, and steeplechases; thorough-breds with illustrious pedigrees, and “useful” animals without any; descendants of Derby winners and of sires who, in their day, “were sure to win,” but, by some fatality, “walked in with the crowd;” clever cobs; barouche horses; and those wonderful animals equal to either fortune, who are quiet in single and double harness, are good hacks, and have carried a lady. The horses themselves display a jaunty air, and evidently feel themselves the heroes of the hour; vastly unlike the poor dogs at Leadenhall-market, who look imploringly at the passers-by, and bark to each other Jack Johnson’s aspiration—

I wish to God that somebody would buy us.

Not only on his own premises does Mr. Tattersall wield the hammer, but presides over many great sales of blood stock, where lucky and rich turfites compete eagerly for promising yearlings—too often only “promising.” His name, in fact, is bound up with the most glorious associations of English horseflesh, and adorned by the traditions of a family whose dealings have ever been scrupulously honourable. So great is the renown of the house of Tattersall for extreme nicety in all its transactions, that it would seem to have been specially created to disprove the thesis of those who insist that contact with horseflesh tends to the relaxation of the moral sense.

As I stroll out of new Tattersall’s, revolving many things—chariots and horses, books and men—I am accosted by a seedy young man, who evidently knows me. It is astonishing what a memory shabby people have. Older, by twenty years, judging from appearances, it is indeed no other than our ingenious friend “’Arry,” whom we left rejoicing over his winnings and determined to become a Leviathan. For a while after he prospered, and was always pestering me to “patronise his little book,” but I had ultimately lost sight of him. Turf mushrooms often spring up in a night, and wither again, like the prophet’s pumpkin. They then disappear into utter darkness, and, like the lost Pleiad, are seen no more. ‘Arry’s “little book” had not, so he said, turned out a success. He wanted “the nerve,” I think he called it,

to “lay agin’ certainties,” and hence his present plight. I prepared to bid him farewell, when he asked the loan of a “dollar,” not for such base requirements as meat and drink, but to back an absolute “certainty” for the Derby at a long price. I believe the infatuated creature duly invested that dollar on I know not what animal, and I sincerely hope he may win.

A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF “BLACK SHEEP,” “CASTAWAY,” “THE YELLOW FLAG,” &c. &c.

BOOK III. CHAPTER XI. THE LAST SACRIFICE.

THERE is little need to tell that Anne Studley, when she gave up the charge of the poor maimed woman, whose revelation had made such a difference in her life, at the same time abandoned her assumed name of Gaynor, and took up her abode at the Hermitage with Grace Middleham, “to remain there for life,” Grace said, as she welcomed her long-lost friend; but Anne smiled quietly, and shook her head. She said nothing, but she had her own notions that an alteration in the domestic affairs might possibly be made soon, when a re-arrangement of the household would be necessary.

And before she had been an inmate of the Hermitage for a month, that which had been a shrewd suspicion grew to be an undoubted certainty. Anne Studley saw that the measure of her sorrow was not yet full, and that there was still another sacrifice which it was necessary for her to make. When, in the depth of her despair, she had abandoned the quiet family in the little German town, where, up to that time, what had been the most peaceful, if not the happiest portion of her existence, had been passed; and arriving solitary and friendless in London, had determined upon pursuing the avocation of a hospital nurse, as the one which, by entirely engrossing her time, would give her no scope for reflection or recollection, she found she had miscalculated her powers of endurance, and but for one circumstance would have retired from her newly-elected occupation in disgust. The chance meeting with Clement Burton, brought about in the mutual discharge of their professional duties, induced her to persevere in her original idea. The intelligent young surgeon not merely recognised that Anne’s clear head and practical sense would be of great value in the calling

she had chosen, but, reading between the lines, he was enabled to perceive the necessity for her immersion in some daily routine which should prevent her thoughts from dwelling on her past career. With much gentle skill and judgment, and without the least appearance of busying himself with her affairs, he contrived to let her see the importance he attached to her assistance, and gradually won her to regard her duties with interest. That interest was not limited to her occupation, but extended to him who had been the means of procuring it for her. Meeting daily as they did, Anne had every opportunity of observing Clement Burton's noble qualities—his kindness of heart, his patience, his devotion to the humblest of those who were brought under his care. It had never previously been her lot to meet with such a man, and it was not difficult to guess the result. Her early appreciation of his goodness deepened by degrees into a stronger feeling, and long before, at his suggestion, she had gone in attendance on Lydia Walton, she knew that her heart, which had refused to listen to the honest pleadings of Franz Eckhardt, and had never before been touched, was hers no longer. She loved Clement Burton with a silent, deep, but entirely hopeless love; hopeless, not merely on account of the barrier erected between them by her previous marriage, but from the fact, which she did not attempt to disguise from herself, that of her passion there was, on Clement's part, no return. He appreciated her, respected her, liked her—she knew that; no brother could have treated her with greater regard; but the feelings by which he was actuated were plainly different to hers, and never could become the same.

She acknowledged all this before she knew of Clement's acquaintance with Grace Middleham; but from the time that she first saw them together, she knew that whatever little remnant of hope had remained concealed in her bosom must be given up, and that her fate was fixed. The barrier of her marriage had been broken down by Lydia Walton's disclosure, but one quite as impassable reared itself in the vacant place. Her clear eyes saw in an instant that Clement loved Grace, and that his love was returned, and a very little study of the case showed her exactly how matters stood between them; her lengthened intercourse with the young man had given

her a keen insight into his character. He had often talked freely with her of himself and his affairs; she knew his firm sense of honour, and was certain that he had never so much as hinted to Grace the state of his feelings towards her. Had the woman he loved been in a different position, it was probable, Anne thought, that Clement would long since have asked her to share his lot; but the fact that Grace was an heiress had kept him silent. He was in a good practice and position now, and could well afford to maintain a wife out of his professional earnings; but he was a proud man, and keenly sensitive, and would shrink from the idea that even the merest gossip of the world should accuse him of having paid court to the heiress from interested motives.

All that Anne surmised was true; true now to a greater extent than she suspected. The regard which Clement Burton felt for Miss Middleham on their first acquaintance had grown with their daily intercourse, and had at last attained such proportions as rendered it necessary for him to take some decisive step. What that step should be, required in his mind but short consideration.

The feelings with which Anne had accredited him existed even more vividly than she had imagined, and though he would have given all that he possessed to call Grace his wife, he feared to declare himself to her, lest his motives should be misunderstood. In the course of his experience he had frequently heard stories of doctors perverting the confidence which had been placed in them professionally to their own private ends, and the mere idea, that such an accusation should be brought against him, filled him with horror and dismay. Better trample out the fire which was consuming him and go away, leaving no sign. It was time the present condition of affairs should cease; and he set himself to work to bring about the end.

When Mr. Burton's mind was once made up, he was prompt in action, and three days after his determination he presented himself at the Hermitage. The friends were in the drawing-room—Miss Middleham at work, while Anne was reading to her. After the ordinary commonplaces, Clement said, in as gay a tone as he could assume, "I have come to make a little revelation, which, I think, will surprise, and which I am selfish enough to hope may grieve you."

Both the girls looked up instantly;

Grace in astonishment, Annie with an odd prescience of what was coming.

Anne was the first to speak. "Something which will grieve us?" she repeated.

"I hope so," said Clement. "Odd though it may sound, I hope that the interest you both take in me is sufficient for you to be sorry to hear that I am going to leave you."

The usual colour fled from Grace's cheeks as she said, "To leave us, Mr. Burton; you don't mean for long, I suppose?"

"For long? Certainly," he replied; "possibly for life."

Anne was silent; but Grace said, in a faint low tone, "What can you mean? Surely this is very sudden?"

"The decision is sudden," Clement said, "though I have had the idea for some time in my mind. The fact is, that I find this kind of work telling upon me, and I have long been desirous for a change. I think I explained to you, Miss Middleham, that my own inclination did not lead me to my profession, and that I only took to it from necessity. I have nothing to complain of my success in it, and it has made me many kind friends; but I rather pine for freedom, and now there is a chance of obtaining it."

A dead silence ensued, to break which Anne said, "You are not going then to pursue your profession abroad, Mr. Burton?"

"No," he said, as though suddenly recalling himself from a dream. "The fact is, that a patient of mine, and a kind friend as well, has received the appointment as governor to one of the West India islands. He takes me out with him as his secretary, and promises me that my work shall be nominal, and that I shall have plenty of time for any literary or scientific pursuits which I may choose to indulge in."

Still Grace was silent; but Anne said, in a hard voice, "The temptation is a great one—when do you go?"

"My friend thinks of sailing in about ten days' time, but nothing is as yet decided. He only made me the offer last night, and you are the first to whom I have communicated it."

"We ought to be greatly obliged to Mr. Burton for his selection of us to share his confidence, ought we not, Grace?" said Anne. "Come, dear, you have promised me a drive to Richmond this morning, and the best of the sunshine will be lost if we delay." Then Grace, managing to regain her self-possession, said a few words, and Mr. Burton took his leave.

That was a silent drive to Richmond, for each of the ladies was too much immersed in her own thoughts to speak. The shock which Miss Middleham had received at the announcement of Clement Burton's intended departure, and the consequent alteration in her whole life; the loss of something which she looked forward to from day to day, the breaking up of that delightful communing which she regarded as the principal solace of her life, had been almost too much for her. Whatever dreams she had indulged in seemed now to be hopelessly shattered. He could never have cared for her, or he would not have allowed himself to be carried away on so comparatively slight a pretext. All the kindness and attention, then, which he had paid her, had been prompted by friendship—nothing more; and, imputing no blame to him, Grace owned she had cruelly deceived herself. From everyone, even from Anne, she tried to hide any expression of her feelings, but this was beyond her control; and as she lay back in the carriage, recalling the pleasures of the past, and mourning over the flight of the happiness which she had anticipated in the future, tears of disappointment, scarcely hidden by her veil, rolled down her cheeks.

Her companion was equally silent, equally preoccupied, and if her eyes were dry, her mind, at least, was as much disturbed. The story which she had heard Clement Burton tell that morning, and the scene which she had witnessed, were, to her, ample confirmation of what she had long suspected. She now was certain that the young surgeon had found himself unable any longer to go quietly through the ordinary routine of life, and be constantly in the presence of his idol, without declaring himself. To avow his passion and ask her hand would be, according to his supersensitiveness, an act of meanness and disloyalty, and he had, therefore, sought for this appointment as a means of escape from the dilemma. His heart was breaking at the idea of separating from Grace, but it was, in his opinion, the voice of honour which bade him go, and he hesitated not. Nor had Anne any longer any doubt, if such had ever possessed her mind, that her friend returned Clement Burton's affection. The sudden change in her appearance when Clement announced his departure; her altered demeanour ever since; the half-hysterical state in which, though she strove to disguise it, she then

was—all showed that she was passing through no ordinary trial.

And, above all, Anne felt herself called upon to make the crowning sacrifice of her life, by stifling for ever the deep attachment she had silently nourished, and solving the difficulty which existed between those two. It could be done, she thought—the misunderstanding could be at once removed—if she only had the courage to efface herself, and to act as interpreter between them. If Clement could be persuaded that Grace was really attached to him, and that in demanding her hand he would be behaving honourably, his motive being beyond question, he would only too gladly obey the suggestion. As for Grace, to bring her lover to her feet would be recalling her to life. Here was a way, then, Anne thought, of repaying all the friendship which she had received at Grace's hands; and when she remembered the devotion existent from their school-days, and, even at that present moment, manifest in each of Grace's words and acts towards her, she felt that, though her own immolation was a part of the scheme, she could yield herself up without a murmur.

That night Anne Studley wrote to Mr. Burton a note, requesting him to call and see her the next morning, as she wished particularly to consult him. He was not to mention having received the note, and, if he saw Miss Middleham, was to make it appear to her that his visit was an ordinary one. Just before the time when she expected the young surgeon, Anne Studley took Grace with her into the morning-room, out of which, through heavy velvet portières, opened a pretty little conservatory filled with exotics, and with a fountain plashing in its midst. As they were sitting idly talking, the conversation being mostly carried on by Anne—for Grace was meditative and preoccupied—Mr. Burton was announced.

"Stay, Jennings," said Anne to the servant, quickly, "one minute before you let him in. Grace, dear, I have a particular desire you should not see Mr. Burton this morning; at all events, until I have spoken to him upon some very important business of my own."

The blush was on Grace's face in an instant. "What can I do?" she said. "If I go out I shall meet him in the hall."

"Step into the conservatory," said Anne; "you can pass through and go out by the other door. Now, Jennings, show Mr. Burton in."

But when Grace tried the outer door of the conservatory, she found it locked on the outside, and as Mr. Burton was already in the room, she was compelled to remain in hiding.

"You see I have obeyed your commands, Miss Studley," was Clement's salutation, "and I am here."

"It was very good of you to come," said Anne, quietly; "but I think, before our interview is ended, you will see the necessity for my somewhat apparently brusque summons. You used to say," she added, with a slight colour rising, but fading as suddenly as it came, "in the old days, when I was Mrs. Gaynor—you used to say that one of my chief merits was frankness."

"I never knew you to be otherwise than thoroughly frank and thoroughly trustworthy," he said.

"And you will find, I hope, that those qualities have not deserted me. In all I am going to say to you now I shall be thoroughly frank—too frank for politeness, perhaps, but not for truth; certainly not too frank, considering how very nearly the happiness of one so dear to me is concerned."

He started, and looked at her keenly. "I am afraid I do not comprehend you, Miss Studley," he said.

"I think you do," she replied, quietly; "or, at all events, have some glimmering of what I mean. Mr. Burton, you love my friend, Grace Middleham!"

He started, and cried, in an excited tone, "What makes you think that?"

"My own observation; my own intuitive knowledge," she said.

"I am not answerable for your own observation, nor for your intuitive knowledge, Miss Studley. I can only say that such knowledge could never have been derived from anything which I have ever said—or done."

"You may have your words and actions under command, Mr. Burton," she replied, "and yet involuntarily have given me reason to suspect what I have just averred. You love Grace Middleham, I repeat!"

"And what if I do?" he cried, suddenly. "It is not a confession which I should have voluntarily made; and yet, inexplicable as my hesitation may seem to you, it is one in which I glory."

"And yet, for the sake of improving your position, you would readily forsake her?"

"For the sake of improving my position!" he cried.

"Is it not so?" said Anne, scornfully. "You pretend to yourself that you love this girl, and yet, when the opportunity offers for you to get rid of the profession which you never liked, and of which you are thoroughly wearied—when you see a chance of easily obtaining change of scene, and of leading a more congenial life, you do not hesitate to accept it and to throw your fine feelings to the winds."

"You scarcely know what you are saying, Miss Studley," said Clement, quietly.

"Do I not?" said Anne; "I think I do. I think anyone before whom the circumstances were brought would not hesitate to decide with me that, however much you may imagine yourself to be in love, in the course which you propose to take you are selfishly preferring your own ease and comfort, and the improvement of your position, to the love which you profess to feel."

Clement Burton rose from his chair and stood before her, hat in hand. "You told me that you would be frank, Miss Studley, and I expected plain speaking from you; but I was, I confess, but little prepared for the turn which your observations have taken. This is the first, and it must be the last, time on which this subject shall ever be mentioned between us. My frankness, therefore, shall be as great as your own, and I hope it will have the effect of leaving a different impression on you. You have guessed rightly that I love Miss Middleham, but how deeply I love her you will never know. For that love I am prepared—nay, I am about to sacrifice what is to me the whole pleasure of existence—being with her, the seeing and hearing her, the breathing the air she breathes, the knowledge that this delight is to be renewed from day to day—for that love I am giving up the practice, to secure which I have toiled early and late, and the prospects which are opening before me; and I do this, I keep silence before her, and leave her presence for ever without having breathed one word of my hopes, because I will not have it said that I, the poor surgeon, made use of my professional opportunities to gain the confidence of the wealthy heiress for my own purposes. If Miss Middleham had herself been poor, I

should, months ago, have put to her the question with which my heart had been so long troubled, and asked her to become my wife."

He spoke with trembling lips and pallid cheeks. When he had come to an end he made a bow, and was turning away, but Anne caught him by the arm.

"Don't you think it fair?" she said, "that Miss Middleham should know the state of your feelings—should have an opportunity of answering that question?"

"She shall never have it from me," said Clement, with a sigh.

"But suppose she has had it already," said Anne, drawing aside the curtain, and pointing to where Grace stood, her blushing face covered with her hands. "Suppose I have given her the chance of hearing and answering, don't you think it will be worth while to get her reply from her own lips?"

Clement Burton did not take up his appointment as secretary to the West India governor, but remained in London, where you have perhaps seen him very often, for he is one of our most eminent surgeons, and his practice is enormous. His wife, who is very pretty and much admired, wants him to retire, but he seems to be too much interested in his work. Mr. and Mrs. Burton are the active and generous patrons of a prosperous institution for training hospital nurses, at the head of which is Anne Studley, who devotes all her time to the institution. She lives in the house, and personally superintends an imbecile woman with a useless right arm, who sings very sweetly, and is happy in her mindless way, looking to Anne for everything, as a dog looks to its master.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

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BY FRANCIS ELKANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XVII.

ALGERNON was elated by the success of his song, and by Lady Seely's full acknowledgment of his cousinship, and he left the mansion in Mayfair in very good spirits, as has been said. But when he got back to his inn—a private hotel in a dingy street behind Oxford-street—he began to feel a recurrence of the disappointment which had oppressed him, when Lady Seely had declared so emphatically that my lord could do nothing for him, in the way of getting him a place. What was to be done? It was all very well for his mother to say that, with his talents and appearance, he must and would make his way to a high position; but, just and reasonable as it would be that his talents and appearance should give him success, he began to fear that they might not altogether avail to do so. He thought of Mr. Filthorpe—that substance, which Mr. Diamond had said they were deserting for the shadow of Seely—and of the thousands of pounds which the Bristol merchant possessed. Truly a stool in a counting-house was not the post which Algernon coveted. And he candidly told himself that he should not be able to fill it effectively. But, still, there would have been at least as good a chance of fascinating Mr. Filthorpe as of fascinating Lord Seely, and the looked-for result of the fascination in either case was to be absolution from the necessity of doing any disagreeable work whatever. And, more-

over, Mr. Filthorpe, at all events, would have supplied board and lodging and a small salary, whilst he was undergoing the process of being fascinated.

Algernon looked thoughtful and anxious, for full a quarter of an hour, as he pondered these things. But then he fell into a fit of laughter at the recollection of Lady Seely and Fido. "There is something very absurd about that old woman," said he to himself. "She is so impudent! And why wear a wig at all, if a wig is to be such a one as hers? A turban or a skull-cap would do just as well to cover her head with. But then they wouldn't be half so funny. Fido is something like his mistress—nearly as fat, and with the same style of profile."

Then he set himself to draw a caricature representing Fido, attired after the fashion of Lady Seely, and became quite cheerful and buoyant over it.

In the interval between the day of his visit to the Seelys and the Thursday on which he was to dine with them, Algernon made one or two calls, and delivered a couple of letters of introduction, with which his Whitford friends had furnished him. One was from Dr. Bodkin to an old-fashioned solicitor, who was reputed to be rich, but who lived in a very quiet way, in a very quiet square, and gave very quiet little dinners to a select few who could appreciate a really fine glass of port. The other letter was to a sister of young Mr. Pawkins, of Pudcombe Hall, married to the chief clerk of the Admiralty, who lived in a fashionable neighbourhood, and gave parties as fashionable as her visiting-list permitted, and by no means desired any special connoisseurship in wine on the part of her guests.

On the occasion of his first calls, Algernon found neither Mr. Leadbeater, the solicitor, nor Mrs. Machryn-Stables (that was the name of young Pawkins's sister) at home. So he left his letters and cards, and wandered about the streets in a rather forlorn way; for, although it was his first visit to London, it was not possible for him to get much enjoyment out of the metropolis, all alone. To him every place, even London, appeared in the light of a stage or background, whereon that supremely interesting personage, himself, might figure to more or less advantage. Now London is a big theatre. And although a big theatre full of spectators may be very exhilarating to the object of public attention who performs in it, a big theatre, practically barren of spectators—for, of course, the only real spectators are the spectators who look at *us*—is apt to oppress the mind with a sense of desertion. So he was very glad when Thursday evening came, and he found himself once more within the hall-door of Lord Seely's house.

My lord was in the drawing-room alone, standing on the hearth-rug. He shook hands very kindly with Algernon, and bade him come near to the fire and warm himself, for the evening was cold.

"And what have you been doing with yourself, Mr. Errington?" asked Lord Seely.

"I have been chiefly employed to-day in losing myself and asking my way," answered Algernon, laughing. And then he began an account of his adventures, and absolutely surprised himself by the amount of fun and sparkle he contrived to elicit from the narration of circumstances, which had been in fact dull and commonplace enough.

My lord was greatly amused, and once even laughed out loud at Algernon's imitation of an Irish apple-woman, who had misdirected him with the best intentions, and much calling down of blessings on his handsome face, in return for a silver sixpence.

"Capital!" said my lord, nodding his head up and down.

"The sixpence was badly invested, though," observed Algernon, "for she sent me about three miles out of my way."

"Ah, but the blarney! You forget the blessing and the blarney. Surely they were worth the money, eh?"

"No, my lord; not to me. I can't afford expensive luxuries."

Lady Seely, when she entered the room, gorgeous in pea-green satin, which singularly set off the somewhat pronounced tone of her rouge, found Algy and my lord laughing together very merrily, and, as she gave her hand to her young relative, demanded to be informed what the joke was.

Now it has been said that Algernon was possessed of wonderfully rapid powers of perception, and by sundry signs, so slight that they would have entirely escaped most observers, this clever young gentleman perceived that my lady was not altogether delighted, at finding her husband and himself on such easy and pleasant terms together. In fact, my lady, with all her blunt careless jollity of manner and pleasant, mellow voice, was apt to be both jealous and suspicious. She was jealous of her ascendancy over Lord Seely, who was said by the ill-natured to be completely under his wife's thumb, and she was suspicious of most strangers—especially of strangers who might be expected to want anything of his lordship. And she usually assumed that such persons would endeavour to "come over" that nobleman, when he was apart from his wife's protecting influence. She had a general theory that "men might be humbugged into anything;" and a particular experience that Lord Seely, despite his stiff carriage and abrupt manner, was in truth far softer-natured than she was herself.

"That young scamp has been coming over Valentine with his jokes and his flummery," said my lady to herself. "He's an Angram, every inch of him."

At that very moment Algernon was mentally declaring that the conquest of my lady would, after all, be a more difficult matter than that of my lord; but that, by some means or other, the conquest must be made, if any good was to come to him from the Seely connection. And a stream of easy chat flowed over these underlying intentions and hid them, except that here and there, perhaps, a bubble or an eddy told of rough places out of sight.

After some ten minutes of desultory talk, my lady was obliged to own to herself that the "young scamp" had a wonderfully good manner. Without a trace of servility, he was respectful; conveying, with perfect tact, exactly the sort of homage that was graceful and becoming from a youth like himself to persons of the Seelys' age and position. Neither did he commit the error of becoming familiar, in

response to Lady Seely's tone of familiarity, a pitfall which had before now entrapped the unwary. For my lady, whom Nature had created vulgar—having possibly, in the hurry of business, mistaken one kind of clay for another, and put some low person's mind into the fine porcelain of an undoubted Ancram—was fond of asserting her position in the world by a rough unceremoniousness in the first place, and a very wide-eyed arrogance in the second place, if such unceremoniousness chanced to be reciprocated by unauthorised persons.

"Do we wait for any one, Belinda?" asked Lord Seely.

"The Dormers are coming. They're such great musicians, you know. And I want Lady Harriet to hear this boy sing. And then there may be Jack Price, very likely."

"Very likely?" said my lord, raising his eyebrows and stiffening his back. "Doesn't Mr. Price do us the honour of saying positively whether he will come or not?"

"Oh, you know what Jack Price is. He says he'll come, and nine times out of ten he don't come; and then the tenth time he comes, and people have to put up with him."

My lord cleared his throat significantly, as who should say that he, at all events, did not feel inclined to put up with this system of tithes in the fulfilment of Mr. Jack Price's promises.

"If he comes," said Lady Seely, addressing Algernon, "you'll have to walk in to dinner by yourself. I've only got one young lady; and, if Jack comes, he must have her."

"Where is Castalia?" asked my lord.

"Oh, I suppose she's dressing. Castalia is always the slowest creature at her toilet I ever knew."

Algernon had read up the family genealogy in the "Peerage," under his mother's instructions, sufficiently to be aware that Lord and Lady Seely were childless, having lost their only son in a boating accident years ago. "Castalia," then, could not be a daughter of the house. Who was she? A young lady who was evidently at present living with the Seelys, whom they called by her Christian name, and who was habitually a long time at her toilet! Algernon felt a little agreeable excitement and curiosity on the subject of the tardy Castalia.

The door was thrown open. "Here she

comes!" thought Algernon, settling his cravat as he threw a quick side glance at a mirror.

"General and Lady Harriet Dormer," announced the servant.

There entered a tall elegant woman, leaning on the arm of a short, stout, benevolent-looking man in spectacles. To these personages Algernon was duly presented, being introduced, much to his gratification, by Lady Seely, as "A young cousin of mine, Mr. Ancram Errington, who has just come to town." Then, having made his bow to General Dormer, who smiled and shook hands with him, Algernon stood opposite to the graceful Lady Harriet, and was talked to very kindly and pleasantly, and felt extremely content with himself and his surroundings. Nevertheless he watched with some impatience for the appearance of "Castalia;" and forgot his usual self-possession so far, as to turn his head, and break off in the middle of a sentence he was uttering to Lady Harriet, when he heard the door open again. But once more he was disappointed; for, this time, dinner was announced, and Lord Seely offered his arm to Lady Harriet and led the way out of the room.

"No Jack!" said Lady Seely, as she passed out before Algernon. "And no Castalia!" said my lord over his shoulder, in a tone of vexation.

Algernon followed his seniors alone; but just as he got out on to the staircase there appeared a lady, leisurely descending from an upper floor, at whom Lord Seely looked up reproachfully.

"Late, late, Castalia!" said he, and shook his head solemnly.

"Oh no, Uncle Valentine; just in time," replied the lady.

"Castalia, take Ancram's arm, and do let us get to dinner before the soup is cold," said Lady Seely. "Give your arm to Miss Kilfane, and come along." And her ladyship's pea-green satin swept downstairs after Lady Harriet's sober purple draperies. Algernon bowed, and offered his arm to the lady beside him; she placed her hand on it almost without looking at him, and they entered the dining-room without having exchanged a word.

The dining-room was better lighted than the staircase, and Algernon took an early opportunity of looking at his companion. She was not very young, being, in fact, nearly thirty, but looking older. Neither was she handsome. She was very thin, sallow, and sickly-looking, with a small

round face, not wrinkled, but crumpled, as it were, into queer, fretful lines. Her eyes were bright and well-shaped, but deeply sunken, and she had a great deal of thick, pale-brown hair, worn in huge bows and festoons on the top of her head, according to the extreme of the mode of that day. Her dress displayed more than it was judicious to display, in an æsthetic point of view, of very lean shoulders, and was of a bright, soft, pink hue, that would have been trying to the most blooming complexion. Altogether, the Honourable Castalia Kilfinane's appearance was disappointing, and her manner was not so attractive as to make up for lack of beauty. Her face expressed a mixture of querulousness and hauteur, and she spoke in a languid drawl, with strange peevish inflections.

"You and I ought to be some sort of relations to each other, oughtn't we?" said Algernon, having taken in all the above particulars in a series of rapid observations.

"Why?" returned the lady, without raising her eyes from her soup-plate.

"Because you are Lady Seely's niece and I am her cousin."

"Who says that I am Lady Seely's niece?"

"I thought," stammered Algernon, "I fancied—you called Lord Seely 'Uncle Valentine?'"

Even his equanimity, and a certain glow of complacency he felt at finding himself where he was, were a little disturbed by Miss Castalia's freezing manner.

"I am Lord Seely's niece," returned she.

Then, after a little pause, having finished her soup, she leaned back in her chair and stared at Algernon, who pretended—not quite successfully—to be unconscious of her scrutiny. Apparently, the result of it was favourable to Algernon; for the lady's manner thawed perceptibly, and she began to talk to him. She had evidently heard of him from Lady Seely, and understood the exact degree of his relationship to that great lady.

"Did you ever meet the Dormers before?" asked Miss Kilfinane.

"Never. How should I? You know I am the merest country mouse. I never was in London in my life, until last Friday."

"Oh, but the Dormers don't live in town. Indeed, they are here very seldom. You might have met them; their place is in the West of England."

Algernon, after a rapid balancing of pros and cons, resolved to be absolutely candid. With his brightest smile and most arched eyebrows, he began to give Miss Kilfinane an almost unvarnished description of his life at Whitford. Almost unvarnished; but it is no more easy to tell the simple truth only occasionally; than it is to stand quite upright only occasionally. Mind and muscles will fall back to their habitual posture. So that it may be doubted whether Miss Kilfinane received an accurate notion of the precise degree of poverty and obscurity in which the young man who was speaking to her had hitherto lived.

"And so," said she, "you have come to London to——"

"To seek my fortune," said Algernon merrily. "It is the proper and correct beginning to a story. And I think I have had a piece of good luck at the very outset by way of a good omen."

Miss Kilfinane opened her eyes interrogatively, but said nothing.

"I think it was a piece of luck for me," continued Algernon, emboldened by having secured the scornful lady's attention, and perhaps a little also by the wine he had drunk, "a great piece of good luck that Mr. Jack Price, whoever he may be, did not turn up this evening."

"Why?"

"Because, if he had, I should not have been allowed the honour of bringing you in to dinner."

"Oh yes! I should have had to go in with Jack, I suppose," answered the lady with a little smile.

"Please, Miss Kilfinane, who is Jack Price? I do so want to know!"

"Jack Price is Lord Mullingar's son."

"But what is he? And why do people want to have him so much, that they put up with his disappointing them nine times out of ten?"

"As to what he is—well, he was in the Guards, and he gave that up. Then they got him a place somewhere—in Africa, or South America, or somewhere—and he gave that up. Then he got the notion that he would be a farmer in Canada, and went out with an axe to cut down the trees, and a plough to plough the ground afterwards, and he gave that up. Now he does nothing particular."

"And has he found his vocation at last?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," said Miss Kilfinane, languidly. Her power of perceiving a joke was very limited.

"Thanks. Now I know all about Mr. Price; except — except why everybody wants to invite him."

"That I really cannot tell you."

"Then you don't share the general enthusiasm about him?"

"I don't know that there is any general enthusiasm. Only, of course—don't you know how it is?—people have got into the way of putting up with him, and letting him do as he likes."

"He's a very fortunate young man, I should say."

"Young man!" Miss Kilfinane laughed a hard little laugh. "Why Jack Price is ever so old!"

"Ever so old, is he?" echoed Algernon, genuinely surprised.

"He must be turned forty," said the fair Castalia, rising in obedience to a look from Lady Seely. And if she had been but fifteen herself, she could not have said it with a more infantine air.

After the ladies had withdrawn, Algernon had to sit for about twenty minutes in the shade, as it were, silent, and listening with modesty and discretion to the conversation of his seniors. Had they talked politics, Algernon would have been able to throw in a word or two; but Lord Seely and his guest talked, not of principles or party, but of persons. The persons talked of were such as Lord Seely conceived to be useful or hostile to his party, and he discussed their conduct, and criticised the tactics of ministers in regard to them, with much warmth. But, unfortunately, Algernon neither knew, nor could pretend to know, anything about these individuals, so he sipped his wine, and looked at the family portraits which hung round the room, in silence.

My lord made a kind of apology to him, as they were going upstairs to the drawing-room.

"I'm afraid you were bored, Mr. Errington. I am sorry, for your sake, that Mr. Price did not honour us with his company. You would have found him much more amusing than us old fogies."

Algernon knew, when Lord Seely talked of Mr. Price not having honoured them with his company, that my lord was indignant against that gentleman. "I have no doubt that Mr. Price is a very agreeable person," said he, "but I did not regret him, my lord. I thought it a great privilege to be allowed to listen to you."

Later in the evening, Algy overheard Lord Seely say to General Dormer, "He's

a remarkably intelligent young fellow, I assure you."

"He has a capital manner," returned the general. "There is something very taking about him, indeed."

"Oh yes, manner; yes; a very good manner—but there's more judgment, more solidity about him than appears on the surface."

Meanwhile, Algernon went on flourishingly, and ingratiated himself with every one. He steered his way, with admirable tact, past various perils, such as must inevitably threaten one who aims at universal popularity. Lady Harriet was delighted with his singing, and Lady Harriet's expressed approbation pleased Lady Seely; for the Dormers were considered to be great musical connoisseurs, and their judgment had considerable weight among their own set. Their own set further supposed that the verdict of the Dormers was important to professional artists: a delusion which the givers of second-rate concerts, who depended on Lady Harriet to get rid of many seven-and-sixpenny tickets during the season, were at no pains to disturb. Then, Algernon took the precaution to keep away from Lord Seely, and to devote himself to my lady, during the remainder of the evening. This behaviour had so good an effect, that she called him "Ancram," and bade him go and talk to Castalia, who was sitting alone on a distant ottoman, with a distinctly sour expression of countenance.

"How did you get on with Castalia at dinner?" asked my lady.

"Miss Kilfinane was very kind to me, ma'am."

"Was she? Well, she don't make herself agreeable to everybody, so consider yourself honoured. Castalia's a very clever girl. She can draw, make wax flowers, and play the piano beautifully."

"Can she really? Will she play to-night?"

"I'm sure I don't know. Go and ask her."

"May I?"

"Yes; be off!"

Miss Kilfinane did not move or raise her eyes when Algernon went and stood before her.

"I have come with a petition," he said, after a little pause.

"Have you?"

"Yes; will you play to-night?"

"No."

"Oh, that's very cruel! I wish you would!"

"I don't like playing before the Dormers. They set up for being such connoisseurs, and I hate that kind of thing."

"I am sure you can have no reason to fear their criticism."

"I don't want to have my performance picked to pieces in that knowing sort of way. I play for my own amusement, and I don't want to be criticised, and applauded, and patronised."

"But how can people help applauding when you play? Lady Seely says you play exquisitely."

"Did she tell you to ask me to play?"

"Not exactly. But she said I might ask you."

At this moment General Dormer came up, and said, with his most benevolent smile, "Won't you give us a little music, Miss Kilfinane? Some Beethoven, now! I see a volume of his sonatas on the piano."

"I hate Beethoven," returned Miss Kilfinane.

"Hate Beethoven! No, no, you don't. It's quite impossible! A pianist like you! Oh no, Miss Kilfinane, it is out of the question."

"Yes, I do. I hate all classical music, and the sort of stuff that people talk about it."

The general smiled again, shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and walked away.

"Miss Kilfinane, you are ferociously cruel!" said Algernon under his breath as General Dormer turned his back on them. The little fear he had had of Castalia's obilly manner and ungracious tongue had quite vanished. Algernon was not apt to be in awe of any one. And he certainly was not in awe of Castalia Kilfinane. "Why did you tell the general that you hated Beethoven?" he went on saucily. "I'm quite sure you don't hate Beethoven!"

"I hate all the kind of professional jargon which the Dormers affect about music. Music is all very well, but it isn't our business, any more than tailoring or millinery is our business. To hear the Dormers talk, you would think it the most important matter in the world to decide whether this fiddler is better than that fiddler, or what is the right time to play a fugue of Bach's in."

"I'm such an ignoramus that I'm afraid I don't even know with any precision what a fugue of Bach's is!" said Algernon, ingenuously. He thought he had learned to understand Miss Castalia. Nevertheless, when, later in the evening, Lady

Harriet asked him in her pretty silver tones, "And do you, too, hate classical music, Mr. Errington?" he professed the most unbounded love and reverence for the great masters. "I have had few opportunities of hearing fine music, Lady Harriet," said he; "but it is the thing I have longed for all my life." Whereupon Lady Harriet, much pleased at the prospect of such a disciple, invited him to go to her house every Saturday morning, when he would hear some of the best performers in London execute some of the best music. "I only ask real listeners," said Lady Harriet. "We are just a few music-lovers who take the thing very much *ausérisieux*."

On the whole, when Algernon thought over his evening, sitting over the fire in his bedroom at the inn, he acknowledged to himself that he had been successful. "Lady Seely is the toughest customer, though! What a fish-wife she looks beside that elegant Lady Harriet! But she can put on airs of a great lady too, when she likes. It's a very fine line that divides dignity from impudence. Take her wig off, wash her face, and clothe her in a short cotton gown with a white apron, and how many people would know that Belinda, Lady Seely, had ever been anything but a cook, or the landlady of a public-house? Well, I think I am cleverer than any of 'em. And, after all, that's a great point." With which comfortable reflection Algernon Angram Errington went to bed, and to sleep.

ENGLISH CATHEDRALS.

BATH.

ACCORDING to the mendacious old chroniclers, Bath was founded by the discoverer of the medicinal hot-wells, King Bladud, a disciple of Pythagoras, generally known as "the Hypoborean priest of Apollo and the founder of the great university of the Druids." According to Dr. Jones, in his "Bathes of Bathes Ayde," Bladud was the thirtieth in direct descent from Adam; but less imaginative antiquaries trace him from Brutus, and make him the ninth in descent from the great grandson of *Æneas*.

This young prince Bladud, the story goes, had been banished by his father Huddibras, at the request of the nobility and gentry of the English court, on account of the leprosy from which he suffered, and on his parting the queen mother had presented him with a ring, as a token by which she might recognise him if he re-

turned to London cured. On the Downs, poor Bladud exchanged clothes with a shepherd, and soon after, by aid of this rough dress, obtained charge of a drove of pigs from a swineherd at Keynsham. Unfortunately, Bladud's pigs soon caught the leprosy of their master, and, to conceal the disorder, the young swineherd proposed to drive the pigs to the other side of the Avon, and feed them on the acorns of the woods that covered the sides of the Somersetshire hills.

He crossed the river at a place he afterwards called Swinford, and was praying to God as the sun broke forth upon him, when, as if at a given signal, the whole drove of swine rushed up the valley by the side of the river till they reached the bogs into which the hot-springs of Bath oozed. With difficulty decoying the pigs from their luxurious wallow by sprinkles of acorns, Bladud was delighted and astonished to find some of the herd recovered from their loathsome disease. The prince, pondering over this fact for a week, as he daily fed and washed his porkers, came at last, slowly but surely, to the not unnatural conclusion that a warm mud-bath might do no harm to himself, if the old proverb, "What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander," was worth anything. So in he went among the mud and sedges, two headers a day; and in a few weeks became sound and whole as the fairest maid in Albion.

Bladud then drove home his cured bacon, and told the worthy swineherd who he was, and all the history of the miraculous cure. Then off Bladud and the swineherd went to the palace of King Hudibras, the young prince promising, if he could, to make a regular gentleman and landed proprietor of the worthy pork butcher of Keynsham. As the king and queen were dining in public, Bladud slyly slipped the ring into a glass of wine that was being presented to the queen, who, luckily, not swallowing it, observed it at the bottom of the glass, and instantly threw up her white arms and exclaimed:

"Where is Bladud! O where is Bladud, my child?" A scene ensued. Everyone embraced everybody, and Bladud was at once proclaimed heir-apparent.

The rejoicings over, King Hudibras resolved to send his son to study in Greece, as he seemed so remarkable a genius; and retainers and rich clothes were duly ordered. But Bladud, with his usual good sense, determined to go to Athens in plain

student's dress; and there he stayed for eleven years, learning philosophy, the rules of three, dry measure, duodecimals, vulgar fractions, and necromancy, and so rendered himself fit in due time to succeed King Hudibras, and to build a palace and cisterns at Bath, which he made the capital of the British kings, erecting a temple to Minerva on no less a place than Lansdown.

King Bladud's end, however, was not of a satisfactory sort, for he gave out, one luckless day, says Leland, that he would publicly rival Dædalus and make a journey through the air like a bird; and so he did, with only one point of difference—that, when he was up, he could not keep up; so down he came, as some say, on Salisbury church; as others say, on a temple of Apollo, and broke his imprudent neck, after an otherwise judicious reign of twenty years.

This wild conglomerated story was firmly believed in Bath as late as 1740, in spite of Rochester's satire and even Powell's puppet-show, that had mixed up Punch with Bladud and his pigs in a most irreverent and droll way.

Bath was built by the Emperor Claudius about the year A.D. 44, after the fierce Caractacus had been driven into Wales and the Dobuni, who held Gloucestershire, had been subdued. Claudius, pleased with the warm and healing springs, left word for a city to be at once begun here, to inclose the magic waters. Parts of this inclosure was discovered, about 1795, on the site of the borough walls opposite the Hospital. Eleven feet deep the Roman basements were found, fifteen feet thick; the outer face was grit stone, the rubble filled up with that adamantine lime peculiar to those energetic builders. The Roman baths themselves had been discovered, in 1755, twenty feet below the surface. The semicircular walls were eight feet in height, and of wrought stone, with a stone seat round them, and a descent of seven steps into the water. Another bath, an oblong, had on three sides a colonnade, and on one side of this second bath were two sudatories, the brick floors being supported by strong brick pillars; several other small apartments were discovered near the sudatories—a room for undressing, a tepid room, and a room for oil, ointments, and perfumes. Some of these chambers had tessellated pavement and a regular set of well-wrought channels conveyed the waste water from the baths into the Avon.

Agricola, Domitian's general, who repressed the revolt of Arviragus and the Silures of Wales, did much to increase the luxury of Bath. He built in the new Anglo-Roman city a temple, which he dedicated to Minerva, whom Domitian claimed as his mother. The Emperor Hadrian posted some of his sixth legion here in A.D. 120, and established in Bath a manufactory of arms, obtaining the requisite iron from the Forest of Dean and the hills of Monmouthshire. Many of the Roman remains found in Bath have reference to the curative powers of the Bath waters, the earliest being two votive altars erected by a freed-man in gratitude to the Bath water gods for the benefit derived by his patron, Marcus Aufidius, an officer of the sixth legion. Here also exists the pediment of a rude chapel, apparently dedicated to Luna and Æsculapius, both deities who presided over human health. Geta, the younger son of Severus, is said to have spent some time at Bath when Severus, his father, and Caracalla, his detestable brother, came to Britain to quell a Caledonian insurrection, and an equestrian figure of Geta has been discovered at Bath.

Bath became afterwards known to the Romans as "Aque Solis" (Waters of the Sun), and the springs were dedicated to Apollo Medicus. The head of the bronze statue of this god, set up in the city, probably in the reign of Caracalla or Heliogabalus, is still extant. There is also shown to visitors a rude square altar, roughly sculptured with figures in relief of Jove and Hercules Bibax (convivial Hercules). These were the patron deities of Diocletian and Maximinus, in whose reign Carausius, a Roman admiral, seized Britain and held it manfully for seven years. Bath also possesses a barbarous piece of sculpture, supposed to represent this usurper dressed in a tunic and a clasped chlamys. The hair is cropped, and the beard short and curled, while a rudely-carved dolphin near the head marks the Roman naval officer. Coins of Carausius have been also found in the neighbourhood of Bath.

Little more is known of Roman Bath, except that a part of the twentieth legion and some Spanish horse were quartered there, and that a votive tablet, erected by some German invalid, testifies to the continued belief in the healing waters.

The Romans had called Bath the Hot Wells, the Waters of the Sun; the Saxons, Caer-Badon, Hot Bathen, or Ake-meni-

caster (the Sick Men's Town). The mediæval monks named it Bathonia, Badonda, Badonesse, Balnea. In 498 Ella and the Saxons were said to have encamped on Lansdown and besieged Bath; but King Arthur overthrew them in a tremendous battle. Arthur is also said to have beaten at Bath Cerdic's three generals, and to have cleared off with his own hand four hundred and forty Saxon private soldiers, which, considering that there were no newspapers then, is pretty well. Osric, king of the Wickii, founded a nunnery at Bath in 677. In 775 Osric, king of Mercia, wresting Bath from Wessex, replaced the Bath nunnery by a college of secular canons. In the reign of Athelstan, Bath was flourishing, and there was a Saxon mint in the city. This munificent monarch gave the convent fifteen small estates on the condition that daily masses were offered up for him. King Edgar was crowned in Bath.

In this reign the monastery at Bath was turned upside down by St. Dunstan's cruel crusade against the married clergy. He represented them as monsters of wickedness, and finding them indifferent to the ambitious aims of the church and the exorbitant and daily increasing claims of the Pope, swept them out of Bath (and forty-seven other monasteries) and replaced them with Benedictine monks. Many sham miracles were now manufactured to elevate the Benedictine order, and amongst others the dead Abbot of Pershore was said to have risen from his bier, and to have told his mourners that St. Benedict had introduced him into Heaven, where he was one of the handsomest and best-dressed saints he saw, and that he was surrounded by a vast assembly of monks and nuns. The new abbot appointed at Bath was Elphegus, a native of Weston, who had lived as a hermit, practising fasts and denials of all kinds, and lashing himself daily. The abbey of Bath now laid in a profitable stock of relics, the necessary attractions to rich pilgrims. Among these were the heads of St. Bartholomew, St. Lawrence, and St. Pancras; the knee of St. Maurice the Martyr; hair and milk of the Virgin; some of John the Baptist's blood; part of our Lord's sepulchre and his shroud and vest; a fragment of the pillar to which he was bound; the ribs of St. Barnabas; and the arm of St. Simeon.

At the dissolution the income of Bath abbey amounted to six hundred and seven-

teen pounds two shillings and threepence halfpenny, and as many of the monasteries whose revenue did not exceed two hundred pounds a year were first suppressed, Bath, by aid of a bribe to Cromwell, was not touched for some time. The abbot, however, voluntarily surrendered the abbey in 1539; and he and other brothers were all pensioned, the monastery having existed, doing more or less good, for eight hundred and sixty-three years.

The abbey-house was not finally demolished till 1755; and in one of the old rooms a sacristy was discovered, hung with copes, albs, and chasubles, which, however, crumbled into dust when the external air was admitted to them. In this room was also found the handle of a crozier and two large chests, empty, as the workmen asserted, though one of the men soon after grew suddenly rich and retired from business. In a window in the prior's lodgings were blazoned the arms of Priors Bird, Cantlow, and Hungerford.

It was Olive King, principal secretary of Henry the Seventh, who rebuilt Bath abbey in its present state. Sir John Harrington, in his *Nugæ Antiquæ*, tells a curious story of the vision that induced this bishop to undertake the good work. One night, at Bath, after his devotion and prayers for King Henry the Seventh and his children, he was lying, meditating, when he saw, or supposed he saw, a vision of the Holy Trinity, with angels ascending and descending by a ladder, near which stood an olive-tree, supporting a crown, and a voice called to him, "Let an olive establish the crown, and let a king restore the church." In this dream the bishop took great comfort, telling divers of his friends, and applying it, partly to the wise king his master, "the wisest and most peaceable king in all Europe of that age," and partly to himself. He had been Henry's ambassador to Charles the Eighth of France, and had obtained from him a concession to England of seven hundred and forty-five ducats, besides a yearly tribute of twenty-five thousand crowns. The bishop, transported with this dream, for his name was both Olive and King, presently set to work on this church; and in the west end he graved a vision of the Trinity, with angels on Jacob's ladder, and, on the north side, an olive and crown, with certain French words and this verse in English:

Trees going to choose their king,
Said, "Be to us the olive king."

and near it the words, "De sursum est."

("It is from on high.") The olive and crown are still on both the north and south side of the church, with an elephant on each side of the crowned olive.

When that negligent Italian bishop, De Castello, lived at Rome and farmed out the see of Bath and Wells, Cardinal Wolsey rented it of the absentee.

Bishop Godwyn, who in Mary's reign had turned physician, was one of Queen Elizabeth's Lent preachers. He pleased the queen with his learned and "smart conversation." In his old age, however, he incurred the Virgin Queen's displeasure by marrying a young and wealthy lord's widow.

Godwyn's successor, the learned Dr. John Still, master of Trinity College, Cambridge, was the author of that droll old comedy, *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, and the writer of that hearty old drinking song, *Jolly Good Ale and Old*. This bishop made large sums from the episcopal lead mines, near Mendip.

The next bishop, Dr. James Montague, who had been dean of the chapel to James the First, spent large sums in decorating Bath abbey. Sir John Harrington is said to have enticed the bishop to this good work by leading him, on a wet day, into the unroofed north aisle of the abbey.

"Sir John," said the bishop, looking up, "we are still in the wet."

"How can that be, my lord, seeing that we are within the church?" replied Harrington.

"True," said the bishop; "but your church is unroofed, Sir John."

"The more's the pity," replied the knight, "and the more does it call for the munificence of your lordship."

The narrow-minded Laud was Bishop of Bath and Wells when he angered the susceptible people by using an old formula, disused since the reign of Richard the Second, when he crowned Charles the First. The excellent Bishop Kenn (author of the *Evening Hymn*) threw up this see rather than transfer his allegiance to William of Orange, and went and died at Longleet, the seat of his friend and patron, Lord Viscount Weymouth. It is said that he secretly wore his shroud from his secession till the day of his death. Bishop Kidder met with a singular end in the year of Queen Anne's accession. During the tremendous storm of November 27, 1703, as he and his wife were at prayers in the palace at Wells, one of the chimneys bat-

tered down the roof of the apartment, and crushed them both.

Bath cathedral is interesting as being the last cathedral built in England. The west end is very sumptuous. The doorway of the grand entrance was given in 1617 by Sir Henry Montague, brother of the bishop. It is charged with the arms of the see, impaling those of Montague, and round the shield runs the device of the Garter. Under the two other shields, which are those of Montague alone, is a label, with the inscription, "Eoec quam bonum et quam jucundum," &c. : "Behold, how joyful and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Above the shields is a profile helmet, with a griffin's head for a crest, and behind a flowing mantle. The arch is square-headed, and the spandrels are filled with labels inclosing wounded hearts, crowns of thorns, and pierced hands and feet. On each side of the doorway, in niches, stands statues of St. Peter and St. Paul. Under the first is a blended white-and-red-rose crown; under St. Paul, a crown and a portcullis. In the battlemented cornices above is a vacant niche, once, probably, filled by St. Peter or Henry the Seventh. Up the two side turrets of the great west window run two ladders which the angels of Bishop Olive King are ascending. Below, on either side of the ladders, stand figures of shepherds, with illegible labels close above their heads. On each side of the upper part of the ladders are six canopied figures of the Apostles, among which St. John and St. Andrew only have been preserved in their integrity. Above the great sheet of glass are rows of kneeling angels, who represent the heavenly choir above. On the central and topmost niche is a mutilated statue; and below, the arms of the see and the supporters to the arms of Henry the Seventh, holding the white-and-red roses and a royal crown. There are also still visible two shields, surmounted by a cardinal's cap, probably those of Adrian de Castello, who vaulted the choir.

The aisle buttresses are ornamented with scrolls now illegible, and small arched heads with crowns, from the rays of which spring olive trees; over these are bishops' mitres. On the mullions of the windows are statues of Offa and Edgar. The one restored Offa's monastery, while the other gave a charter to Bath. The figures stand on emblazoned pedestals. Over the head of a statue of

Our Saviour is a griffin. Above one window is the inscription "Domus mea," and over another, "Domus orationis."

The interior of the abbey is singular and very beautiful, with its fifty-two windows, and its great range of light and fragile stone work. The nave is later work than the choir, and was probably rebuilt by Bishop Montague. The roof is very flat. The little chapel of Prior Bird (1525), a mass of crochet tracery, has been ruthlessly cut down to make room for the cumbersome bishops' throne. The gorgeous tomb of the generous Bishop Montague, with its pontifical effigy, adorns the north centre of the nave. Corinthian pillars at the head and feet support an entablature, and it is crowned above with the bishop's escutcheon. From the nucleus, where the transept, nave, and choir unite, springs the massy tower, one hundred and sixty-two feet in height, and crowned with perforated battlements that look like petrified lace-work.

In this noble abbey repose knights and beaux, George the Third doctors and barons of the Tudor times. Under the well-trodden floor repose the masqueraders of all centuries, waiting for the last trumpet—abbots and fine ladies, friends of Dr. Johnson and Garrick, and stern monks, who opposed kings and beat down the sword with the crozier. Dainty misses, who swam about the baths with floating trays for nosegay and snuff-box, and demure nuns of the early English period; gentlemen who were not admitted to the new assembly-rooms in boots; and young misses who were not allowed to dance minuets without lappets or in aprons, lie beside early English barons and lady prioresses—"Dust to dust" and "All is vanity" written largely on many a tomb.

Some of the epitaphs are very noteworthy. There is a quaint one of the reign of James the First on one of the Ernesles of Wiltshire, who intermarried with the Hungerfords of Farley Castle and Hungerford Market:—

An Ernale Hungerford here lyeth in grave;
More than thy owne, O earth, thou maist not have:
His earthly part, his body, that is thine,
His heavenly, his soule, that part divine,
Is Heaven's right; there doth it live and reignes,
In joy and blisse for ever to remaine.
His body in her bosome earth must keep
Till such as rest in hope shall rise from sleepe;
Then body joyned with soule for ever shall
In glory live, reignes both celestiall.

At the north side of the transept is the bust of a lady, seen between curtains. It

is one of the Framptons of Dorsetshire, with an epitaph by Dryden, from which we extract a few characteristic verses :

Beneath this marble monument is laid
All that Heaven wants of this celestial mayd :
Preserve, O sacred tomb ! thy trust consign'd !
The mould was made on purpose for the mind ;
And she would lose, if at the latter day
One atom could be mixed of other clay.
Such were the features of her heavenly face,
Her limbs were form'd with such harmonious grace ;
So faultless was the frame, as if the whole
Had been an emanation of the soul,
Which her own inward symmetry reveal'd,
And like a picture shone, in glass amaz'd ;
Or like the sun eclipsed with shaded light,
Too piercing else to be sustain'd by sight.
Each thought was visible that roll'd within,
As through a crystal case the figur'd hours are seen :
And Heaven did this transparent veil provide,
Because she had no guilty thought to hide.
All white, a virgin-aint, she sought the skies ;
For marriage, though it sullies not, it dyes !
High though her wit, yet humble was her mind,
As if she could not, or she would not find,
How much her worth transcended all her kind.
Yet she had learn'd so much of Heaven below,
That when arriv'd she scarce had more to know ;
But only to refresh the former hint,
And read her Maker in a fairer print.

On a pillar at the south-eastern end of the nave there is a very neat monument, having, on a pyramid of Sienna marble, a medallion with the half-length figure of the facetious James Quin, and on a tablet underneath the following inscription :

That tongue which set the table in a row,
And charm'd the public ear, is heard no more ;
Close'd are those eyes, the harbinger of wit,
Which spake before the tongue, what Shakespeare
writ ;
Cold is that hand, which, living, was stretch'd forth,
At friendship's call, to succour modest worth.
Here lies James Quin :—Deign, reader, to be taught,
What'er thy strength of body, force of thought,
In Nature's happiest mould however cast,
To this completion thou must come at last.

Ob. MDCCLXVI. Etatis LXXIII.

D. GARRICK.

At the south end of the south transept is a monument to the wife of Waller, the poet, with the following inscription :

To the dear memory of the right virtuous and
worthy lady, Jane Lady Waller, sole daughter and
heir to Sir Richard Bagnell, wife to Sir William
Waller, Knight :—

Sole issue of a matchless pair,
Both of their state and virtues heyre ;
In graces great, in stature small,
As full of spirit as voyd of gall ;
Cheerfully brave, bounteously close,
Holy without vain-glorious shows ;
Happy, and yet from envy free,
Learned without pride—witty, yet wise.
Reader, this riddle read with me,
Here the good Lady Waller lyes.

There is a tradition that King James the Second, passing through the church and casting his eye on Waller's obnoxious effigy, drew his sword, and hacked off the

poor knight's nose, in which mutilated state his face still continues, in testimony of that act of heroism.

An instance of James's bigotry, as well as this anecdote of his impotent malice, is preserved to us by tradition. Shortly after his accession to the crown, he visited this city, and, amongst his attendants, brought down the famous Father Huddleston, his confessor and friend. The friar, by James's order, went to the abbey church and exhibited on the altar all the nummery of the Romish ritual, closing the farce with a heavy denunciation of wrath against the heretics, and an exhortation to an immediate change from the errors of Protestantism to the true faith, from which this country had apostatised. In the number of his auditors was Kenn, Bishop of Bath and Wells, who had ever been a firm friend of the Reformed Church and a defender of its rights. Fired with indignation at this ill-judged display of blind zeal, the prelate, as soon as Huddleston concluded his discourse, mounted a stone pulpit, which then stood in the body of the church, and, desiring the congregation (who were retiring) to remain, he pronounced, extempore, a discourse in answer to Huddleston; exposing his fallacies, and displaying the errors of his church and the absurdity of its doctrines, in a strain of such impressive eloquence as astonished and delighted his congregation and completely confounded Huddleston and the royal bigot.

Nor, last of all, must we forget the tomb of that worthy fribble but useful king of the fashionable watering-place, Beau Nash, who died in this city in 1761, old and imbecile, aged eighty-seven. Nash was born to rule, and did all a master of ceremonies could do: he kept the men in order and the women in good humour, and he forbade the wearing of swords, boots, and spurs in the ball-room. He erected the obelisk in the Grove in token of the recovery, in Bath, of the Prince of Orange and the honour conferred on the city by the Prince of Wales's visits; and Dr. Barrington inscribed the following not undeserved lines on his tablet in Bath abbey church :

If social virtues make remembrance dear,
Or manners pass on decent rule depend ;
To his remains consign one grateful tear
Of youth the guardian, and of all the friend.
Now sleeps dominion; here no bounty flows ;
No more avails the festive scene to grace ;
Beneath that hand which no discernment shows,
Untaught to honour or distinguish place.

I'LL DIE AT HOME.

OH eye, it is very likely, it's mostlins what I have heard;
 She comes of an honest stock, you see, the egg bodes best of the bird;
 And we were girls together, we've laked through many a day,
 Though now she's mistress up yonder, and I'se upon parish pay.
 And I'se no call to shame for it; I'se but taking back my own,
 I'se never owed cess, or rent, or rate, it's known through all the town;
 It's not much I want—a sup of tea, a bite of bread to eat,
 But, sooner than go to't House for them, honey, I'd die i't' street.
 What, she "keeps all straight and tidy," Mrs. Jones we mun call her now.
 It was Sal, and Polly, long ago, in the cots upon the brow;
 O she's a canny body, was always hearty and wick,
 Never let a job stand still for her, nor dirt have time to stick.
 And I'se a cobweb i't' corner. I sead theetak' heed of it,
 And thou'd fain ha' dusted the settle, when I bade thee come and sit;
 I sead thee Bairn, and I'd ha' liked to up and tell thee then,
 Thou'd, mebbly, be no better off at thy threescore and ten.
 It's "Home, be it ne'er so homely," as my old man used to sing,
 When, after supper at father's farm, he sate by me in the ring;
 And here he brought me when we were wed, and here the childer were born,
 And here he bade God bless me, and went, one dreary Christmas morn.
 I sate all night by yon pillow, where he lay dead and cold,
 The little 'uns climbed about me, as the passing-bell was tolled;
 Well, it's all past and half forgot, and my time has soon to come,
 But they needn't crack of the House to me, I tell thee I'll die at Home.
 That's his stick set by the clock, dost see, and his cap upon the pin,
 And yon's the corner our bonnie bairns were fond of hidelin' in;
 Why, when the ashes are dying, I sit, and listen, and look,
 Till I see it all afore me, as plain as a printed book.
 And I can steek my door, and clean, or pray, or cry my fill,
 Or set it wide, and rake the logs, and call a neighbour at will,
 And go where I like, and have who I like, and watch them go and come;
 Bed and board may be good up there, but, for me, I'll die at Home.
 I'se had little but labour all my life, bread has been hard to get,
 But I'se done as my old man bid me—kept clear of begging or debt;
 I want but a hole of my own, in this world of the rich and blest;
 Well, it all raffles my worsted, but for sure the Lord knows best.
 It's His will. I've striven to do it, to be honest, and pure, and brave,
 His Word says naught of the Workhouse, and naught of a Parish grave;

I'se put by what'll bury me, i't' stocking up on t' shelf,
 And what I can't get I'll do without, and make my moan to myself.

Mrs. Jones may come and see me. I'll give her a cup of tea,
 We'll talk of times when we little thought of differ 'twixt her and me;
 She's nobbut keeper of a gaol, as may be to the liking of some,
 But, faring hard, or sleeping cold, I'll die, as I've lived, at Home.

REMARKABLE ADVENTURERS.

COUNT SAINT-GERMAIN.

FROM the days of Ishmael to those of joint-stock companies, a certain percentage of the human race has filled the rôle of the adventurer—of him whose hand is against every man, and whose life depends upon that precarious patrimony known as his wits. As civilisation has ebbed and flowed, and society put on various shapes and colours, the adventurer, chameleon-like, has known how to adjust his hue to that of surrounding objects. Athens and Rome have left imperishable records of the sycophants and parasites, led-captains and legacy hunters, who infested the tables of the great—creatures whose existence depended on the luxury and vanity inspired by wealth and culture, destined to extinction in those dour times when a supple knee, an agile wit, and a lying tongue availed little against hard knocks. In the dark ages the adventurer changed his skin, showed his claws openly, and threw off the perfumed garments and the rosy crown, to don the baresark of the Viking, the mail of the robber baron, or the buckskin jerkin of the merry outlaw—merry enough in himself, doubtless, but hardly the cause of merriment in others. At a later date he put on many disguises, and appeared by turns as a crusader; as a condottiere; as a Barbary rover; as a gentleman of Devon, who went forth in his tall ship to trade a little, and to plunder Jack Spaniard as much as possible; as a reiter or as a lanzknecht; as a goldseeker in the fabled El Dorado; as a buccaneer in the Spanish Main; as a trailer of a pike in the Low Countries; as a gambler, necromancer, and financier by turns; and at last as a quiet man, attentive to all social observances, and strictly, nay, severely, moral in his outward seeming, but through whose outward covering of fashionable yet sober cut may be descried the more picturesque garments of his predecessors in the world of adventure.
 Under the sleek broadcloth of that

cleanly-shaven promoter of public companies lurks the Lincoln green jerkin of Robin Hood; his stiff white waistcoat recalls the corslet of Bertram Risingham; the neat boot conceals the upturned slipper of the Sallee renegade; the spotless wristbands hide Casanova's lace ruffles; the trim umbrella-cover incloses Captain Kyd's cutlass; the well-brushed hat has inside it the morion of Hawkwood; and the neatly-tied cravat overlaps the simpler necktie of stout Johnnie Armstrong!

The last century, among its other merits, had that of producing a race of swindlers as unlike to their forbears as to their living descendants. These illustrious sharpers were fostered by the peculiar condition of European society; and more particularly by the singular appetite for the marvellous which prevailed, not merely among the million, but in circles renowned for wit, learning, and scepticism. For the fifty or sixty years preceding the destruction of the Bastille the life of European courts was very much after the traditions of the regent Philip of Orleans, who himself had merely brought about a revival of the early days of Louis the Fourteenth. Court life in London presented an odd spectacle. Despite the effulgence of a few great figures, the age was mediocre, even in comparatively happy England; but abroad the curse of mediocrity, incredulity, and extravagance sat heavily on the reigning caste. Venice was in her dotage, and from the politest city in Europe had sunk to be the most dissolute—Rome, perhaps, excepted. Germany was sprinkled over with petty courts, each of which strove to imitate the sublime exemplar of Versailles, if not in splendour, at least in dissipation. Paris—luxurious Paris—piped and danced, recking little of poor Jacques Bonhomme starving in the country, and murmuring, for the time, only a low breath of wailing, shortly to swell into the voice of the hurricane. Brazen beauties and godless abbés led a merry careless life of intrigues and madrigals, cards and junketings. It was a curious world, this Paris of Louis the Well-beloved. Old faiths had broken up and new ones had not yet begun to crystallise. Leagner and Huguenot had been levelled down by Richelieu, and the relics of Catholicism had been melted in the crucible of the encyclopædists. From the king down to his valet de chambre nobody believed steadfastly in anything; but the want of faith in old doctrines was

supplied by an extraordinary credulity so far as the occult sciences were concerned. There was a singular craving for the mystical—the unknown. Fashionable sceptics opened their ears to the mysticism of Swedenborg, Lavater, and St. Martin. It would be absurd to confound these honest enthusiasts with the adventurers who perceived the weak side of their extant human nature. I merely cite their names to indicate the bias of instructed men and women towards new schemes and theories of life. Old-world fancies distilled from the alembics of astrologers met with ready favour. Abra-cadabra, cabala, the transmutation of metals, and the elixir of life again came to the front, along with Rosicrucian dreams and Egyptian freemasonry.

This peculiar condition of thought was eminently favourable to the advent of the charlatan, who saw his advantage and failed not to profit by it. Of various type and dubious nationality the charlatan sprang into life all over Europe; but as vultures spy from afar their loathsome food, and with heavy wing descend upon it, so towards the carcase of the old French monarchy sped a flock of adventurers—jugglers, conjurors, astrologers, charlatans—of every tribe and nation. In Paris, most incredulous and most curious of cities, the birds of prey clustered thickest. Over statesmen and philosophers, ballet dancers and poets, painters and pandars—odd harlequin crowd—rises clearly and distinctly the representative man of the epoch—the charlatan. At the councils of the king and at the board of cabinet ministers crop up strange figures, labelled with stranger titles—the illustrious Count Cagliostro, the dashing Chevalier de Seingalt, and the mysterious Count Saint-Germain.

This famous adventurer is supposed to have been an Hungarian by birth, but the early part of his life was by himself carefully wrapped in mystery. His person and his title alike stimulated curiosity. His age was unknown, and his parentage equally obscure. We catch the first glimpse of him in Paris, a century and a quarter ago, filling the court and the town with his renown. Amazed Paris saw a man—apparently of middle age—a man who lived in magnificent style, who went to dinner parties, where he ate nothing, but talked incessantly, and with exceeding brilliancy, on every imaginable topic. His tone was, perhaps, over trenchant—the

tone of a man who knows perfectly what he is talking about. Learned, speaking every civilised language admirably, a great musician, an excellent chemist, he played the part of a prodigy, and played it to perfection. Endowed with extraordinary confidence, or consummate impudence, he not only laid down the law magisterially concerning the present, but spoke without hesitation of events two hundred years old. His anecdotes of remote occurrences were related with extraordinary minuteness. He spoke of scenes at the court of Francis the First as if he had seen them, describing exactly the appearance of the king, imitating his voice, manner, and language—affecting throughout the character of an eye-witness. In like style he edified his audience with pleasant stories of Louis the Fourteenth, and regaled them with vivid descriptions of places and persons. Hardly saying in so many words that he was actually present when the events happened, he yet contrived, by his great graphic power, to convey that impression. Intending to astonish, he succeeded completely. Wild stories were current concerning him. He was reported to be three hundred years old, and to have prolonged his life by the use of a famous elixir. Paris went mad about him. He was questioned constantly about his secret of longevity, and was marvellously adroit in his replies, denying all power to make old folks young again, but quietly asserting his possession of the secret of arresting decay in the human frame. Diet, he protested, was, with his marvellous elixir, the true secret of long life, and he resolutely refused to eat any food but such as had been specially prepared for him—oatmeal, groats, and the white meat of chickens. On great occasions he drank a little wine, sat up as late as anybody would listen to him, but took extraordinary precautions against the cold. To ladies he gave mysterious cosmetics, to preserve their beauty unimpaired; to men he talked openly of his method of transmitting metals, and of a certain process for melting down a dozen little diamonds into one large stone. These astounding assertions were backed by the possession of apparently unbounded wealth, and a collection of jewels of rare size and beauty.

In endeavouring to tell what is known of this extraordinary man, I think it well to reject all evidence of the second-hand or hearsay order, and to confine myself strictly to the evidence of eye-witnesses.

Of these, one of the most important is Madame du Hausset, a lady who enjoyed the distinguished honour of being *femme de chambre* to Madame de Pompadour, and was industrious enough to write a book of Memoirs, confused in composition and atrocious in spelling, but nevertheless full of interest for those who "want to know." It must not be supposed that, because she wrote and spelt ill, Madame du Hausset was a vulgar person, or of base origin; on the contrary, she was a person of condition, spoke, wrote, and spelt like one. In estimating the degree of cultivation achieved by ladies during the two last centuries, it must never be forgotten that the arts of speaking decently and civilly, and of spelling correctly, are of modern invention, and are by no means too widely distributed even at the present moment. The lady *femme de chambre* appears to have been the confidante of her mistress, who, from her beaudoir, misruled France and bedevilled the politics of Europe. Madame de Pompadour, highly accomplished as she was, nevertheless protected a private fortune-teller—one Madame Bontemps—who told fortunes by coffee-grounds, and had had the good luck to foretell the disgrace of the Abbé de Bernis. "There came often to see my mistress," says Madame du Hausset, "a man who was at least as astonishing as any sorceress. This was the Count Saint-Germain, who wished it to be believed that he had lived for several centuries. One day, as Madame (de Pompadour) was at her toilet, she said to him before me, 'What sort of a man was Francis the First? That's a king I should have loved.' 'A most amiable man,' said Saint-Germain, and described his face and general appearance. 'It is a pity he was so given to gallantry. I could have given him a piece of advice that would have saved him from all his misfortunes; but he would not have followed it, for it seems there is for princes a fatality which closes their ears, that is to say, those of their mind, to the best advice—above all at critical moments.' 'And the constable,' said Madame, 'what do you say of him?' 'I cannot say much good or much harm,' replied he. 'Was the court of Francis the First very splendid?' 'Very; but that of his grandson's infinitely surpassed it, and in the time of Mary Stuart and Marguerite of Valois it was an enchanted region, the temple of pleasure and wit. The two queens were

learned, and made verses it was a pleasure to listen to.' Madame replied, laughing, 'It seems that you have seen all this.' 'I have a good memory,' said he, 'and I have read French history a great deal. Sometimes I amuse myself, not in making believe but in letting believe, that I have lived in very ancient times.' 'But, after all, you won't tell your age, and you give yourself out as very old. The Countess Gergy, who was, I believe, fifty years ago ambassadress at Venice, says that she knew you such as you are to-day.' 'It is true, madame, that I knew Madame de Gergy long ago.' 'But, according to what she says, you must now be more than a hundred years old.' 'That is not impossible,' said he, laughing, 'but I admit that it is more possible that this lady, for whom I have infinite respect, talks nonsense.' 'You gave her,' said Madame, 'an elixir surprising in its effects; she pretends that for a long while she appeared to be no older than twenty-four. Why should not you give some to the king?' 'Ah! madame,' said he, with a species of terror, 'I should be mad indeed to take it into my head to give the king an unknown drug.'

At this interesting point aggravating Madame du Hausset retired to her room, "to write down this conversation." "A few days after," she continues, "there was much talk between the king, madame, sundry seigneurs, and the Count of Saint-Germain, concerning the secret he possessed to remove stains from diamonds. The king had a middling-sized diamond brought to him, marked very distinctly. It was weighed, and the king said, 'It is worth six thousand livres, but it would be worth ten without the stain. Will you undertake to make me the richer by four thousand?' The count, a month later, brought back the diamond stainless, wrapped in an asbestos cloth. The king had it weighed, and it nearly drew the full weight. The king sent it secretly to his jeweller, by M. de Gontaut, who brought back nine thousand six hundred livres, but the king got the diamond back and kept it out of curiosity. The king was non-plussed, and said that Saint-Germain ought to be worth millions above all, if he had the secret of making big diamonds out of little ones. To this he replied neither yes nor no, but said positively that he could increase the size of pearls, and gave them one of the finest colour."

These latter details were told Madame du Hausset by her mistress. She now resumes the rôle of eye-witness. "I have seen him many times; he appeared about fifty years old, was neither stout nor thin, had a keen bright look, was dressed simply, but with great taste; he wore very handsome diamonds on his fingers, as well as on his snuff-box and watch. He came one day, when the court was in full splendour, to see Madame, with shoe-buckles and garters of such superb diamonds, that Madame thought the king had none so handsome. He went into the ante-chamber to take them off, in order to show them better and compare them with others. Madame Gontaut, who was there, said they were worth at least two hundred thousand francs. On the same day he wore a snuff-box of immense value, and ruby sleeve-buttons of great splendour. Nobody knew how this man became so rich and so remarkable, and the king would not allow him to be sneered at or treated with contempt. He is said to be a natural son of the King of Portugal."

It would appear that the famous count was on very familiar terms not only with the Pompadour but with the king. One day he said, "To esteem mankind one must be neither confessor, minister, nor chief of police." "Nor king," added his most christian majesty. "Ah," said the count, "your majesty observed the fog there was a few days since; you could not see a yard before you. Kings in general are environed by much thicker fogs, evolved by schemers and faithless ministers." "This," says Madame du Hausset, "I heard myself on the same day that the king compared his Prussian majesty to Julian the Apostate." On another occasion Saint-Germain dropped in with a box full of topazes, emeralds, and rubies. Madame du Hausset could not believe them to be real, and made a sign to her mistress to that effect. Saint-Germain crushed the sceptic at once by giving her a jewelled cross "worth fifteen hundred francs."

Thus far Madame du Hausset, who clearly could not make up her mind concerning the great adventurer, who asked nothing and gave freely. Our next view of him is not in the veiled light of the boudoir, but in the broad glare of the world. Charles Henry Baron Gleichen, coming to Paris in the year 1759, paid a visit to the widow of the Chevalier Lambert. Shortly after his arrival came in

a man of middle height, squarely built, dressed with rich and choice simplicity. He threw his hat and sword on the bed of the mistress of the house, and hid himself into an arm-chair near the fire, interrupting the conversation by saying to the man who was speaking, "You don't know what you are talking about; I am the only person able to speak on this subject. I have exhausted it as I have music—having nothing more to learn."

This impertinent personage was no other than Saint-Germain, then in the full confidence of Madame de Pompadour and of the king, who had given him a residence at Chambord to carry out some experiments in dyeing. Meeting him next day at dinner, Baron Gleichen turned the conversation upon Italy, and had the happiness to please the eminent magician, who said, "I have taken a great fancy to you, and will show you a dozen pictures, the like of which you have not seen in Italy." "Actually," says Gleichen, "he almost kept his word, for the pictures he showed me were all stamped either with singularity or perfection, which rendered them more interesting than many first-class works. Above all was a Holy Family by Murillo, equal in beauty to that by Rafaele at Versailles. But he showed me other wonders—a large quantity of jewels and coloured diamonds of extraordinary size and perfection. I thought I beheld the treasures of the Wonderful Lamp. Among other gems were an opal of monstrous size, and a white sapphire (?) as large as an egg, which, by its brilliancy, dimmed all the stones compared with it. I flatter myself that I am a connoisseur in gems, but I can declare that it was impossible to perceive any reason for doubting the genuineness of these jewels, the more so that they were not mounted." Baron Gleichen was convinced, and quitted him a fervent believer; and explains the stories about his age very simply, by saying that Saint-Germain adapted his style of narrative to his audience. Talking of remote events to a blockhead, he told him downright that he was present; but when before a critical audience, conducted himself as he did before Madame de Pompadour. According to Gleichen, the excitement about the popular stories of Saint-Germain was not lessened by the eccentricities of an odd personage called Lord Gower, because he imitated Englishmen very well. Having been employed as a spy in the English army during the Seven Years' War,

he was familiar with the art of disguise, and proceeded among the good bourgeois of the Marais to give himself out as the Count Saint-Germain. This joker did not stick at trifles. He was not hundreds, but thousands of years old; had been a friend of Pontius Pilate and family; had assisted at the Council of Nice; and, moreover, possessed a truly rejuvenating elixir, of which it was said that a lady kept carefully stored away a precious phial, but that her old servant, discovering the secret, took such tremendous doses that she became again a little child! The age of the true Saint-Germain puzzled all his contemporaries. Rameau and Madame de Gergy declare that he looked fifty in 1710; in 1759 he looked barely ten years older either to Gleichen, Madame du Hansset, or other eye-witnesses; and up to the time of his death, in 1783, preserved the appearance of a vigorous sexagenarian.

On the 14th of March, 1760, Kauderbach, then Saxon minister at the Hague, wrote a curious despatch to the home government touching the Count Saint-Germain, who had made his appearance at the Dutch diplomatic capital. Louis the Fifteenth was served, like many more of the same type, by two sets of servants. The Duke de Choiseul was the king's minister of foreign affairs and the very humble servant of the Marchioness Pompadour. Under his rule, the brothers Paris-Duvernay—great financiers—became absolute sovereigns of the Bank of France, and the national cash-box became nearly empty. In his necessity, the king had recourse to the Maréchal de Bellegarde, whose "âme damnée" was none other than Saint-Germain, who had given him the plan and the model of the famous flat boats which were to assure the conquest of England. The Marshal, who was keen enough to see that Choiseul alone stood between France and a direct treaty with Prussia, based on the ruins of the ancient alliance with Austria, urged the king and Madame de Pompadour to secure the head and arm of the Great Frederick. Saint-Germain ultimately succeeded in persuading them to send him to the Hague, to the Duke Louis of Brunswick, of whom he declared himself the most particular friend. Armed with credentials, the mysterious count set out for the Hague, to conduct a negotiation without the knowledge of the ambassador, M. d'Affry. At first he was very successful, and Kauderbach was, with others, completely

captivated by the elegance, amiability, and riches of the mysterious envoy, but he nevertheless became a nine days' wonder, and no more, for the great adventurer had overshot his mark, and was compelled to bid adieu for ever to Paris, Chambord, Pompadour, &c. Choiseul, instructed by the acute ambassador d'Affry, easily unravelled the schemes of the occult envoy extraordinary, and complained to the king, who immediately disavowed all share in the business, and left Saint-Germain to his fate. Choiseul despatched a courier to d'Affry, who at once demanded of the Grand Pensionary the arrest and extradition of Saint-Germain, who ran a narrow chance of sharing the fate of the Man with the Iron Mask. The Pensionary referred the request to the council of deputies of the province of Holland, of whom Bentinck was president. This gentleman advised Saint-Germain of his danger, and made him sail for England.

From time to time this strange being appeared in various European capitals, under various names—as Marquis of Montferrat; Count Bellamare, at Venice; Chevalier Schoening, at Pisa; Chevalier Weldon, at Milan; Count Soltikoff, at Genoa; Count Tzarogy, at Schwabach; and, finally, as Count Saint-Germain, at Paris; but, after his disaster at the Hague, no longer seems so wealthy as before, and has at times the appearance of seeking his fortune.

At Tournay he is "interviewed" by the renowned Chevalier de Seingalt, who finds him in an Armenian robe and pointed cap, with a long beard descending to his waist, and ivory wand in hand—the complete make-up of a necromancer. Saint-Germain is surrounded by a legion of bottles, and is occupied in developing the manufacture of hats upon chemical principles. Seingalt being indisposed, the count offers to physic him gratis, and offers to dose him with an elixir which appears to have been ether; but the other refuses, with many polite speeches. It is the scene of the two augurs. Not being allowed to act as a physician, Saint-Germain determines to show his power as an alchemist; takes a twelve-sous piece from the other augur, puts it on red-hot charcoal, and works with the blowpipe. The piece of money is fused and allowed to cool. "Now," says Saint-Germain, "take your money again."—"But it is gold."—"Of the

purest." Augur number two does not believe in the transmutation, and looks on the whole operation as a trick, but he pockets the piece nevertheless, and finally presents it to the celebrated Marshal Keith, then governor of Neuchâtel.

Again in pursuit of dyeing and other manufacturing schemes, Saint-Germain turned up at St. Petersburg, Dresden, and Milan. Once he got into trouble, and was arrested in a petty town of Piedmont on a protested bill of exchange; but he pulled out a hundred thousand crowns' worth of jewels, paid on the spot, bullied the governor of the town like a pickpocket, and was released with the most respectful excuses.

Very little doubt exists that during one of his residences in Russia, he played an important part in the revolution which placed Catherine the Second on the throne. In support of this view, Baron Gleichen cites the extraordinary attention bestowed on Saint-Germain at Leghorn, in 1770, by Count Alexis Orloff, and a remark made by Prince Gregory Orloff to the Margrave of Anspach during his stay at Nuremberg.

After all, who was he?—the son of a Portuguese king, or of a Portuguese Jew? or did he, in his old age, tell the truth to his protector and enthusiastic admirer, Prince Charles of Hesse-Cassel? According to the story told his last friend, he was the son of a Prince Rakoczy, of Transylvania, and his first wife a Tékély. He was placed, when an infant, under the protection of the last of the Medici. When he grew up, and heard that his two brothers, sons of the Princess Hesse Rheinfels, or Rothenburg, had received the names of Saint Charles and Saint Elizabeth, he determined to take the name of their holy brother, Sanctus Germanus. What was the truth? One thing alone is certain—that he was a protégé of the last Medici. Prince Charles, who appears to have regretted his death, which happened in 1783, very sincerely, tells us that he fell sick, while pursuing his experiments in colours, at Eckernförde, and died shortly after, despite the innumerable medicaments prepared by his own private apothecary. Frederick the Great, who, despite his scepticism, took a queer interest in astrologers, said of him, "This is a man who does not die." Mirabeau adds, epigrammatically, "He was always a careless fellow, and at last, unlike his predecessors, forgot not to die."

What was this man? an eccentric prince, or a successful scoundrel? a devotee of science, a mere schemer, or a strange mixture of all?—a problem, even to himself.

THE HOSTESS OF THE RAVEN.

A STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

I WAS belated. I was in a remote side valley that opened from one of the great passes from Switzerland into Italy, and that terminated at its upper end at the foot of a mighty glacier. The road was practicable for wheels as far as a village which I shall call Falkenau.

I was young, active, and healthy, and I was tramping through some of the by-ways of Switzerland, on a solitary walking tour. As the autumn day fell, I suddenly awoke to the fact that it was dusk, nearly dark, that I was utterly alone on a solitary road, that there were no signs of Falkenau, which I ought to have reached half-an-hour ago, and that a strong Föhn was blowing down the valley.

Do you know what a Föhn is? It is a hot south-east wind from Italy, that oppresses and depresses man and beast. When it is very violent, and in certain localities, it is almost as dangerous as a West Indian hurricane; but it does not often get to be so bad as that. Well, the Föhn was blowing in my face, and chasing dark leaden-looking clouds across the sky. The dust rose before it in eddies, and a strange shudder ran through the pine trees in the little wood to my left. I had a sensation of something uncanny in the air, as we say in my north country, and I was more relieved than the occasion seemed to warrant, to see, on turning the corner of the crag that had seemed to bar my progress, a light twinkling in a window, and to know that I was close to Falkenau.

The light shone from a lower window of a large house which I presently reached. The house stood in a queer, cornerwise position with regard to the road, to which it seemed to turn a sulky shoulder. The highway had doubtless been made long after that house was built. It was of timber that had turned ashen-grey in the weather; and it had three stories, and large gables, and a huge, sloping, overhanging roof. There were many windows in the house, but they were all, save one, closely shut, and guarded by wooden shutters of the sort that we call in England Venetian blinds. Those shutters

may once have been painted, but all trace of colour had long departed from them, and they were now of the same ashen-grey hue as the rest of the building. The one window that was not barred up, showed the light which had cheered me. As I drew nearer, I perceived a great sign that was swinging and creaking above the road from the eaves. It was the creaking, indeed, that attracted my attention. Just at this moment the wind tore a black cloud overhead into tatters, and let down upon the house the last faint ghastly glimmer of daylight that remained in the air. In this way I was enabled to see that the sign was one of the curious, ancient pieces of wrought-iron work, which are used for the purpose of announcing a house of public entertainment in the south-eastern parts of Switzerland. An elaborately wrought hook, of colossal proportions, supported an oval ring, also richly wrought in grotesque arabesques. In the centre of this ring hung a nondescript effigy, which at first seemed to me as unreal as a heraldic griffin. But in a second or two I perceived that it clumsily represented a great bird, that swung slowly to and fro as the gusts of the Föhn moved its massive perch. Such ensigns as these are usually brightly gilt, but this one hung black and sombre overhead, its sable hue only diversified by some rusty weather-stains, of a dark blood-red. The house was an inn, then.

Farther on in the distance I could see the twinkling of other lights in the village, but they were still somewhat far away. The strange nervous sensation I had upon me made me long for some human companionship. This inn would doubtless serve me as well as another to pass the night in. I needed only bread, wine, and a bed to sleep in. Most of all I needed to hear the voice and to see the face of a fellow-creature, for the lonely vastness of the mountains was weighing on my spirits as I had never felt it before. I searched along the side of the house with its rows of shattered casements, but saw no entrance. Round the corner of the building I found a triangular patch of garden. Here there was a short flight of wooden steps, ending in an external landing-place overhung by a porch. And beneath the porch was a door. I mounted the steps and pushed the door, which was ajar. It did not yield to my hand, and I found that it was prevented from opening entirely by a chain, or some other fastening within.

This precaution, unusual everywhere in these valleys, and almost unprecedented in a house of public entertainment, surprised me not a little, until I remembered the Föhn, which was rising in strength every minute, and made the shutters rattle, and the massive oaken door quiver as I stood there. I tapped with my alpenstock, and listened. For at least a minute there was dead silence. I had thought previously that I had heard a voice singing, or chanting in a measured cadence, but it might have been the wind, for now every sound had ceased.

This unusual stillness, instead of the movement and bustle I had expected in answer to my summons, made so unpleasant an impression on me, that I was moved by a sudden impulse to go away, and plod the other half mile or so to Falkenau. I had my foot on the ladder-like staircase to descend, when a footstep shuffled on the floor within the house, and the chain of the door was withdrawn. A light gleamed out on to the steps where I stood. Ashamed of my haste, I turned and stepped back beneath the porch, saying as I did so, "Why, I began to think all the folks were asleep in this inn! It is an inn, isn't it?"

"Ja wohl! The Raven."

The voice that answered me might have belonged to the raven itself, so harsh, and deep, and dissonant was it. But it came from a woman who stood holding the light low, so as to illuminate the steps, and shading her eyes with her hand, as she peered out at me.

"Can I sleep here?"

"Why not? Why not? Come in, my son. The Föhn is enough to blow us all away. It will be a wild night. Come in."

Her words were friendly and welcoming, though her voice was harsh. She was an elderly woman too, and her epithet "my son," applied to a lonely wanderer at her gate, pleased my fancy.

I went into the house, and she closed and locked and bolted the heavy door behind me.

"You are afraid of the wind?" said I.

"Yes; it is a bad wind, the Föhn. Go in, go in. Not that door! The door to the right."

I entered a low, wainscoted room. The panelling was of walnut wood. The ceiling was crossed by heavy beams, so low that I could easily touch them. The room was not sufficiently illuminated by the one flaring candle in my hostess's

hand, to enable me to see it very distinctly, but it seemed bare, and smelt close, and an ancient cobweb hung across one of the windows. A long table that ran down the centre of the room was quite bare.

"I suppose I can have a bed, and something to eat?" I said, rather doubtfully. My quarters so far did not promise very well.

"Why not? Why not? There is good entertainment at the Raven. The Raven is none of your new-fangled inns. It stood here before either of those gimcrack places down there at Falkenau was built. Aye, and before there was a road through the valley except for foot travellers, or, maybe, a pack mule."

She had set her candle down on the table, and I could now see her distinctly for the first time. She was a tall, lean woman, with tangled grey hair that fell in straight elf-locks. Her face was yellow, weather-beaten, furrowed with a hundred wrinkles. The features were flat, mean, and coarse. The under jaw projected, and when she spoke, she made hideous grimaces with an utterly toothless mouth. Two dark eyes glittering beneath a broad and not unintelligent forehead completed this physiognomy, which was certainly one of the most repulsive I ever saw. What her age might be, it was impossible to guess; for despite her grey hairs and toothless gums, she was upright, active in all her movements, and was altogether of a singularly vigorous and powerful frame, which contrasted startlingly with the furrowed, yellow face above it.

I stared at her in a kind of horrible fascination. Besides her natural ugliness, she was dirty and slovenly to an incredible degree. A man's jacket of dark cloth enveloped the upper part of her person, and was fastened tightly round her throat. The rest of her dress consisted of a ragged skirt of some cotton stuff, a black apron, and stout leather shoes. But I observed that she wore a pair of massive gold earrings which seemed to be antique, and of good workmanship. On her part she bore my gaze unflinchingly, and examined me in turn, with her keen bright eyes.

"Oh, you're a foreigner!" she said at length. "I didn't know at first, by your talk. You speak German well. I thought you might be some Bursch on your travels. Excusez!"

Her manner became more respectful, and at the same time she grinned and nodded to herself with an air of satisfaction.

"You have no objection to foreigners, I suppose!" said I, scarcely knowing what to say.

"Oh, objection! None in the world. The Raven used to see plenty of foreigners. Fine young gentlemen that wanted to climb the glacier yonder. Times are changed. New folks, new ways. We have enemies who speak against us. They wanted to buy this house, and turn it into a fine hotel! But we wouldn't consent. We will never consent to sell the old place. It has been in my family—I brought it in marriage to my husband—for more than a hundred years. After me—well, who knows? But whilst I live, nothing shall be changed here; nothing!"

"Can I have something to eat?" I asked, as soon as she paused.

Of course I could have something to eat! What should I like? Coffee? I accepted the suggestion and ordered coffee and bread and butter, and some cold meat, if any was to be had. Meanwhile, could I not see my bed-room? The landlady snatched up the candlestick again in her sinewy hand, and throwing open the door, she stepped into the passage and motioned me to follow. As we passed along the corridor, which was quite dark but for the flaring candle she carried, I heard again, coming apparently from the room at the end of the passage, which she had called to me not to enter when I first came into the house, a monotonous sound of chanting. I knew that it was customary among many of the more pious peasants of this Catholic district, to recite a litany in the evening, and that the whole household often joined in these exercises. I had paused to listen, for an almost imperceptible instant of time; but my hostess marked the pause, and seemed to hurry me onwards. As we ascended the stairs, she muttered something to the effect that I need not fear being disturbed.

"Oh, I am not afraid of being disturbed," I returned; "especially as it won't go on all night. They are saying their prayers downstairs, I suppose."

She shot a quick, queer glance at me, and nodded. All this time I had seen no one but this woman, and now the circumstance was accounted for. The rest of the household were, doubtless, at their evening devotions. The landlady stopped at a door in a long rambling passage on the first floor, which looked almost limitless in the dimness, and, taking a key from a bunch at her girdle, turned it with a visible effort

in the lock. The rusty iron creaked and jarred, as though it had not been touched for years, and, when the door at last turned on its hinges, there came forth a damp, mouldy smell from the chamber that sickened me, and a great moth, flying out, singed its wings in the candle-flame and beat itself blindly against my cheek.

"I can't sleep here!" I cried, starting back. "The place is like a cellar, or a churchyard."

She mumbled some words in an angry tone, and looked at me sullenly; but made no offer to move, or to show me another room. I asked if I could not have a bed elsewhere—anywhere—in a loft, on a truss of clean straw. I was not dainty, but I wished for air to breathe, and that room smelt like a charnel-house.

"Air!" said she, with a contemptuous toss of her ragged, grey head. "You shall soon have air enough!"

With that she darted at one of the windows, and, wresting its fastenings apart and scattering a cloud of dust around her in the process, she threw it wide open. It opened inward; otherwise, it could not have been opened at all, for outside were the heavy wooden shutters fast closed. But through the chinks of these the wind found its way with sufficient force to cause the door to bang to violently, and to make the candle flare and sputter. My hostess continued to mutter and mumble.

"It was a good room. What did I want? It was the best room in the house. As for air, people didn't usually leave doors and windows open when the Föhn was blowing. Foreigners didn't understand what the Föhn was. There was a beautiful bed, and sheets of the finest linen. What more could be desired?" As she spoke, she turned down the moth-eaten coverlet of the bed, and showed me the pillow. It was, in truth, of fine linen, and adorned at the edges with elaborate needle-work. The sheets, also, were fine and similarly ornamented; but they were absolutely clammy to the touch.

"This is, indeed, fine linen!" said I; "and the needle-work seems ancient and curious; but, to say the truth, a truss of dry straw would please me better. These sheets are not only damp but wet. Why, the bed cannot have been slept in for a twelvemonth!"

Perhaps my appreciation of her fine linen had mollified her; perhaps she recognised the justice of my objection. At all

events, she seemed to have recovered her temper, and promised, with alacrity, that she would substitute well-aired bedding for the damp sheets. Meanwhile, she would go and prepare my supper. Whilst I was eating it, the bed-room should be comfortably arranged. I asked for water and a towel. She went out into the dark passage, and quickly returned with an earthen pitcher, full of cold water, and over her arm a napkin of fine homespun damask. There was something quite inexplicable in the contrast between these stores of fine linen, and the dirt and squalor of her own appearance. After I had refreshed my face and hands with the water, I ventured to look round my chamber more closely than I had hitherto done. It was in a deplorable condition of decay and neglect. The plaster was falling from the ceiling, dust lay on all the furniture, which was literally falling to pieces; and yet, with strange incongruity, there were evidences everywhere of a kind of rustic wealth. A pair of candlesticks stood on the table; they were so tarnished as to be nearly black, but on examination they proved to be of silver. A crucifix was fastened to the wall at the head of the bed, and, on wiping away the coating of dirt and cobwebs which encrusted it, I found it to be a good specimen of ivory carving, evidently Italian; whilst the bracket which supported it was of fine inlaid woodwork. What could be the history of this house?

All was now absolutely quiet. From my room I could hear no sound, no voice, no movement, no token of human life. One thing was plain to me: whatever may have been formerly the case, the hostelry of the Raven was now deserted and forlorn. No traveller came there, except some chance wayfarer, like myself; and most probably I should never have entered its doors, but for the darkness which had partially concealed the appearance of the house from me. "I am thankful it is but for one night!" I exclaimed, half aloud, as I took up the candle and cast a last glance at my bed. I propped the heavy door open with a chair, in order that the draught from the window might sweep through the room, and purify its atmosphere.

I had exchanged my thick walking boots for light slippers, which I carried in my knapsack, so that I went along the passage and down the stairs with a perfectly noiseless tread. I should almost have been glad to hear my own footfall,

for the silence within the house was oppressive. It seemed to be heightened by the moan of the wind and the long, complaining creak of the iron Raven, swinging on his perch outside.

When I reached the ground-floor, I found a door open, which led to a yard at the back. By contrast with the black shadows and the yellow flare of the candle, the last twilight which lingered outside made all the objects which I could distinguish take a ghastly, bluish tint. By this light, or no light, I saw a figure cross the yard and come to the open door, near which I had paused. It bore a burden on its back, and moved slowly and heavily, as if oppressed by the weight. When it reached the door and the light of the candle fell on it, I saw that it was a woman, bearing on her back a large basket or creel, such as the peasants use hereabouts, full of firewood. Her head was bent down and I could not see her face; but her garments were so filthy, ragged, and wretched, that the hostess, had she stood near, would have seemed well-clothed by comparison. I moved, to let her pass, and she went by me without speaking or looking up, plodding straight onward, like a weary dumb beast of burthen, and entered the room at the end of the passage. Immediately afterwards, the hoarse voice of the mistress of the house called me to supper, and I went into the long low room I had been in before.

The meal, such as it was, was set out at one end of the great, bare, dusty table. There was some fluid, that purported to be coffee, in a blackened tin pot; a jug of hot milk, tasting of wood-smoke; a shapeless lump of stale bread; some butter; and a slice or two of lean ham, swimming in fat. All the utensils were dirty and squalid. The food looked and smelt revolting; I could neither eat nor drink. The old woman stood by, eyeing me unfavourably. At length, in despair of making even a pretence of partaking of this loathsome fare, I asked if I could have some wine. I thought that I might swallow a crust of the coarse bread, if it were washed down with wine.

"If you can pay for it," answered the mistress of the Raven, curtly.

"Pay for it! I certainly do not expect to have what I call for, without paying."

"Ah, but it isn't cheap. We have some common wine of the country, but I can see it wouldn't suit you. You're dainty!"

I did not think it worth while to discuss

the point, and made no answer. She proceeded:

"There's a half-dozen or so of good wine left in the cellar; real good, it is. It has been under this roof three-and-thirty years. There's no such wine at Falkenau, I can tell you."

I ordered a bottle of this lauded vintage, and the woman puckered her horrible face into a smile, as she went off, key in hand, to get it for me. "You'll see," said she. "It is a real wonderful wine."

As soon as she was gone, I determined to satisfy a feeling of curiosity which had been growing on me, and to ascertain if there were any other human beings in the house, besides its mistress and the wretched creature I had seen bringing in wood. There was something indescribably strange about the whole air of the place; and I was urged by a strong impulse to explore that closed room at the end of the passage, which from its position in the house I concluded must be the kitchen. I pushed the door softly, and peeped in. The room was dark except for a dull glow on an open hearth at one end, and I heard no sound. After standing for a few seconds at the door, I returned to the eating-room and fetched the candle from the table.

By its light I saw a large stone-flagged kitchen. At one end was the old-fashioned open hearth I have spoken of, on which a wood fire smouldered. A few metal cooking utensils hung on the smoke-begrimed walls. All was sordid, dirty, and neglected as in the rest of the house. But presently, peering into the dim corners of the room, I saw two heaps of dun-coloured rags; and then another heap in the shadow by the hearth; and as I looked the heaps began to move, and a human hand came out of one of them, and shaded a pair of eyes that seemed to look at me.

I stood as if a strong grasp held me motionless. The silence and the stillness seemed to last a long time. At length the heap near the hearth rose up, and began to emit some inarticulate noises. It proved to be a lad, with the unmistakable stamp of cretinism on his grotesque countenance. He nodded and blinked at me, and then broke into an incoherent kind of monotonous song or chant, which I recognised as the sound I had heard before, muffled by the closed door. Upon this, one of the other figures advanced and shook him roughly by the arm, and he collapsed again into silence and his old crouching posture by the hearth.

"Don't hurt the poor creature!" I said in a low tone to the woman—it was a woman, the same I had seen carrying wood into the house. She did not turn, or notice me in any way, but went to a wood-heap in one corner, and taking a heavy billet in each hand, threw them roughly on to the hearth. Then, the third occupant of the kitchen arose, and turned on me a wolfish, haggard face, lit up by a pair of gleaming eyes. He was a young, strongly-built man, but so lean and gaunt, that he might have been represented by an artist as the embodiment of Famine. Neither did he speak, nor salute me by a gesture, but glared at me with a strange malignant stare.

I cannot describe the sensation of horror and bewilderment which came over me. I stood rooted to the spot, feeling almost as imbecile as the poor idiot who was crooning over the hearth, and unable to move away, until the sound of the hostess's returning footsteps seemed to break the spell, and I hurried off, unwilling that she should find me there, although I could scarcely account to myself for the unwillingness.

I had scarcely reached the eating-room again, before the old woman returned to it, bearing a common, cloudy-looking drinking glass in one hand, and in the other a bottle covered with dust and cobwebs. She nodded and mumbled with her toothless jaws as she drew the cork. I unceremoniously wiped the dim glass on a corner of the table-cloth, before filling it with a ruby-coloured liquid which sent a grateful perfume up my nostrils. The savour was equal to the smell. It was very fine old wine; Burgundy, and of a first-rate vintage. Under its generous influence I felt the nervous horror I had been suffering dissipated, as the sun dissipates a chill fog. My hands, which, despite the Föhn, had become icy cold, recovered their natural warmth, and I felt a delightful glow circulate through my veins. I could even bear to listen to my hostess's harsh voice, as she croaked on, her tongue apparently loosened by a glass of the mellow Burgundy which she accepted at my request.

She was a widow. Her husband had been a much-respected man, a member of the governing council of the district. He belonged, as she did herself, to one of the oldest families in that part of the country. They had had a good many trials and troubles, one way and another. And then

her husband died, and she kept on the old house by herself.

"But you don't live here quite alone," said I, thinking of the singular group in the kitchen. "You have some servants, or people, about the place."

She looked at me with a sudden, lowering defiance in her face. "What servants?" she asked, in deep angry tones.

"Nay, you should know better than I! But I saw a woman carrying in wood from the yard. And—and just now I peeped into the kitchen, having nothing else to do, and I saw a—a—hostler, or stable-boy, I suppose he was. And to say the truth, I thought them both very surly and ill-mannered. I wonder you care to live alone with such people."

She sat with her chin on her hand, and looked at me unwinkingly and searchingly for full a minute. Then she answered with perfect coolness, and as if I had spoken only the instant before:

"Oh, why not? They are very harmless creatures; only a bit shy and unused to strangers. Besides," she added with a grim that distorted her mouth and left her forehead frowning, "I'm not fanciful. It isn't easy to frighten me."

With an amount of watchful attention that I could well have dispensed with, she would not leave me again, until I went to rest, and insisted on lighting me upstairs to my room. I noticed that the door, which I had left propped open, was shut; and that when I turned the handle it opened noiselessly and easily, instead of creaking as it had done before.

"I oiled the lock," said the hostess, answering my look. "It wanted oiling."

I was in a much pleasanter frame of mind, as I undressed myself, than I had been in on first entering that chamber. The musty, sickening odours were nearly all gone, thanks to the draught of air I had established. Clean and dry linen was on the bed. I resolutely refrained from any further investigations into unswept corners, and shut my eyes to the cobwebs. Even the recollections of those three wretched-looking beings in the kitchen did not now produce so startling an effect on my imagination. In a word, the Burgundy had done wonders.

"What an absurdly nervous, hypochondriacal state I must have been in," said I to myself, as I placed the candle and some matches within reach, preparatory to getting into bed, "to be so upset by those folks downstairs. The cretin was not an

agreeable object, certainly, poor wretch! But, unfortunately, cretins are common enough in Switzerland. How the Föhn is rising! Well, Raven, black, creaking, and uncanny as you may be, your shelter is better than none on a night like this."

But I changed my opinion, by-and-by, as you will see.

The long day's tramp in the fresh air (not to mention the Burgundy) had made me so drowsy that I soon fell into a profound sleep. At first it was dreamless. But gradually broken and confused images formed themselves in my brain; and finally one face, the face of a dear lost parent, grew clear and distinct, and I was about to address it, when the word that was shaping itself on my dreaming mouth was suddenly yelled aloud, as it seemed, in my very ears, in a tone that made every nerve in my body quiver, and an ice-cold shudder run down me from head to foot.

"Mother!"

The sound had awakened me effectually. Whose could that terrible voice be, calling on the sacred name of mother with so blood-freezing a shriek? I listened in an anxiety that amounted to anguish, for a repetition of the cry; but for a long time no sound woke the stillness within, whilst, outside, the wind moaned and sighed in weird gusts.

I had almost persuaded myself that the voice had been the mere figment of my dreaming brain, when again came that hideous yell, "Mother!" And then confused screams, and laughter, and babble of inarticulate noises like a chorus of fiends.

I sprang out of bed and lighted my candle. The flame flickered in the gust of wind that blew through the crevices of the shutters. The heat was stifling, notwithstanding the violent movement of the air, which seemed to be blowing from a furnace. As I threw my clothes on with headlong speed, a thousand wild conjectures were darting through my brain, as to the cause of the horrible din which still continued, although with fluctuations from loud to low.

Suddenly the sounds ceased for a moment, and then almost immediately the screams recommenced. But now they had changed to cries of pain and half-stifled moans; and the floor of the room over my head was shaken by the trampling of feet, and then I heard and felt that some heavy body was being forcibly dragged across it.

Good God! what was happening in this horrible house? Was murder being com-

mitted? I remembered the wolfish malignant glare of the young man whom I had seen in the kitchen, and the sullen silence of the woman, and the thought came, almost with the force of a conviction, into my mind, that these two were attempting to kill the old woman their mistress. A violent struggle was going on, without doubt. I seized my alpenstock—no despicable weapon in case of need, with its iron ferule—and rushed to the door. It was locked!

For an instant I stood irresolute. It was now clear that some foul play had been deliberately planned, and that any possible interference on my part had been guarded against by imprisoning me in my room. Perhaps I was to be the next victim. My irresolution did not endure many seconds. I raised the alpenstock, and battered against the closed door with all the force I could command. The heavy panels resisted my efforts. The lock jarred, and shook, and quivered, but it held fast. I had not struck many strokes before I perceived that they were echoing through a silent house. The noise above had ceased. Once or twice I thought I could distinguish a low whimpering, as of some animal in pain; but otherwise all was still as death. I called aloud. There was no answer. I ran to the window and endeavoured to throw open the wooden shutter, with some half-formed idea of getting egress from the house in that way. The shutters were not merely fastened in the ordinary way, but nailed up. However, the wood was so rotten and worm-eaten, that, with a little exertion, I succeeded in wrenching the shutters open, and looking out into the night.

At first I was nearly choked and blinded by a cloud of dust. There was a moon nearly at the full, but the sky was so covered with clouds that her light only occasionally pierced through them here and there, as they were swiftly driven from south to north by the Föhn. That terrible wind was still blowing, and with hourly increasing violence. In addition to the noise made by the wind, I could hear the rush of the main stream running through the valley, and the impetuous dash of a side torrent that poured down the rocks behind the house, and in close proximity to it. The noise of this torrent was not only louder than it had been, but

there was a peculiar change in its tone, which I knew by experience indicated a very great increase in the volume of water. It occurred to me that if this stream should become much more swollen, retreat from the house might be rendered difficult, if not dangerous. As the thought passed through my mind, I heard in the distance the long wailing note of a horn.

It is the custom in these valleys, during the continuance of a Föhn, when sudden melting of snows may be expected, to have a man watching all night near dangerous points, such as the confluence of two mountain streams, to give notice by the sound of an Alp-horn to the inhabitants of lonely scattered dwellings, when the waters swell to a threatening height; so that the flood—if there come a flood—should not find them quite unprepared.

Thus I understood the significance of that warning note. I knew with what rapidity (incredible to those who have never witnessed it) the trickling threads of water which furrow the great mountains can grow to be raging torrents, pouring devastation into the lower lands. But I hailed the approach of the watchman (herald of evil tidings though he were) with a sensation of relief unspeakable. Within a few minutes I saw the glimmer of a lantern at a long distance down the road, and the Alp-horn sounded again—once, twice, thrice. I awaited the drawing near of the lantern with trembling impatience. The wind and the water roared and howled against each other like two furious, conflicting monsters, and made the dead stillness within the house more awful. What horror might not have been enacted in that room above? I cried out, and a long shudder ran through my body as some insect of the night brushed my forehead; and I could scarcely remove my eyes from the crumbling plaster of the ceiling, so possessed was I with the dread of seeing a ghastly, crimson rain drip horribly through its chinks!

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"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 341. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JUNE 12, 1875.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCIS ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XVIII.

On the day following the dinner at Lord Seely's, Algernon received a card, importing that Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs would be at home that evening.

Of the lady he knew nothing, except that she was an elder sister of young Pawkins, of Pudcombe Hall; and that her family, who were people of consideration in Whitford and its neighbourhood, thought Jemima to have made a good match in marrying Mr. Machyn-Stubbs. In giving him the letter of introduction, Orlando Pawkins had let fall a word or two as to the position his sister held in London society.

"I can't send anybody and everybody to the Machyn-Stubbs's," said young Pawkins. "In their position, it wouldn't be fair to inflict our bucolic magnates on them. But I'm sure Jemima will be very glad to make your acquaintance, old fellow."

Algernon was quite free from arrogance. He would have been well enough contented to dine with Mr. Machyn-Stubbs, had that gentleman been a grocer or a cheese-monger. And, in that case, he would probably have derived a good deal of amusement from any little vulgarities which might have marked the manners of his host, and would have entertained his genteeler friends by a humorous imitation of the same. But he was not in the least overawed by the prospect of meeting Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs, and was

quite aware that he probably owed his introduction to her, to young Pawkins's knowledge of the fact that he was Lady Seely's relation.

Algernon betook himself to the house of Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs, in the fashionable neighbourhood before mentioned, about half-past ten o'clock, and found the small reception-rooms already fuller than was agreeable. Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs received him very graciously. She was a pretty woman, with a smooth fair face and light hair, and she was dressed with as much good taste as was compatible with the extreme of the prevailing fashion. She smiled a good deal, and was quite destitute of any sense of humour.

"So glad to see you, Mr. Errington," said she, when Algernon had made his bow. "You and Orlando are great friends, are you not? You must let me make you acquainted with my husband." Then she handed Algernon over to a stout, red-faced, white-haired gentleman, much older than herself, who shook hands with him, said, "How d'ye do?" and "How long have you been in town?" and then appeared to consider that he had done all that could be expected of him in the way of conversation.

"I suppose you don't know many people here, Mr. Errington?" said Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs, seeing that Algernon was standing silent in the shadow of her husband.

"Not any. You know I have never been in London before."

"Haven't you, really? But perhaps we may have some mutual acquaintances notwithstanding. Let me see who is here!" said the lady, looking round her rooms.

"Are you acquainted with the Dormers, Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs?"

"The Dormers? Let me see——"

"General and Lady Harriet Dormer."

"Oh! no; I don't think I am. Of course I must have met them. In the course of the season, sooner or later, one meets everybody."

"Do you know Miss Kilfinane?"

"Miss Kilfinane? I—I can't recall at this moment——"

"She is a sort of connection of mine; not a relation, for she is Lord Seely's niece, not my lady's."

"Oh, to be sure! You are a cousin of Lady Seely. Yes, yes; I had forgotten. But Orlando did mention it."

In truth, the fact of Algernon's relationship to Lady Seely was the only one concerning him which had dwelt in Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs's memory. Presently she resumed:

"I should like to introduce you to a great friend of ours; the most delightful creature! I hope he will come to-night, but he is very difficult to catch. He is a son of Lord Mullingar."

"What, Jack Price?"

"Oh, you know him, do you?"

"Only by reputation. He was to have dined at Lord Seely's last night, when I was there. But he didn't show."

"Oh, I know he's dreadfully uncertain. But I must say, however, that he is generally very good about coming to me. It's quite wonderful, I'm sure. I don't know why I am so favoured!"

Then Algernon was presented to a rather awful dowager, with two stiff daughters, to whom he talked as well as he could; and the nicest looking of whom he took into the tea-room, where there was a great crush, and where people trod on each other's toes, and poked their elbows into each other's ribs, to procure a cup of hay-coloured tea and a biscuit that had seen better days.

"Upon my word," thought Algernon, "if this is London society, I think Whitford society better fun." But then he reflected that Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs was not a real leader of fashionable society. She was not quite a rose herself, although she lived near enough to the roses for their scent to cling, more or less faintly, about her garments. He was not bored, for his quick powers of perception, and lively appreciation of the ludicrous, enabled him to gather considerable amusement from the scene. Especially did he feel amused and in his element when, on an allusion to his cousinship to Lady Seely,

thrown out in the airiest, most hap-hazard way, the awful dowager and the stiff daughters unbent, and became as gracious as temperament in the one case, and painfully tight stays in the other, permitted.

"He's a very agreeable person, your young friend, Mr. Ancram Errington," said the dowager, later on in the evening, to Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs.

"Oh yes; he's very nice indeed. He is a great favourite with my people. He half lives at our place, I believe, when Orlando is at home."

"Indeed! He is—a—a—connected with the Seelys, I believe, in some way."

"Second cousin. Lady Seely was an Ancram—Warwickshire Ancrams, you know," returned Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs, who knew her Peerage nearly by heart. Whereupon the dowager went back to her daughter, by whose side, having nothing else to do, Algernon was still sitting, and told him that she should be happy to see him at her house in Portland-place any Friday afternoon, between four and six o'clock, during the season.

Presently, when the company was giving forth a greater amount and louder degree of talk than had hitherto been the case—for Herr Doppeldaum had just sat down to the grand piano—Algernon's quick eyes perceived a movement near the door of the principal drawing-room, and saw Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs advance with extended hand, and more eagerness than she had thrown into her reception of most of the company, to greet a gentleman who entered with a kind of plunge, tripping over a bear-skin rug that lay before the door, and dropping his hat.

He was a short, broad-chested man, with a bald forehead and a fringe of curly chestnut hair round his head. He was evidently extremely near-sighted, and wore a glass in one eye, the effort of keeping which in its place occasioned an odd contortion of his facial muscles. He was rubicund, and looked like a man who might grow to be very stout later in life. At present he was only rather stout, and was braced, and strapped, and tightened, so as to make the best of his figure. His dress was the dress of a dandy of that day, and he wore a fragrant hot-house flower in his button-hole.

"That must be Jack Price!" thought Algernon, he scarcely knew why; and the next moment he got away from the dowager and her daughters, and sauntered towards the door.

"Oh, here is Mr. Errington," said Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs, looking round at him as he made his way through the crowd. "Do let me introduce you to Mr. Price. This is Mr. Ancram Errington, a great friend of my brother Orlando. You have met Orlando, I think?"

"Oh, indeed, I have!" said Mr. Jack Price, in a rich sweet voice, and with a very decidedly marked brogue. "Orlando is one of my dearest friends. Delightful fellow, what? Orlando's friend must be my friend, if he will, what?"

The little interrogation at the end of the sentence meant nothing, but was a mere trick. The use of it, with a soft rising inflection of Mr. Jack Price's very musical voice, had once upon a time been pronounced to be "captivating" by an enthusiastic Irish lady. But he had not fallen into the habit of using it from any idea that it was captivating, nor had he desisted from it since all projects of captivation had departed from his mind.

"I was to have met you at dinner, last night, Mr. Price," said Algernon, shaking his proffered hand.

"Last night? I was,—where is it I was last night? Oh, at the Blazonvilles! Yes, of course, what? Why didn't you come, then, Mr. Errington? The Duke would have been delighted—perfectly charmed, to see you!"

"Well, that may be doubtful, seeing that I cannot flatter myself that his Grace is even aware of my existence," said Algernon, looking at Mr. Price with twinkling eyes, and his mouth twitching with the effort to avoid a broad grin.

Jack Price looked back at him, puzzled and smiling. "Eh? How was it then, what? Was it—it wasn't me, was it?"

Algernon laughed outright.

"Ah now, Mr.—Mr.—my dear fellow, where was it that you were to have met me?"

"My cousin, Lady Seely, was hoping for the pleasure of your company, Mr. Price. She was under the impression that you had promised to dine with her."

Jack Price fell back a step and gave himself a sounding slap on the forehead. "Good gracious goodness!" he exclaimed. "You don't mean to say that?"

"I do, indeed."

"Ah, now, upon my honour, I am the most unfortunate fellow under the sun! I don't know how the deuce it is that these kind of misfortunes are always happening to me. What will I say to Lady

Seely? She'll never speak to me any more, I suppose, what?"

"You should keep a little book and note down your engagements, Mr. Price," said Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs, as she walked away to some other guest.

Mr. Price gave Algernon a comical look, half rueful, half amused. "I don't quite see myself with the little book, entering all my engagements," said he. "I daresay you've heard already from Lady Seely of my sins and shortcomings?"

"At all events, I have heard this: that whatever may be your sins and shortcomings, they are always forgiven."

"I am afraid I bear an awfully bad character, my dear Mr.—"

"Errington; Ancram Errington."

"To be sure! Ah, I know your name well enough. But names are among the things that slip my memory. It is a serious misfortune, what?"

Then the two began to chat together. And when the crowd began to diminish, and the rattle of carriages grew more frequent down in the street beneath the drawing-room windows, Jack Price proposed to Algernon to go and sup with him at his club. They walked away together, arm in arm, and, as they left Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs's doorstep, Mr. Price assured his new acquaintance that that lady was the nicest creature in the world, and one of his dearest friends; and that he could take upon himself to assert that Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs would be only too delighted to receive him (Algernon) at any time and as often as he liked. "It will give her real pleasure, now, what?" said Jack Price, with quite a glow of hospitality on behalf of Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs. Then they went to Mr. Price's club. It was neither a political club, nor a fashionable club, nor a grand club; but a club that was widely miscellaneous, and decidedly jolly. Algernon, before he returned to his lodging that night, had come to the opinion that London was, after all, a great deal better fun than Whitford. And Jack Price, when he called upon Lady Seely the next day, to make his peace with her, declared that young Errington was, really now, the most delightful and dearest boy in the world, and that he was quite certain that the young fellow was most warmly attached to Lord and Lady Seely.

All this was agreeable enough. And Algernon would have been content to go on in the same way to the end of the

London season, had it been possible. But careless as he was about money, he was not careless about the luxuries which money supplies. Certainly, if tradesmen and landlords could only be induced to give unlimited credit, Algernon would have had none the less pleasure in availing himself of their wares, because he had not paid for them in coin of the realm. But as to doing without, or even limiting himself to an inferior quality and restricted quantity, that was a matter about which he was not at all indifferent. He was received on a familiar footing in the Seelys' house; and his reception there opened to him many other houses, in which it was more or less agreeable and flattering to be received. Among the Machyn-Stubbases of London society he was looked upon as quite a desirable guest, and received a good deal of petting, which he took with the best grace in the world. And all this was, as has been said, pleasant enough. But, as weeks went on, Algernon's money began to run short; and he soon beheld the dismal prospect ahead—and not very far ahead—of his last sovereign. And he was in debt.

As to being in debt, that had nothing in it appalling to our young man's imagination. What frightened him was the conviction that he should not be permitted to go on being in debt. Other people owed money, and seemed to enjoy life none the less. Mr. Jack Price, for instance, had an allowance from his father, on which no one pretended to expect him to live. And he appeared very comfortable and contented in the midst of a rolling sea of debt, which sometimes ebbed a little, and sometimes flowed alarmingly high; but which, during the last ten years or so, he had managed to keep pretty fairly at the same level. But then Mr. Price was the Honourable John Patrick Price, the Earl of Mullingar's son—a younger son, it was true; and neither Lord Mullingar, nor Lord Mullingar's heir, was likely to have the means, or the inclination, to fish him out of the rolling sea aforesaid. At the most, they would throw him a plank now and then, just to keep him afloat. Still there was something to be got out of Jack Price by a West-end tradesman who knew his business. Something was to be got in the way of money, and, perhaps, something more in the way of connection. Upon the whole, it may be supposed that the West-end tradesmen understood what they were

about, when they went on supplying the Honourable John Patrick Price with all sorts of comforts and luxuries, season after season.

But with Algernon the case was widely different, and he knew it. He had ventured to speak to Lord Seely about his prospects, and to ask that nobleman's "advice." But Lord Seely had not seemed able to offer any advice which it was practicable to follow. Indeed, how should he have done so, seeing that he was ignorant of most of the material facts of the case? He knew in a general way that young Ancram (Algernon had come to be called so in the Seely household) was poor; but between Lord Seely's conception of the sort of poverty which might pinch a well-born young gentleman, who always appeared in the neatest-fitting shoes and freshest of gloves, and the reality of Algernon's finances, there was a wide discrepancy. Algernon had indeed talked freely, and with much appearance of frankness, about his life in Whitford; but it may be doubted whether Lord Seely, or his wife either—although she, doubtless, came nearer to the truth in her imaginings on the subject—at all realised such facts as that Mrs. Errington had no maid to attend on her; that her lodgings cost her eighteen shillings a week; and that the smell of cheese from the shop below was occasionally a source of discomfort in her only sitting-room.

With Lord Seely, Algernon had made himself a great favourite. And the proof of it was, that my lord actually thought about him when he was absent; and one day said to his wife, "I wish, Belinda, that we could do something for Ancram."

"Do something for him. I think we do a great deal for him. He has the run of the house, and I introduce him right and left. And he is always asked to sing when we have people."

"That latter looks rather like his doing something for us, I think."

"Not at all. It's a great advantage for a young fellow in his position to be brought forward, and allowed to show off his little gifts in that way."

"He is wasting his time. I wish we could get him something to do."

"I am sure you have plenty of claims on you that come before him."

"I—I did speak to the Duke of Blazonville about him the other day," said my lord, with the slightest hesitation in the world.

The Duke of Blazonville was in the

cabinet, and had been a colleague of Lord Seely's years ago.

"What on earth made you do that, Valentine? You know very well that the next thing the duke has to give, I particularly want for Reginald."

"Oh, but what I should ask for young Ancram would be something at which your nephew Reginald would probably—"

"Turn up his nose?"

"Something which Reginald would not care about taking."

"Reginald wouldn't go abroad, except to Italy. Nor, indeed, anywhere in Italy but to Naples."

"Exactly. Whether the duke would consider that he was particularly serving the interests of diplomacy by sending Reginald to Naples, I don't know. But, at all events, Ancram could not interfere with that project."

"Serving—? Nonsense! The duke would do it to oblige me. As to Ancram, I have latterly had a kind of plan in my head about Ancram."

"About a place for him?"

"Well, yes; a place, if you like to call it so. What do you say to his coming abroad with us in the autumn?"

"Eh? Coming abroad with us?"

"Of course we should have to pay all his expenses. But I think he would be amusing, and perhaps useful. He talks French very well, and is lively and good-tempered."

"I have no doubt he would be a most charming travelling companion—"

"I don't know about that. But I should take him out of kindness, and to do him a service."

"But I don't see of what use such a plan would be to him, Belinda."

"Well, I've an idea in my head, I tell you. I have kept my eyes open, and I fancy I see a chance for Ancram."

"You are very mysterious, my dear!" said Lord Seely, with a little shrug.

"Well, least said, soonest mended. I shall be mysterious a little longer. And, meanwhile, I think we might make him the offer to take him to Switzerland with us, since you have no objection."

"I have no objection, certainly."

"I think I shall mention it to him, then. And, if I were you, I wouldn't bother the duke about him just yet."

"But what is this notion of yours, Belinda?"

The exclamation rose to my lady's lips, "How inquisitive men are!" but she

suppressed it. It was the kind of speech which particularly angered Lord Seely, who much disliked being lumped in with his fellow-creatures on the ground of common qualities. Even a compliment, so framed that my lord was supposed to share it with a number of other persons, would have displeased him. So my lady said, "Well, now, Valentine, you'll begin to laugh at me, very likely, but I believe I'm right. I think Castalia is very well inclined to like this young fellow. And she might do worse."

"Castalia! Like him? Why, you don't mean—?"

"Yes, I do," returned my lady, nodding her head. "That's just what I do mean. I'm sure, the other evening, she became quite sentimental about him."

"Good heavens, Belinda! But the idea is preposterous."

"Yes; I knew you'd say so at first. That's why I didn't want to say anything about it just yet awhile."

"But allow me to say that, if you had any such idea in your head, it was only proper that it should be mentioned to me."

"Well, I have mentioned it."

Lord Seely clasped his hands behind his back, and walked up and down the room in a stiff, abrupt kind of march. At length he stopped opposite to her ladyship, who was assiduously soothing Fido; Fido having, for some occult reason, become violently exasperated by his master's walking about the room.

"Why, in the first place—do send that brute away," said his lordship, sharply.

"There! he's quiet now. Good Fido! Good boy! Mustn't bark and growl at master. Yes; you were saying—?"

"I was saying that, in the first place, Castalia must be ten years older than this boy."

"About that, I should say. But if they don't mind that, I don't see what it matters to us."

"And he has not any means, nor any prospect of earning any, that I can see."

"Why, for that matter, Castalia hasn't a shilling in the world, you know. We have to find her in everything, and so has your sister Julia, when Castalia goes to stay with her. And if these two could set their horses together—could, in a word, make a match of it—why, you might do something to provide for the two to-

gether, don't you see? Killing two birds with one stone!"

"Very much like killing two birds, indeed! What are they to live on?"

"If Ancram makes up to Castalia, you must get him a place. Something modest, of course. I don't see that they can either of them expect a grand thing."

"Putting all other considerations aside," said my lord, drawing himself up, "it would be a very odd sort of match for Castalia Kilfinane."

"Come! his birth is as good as hers, any way. If his father was an apothecary, her mother was a poor curate's daughter."

"Rector's daughter, Belinda. Dr. Vyse was a learned man, and the rector of his parish."

"Oh, well, it all comes to the same thing. And as to an odd sort of match, why, perhaps, an odd match is better than none at all. You know Castalia's no beauty. She don't grow younger; and she'll be unbearable in her temper; if once she thinks she's booked for an old maid."

Poor Lord Seely was much disquieted. He had a kindly feeling for his orphan niece, which would have ripened into affection if Miss Castalia's character had been a little less repellent. And he really liked Algernon Errington so much that the notion of his marrying Castalia appeared to him in the light of a sacrifice, even although he held his own opinion as to the comparative goodness of the Ancram and Kilfinane blood. But, nevertheless, such was Lady Seely's force of character, that many days had not elapsed before his lordship was silenced, if not convinced, on the subject. And the invitation to go to Switzerland was given to Algernon, and accepted.

STORM LAWS.

WHEN we find an eminent savant writing for the glorification, not of his own scientific exploits, but of the discoveries of others, his utterances have a double claim on our attention. And this recommendation is remarkably applicable to M. Faye's convincing Defence of the Law of Storms, which constitutes the Scientific Notice appended to the *Annuaire of the Bureau des Longitudes* for 1875.

From time to time our journals have to record the occurrence of hurricanes which devastate the East and West Indian and Chinese seas, under the name of tornados,

typhoons, and cyclones. European tempests give no idea of the violence of these fearful phenomena, which, in a few instants, wreck hundreds of vessels, drown thousands of victims, level buildings with the ground, destroy whole harvests, crush and sweep down forests, and cause gigantic bore-waves to rush far inland. In short, with the exception of an earthquake, there is nothing in the world so destructive as a typhoon—no calamity which sacrifices so many lives in so short a space of time. Consequently the disasters caused by these cyclones (whose final efforts reach our shores under the form of squalls and tempests) naturally directed public attention to phenomena hitherto but imperfectly understood. For, although they have been carefully studied in England and the United States, there are not a few persons, especially in France, who, on reading the title of this paper, will be astonished to learn that Storms are really subject to Laws, and will ask themselves what a writer can mean by maintaining that any such laws exist.

Nevertheless, storms are not disordinate phenomena; they are governed by sure and certain, almost geometrical rules; they obey laws of the highest interest to science, and still more useful as guides to the mariner. These rules are taught in naval schools, and are exacted from candidates for naval promotion. But recently the Laws of Storms have been contested; the navigators' guides to safety have been put in doubt on the pretended authority of Meteorology. Therefore has M. Faye taken upon himself to state clearly the Laws of Storms and to refute those who would lessen their practical value.

It is fortunate, both for navigation and for science, that eminent men, like Piddington, Reid, and Redfield, dismissing the theories and prejudices of the day and resolved to trust to facts alone, should have set to work some forty years ago, with no other pretension than to inquire whether these tempests did not follow some law, from which rules might be deduced for working a vessel. As they rage in the most frequented seas on the globe, there would be no lack of the means of information; data would only have to be collected and interpreted. The first premises on which those illustrious investigators went were, first, the idea that there ought to be some regularity in the course of hurricanes; and then the still clearer notion, supported by facts, that in every

one of these disastrous storms the wind appeared to turn in circles. "We do not ask," they said to themselves, "how storms are formed, but how they march." Instead of indulging in hypothetical speculations, they collected for every hurricane extracts from the log-books of every vessel caught in it; they traced upon a map the position of those vessels and the direction of the winds observed at given dates, and then applying to the map transparent papers on which concentric circles had been drawn, they discovered, from the arrow-heads marking the winds, that, at that particular date, over the whole region visited by the storm, the mass of air resting on sea and land must have been animated by a vast revolving movement round a determinate centre.

Every tornado, typhoon, and hurricane presents this very identical character, in the East Indies as well as in America, in the Chinese exactly as in the Southern seas; and they preserve it throughout their whole duration and course, which is often of more than six hundred leagues. The conclusion is evident. It is a case of circular motion on an enormous scale, distinctly limited to a certain portion of our atmosphere, which said revolving portion is also carried onwards by a movement of translation or progression.

A most remarkable fact is that, when we compare these partial results obtained throughout the northern hemisphere, from the Gulf of Bengal to the Caribbean Sea, passing by China and Japan, we find that the gyration takes place in the same direction, always and everywhere from right to left. Still more remarkable is it, that when our observations are extended to the southern hemisphere, the same law, the same gyration is met with, only in the reverse direction, namely, from left to right. Lastly, the lines of their onward course offer in each hemisphere such striking features in common, and such symmetry from hemisphere to hemisphere, that M. Faye has been able to delineate their movements in diagrams whose sameness of pattern immediately catches the eye. All is symmetry on either side of the equator, or rather of the zone of calms which oscillates a little every year, following the course of the Sun; there is symmetry in the direction of rotation, symmetry in the course and figure of the lines marking the progressive movement, and that all over the whole terrestrial globe.

Such are the Storm Laws. M. Faye retains their English name, because other nations had no hand in the discovery, which was reserved for the two greatest maritime powers to make—England and the United States. The result of persevering observation, of empiricism (taking the word in its good sense), they have not yet a theory. On the contrary, to discover them, it required great strength of mind to break with contemporary notions, and doctrines whose influence was sterile at the best. They form the counterpart of Kepler's Laws, which long remained without a theory to rest on, discovered by gropings in the dark and empiricism, thanks to the genius of a man who dared to free himself both from ancient prejudices, and from prevailing hypotheses and vain conceptions. And yet even the immortal Newton, when combining them with his principle of universal gravitation, adopted them with the quiet remark, "Uti supposit Keplerus."

But the object here aimed at is practical utility; it is a question of saving human life. Are there any precursory signs of cyclones? For, the mariner forewarned in time, is all but rescued. When the cyclone begins to be felt, can we discover the position of its centre, in which the rotation increases in swiftness, where all the causes of destruction are at their worst? Since the cyclone does not stand still, but marches onwards, are there indications which reveal its direction? How can it be known whether a vessel is caught in the dangerous region—in which the velocity of the wind is the sum of the velocities of rotation and of translation—or in the manageable region, where the wind's velocity is only the difference of those two velocities? How handle the ship to avoid the hurricane, or to escape if unfortunately entrapped within its circuit? These questions have now their answers; some clear and imperative, others more elastic, leaving a certain degree of liberty to the tact and skill of the officer in command.

By a long and continuous fall, the barometer, which never deceives between the Tropics, announces that a cyclone is not far off. When the wind begins to blow with a certain force, it is easy to determine the direction in which the centre of the cyclone is situated. Piddington's rule is this: Face the wind and, if in the northern hemisphere, stretch out your right arm; the centre is in that direction.

If in the Southern Seas, it would be the left arm. Soon the strength of the wind increases, the barometer goes down more rapidly; the centre is approaching, for the cyclone stalks onwards. If the wind continues to augment without changing its direction, you are on the exact line of march of the centre, and you will soon be in the very heart of the tempest. Then, all of a sudden, there is a calm; in the centre of the cyclone is a circular space where reigns a relative calm which, by contrast, seems almost absolute. There, the sky is serene, and you fancy that you have escaped; but this quiet area is speedily crossed, and the storm recommences. It is then the hinder portion of the cyclone which is passing: only the wind has suddenly shifted one hundred and eighty degrees; it blows now in the opposite direction to its former quarter, perpendicularly to the path of the cyclone's centre.

The situation just supposed is a particular case, which does not very often occur; in general, the vessel happens to be to the right or the left of the centre of the cyclone's path, whose direction, however, should be endeavoured to be ascertained. The alternative is far from indifferent; it is a matter of life or death: for the one answers to the manageable, the other to the perilous semicircle. Here is Reid's rule, which removes all uncertainty: In whichever hemisphere you happen to be, if the wind successively changes its direction by passing through the points of the compass in the same direction as the cyclone itself, you are in the manageable semicircle; if it changes by shifting in a direction opposite to that of the cyclone's own rotation, you are in the dangerous semicircle. In the first of these two semicircles, it is possible to employ the force of the wind as a means of escape from the hurricane, and almost literally to accomplish the feat of taking a ride upon a cyclone.

But recent critics have reproached these rules with being merely empirical, unsupported by theory; the science of Mechanics ought to have taken them in hand and explained them. But Statics and Dynamics could do nothing of the kind; because the whirling movements of fluids, and even of liquids, still remain a sealed book to Statics and Dynamics. In spite of the adhesion of practical men, the Meteorologists do not find in the Storm Laws the points which, according to them, ought to

characterise tempests. They would even reject the practical rules which navigators have adopted for the last thirty years; and that because, as we have seen, they are entirely based on the circularity of the movement of the air in tempests.

The winds, objectors hold, ought to rush to a centre, and then suck up whatever they find there. Centripetal hurricanes of aspiration are an old idea, whose formation may be traced from the remotest times to the present, and originating in an illusion of the sense of sight. When a thing has been believed to have been seen, there is no possibility of gainsaying it. Thus, waterspout stories, the things they have lifted and the things they have let fall again, have been handed down through generations of sailors whose great-grandfathers had seen them, if they themselves had not—had seen them, much as the Arabs saw Lambert Bey, the founder of the Observatory at Cairo, unfasten the stars with his telescope and compel them to come within his reach.

Typhoons and cyclones, as well as waterspouts and whirlwinds, are all, in reality, kindred phenomena, differing only in their dimensions. A whirlwind is only a large waterspout; a typhoon, a magnified whirlwind; between the typhoon and the vastest cyclone there is not the slightest difference. If you arrange these phenomena in the order of their magnitude, you will pass from the smallest waterspout to the mightiest hurricane by an insensible transition. Mr. Piddington was therefore right in confounding them in the common term of cyclone. But in regard to their observation, there is this capital difference, that a waterspout or a tornado can be taken in at a glance, at least from a distance. We can catch its form, and observe how it treats the ground over which it passes or the clouds whence it descends; whereas cyclones are so enormous that they embrace areas far wider than the observer's horizon. Their limits are beyond his ken, and he can only form an idea of them by collecting observations made at distant points.

Neither may too much importance be attributed to electrical influences. There was a time when everything in Meteorology was attempted to be explained by electricity. On the occurrence of difficulties, it was a convenient resource, and the explanation seemed complete if a laboratory experiment could be cited to the purpose. But the electric spark,

special to charged conductors when brought within explosive distance, has always forgotten to spring from the two portions of a waterspout when about to join each other. In short, vertical aspiration and electricity being set aside as inadequate, the question so simplified remains an affair of pure Mechanics.

When there exist in a watercourse differences of velocity between two contiguous streams of fluid, there is tendency to form, in consequence of those unequal velocities, a regular movement of rotation round a vertical axis. Observation has also left no doubt about the downward direction of the spiral movement in those whirlpools. On a sufficiently large scale they are the terror of bathers. When a swimmer is unfortunately drawn into one, he is carried by a rapid rotation to the very bottom. The identity of aerial tornados and aqueous whirlpools, however complete mechanically and geometrically, is not absolutely so physically, in consequence of the differences between water and gases. The temperature of a stream is nearly the same throughout its depth; not so the atmosphere. Still the resemblance is sufficient for illustration.

One of the characteristics of the whirlpools in our watercourses, is to occur on every scale of magnitude, without the slightest change in their nature or properties. Some whirlpools are several inches, others several yards, several scores and hundreds of yards in diameter; their only limit is the breadth of the current in which they are produced. In our seas, there are gyrations of still wider area; some are even colossal—witness the vast revolving movements of the Atlantic—with a still expanse lying in their centre, in which enormous beds of *Fucus natans*, or *Sargassum vulgare*, form what are called *Sargasso seas*.* On the Sun's surface we beheld revolving movements, namely, the spots, still more decidedly characterised, and of all sizes, up to spots five or six times as large as our globe. In like manner, in the circular movements of our atmosphere, you find little momentary passing whirlwinds, whiffs only a few feet or less across;

waterspouts much more durable, from ten to two hundred yards; and tornados from five hundred to three thousand yards in diameter. Beyond those dimensions the eye fails to catch the forms of the revolving column; it is then called by a different name, but there is no change in its real nature. Larger still, with diameters of three, four, and five degrees, they are known as hurricanes or cyclones; but there is still no alteration in their mechanism. They are invariably gyratory, circular movements, whose velocity goes on increasing towards the centre; initiated in the superior atmospheric currents at the expense of their unequal velocities; propagated downwards into the lower strata, in spite of their perfectly calm condition or independently of the winds therein prevailing; committing their ravages when they reach and encounter the obstacles standing on the soil; and following in their march the upper currents, so that their devastations trace on the terrestrial globe the otherwise invisible course of those currents.

The Storm Laws, then, are in reality only an approximation. They would be always reliable and exact, if the currents of the atmosphere were never subject to any disturbing action. But as they take no account of those disturbances and afford no means of foreseeing or appreciating their effect, we ought not always to apply those Laws with our eyes shut. Nevertheless, the Storm Laws have a general agreement with the mechanical theory of revolving motion in the atmosphere. The nautical rules deduced from them deserve, in ordinary cases, all the confidence which mariners have placed in them for the last thirty years. The exceptions ought to be simply treated as mechanical disturbances of the gyratory movement, whose investigation will surely complete the first happy indications. The discovery of these approximate Laws of Tempests is one of the grandest scientific conquests of the age; and if we would carry the actual approximation still farther, it is the study of the solar cyclones which will furnish us with future guides.

Whirlpools, in former times, played an important part in our general conceptions of the Universe. Fallen into discredit by a natural reaction against a false idea, they have been too completely forgotten. Consequently, when a gyratory character was recognised in the grand movements of the atmosphere, men determined by common

* So styled by Maury in his *Physical Geography of the Sea*. "Midway the Atlantic, in the triangular space between the Azores, Canaries, and the Cape de Verd Islands, is the great Sargasso Sea. Covering an area equal in extent to the Mississippi Valley, it is so thickly matted over with Gulf weed that the speed of vessels passing through it is often much retarded," &c.

consent to attribute them to quite different and discrepant causes. Occasionally, geometers seemed inclined to refer them to tumultuous and chaotic motions, of which they could make nothing and out of which, they thought, nothing was to be made. At present it is clearly seen that movements of the cyclonic order really do constitute a vast series of regular and stable phenomena whose very perturbations affect a geometrical behaviour.

This series, which commences with the tiny whirlpools of our streams, comprises the most curious and the most fearful phenomena of our atmosphere, the gigantic movements which observation has revealed in the Sun, and extends perhaps to the nebulae, in which Lord Rosse's telescope has detected a decidedly spiral structure. It would therefore be of the highest utility, M. Faye concludes, to refer the theory of these atmospheric movements to the domain of rational mechanics. For that, the first step was, to search out their rules empirically; which step was accomplished, thirty years ago, by the eminent authors of the Law of Storms.

OLD LONDON CARRIERS AND THEIR HOUSES OF CALL.

A SINGULAR book is extant, written by a singular man, on a subject which throws much light on the state of society in the Stuart times, in so far as concerns the transmission of goods, letters, and passengers from place to place. John Taylor, in the reigns of James the First and Charles the First, in the time of the Commonwealth, and far on into the reign of the Second Charles, was knocking about the world in various capacities, and with many ups and downs of fortune—more downs, perhaps, than ups. At one time in his career he was a waterman on the Thames. Wherever he went, or whatever he was doing, scribbling was his chief delight; he wrote and published largely, nearly as much in verse as in prose. He clubbed together his occupation and his amusement by calling himself the Water Poet, a name by which he has ever since been known. We have already made his acquaintance in this capacity.* One of his numerous undertakings was of a remarkably useful character, albeit not very profitable to himself, so far as can

be judged from the context. The best way of conveying an idea of this undertaking, embodied in a small book now before us, is to transcribe the title of the booklet in full; and this we do the more willingly, because it is a good example of the amazingly prolix title-pages which the old writers were wont to prefix to their books:—"The Carriers' Cosmographie: A Briefe Relation of the Innes, Ordinaries, Hostelries, and other Lodgings in and neere London, where the Carriers, Waggoners, Footpostes, and Higglers doe usually come, from any parts, Townes, Shires, and Counties of the Kingdom of England, Principality of Wales, also from Kingdoms of Scotland and Ireland. With nominations of what Dayes of the Weeke they doe come to London, and on what Dayes they returne; whereby all sorts of people may finde direction how to receive or send Goods or Letters, unto such places as their owners may require. As also where the Ships, Hoighs, Barks, Tilt-boats, and Wherries doe usually attend to carry Passengers and Goods to the Coast Townes of England, Scotland, Ireland, and the Netherlands; and where the Barges and Boats are ordinarily to be had that goe up the River of Thames, westward from London."

Let us see what this denotes, in the condition of English travelling which prevailed in the year Sixteen Hundred and Thirty-Seven, when Charles the First had been about ten years on the throne.

In the first place, as regards goods and merchandise. This branch of the carrier's trade was but slightly developed. Instead of making nearly all our cutlery at Sheffield, as now, there were cutlers in most large towns, who supplied their neighbours without any great extent of road transport. Instead of looking, as now, to Birmingham for trinkets, and to the Black Country for iron pots and kettles, most of our principal towns had a sufficient number of gold-workers, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, brass-founders, &c., to supply the metal wares required in the neighbourhood. The cotton manufacture had hardly commenced; while the spinning and weaving of linens, woollens, and silks were more generally diffused throughout the country than they are at present. The coal consumed in London was entirely brought by sea; and most of the mineral ores were worked and smelted, in localities where water-carriage was similarly available. Fish could with difficulty reach the inland districts at all,

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, Feb. 20th, 1875, "The Voyage of a Water Poet."

and was on that account sold very cheaply on the coast. In these and in other ways local distribution was more observable than great concentration; the inhabitants of each town looked to the manufacturers and workmen of that town, rather than to those of any great centre or centres of industry, for the supply of their wants. This was to a certain extent a matter of necessity; for the roads were so narrow and so bad as to render the transport of goods a difficult, tedious, and costly affair. Horses could trot or walk where wheeled vehicles could not run; and thus a good deal of road traffic was conducted by bagmen—travellers who carried packages of merchandise in their saddle-bags. Larger consignments were intrusted to carts and waggons, the latter having very broad wheels and many horses; and the troubles which ensued when these wheels stuck in the mud formed many an amusing incident in the diaries, dramas, and stories of those times. The carts and waggons which went to and from London were naturally looked up to as more important than those confined to provincial districts. The inns and hostelries at which the vehicles, horses, and drivers put up at night were also the goods' offices; and John Taylor did a very useful work in presenting such a list of them as he could obtain.

In the second place, as concerns travellers. If two towns were situated on the same river, wherries, barges, and fly-boats of various kinds were much employed for the conveyance of passengers; and townsmen who had easy access to the sea naturally took advantage of that mode of travelling. Canals there were none; regular stage coaches were in their infancy; and passengers who could not afford the hire of a coach for themselves mostly travelled in the waggons and carts, which also conveyed merchandise. John Taylor had not to get up one list of waggons and another of coaches: the same vehicle generally served to carry goods and passengers, and people had to acquaint themselves with the hostelries from whence the lumbering conveyances started.

In the third place, we have to bear in mind that there was no Postal System in those days. The Government had not organised a plan for this purpose. Letters were conveyed by hand, or were placed under the care of carriers and waggons; and it was always a doubtful problem whether, and when, a letter would reach

its destination. Some of the vehicles, perhaps quicker and lighter than the rest, carried bags to the more important towns; and the name of "Post" was often given to such a vehicle, or perhaps to the bag which it carried, or to the man who carried the bag, but with no such official importance as we now attach to the term. People had to take their letters, not to a Post Office in our sense of the word, but to the inns, and consign them just as they would merchandise and passengers. John Taylor, therefore, in collecting the materials for his list of inns, rendered three kinds of service at once, having relation to goods, travellers, and letters. His list was a sort of Bradshaw's Guide and Post Office Directory rolled into one, so far as the arrangement of that age permitted such luxuries.

The Introduction to Taylor's book is not the least curious feature about it. He had considerable power of sarcasm, and made use of it to give some hard hits to persons who had behaved shabbily to him. His Introduction was addressed, "To all whom it may concern, with my kinde remembrance to the Posts, Carriers, Waggoners, and Higglers." He claims a right to say that, "If any man or woman whomsoever hath occasion or patience to read this following description, it is no doubt but they shall find full satisfaction for as much as they laide out for the Booke; if not, it is against my Will, and my good intentions are lost and frustrate." Then comes a statement of these intentions. "I wrote it for three causes. First, for a generall and necessary good use for the whole commonwealth. Secondly, to express my gratefull duties to all those who have honestly paid me my Money which they owed me for my Booke of the Collection of Tavernes in London and Westminster, and tenne Shires or Counties round about London; and doe also thanke all such as doe purpose to pay me hereafter. Thirdly (for third sort) that can pay me and will not, I write this as a document. I am well pleas'd to leave them to the hangman's tuition, as being past any other man's mending; for I must have them to know that I am sensible of the too much losse that I doe suffer by their pride or cousenage; their number being so many, and my charge so great which I paid for Paper and Printing of those Bookes, that the base Dealing of these Sharks is insupportable." That he had experienced much trouble and annoy-

ance in collecting the materials for the present work, is made clear in his own pungent style. "The tedious Toyle that I had in the collection, and the harsh and unsavoury answers that I was faine to take patiently from Hostlers, Carmen, and Porters, may move any man that thinks Himself mortal to pittie me. In some places I was suspected for a projector, or one that had devised some Tricks to bring the Carriers under some new Taxation; and sometimes I was held to have been a man-taker, or serjeant, or baylife, to arrest or attach men's beasts or goods. Indeed, I was scarce taken for an honest man amongst the most of them. All which suppositions I was enforced oftentimes to wash away with two or three Ingges of Beere, at most of the Innes I came to. In some Innes or Hosteries I could get no certain Intelligence, so that I did make Investigation at the next Inne unto it, which I did oftentimes take upon Trust, that I doubted it was indirect and imperfect."

The indefatigable Directory compiler (for such he assuredly was) proceeds to set forth the unavoidable consequences of the difficulties thrown in his way. "Had the Carriers, Hostlers, and others knowne my harmlesse and honest intendments, I doe thinke this following relation had been more large and usefull; but if there be anything left out in this first, it shall be with diligence inserted hereafter, when the Carriers and I shall be more familiarly acquainted, and they, with the Hostlers, shall be pleased in their ingenerosity to afford me more ample directions. In the meane space, I hope I shall give none of my Readers cause to curse the Carrier that brought me to towne." The chance of removal from place to place, and the difficulty thus arising of finding out the new address, did not escape his notice. "Some may objecte that the Carriers doe often change and shift from one Inne or Lodging to another, whereby the following directions may be hereafter untrue. To this I answer that I am not bound to binde them, or to stay them in any one place; but if they doe remove, they may be enquired for at the place which they have left or forsaken, and it is an easie matter to finde them by the learned intelligence of some other Carrier, an Hostler, or an understanding Poste."

Quite characteristic of the man is the independent way in which he takes leave of the reader, after doing his best to render

the book reliable and usefull. "And thus, Reader, if thou beest pleas'd, I am satisfied; if thou beest contented, I am paid; if thou beest angry, I care not for it."

The book itself, the Carriers' Cosmographie, is of very humble proportions. Taylor's difficulty in obtaining information made his entire budget little more in dimensions than a pamphlet. Yet must he have devoted a good deal of time and trouble in collecting it.

The towns are arranged alphabetically, with a brief mention, under the heading of each, of the inn, and other particulars of departure from and arrival in London. Here is a specimen, relating to St. Albans: "The Carriers of Saint Albanes doe come every Friday to the signe of the Peacocke in Aldersgate Street; on which daies also commeth a coach from Saint Albanes to the Bell in the same street. The like coach is also thence for the carriage of passengers every Saturday." St. Albans, we thus see, was rather exceptionally favoured, in having a coach once a week as well as a cart or waggon. Of Aylesbury we are told: "The Carriers of Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire doe lodge at the George neare Holborne Bridge, and at the Swan in the Strand, and at the Angel behind St. Clement's Church, and at the Bell in Holborn; they are at one of these places every other day." This is somewhat vague; it probably means that the same cart or waggon stopped at all the four inns in succession, to take up passengers, goods, and letters. One more example will suffice, for all the entries are moulded much in the same form. "The Carriers of Braintree and Bocking, in Essex, doe lodge at the signe of the Tabbard in Gracious Street (neere the Conduit); they do come on Thursdaies and goe away on Fridaies."

Not the least interesting part of the book is that which relates to the traffic on the Thames, the "Silent Highway" which Taylor so much loved. Within the limits of London, Westminster, and Southwark, the wherry traffic was very considerable. There was only one bridge over the Thames, and the river banks were studded here and there with noblemen's mansions and pleasant gardens. Taylor's landing-stairs as a waterman was a place of thriving trade—Bankside, on the Surrey side of the water. There were theatres near at hand, and the gentry and cits of London and Westminster were wont to take a pleasant trip across the river to those

places of amusement. In one of his poems he apostrophises his favourite river:—

Noble Thames, whilst I can hold a pen,
I will divulge thy glory unto men;
Thou in the morning, when my coin is scant,
Before the evening doth supply my want.

And he liked the occupation of a waterman for its own sake, irrespective of the bread which it put into his mouth:—

I have a trade, much like an alchemist,
That oft-times by extraction, if I list,
With sweating labour at a wooden oar,
I'll get the coin'd-refined silver ore;
Which I count better than the sharpening tricks
Of cosening tradesmen or rich politicks,
Or any proud fool, ne'er so proud or wise,
That does my needful honest trade despise.

Up-river "great boats," for the conveyance of goods and passengers, started from Queenhithe on Tuesdays and Thursdays, bound for Chelsea and other riverside towns and villages as far as Windsor and Maidenhead, returning to Queenhithe on Mondays and Thursdays; and once a week as far as Reading. The penny and twopenny steamers, stopping at a dozen places between London Bridge and Chelsea, how utterly would they have been disbelieved, even as remotely-future possibilities, in the time of John Taylor! A little bit more must be mentioned in regard to up-river accommodation. "To Bull Wharfe (neere Queenhithe) there doth come and goe Great Boates, twice or thrice a weeke, which boates doe carry Goodes betwixt London and Kingston-upon-Thames; also thither doth often come a boat from Colnbrooke, which serveth those parts for such purposes."

Down river the arrangements were different, in order to encounter the stronger tide and rougher water often met with. "At Billingsgate are every Tyde to be had Tilt-boats and wherries, Light-horsemen (a name at that time for one kind of river craft), and Barges from London to the townes of Gravesend and Milton in Kent, or to any other place within the sayd bounds (as weather and occasion may shew)." Shorter distances were reached more easily. "At Lyon Key, twice almost in every twenty-four hours, or continually, are Tylt-boats or wherries, that passe to and fro betwixt London and the townes of Deptford, Greenwich, Woolwich, Erith, and Greenhithe in Kent; and also boats are to be had that every Tyde doe carry Goods and Passengers between London and Rainham, Purfleet, and Grays in Essex." More daring was a voyage to places beyond Graves-

end. "A Hoigh (hoy) doth come from Colchester in Essex to Smart's Key, neere Billingsgate, by which goods may be carried from London to Colchester weekly." There were also sailing vessels, greatly varying in size and in designation, which turned north when reaching the mouth of the Thames, and plied to Ipswich, Yarmouth, Lynn, Hull, Shields, and Berwick; and others which, turning south, worked their slow way to Rochester, Maidstone, Margate, Sandwich, Dover, Weymouth, Poole, Dartmouth, and Plymouth.

Full of good sense and useful information, as well as of whimsies, was the Water Poet.

A VERY LOW RESTAURANT IN PARIS.*

HAVING described a restaurant, where things are done in the grand style, and a restaurant where people are done in style yet grander, it remains to tell of the restaurant where no one takes the pains to do either things or people, leaving them to do themselves. Some time since I visited the Californie, with a view to this paper, thinking that Paris itself could show no eating-house more cheap and nasty. I am half-ashamed now to confess such innocence. Why, you are asked no less than fifty centimes—fourpence threefarthings of hard cash—for dinner at the Californie; and can anyone suppose that a man who gets through thirty glasses of absinthe by two o'clock in the afternoon—the case is real, he died last night—has fourpence three farthings to spend in food? I am glad I did not hastily plunge into an account of that excellent and luxurious establishment. By waiting, I have learnt more interesting things. And yet there is a something about the Californie. Its owner died the other day, and he left a fortune—not two or three hundred pounds, but a great many thousands—out of dinners at fourpence three farthings, mark you! There must be awful mysteries in that kitchen. I will investigate them, if I can; but it is dangerous to pry too closely in that quarter. They gave the Père Californie a great funeral; all the scoundrels of Paris were there, and all the newspapers afforded him a column. For that very reason I will say no more about his establishment.

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 13, p. 323, and Vol. 14, p. 118.

Those who have studied French romances will recall many a fanciful description of the beggars' restaurant. Some of them have been sketched upon the spot, notably those of Eugène Sue; but times and manners change. I should be loath to say that no places exactly like the *Lapin Blanc* are still existing, but I cannot hear of any. The real *Lapin* itself was destroyed years ago. Nowhere, now, can you find even an *Azart de la Fourchaite*, as it was fantastically spelt. The celebrated *Azart* was, as the name implies, the *Chance of the Fork*—its customers dipped for their dinner in a huge pot, paying one halfpenny, deposited beforehand, for each plunge. Many blanks there were, and very few prizes. But the *Azart de la Fourchaite* seems to have gone after the *Lapin Blanc*.

At present the lowest restaurant of Paris is called a *Bibine*, and it may be found flourishing on the left bank principally; that is—for one would not like to commit oneself in this matter—the lowest restaurant I have yet discovered was on that side of the *Seine*. Take the *bibine* of *Madame Frochard*, in an alley, unnamed, by the *Place Maubert*. It seems probable that *Frochard* is not the lady's name; for, in that neighbourhood, few things or people go by such a title as was given them in their baptism. But thus is she recognised, and by no other name would her comestibles smell as sweet. The alley is narrow as *Maidenlane*, bordered with ancient houses that never stood straight. In the most crippled of the row, under a portal that seems dropping on your head, *Madame Frochard* retails her hospitality. Some houses as old keep the remains of a former grandeur. Looking at worn pillars and coats of arms, half effaced, you think sadly how princesses once held state within their halls. No such feeling stirs one in entering the *bibine* of *Madame Frochard*. If her house was not built for its present purpose, it was built apparently for something of the sort. Poor, and squalid, and filthy, it must always have been; an evil spot in a dirty neighbourhood. There is no door to the *bibine*. Perhaps at night they block the opening, and in cold weather some means must be found to keep out the frost; but these are mysteries. One enters at once a low and smoke-dried hall. Two bleak windows, filled with bottle-glass, light it in a manner; walls and ceiling are black with mildew, grease,

and smoke; the pavement under foot, helped out with bricks, is humid. In this abode, which looks like a cellar, there is of course no furniture, save heavy wooden benches and tables to match, so incredibly filthy as to baffle description. On one side, jealously to watch the door, is *Mother Frochard's comptoir*, of deal, once painted white, adorned round the top with cupids, half rubbed out, holding garlands of roses more black than a dead cauliflower. On the wall opposite hangs a black board, inscribed with the day's bill of fare, in chalk. It never varies. When effaced by rubbing shoulders, *Madlle. Eudoxie Frochard*—who can write—renews the inscription, which is to this effect:—

CARTÉ DU JOUR.

Potage.

Haricots à l'huile (beans in oil).

Moules (muscles).

Pommes de terre.

Arlequin (mystery).

Consommé de cheval (horse soup).

Salade.

Fromage de Brie avarié (mity cheese).

Canette de bière.

Petit noir (a fancy preparation of coffee).

One shilling and twopence each.

To be paid on delivery.

The soup is served in plates, cracked, chipped, with all their glaze worn off—they call such calottes. The *petit noir* in a cup to match. For solid meats, no plate is given, but a fragment of newspaper. It must be a newspaper of radical flavour though. *Madame Frochard's* best cooking would not go down, served upon the *Figaro*, the *Pays*, or the *Univers*. We haven't much money at the *bibine*, but we have desperately strong opinions. There are gentlemen here so nice in their tastes, that they could smell *M. Louis Veuillot* through a purée of garlic, and the flavour of *M. de Villemessant* would turn their banquetting to nausea. You might still collect all the series of suppressed Communist newspapers in these *bibines*. I am told, that the dangerous children of Paris who frequent them give the preference to those which serve upon old numbers of the *Combat* and the *Cri du Peuple*. Beer is retailed in mugs of the rudest brown ware, adorned with a cerulean star.

Behind the counter I have told you of, sits *Madame Frochard*. What a type! Her face is red and swollen, eyes menacing as those of a wild boar. Her big red mouth has round rough edges, overhung

by a grisly moustache! She wears a false front shamelessly, cocking and shoving it about like a cap. Such a voice, so deep and so resonant, would be dangerous for the glass of the establishment, if any there were. Every clause of her emphatic speech is pointed by a bang of that great fist upon the counter. She wears an acre or two of old brown silk, so old and so brown that man's recollection runneth not to the contrary. Advisedly I said an acre or two. Not by yards could you measure the stuff needed to clothe that phenomenon of flesh. Time was, maybe, when Mère Frochard had waist as fine, not to say as scraggy, as Madlle. Eudoxie's beside her. Another type is she, and let who will declare which of them is the more repulsive. Madlle. Eudoxie reminds me of a box of tools. Her eyes are gimlets, her nose a hammer, her mouth a gouge, and her body a bag of nails. Her thin lips always wear a mocking, in-drawn smile. She grabs the coppers with a sniff. For my own part, of the two, I prefer the monstrous ugliness of the mother.

The clientèle of a place like this consists of working men, who can't or won't work; of the lowest class of thieves; of chiffonniers, or rag-pickers; of habitual criminals, belonging to that class which can only rob with violence. If a beggar comes here, I am told that he must surely be an honest man; for the unscrupulous of his fraternity board in regular houses, and pay ten to fifteen francs a day. The prefect of police told us, a few weeks since, that twelve to fifteen francs is the average return of begging in the fashionable quarters; and he cited a mendicant who pays twenty-five francs, or one pound, per day for his board and lodging at Passy, wine not included—for this good man owns his cellar, and keeps it well stocked!

Hideous, indeed, are the faces to be observed in a bibine, and almost more hideous the rags and dirt. The blouse is not at all favoured, apparently, by these folk. And I have remarked that a ragged coat or jacket in Paris looks very much more wretched and disreputable than in London. The reason is not far to seek. Parisian clothes, unless of the best London cut, are always pretentious. The tailor knows his customers, and is aware that their first and last desire will be to "show off." He also shares the national absurdity, and would fain show off also. Hence a cut which seems to us bad taste even when the cloth is new, but which appears really

loathsome when the stuff wears ragged and threadbare; hence braiding that trails, and fancy buttons, and silk facings that now exist only as a fringe around the lining. In the same room, a French "blackguard" looks more blackguardly than his English rival. Restless vanity possesses him, however low he may be fallen. There were some, I should say, of the direst ruffians unhung at Mother Frochard's, but one felt inclined to laugh whilst loathing them. I have seen murderers of divers race and colour; they were terrible, for the most part. But your French murderer is grotesque. He plays jackal amongst the wild beasts. His arm is as strong as, and his heart perhaps more wicked than, any others; but you fancy him killing in an attitude taken from Robert Macaire, and mounting a frown modelled on that of his favourite actor. I remember a boy there, such a boy! A few days after we had a horrible assassination; one young villain tempted another, younger, to rob his parents, and then threw him in the river with a stone round his neck. The assassin, when caught, played such antics in the dock, with voice and gesture, as drew from the judge very severe remarks about the *barrière theatre* where his education seemed to have been perfected. In reading the account of that trial, I wondered whether this youth at Madame Frochard's was the hero of the ghastly tale.

He sat at one of the rude and filthy tables, on which both elbows rested—attitude from the "*Chevaliers du Brouillard*"—on his head a peaked cap, torn and grimy. His face, smeared with dirt, had that putty whiteness which distinguishes the low criminal in every land. Eyes small and shadowless, as if bored with a gimlet, glanced all around at once. The mouth was full of railing and bitterness. Such a mouth had nearly all there, and it is one peculiarly French. Conceit of self, contempt for all his fellows, and hatred for all above, are the meaning of that ugly grin. The lad's clothing might have been worth some curious fraction of a centime at a tallow factory. There they could possibly have extracted useful grease out of it; I can't think it would have served any other purpose. And yet, the colourless rag around his neck had once been satin, I think. Nay, in a certain light, it seemed to me there were remains of a gold stamp on it. And the long locks down each cheek had been curled that morning—

positively frizzed, or twisted up in paper over night. Beside him, on each side, sat a younger lad, convulsed with laughter at his hoarse remarks. He, however, allowed himself no more than a twist of the pale lips, imitated, I doubt not, from some actor of the *barrière*. I fancy that my appearance gave some food for this young ruffian's wit; but to catch what he said would have been a hopeless effort, even for a Frenchman of respectable bringing up. Our home slang is language undefiled in comparison with the argot of a Paris thief.

Few women frequent these *bibines*, excepting those who come in with their male relatives. Where feed the dreadful creatures who hang on the most dragged skirts of Lutetia, I have yet to learn. Those present struck me as comparatively respectable. The men with them did not look so much like thieves as the rest. But they were very, very wretched; clad in stuffs colourless and shapeless, hanging in that style which tells there is no raiment underneath.

Nothing struck me as so strange about the *bibine* as the quiet reigning there. Men talk to their friends in a low, hoarse tone, with much laughter, truly; but suppressed, suspicious, timid, as it were. They look all round before they laugh; but, for that matter, they are always glancing here and there, like monkeys in a cage. Towards evening, I believe, there is noise enough. These foul birds wake at the approach of night, and Mother Frochard cannot sit behind her counter, like an evil old goddess, watching the misery she feeds. If the *gendarmes* are not to enter, she must use those big fists of hers to keep things quiet; and they say she is but too ready, after soaking *cassis* all the forenoon and *noyau* all the evening. Mother Frochard's way of keeping peace is more violent than the fighting of most folks; but it is everybody's interest to avoid scandal, and such people as frequent this place have learnt to be cautious even in their cups, and to be vigilant even when asleep.

I don't think that the like of these *bibines* is to be found in London. Well would it be for Paris if she could get rid of these scandalous houses, where children are ruined before they reach an age to know good and evil.

Finally, I must add a word about the alleged danger of exploring these haunts. That a certain risk must be run is evident, and there may be places where the risk

is very serious, indeed, at night; but such are decidedly the exceptions. Nine people in ten of those frequenting the *bibines* dread nothing so much as to attract the notice of the police. They will scowl at you, and say unintelligible things, which are probably insulting; but, if any drunken scoundrel shows the inclination to proceed, as lawyers say here, "*aux voix de fait*," Mother Frochard bangs the counter with her awful fist, and hurls such basso curses at the disturber as would alarm a Red Indian on the war-trail; and all her huge body sways, as if gathering itself to move. Panic seizes the *bibine*, and, with a bound simultaneous, all present fall upon the roisterer. But, at the same time, I recommend those interested to choose broad daylight for their visit, and to dress in their very shabbiest clothes: a shovelful of dust thrown over, and a careful rub against a white-washed wall, are also advised.

THE HOSTESS OF THE RAVEN.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

At length the watchman came within earshot. I could see his figure, black against the white road, which the moonlight partially illuminated for a minute or so. I called and shouted to him, and he stopped and threw the light of his lantern upward on my face and head. As soon as he saw me, he started back in evident amazement, and, turning all the light he could upon my face, stood staring at me with one hand shading his eyes.

"Are you alone?" I asked. "Can you get assistance? You must get into the house, even by force, if it is necessary; I'm afraid that something dreadful has happened. I am a prisoner. I have been locked into my room."

As I spoke, my voice seemed blown back into my throat by the hot wind, and a cloud of dust was whirled up from the road through the open window.

"How came you in the Raven?" returned the watchman, in a tone of the utmost surprise and bewilderment, and still staring at me as if he could not believe his senses.

"For Heaven's sake, man, make haste. What matters how I came here? I am a traveller. I tell you something dreadful has taken place in this house to-night."

"Something dreadful? What?"

I was driven beyond all patience by the slow, cool manner of the fellow, on whom my words seemed to produce less impres-

sion than the fact of my presence in the Raven. The light of his lantern showed me a leaden water-pipe, which ran down the front of the house, close to my window, and which was encircled at intervals by rings of carved wood, that afforded an easy foothold. In less time than it takes to tell it, I had clambered down, and stood on the ground beside the watchman. I seemed to breathe more freely now that I was out of that house.

"You ask what has happened," said I, seizing the man's arm. "I am afraid that murder has happened!" And then in a few words I told him what I had heard.

"Then you saw nothing?" said he, drawing nearer to me, and speaking with more eagerness than he had yet shown.

"I tell you I was locked into my own room; but I heard a din, as if all the devils were loose: cries, shrieks, groans; and then a noise of struggling."

"Do you know what the folks say hereabouts?" asked the watchman, in a low voice. And, as he spoke, he glanced over his shoulder, as if fearful of being overheard. "They say that the Raven is haunted. More than one, going by the house late at night, or in a dark winter's morning, when you couldn't see your hand before you, has heard strange voices and cries in there. Once or twice the folks have said a word to the old woman; but she's ill to talk to, is the Raben-wirthin" (literally, the Raven-hostess), "and there's no getting a syllable from her, if she don't choose to speak. A gruesome woman! She's as strong as any two men; and, as to frightening her, I believe she's afraid of nothing in this world or the other!"

Here the watchman crossed himself in a manner which showed that he, at all events, did not share the old woman's stoutness of nerve.

"If the house is haunted by evil spirits—and I'm afraid it is—they are evil spirits clothed in mortal bodies," said I, remembering the two fierce, sullen faces I had seen in the kitchen. "Come, for Heaven's sake! let us lose no more time. Perhaps we may get into the house by the door beneath the porch."

I hastened towards the angle of the house where the porch was, and the watchman, somewhat reluctantly, followed me. No sooner had we turned the corner and got out of the shelter of the broadside of the house, than a tremendous gust of wind nearly took me off my feet. Here the Föhn was raging in its full force, and

mingled with its roaring came the ever-increasing rush of the side torrent.

"Halt!" cried the watchman, suddenly seizing my sleeve, to hold me back. "Don't you see how the Schwarzbach is rising? Jesu Maria! This will be a flood such as we have not seen for twenty years."

He held his lantern forward, and I saw that my foot was on the edge of a foaming stream where, that evening, the little tangled garden had been. The wooden paling was gone, and the rushing water kept carrying past fragments of wood and débris of various kinds; and, as we looked, the dead body of a drowned animal was whirled along, and disappeared in the darkness.

"That's a goat; one of Andreas Müller's, at the Zurfuh Pasture, I'm thinking. Blessed Virgin! if it lasts like this for another hour, the Raven will scarcely stand against the waters; 'tis an old house, and has had no nail or beam renewed in it for many a year!"

With that the watchman raised his horn, and blew a series of discordant, wailing notes in quick succession.

We waited. Not a sound in the house; not a light in the windows. Only a gleam of transient moonlight on the ashen grey shutters; only the howling of the wind and the rushing of the waters.

"We must knock at the door; we must batter it in, if need be," said I, taking up a great stone for the purpose. The watchman stayed my hand. If his horn had not roused the inmates, no knocking would rouse them, he said; and, as for battering down the solid oak door, no force less than that of the Schwarzbach would do it, he opined.

"But, if we wait for the flood to batter down the door, every creature in the house will be drowned!" cried I. "Is it not an extraordinary thing that no notice is taken of the warning sound of your horn? They must know, well enough, what it means."

"Aye, the Raben-wirthin knows, well enough, what that means."

"She, poor creature, is past hearing any earthly sounds, I much fear; but the others—that ferocious-looking young man—the girl—the unfortunate idiot—what keeps them all still and silent?"

"The others? Oh, the others won't understand anything about it; and if the fit is on them to be silent, silent they'll be, though the waters were up to their necks."

"What do you mean? They would not sit still and let themselves be drowned! Is

it possible that they may have already escaped by the back of the house?"

"Escaped! Not they! They wouldn't think of escaping. But you can soon satisfy yourself about that. Come round to the back of the house with me. Not that way! The Schwarzbach is over your ankles there by this time. Come back under your window, and then over the wall; it's no height."

I followed him cautiously, holding on by any projection of the house that offered itself as we turned the corner, for the wind was now really terrific. We clambered over a low wall and found ourselves in a sort of courtyard, the same in which I had seen the girl carrying wood. Here all was quiet, and the windows on this side of the house were barred outside by massive rods of iron. We tried the door giving access to the yard, and found it firmly fastened on the inside. It was clear, then, that no one could have quitted the Raven that way.

"I told you how it was," said my companion as we returned to the road. "They would never think of escaping."

"It may be that if those servants have committed some hideous crime, they dread justice more than the flood. And perhaps they hope we may go to Falkenau to get assistance, and meanwhile——"

The man interrupted me. "Servants," said he, shaking his head mysteriously. "There have been no servants in the Raven for fifteen years or more; not since the old man died, and before that. But as to getting assistance, my horn has been heard in Falkenau before this. I never blow like that, so many notes close together, unless the waters are getting dangerous, and help is needed. There'll be some folks here before long. Most of the people have been up all night, and many of them didn't go to bed last night neither, for the Föhn has been blowing more or less strong for the last week. And there's come down an awful lot of melted snow from the great glacier yonder. All the streams are full. You'd best put yourself under the lee of the house, and wait. By ourselves we can do nothing. If those inside the Raven are to be saved—supposing the Schwarzbach to keep rising at this rate—it'll take more than you or me, or twice as many, to save 'em."

He pulled me after him to the front of the house, and seated himself on a bench there, motioning me to sit down beside him. In answer to my urgent repre-

sentations that no time ought to be lost, he reiterated his assurance that assistance was coming, and that we must, perforce, wait for it.

"Look!" said he, pointing up the road. "Can't you see a little spark like, moving about in Falkenau? That's a lantern. The folks are coming."

Finding it useless to attempt any further action alone, I crouched down beside the watchman, and determined to await the issue; but before doing so I begged him to sound his horn once more, and as loudly as he could. He did so. But no result followed. The house remained dark, silent, and closed.

"In Heaven's name," said I, "who and what are these people? You say there are no servants in the Raven. Who, then, are that young man and woman, and the idiot boy?"

The moon was now shining uncloudedly. By her light I saw the watchman look at me with a singular expression, as he answered, "They are the children of the Raben-wirthin."

"Her children!"

"Her own children. Two sons and a daughter. There was another daughter, the eldest of 'em. But she went away years ago. Some say she's dead. Some say they sent her to Windisch, in Aargau. I don't know."

"Her own children!"

The sounds I had heard recurred to me with redoubled horror. That shriek of "Mother!" received a blood-chilling significance. What fearful crime had been committed, or attempted by the wretched beings I had seen? And then again, the question presented itself, if they were the hostess's own children, why were they so squalid, starved, and filthy? The house was dirty and neglected, truly; but, as I have said, there were symptoms in it of comparative wealth. The watchman shook his head. "What would be the use," said he, "of trying to keep such as them decent, and like other folks? Didn't you notice? Couldn't you see?"

"See! What?"

"They're—not right." And he put his finger to his forehead.

"Mad?"

"Yes; mad. They're worse at some times than others, but never in their right minds like other Christians."

"But the hostess——"

"Oh, she's not mad. No; the Raben-wirthin has a strong head and a strong

will. It's queer that her children should be such as they are. It seems a sort of curse on the family. But they say it was in the blood of old Zachary Dietrich, her husband."

"But—good Heavens, man! you don't mean to say that the woman lives there shut up alone with two lunatics? I never heard of anything so frightful! It cannot be!"

"What would you have? They are her own children after all."

"Her own children! Yes; but they should be properly cared for—taken to some asylum—"

"Jesu Maria, who would venture to say that to Frau Dietrich? No one durst hint a word to her about such a thing. She won't allow that Theresa and Rudolph are out of their minds. And you know they're not dangerous. And they do a vast deal of work. She makes them work hard, does the Raben-wirthin. I've seen that girl Theresa carrying a load of wood that a man would stagger under, for all she looks to be but skin and bone. And they dig, and mow, and work in the fields all summer."

"Cannot the old woman afford to have any help—any servants?"

"She could afford it well enough. They're well off, though you might not think so. The Dietrichs and the Barts—the old woman was Anna Bart—were the richest families hereabouts. When they were married, I've heard tell that the house was a wonder. It was full of stores of fine linen, and had a cellar of wine that there wasn't the like of in all the Canton. Old Zachary loved good wine, and he had been in France in his youth, and he had got used to many fine things that our people don't know of, nor care for. Oh, 'afford,' yes; it isn't for that. But who would stay in the house? After the old man died, the last servant went away. The Raben-wirthin terrifies every one. And then, as I told you, they do say that the house is haunted. Not a soul in these parts would go into it after dark."

The man rambled on garrulously when once his tongue was loosened. I was struck by his inability to comprehend my horror and amazement at the picture he presented to me, of this household at the Raven. Of course it was an affliction for a family to have madness in its blood. Yes; the Frau Dietrich had been unfortunate. Her youngest child, the cretin, was the worst trouble, perhaps, because they could not make him work. He sat by the fire all winter, and in the sun all summer, and

chanted a kind of jargon of his own, that sounded almost like a litany when you were at a little distance. But the others—well, after all, they could do the work of four. And they were mostly quiet enough. Some people said that they had seen and heard them fighting over their food. But the Raben-wirthin kept them in order. They were terrified at the sight of her.

For my part, I was filled with horrible apprehensions as to what would be revealed to our eyes when we should succeed in getting into the house. The wild unearthly yellings and laughter had received an unexpected elucidation from the watchman's story! But those cries of pain, that sound of struggling, what did they mean? I longed to break down the gloomy doors and let the air of Heaven into the closed-up chambers, even although that air were the wild blast of the Föhn. The waters were rising rapidly. Already the Schwarzbach was so high that to cross it a man must have waded more than knee deep. And so rapid and violent was the current that it would have been almost impossible to keep one's feet in the midst of it. Retreat down the valley was thus cut off. In the direction of Falkenau the way was still open. But how long it would remain so, no man could say. At length we perceived lights approaching on the road, and in my excitement I jumped up and shouted to the men to hasten, although, as the watchman quietly told me, it was impossible for my voice to be heard at any distance, above the noise of the gale and the flood.

The party from Falkenau consisted of seven or eight men, three of whom carried lanterns, and the others had ropes and axes and other tools, the use of which I could not conjecture, until the watchman explained it to me. There was some felled timber piled up at no great distance from the Raven, and it might be possible, by lashing trunks of trees together and fastening them to the banks of the Schwarzbach, to stem and turn the current of the rushing waters, so as to keep the house in safety. The most imminent danger sometimes arose from the floods eating away the soil and thus undermining the foundations of a dwelling-house. And how quickly and completely the solid earth can be absolutely licked up by the waters, and disappear, I had seen in a mountain flood once before.

"How is it going, Alois?" asked one of the Falkenauers, addressing the watchman.

His answer was not very encouraging.

He had been on the watch since nine o'clock; it was now just past midnight, and the waters had risen fearfully during that short time. And when he told the men of the dead goat that he had seen carried down by the Schwarzbach, they looked anxious and frightened. Before attempting to stem the current, I insisted that they should enter the Raven inn, and endeavour to rescue its inhabitants. When I told them what I had heard there that night, some of them were inclined to make light of it, saying that screechings and cries had often been heard there; and that it was only the "crazy Dietrichs" quarrelling. One man muttered something about spirits that haunted the place, and advised that the priest should be sent for. But the most authoritative of the party, who proved to be the village blacksmith, agreed with me, that no time ought to be lost in getting into the house. He shook his head ominously, and declared that he had said, many a year ago, that some dreadful thing would happen if that houseful of lunatics was left, with no one but the old woman to keep them in order.

"She treats 'em very cruelly, you see," said the blacksmith, who was called Lorenz, "and though they're afraid of her, they might take an opportunity to be revenged. Crazy folk are cunning."

At length it was settled that we should divide our forces. Six of the men set to work to drag the felled timber towards the bank of the Schwarzbach, whilst Alois the watchman, Lorenz, and I, determined to break into the house, if we could get access to it in no other way. We went round into the yard and attacked the back door, as I had noticed that it was less massive and strong than that beneath the porch. We knocked and shouted with all our might, but in vain. Then Lorenz, wielding a great sledge-hammer in his brawny arm, bade us step back out of the way, and struck a blow on the panel of the door that smashed it completely in. The old iron lock and hinges remained firm, but the wood was rotten, and crumbled away in fragments. When the crash was over, we waited silently for a few seconds, in the expectation of hearing some movement inside the house, but there was none. All at once we heard a shrill long-drawn note, and then another and another, with a melancholy inflection monotonously repeated. It was the idiot boy chanting his litany. We all three drew back with a shudder. Even Alois crossed himself nervously. The effect of

that shrill voice, singing, unconscious of danger without or death within, was unspeakably terrible.

Then Lorenz, clearing away and breaking down the ruins of the door with arms and shoulders, forced his way into the house and we followed him.

We first made for the kitchen, the door of which was open. Here, in front of the still glowing embers on the hearth, sat the idiot, nodding at the fire, and chanting shrilly his unmeaning jargon. He grinned at us and pointed to the fire, and showed no symptoms of surprise or terror.

"What, Hänseli," said the watchman, going up to him, "where is thy mother? Where are the others?"

The boy neither answered nor seemed to comprehend, but grinned and nodded as before.

"It's no use to question him," said the blacksmith, looking round the kitchen by the light of the lantern he carried. "Why, there," he cried suddenly, "there is the girl!"

She was there, sitting upon the heap of rags where I had previously seen her, near to the pile of firewood, and regarding us sullenly. Questioning her, however, was as vain as questioning the boy. She either could not or would not reply; and Alois whispered that she was possessed with a dumb devil.

It was necessary to get these two out of the house. Every minute increased the danger of its being undermined by the flood; and it seemed clear that, if left to themselves, the idiot and his sister would simply sit still and perish. The boy, Hänseli as they called him, was docile enough, and allowed himself to be led away, unhesitatingly. But the girl at first refused to move, and it was not until Alois had hit on the expedient of saying that her mother was calling for her, and would be angry if she delayed, that the girl followed her brother and Alois out of the house. Hänseli had no sooner got into the courtyard than he hastened with his shuffling pace towards the door of a cowshed or stable, and showed some anxiety to have it opened.

"The creature has more sense than we thought," observed Lorenz. "No doubt there are some beasts there, and he wants to save them."

But it soon proved that such was not the boy's object. There were, indeed, a couple of goats in the stable, but of these he took no heed. He went straight to a

heap of straw at the farther end, and then we perceived that the eldest son, Rudolph, was stretched there fast asleep. His pinched features and gaunt form looked pitifully haggard, as he lay in the profound slumber of utter weariness. The men shook him by the shoulder and called in his ears, and he opened a pair of wild eyes and rolled them from one to another, evidently without any recognition, until he caught sight of the idiot boy, when he at once rose up on to his feet, and confronted us fiercely. The blacksmith addressed him in a quiet tone of command.

"Come, Rudolph," said he, "the Schwarzbach is rising. We're afraid the house may come down. They are lashing tree trunks to the bank of the stream, and we want you to help us."

The young man looked eagerly at the speaker for a moment, and then there came from his mouth the most hollow, unearthly, and horrible voice I have ever heard emitted by a human creature. It seemed as if the act of speaking were so unusual as to be painful.

"Is the devil drowned?" he asked.

"Jesu Maria!" answered Alois, crossing himself several times in rapid succession.

"Come with me, and we will see," answered Lorenz, with a good deal of self-possession. "You have a good strong arm of your own, lad. Come, and help us."

"Can he not tell us where his mother is?" said I, detaining Lorenz as he was about to leave the courtyard.

"Oh, what's the use of asking him?" interposed the watchman, Alois, who was evidently afraid of the young man, and anxious to get rid of him. "Any way, you see that the old woman can't be murdered. There's no one to murder her. No creature lives in the Raven, nor has lived there for years, but Frau Dietrich and her brood. And it's clear that all three have been downstairs, in the dens they sleep in, all night."

When I reiterated my account of the struggle and the cries I had heard, he declared either that I must have been dreaming, or that the ghosts had made the noise, or that the brothers and sister had been fighting and quarrelling, as was their wont. It was true that Rudolph, Theresa, and the idiot had been found in apparent quietude in their usual lairs (beds, they could not be termed); but nothing Alois could say would avail to persuade me out of the evidence of my senses. Besides,

those sounds had come from above, not from below. Who had made them?

"Come out to the others with me now," whispered Lorenz, plucking me significantly by the sleeve. "We will return afterwards to the house, and search for the old woman."

Outside on the borders of the stream there was much movement and confusion. The number of workers had been increased by a considerable accession of villagers from Falkenau. Lanterns glimmered and glanced here and there, but they showed dim and yellow in the pure light of the full moon, which now poured her rays on the scene, as if to show the extent of the danger and devastation. The Schwarzbach was terrible to look upon. It rushed along, a foaming, raging flood, bearing on its rapid tide numberless wrecks and fragments of mountain dwellings, and the bodies of animals from the high pastures. The wooden paling, which had surrounded the garden of the Raven inn, was gone. The sheds and stabling at the back were tottering and cracking, with every pulse of the waters which now beat against their walls. The old house still stood firm, for the course of the Schwarzbach in that direction had been a little checked by the piles of timber lashed to the bank. Among the workers, the lunatic Rudolph displayed prodigious activity. His strength was amazing, and he dragged great beams of wood and tree-trunks to the water's brink with frenzied eagerness. The idiot boy stood near, smiling, clapping his hands, and shrilling his litany louder and louder as the waves rose higher and spread a wider ruin.

"I wanted to have those young ones safe out of the way," said the blacksmith. "Now we must search for the Rabenwirthin, and lose no time about it. If she is alive and is to be saved, every minute is of value." He called two young men from the crowd to accompany us. They were his assistants at the forge, and were stalwart fellows, who carried each an axe and some cord, and had been helping to make the dam. "We shall not need these men," said I, "and they can, surely, be of more use at their post here!" But Lorenz shook his head. "We don't know what we may find," he answered.

We re-entered the house by the broken door at the back, and hastened through the passage on the ground-floor. Lorenz carried a lantern, as did one of the other men. This latter fellow pointed signifi-

cantly to a stream of muddy water that was flowing across the stone-flagged passage from the yard. It was not an eighth of an inch deep, and was moving sluggishly, but it portended worse things. "Hasten!" cried the blacksmith, and we rushed up the staircase after him. We opened the doors of one room after another along the corridor. They were empty, most of them unfurnished, all dirty and neglected. The door of the room I had occupied was still locked. The key was on the outside. We looked in. It was just as I had left it. "There is no story above this," said the young man who carried a lantern. "We have seen all the rooms. Perhaps the old witch has ridden off on a broomstick."

But there were rooms above, as I well knew. And after a minute's search we found a low door in one angle at the darkest end of the corridor. This door opened into a steep staircase, leading to some garrets in the roof. Hardly had I set my feet on the first step, when a door was violently opened, and there emerged from the darkness into the light of our lanterns, the figure of the hostess of the Raven!

We all paused and looked up at her as she stood on the top of the ladder-like staircase. Her hideous face was distorted with rage. Her grey locks were tossed in wild confusion round her head and neck. The dark jacket she wore was rent and torn away from her yellow throat, and her sinewy hands were covered with recent scars.

"What do you here?" she croaked, as we stood speechless before so revolting an apparition. "Do you know this is my house? Mine! Have you broken in like thieves in the night?"

"Frau Dietrich," said the blacksmith, "we have no time for quarrelling or argument. If we have broken into your house, you must guess why we have done so——"

She started back and clutched at a great knotted stick which leant against the wall behind her, and which we had not seen before. "Go back!" she shrieked almost inarticulate with fury. "Go back, or it will be worse for you!"

"Woman," cried I, "have you not heard the horn? Have you not felt the Föhn? The Schwarzbach has overflowed. We are here to save you. Your daughter and your sons are in safety. Come with us."

She seemed surprised, and irresolute for a moment. Lorenz took advantage of her hesitation. He stepped up and seized her wrist.

"Come," said he, "there is no time to lose. The house may go down at any moment and bury us in the ruins."

"Let it go, the old house, and all that is in it!" she muttered, with a wild toss of her dishevelled head. But she seemed disposed to accompany Lorenz. She had, indeed, descended a couple of steps, he still holding her by the wrist, when the blacksmith bade his two apprentices take care of the Raben-wirthin, and bring her safely out of the house, and whispered to me to remain with him for a moment, he had a search to make. The woman's quick ear caught the whisper. She shook herself free of him in an instant, and with one bound she was back at the head of the staircase and confronting us ferociously. "You dogs," she panted out, "you accursed hounds, you are trying to deceive me. Leave my house, begone! Let it stand or fall, it shall not harbour such as you. If there is law in the canton you shall repent this."

"Best not talk of law, mother Dietrich," returned the blacksmith resolutely. "I tell you I have my reasons for looking into these garrets. And by Heaven I'll not quit the house till I've done so. Let me pass."

She aimed a sudden blow at him with the knotted stick, but he had anticipated her attack, and avoided the blow by a quick side movement. Then he rushed upon her and pinioned her arms to her sides. Powerful man as he was, he could not hold her single-handed, so violent were her struggles, so astonishing her strength. But the two apprentices came to his assistance and succeeded in binding her arms with the ropes they carried. It all passed quicker than I can tell it. "Stay and guard her for a moment," shouted Lorenz to his men. "And you, sir, come with me!" I followed him to the head of the stairs and into a low garret, the massive door of which was open. He held up his lantern and looked around. "My God!" he cried, "it is worse than I thought."

I had paused at the threshold, being absolutely beaten back by the intolerable stench and closeness of the air. But on hearing the blacksmith's exclamation I advanced; and this is what I saw:—

A low garret with a sloping roof in which was one hole to admit light, unglazed, but defended by iron bars. Walls foul and blackened with the dirt of years. A floor heaped with dust, and filth unspeakable. No chair, no table, no bed;

but on the floor in one corner a ragged mattress which I would not have given a dog to lie on, and on the mattress a human form.

"What is it?"

Lorenz looked round at me as I asked the question. "It was a woman," said he. "Lord have mercy on us!"

"Was? Is she dead?"

We knelt down beside the creature on the mattress and looked more closely. It was a young woman. God forbid I should ever see her like again! Her body was—not clothed, but—barely covered by a single garment of indescribable vileness and raggedness. Her feet and legs were naked, as were her arms; and their emaciation surpassed anything I could have conceived compatible with life. Her dark hair was cropped close to her head, and her eyebrows and eyelashes, also very dark, enhanced the ghastly pallor of her face and forehead, on one side of which there was a stain of clotted blood. "Look here," whispered Lorenz (we had both instinctively lowered our voices), "look at this!"

He showed me a band round her middle, to which was attached an iron chain. The other end of it had been fixed to a ring in the wall; but the place where the ring had been, was all broken away. The plaster was shivered, and the beam to which the ring had been riveted was splintered. Some strong effort had torn the ring from its place in the rotting wall. The woman's shoulders were covered with bruises and scars, some of old date, some freshly inflicted. Altogether she was an object of such pity and horror as I had never imagined, much less seen.

"It is what I suspected, only worse," said Lorenz. "There were stories going about at the time, that Rosel, the eldest of these Dietrichs, was never sent away at all, but was kept shut up here after she went raving mad. But no one knew for certain. And of late the thing was forgotten, and the younger generation knew nothing about it. But you see how it is! The unfortunate, miserable creature has been kept here chained like a dog, starved, beaten; her own child, sir! Her own flesh and blood! And now that she-devil has killed her."

I turned sick and faint, and must have become suddenly pale, for the blacksmith put out his arm to support me.

"Don't mind me, man. It will pass off in a moment. But, see! let us try—is there nothing to be done? Is she quite dead?"

I put my hand upon her heart, and felt it still beat, though feebly. She was insensible, but there was a tremulous fluttering of the eyelids now and then, as if she were about to lift them. If we could get some aid, I thought we might still save her. But how was it to be accomplished? If we remained much longer there, our own lives might be endangered by the flood. As we still hesitated, kneeling by the mattress, she all at once opened her eyes fully and looked up. Her glance had no madness in it. It was pathetic, wondering, but not mad.

"Don't be afraid, Rosel," said the blacksmith, bending over her; "no one shall hurt you."

At the same instant, a change in the expression of her face made us look round. There, in the doorway, stood the Rabenwirthin. Her violent expostulations, and their own curiosity, had induced the two men who guarded her to return with her to the garret; and there she stood between them, with her hands bound together by ropes, gazing at the miserable creature on the pallet. The girl's lips moved. A brighter light came into her sunken eyes. She was so weak that her voice was the merest whisper; still, we could hear the words she said.

"Rosel's so tired. Mother, take Rosel."

The old woman made a movement forward, but the men beside her held her back.

"Let me go!" she cried, in a strangled voice that would have been almost a shriek if she had not violently controlled it. "Let me go to her!"

"You fiend, do you want to finish your murdering work?" said Lorenz, placing himself between her and the pallet. The woman fell on her knees, and a great convulsion shook her whole body, ending in a storm of sobs, amidst which she poured out a stream of broken sentences.

"I did not mean to kill her!" she cried.

"I have not killed her. You shall not say so. It was only to save myself. She had torn away the ring, and she sprang upon me from behind, and I struggled with her and struck her down. She was raving then—like a wild beast: the devil possessed her. You don't know what it was to bear that all alone, and tell no one, and keep her from doing the horrible things that—but, oh! she knows me now. She knows her own name. She has not known me for twelve years. Think of it! And, whenever she uttered the word 'mother,' she screamed, and cursed, and tore. Oh! let me go to her. You may leave my

hands bound, if you like. As true as there is a God in Heaven, I won't hurt her! Hark! she's crying for me. My own child, Lorenz! My child, that I bore and suckled—not that devil that came and took possession of her spirit. Rosel! Rosel!”

She staggered upon to her feet again; and the blacksmith, without a word, took out his knife and cut the cords round her wrists.

“Mind,” said he, “if you hurt a hair of her head, I'll fell you like a beast to be slaughtered.”

She took no heed of him or his words. She was down on the mattress beside her daughter, holding the poor wounded head on her breast. The dying girl smiled and closed her eyes.

“Mother, hush Rosel to sleep,” she murmured.

The blow which had destroyed her life had restored her reason; but it was the reason of a little child. The intervening years of youth and womanhood had been cancelled by the searing fire of madness.

“Rosel! Rosel! where have you been, my Rosel? Why has the fiend left you, and the curse been taken away, if it is too late?”

The wretched woman's own brain seemed to be giving way under the pressure of this tragedy. Her daughter lay still and placid in the mother's arms, who rocked her and crooned over her as if she had been an infant.

“For God's sake,” cried I, “let us get them both away if possible. We can carry the girl downstairs, and get shelter, and help for her at Falkenau.”

“Yes, come,” said Lorenz, down whose rugged face the tears were streaming. “Let us lift Rosel on the mattress as she is.”

At this moment the girl suddenly reared herself into a sitting posture, and stared intently at one corner of the room. “Mother,” she said, speaking more strongly and clearly than she had yet done, “Come with Rosel. Don't let us stay here, it's so cold and dark. Out there, there's a bright light—oh, so bright! and there's father! Mother, take Rosel!”

She fell back into her mother's arms, dead.

The blacksmith's men came and pulled Lorenz by the sleeve. “It's no use staying here,” they said. “We can do no good, and shall lose our own lives for nothing. Don't you feel how the house shakes? And there's the horn again! Alois is blowing to warn us.” They turned and rushed down the stairs without further

parley. Lorenz and I endeavoured with all our force to drag away the Raben-wirthin from the dead body of her child. It was impossible. She lay face downwards on the mattress, with her arms tightly clasped about the body, and her head upon its breast. She would neither move nor speak, but opposed all her singular strength to our efforts to remove her. A great shout came up from the crowd without. The house was tottering. It was worse than useless to remain. Alone we could do nothing. Horrible as it seemed to leave the wretched woman there to die, the instinct of self-preservation hastened our steps away from that loathsome scene of horror. When we reached the first floor, we heard shouts again from the crowd in the road. I ran into the room I had slept in and looked out of the window. “This way, this way,” shouted the people. “The courtyard at the back is flooded. Jump for your lives!”

I remembered the conduit which had served me to descend before. I called to Lorenz to follow me, and in a few seconds we were standing side by side in the road. “Run!” cried Alois the watchman, from a distant knoll where he was standing. I hardly understood the direction, but Lorenz pulled me along with him at a headlong speed. “We must get clear of the ruins,” he panted. Scarcely had he uttered the words before a horrible cracking was heard. I stopped and looked back. Turbid, foam-crested waves were swirling round the house, and beating against it. The temporary dam of timber had been swept away like so many straws. The ground on which the house stood was being swallowed up by the devouring waters. Another minute, and the building reeled from roof to basement, toppled slowly to one side, and sank down as if it were engulfed by an earthquake. The moon shone brilliantly, and the voice of the idiot boy was heard chanting in shrill delight, as the roof-tree of the Raven inn was whirled past us in the raging flood.

NEXT WEEK WILL BE COMMENCED
A NEW SERIAL STORY,

ENTITLED,
HALVES,

By JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF

“Lost Sir Massingberd,” “At Her Mercy,” &c. &c.

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THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

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HALVES.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIN MASSINGBERD," "A PERFECT TREASURE," "AT HER MERCY," &c. &c.

CHAPTER I. THE RECTOR AND HIS WIFE.

IF the hills of Stanbrook were not dwarfed by the vicinity of the Westmoreland mountains, and its mere reduced to fairy proportions by the neighbourhood of the northern lakes, it would have a name for the picturesque, which at present it does not possess. You may have a very pretty property in land of your own, and one which would make you "a ground swell" in an open county, but if you happen to have a Beaufort or a Derby for neighbours, you are not greatly thought of; and as with people so with places. No one was ever invited by advertisement to take a return ticket to Stanbrook, at five shillings less per head if applied for on the previous day; no splendid picture, bathed in the dyes of sunset and magenta, ever portrayed that paradise at a railway station; nor was the British public ever invited by the genius loci (who generally keeps an inn) to "spend a happy day" there. Yet happy days were spent there for all that.

With all respect for the purveyors of travelling for the million, perhaps our very happiest days are not those which we enjoy in companies of from fifty to five hundred. In boyhood, indeed, it may be so; but in adolescence (or even later) two is the better number; while, in mature age, it is well to wander over some fair scene alone, and think, with unbidden but not unhappy tears, of those who once shared with us its pleasures. Oh, rare and pure is the breeze upon the hill-top, and cool and pure the breeze upon the mere; but

when they breathe for us a gracious memory, they are airs no more of earth, but blow from heaven!

Ah, little house, still mine, but emptied of its pride! Ah, quiet churchyard that enfolds it all, forbear to glass yourselves in these dewy eyes; I turn from Death to Life, from Now to Then, and strive to draw a picture from the Past!

It is an autumn morning; the mists have left the bases of the hills, but shroud their summits; above is the sea of vapour, save one broad peninsula of light that strikes upon a little garden, and decks its trees with drops of diamonds, and sows its lawn with pearls and rubies, and breaks upon the lake in flame. It flames too upon the window of the breakfast parlour, so that Aunt Eleanor, seated at the urn, cries, "What a glare! do draw the blind down, Harry."

But cried Uncle Ralph: "Nay, never shut God's sunshine out in autumn. Let me wheel your chair round; so, my dear. If you knew how light became you and your rings" (here he cast a glance at me, that twinkled with sly humour as brightly as the rings themselves), "you'd have no shade—except to cast your rivals into."

"You are pleased to be facetious this morning, Mr. Hastings," was my aunt's stiff reply; but she took his speech in good part, notwithstanding. It was impossible to put Aunt Eleanor out by any overdose of compliment. She was near upon threescore years and ten, and had been a very fine woman in her day, which, in her own opinion, was by no means over yet: Her complexion was still that of a young girl; her dark hair, which was but slightly tinged with grey, was as plentiful

as that of most girls, and it was all her own. She was indebted neither to rhinoceros nor vegetable ivory for a single tooth. Her hands were a marvel for her age, so plump, and white, and small; and if there were some nodosities about the knuckles, they served the better to keep her rings on. I doubt whether any woman had ever seen my Aunt Eleanor, without wondering who would have those rings when she came to die—a reflection which never troubled the good lady herself in the least. Perhaps she had an idea they would be buried with her, and that she might make a figure with them in other spheres; or, more probably, the subject was altogether foreign to her thoughts. She had had a life interest in forty thousand pounds so long, that I think it had moulded her character, and made her averse to speculations about the future.

Do not let it be supposed, however, that Aunt Eleanor was irreligious. Far from it. Indeed, she would scarcely have married a clergyman—for Uncle Ralph was the rector of Stanbrook—had that been the case. Moreover, although an essentially worldly woman, she had many good qualities; and, though so vain, plenty of wits. It was said, indeed—but mostly by ladies (who, I venture to think, are not infallible judges on such a point)—that she had more common sense in her little finger (the only one without the rings) than her husband had in his whole body. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico* is no more invariably true than other proverbs; and Uncle Ralph was a humorist. A more kindly, undesigning creature than he never existed; and the wonder was, how he had ever committed the prudence of marrying my aunt—a lady ten years older than himself, it is true, but, in all other respects, so excellent a match. My own conviction is, that he had had but little voice in the matter. Up to nearly forty years of age, Eleanor Baby had been walking the wood, looking for a straight stick, when it suddenly struck her that she must not be so particular; and the Rev. Ralph Hastings happening to fall in her way, she had picked him up and appropriated him. He was wholly unsuspecting of her design, imagining her to be much too high on Fortune's ladder for the likes of him; but, so soon as he was made to understand the necessity of the case, his good nature compelled him to succumb. He had but three thousand pounds of his own, and his so-called living, which brought him in two hundred a year,

the half of which he paid back to the poor of the parish; the rectory itself had been but a poor cottage, till, under my aunt's golden reign, it had blossomed into as bright "a bijou residence" as English sun e'er shone on. She had spent more money on the house than would have built it ten times over; the very room in which we sat had had a window "let in" over the fireplace, which the architect had pronounced to be "an impossibility," and charged for it accordingly, when surmounted; and to sit with her small feet on the fender, watching the snow fall on the Fells, and reflecting that she had had her will in spite of that architect, was one of my aunt's winter pleasures. Her mother had been a Frenchwoman, and she ought to have been French herself by rights; so tasteful and trim she was, so shallow and sparkling, so sentimentally tender, and so childishly selfish. There were only three persons in the world, beside herself, for whom she had any personal affection, I believe, at the time of which I write: first, her husband—I have a doubt as to his being first, but I give him and her the benefit of it; secondly, her Blenheim spaniel, Nelly, who was "a great invalid," as her mistress was wont to say, and pushed the wants and caprices of invalidism to extremity; and, thirdly, though at a considerable interval, her nephew and biographer, myself.

"Harry, boy, you don't eat," said my uncle; "what is the matter?"

"Why need you ask, Mr. Hastings? He has had but a trout and two eggs, and a little cold beef, it is true, at present; but then, don't you remember that to-morrow he leaves us?"

"Pull down the blind," said my uncle, sententiously; and this time I obeyed him at once.

"There now," continued my aunt, patting my shoulder graciously, "I am no longer angry with anybody, and least of all with you, Harry. Let me have my own way, and I am always delighted. I am very sorry you are going away. If your uncle had not been so cruel, you might have remained here all your days—at least, all my days—and written poems to the sunsets. For my part, I would like you to be a poet, and nothing else. It is so ethereal; now that is not at all the case with an attorney."

"Very likely," remarked my uncle; "but unless Harry is poet enough to live, as Eve Fleigon of Clare did, on

no other nourishment than the smell of flowers——”

“How delightful!” interposed my aunt.

“In summer time, perhaps; but when it came to the dahlia season I should not have envied her. Well, since Harry has nothing to depend upon but his own exertions, it is necessary he should set to work.”

“How sad!” sighed my aunt.

“He has had the education of a gentleman at the university,” continued the rector, looking towards his wife, but in reality, as I was well aware, intending his discourse for my private behoof; “and I much regret that he did not get more out of it. You have heard of a man being ‘a gentleman and a scholar;’ well, unhappily, he did not become the latter. You have also heard of the alternative of being ‘a gentleman’ or ‘a fellow;’ he, unfortunately, chose the former. Worse than all, he has chosen to devote his time and talents to the composition of verse, for which he will never get a farthing a foot—not alcaic, but linear measure.”

“Nay, he got two guineas for that charming valentine in the Illustrated Post last February,” interposed my aunt, good-naturedly.

“Well, let us except the valentine; a man who can only make money by his profession on the 14th of February reminds one of the American gentleman, whose calling was to blacken glasses against eclipse days. Harry Sheddton will never be the Laureate, nor even procure bread and cheese by his muse. What profession would he choose then, was the question which I, as his guardian, was bound to put to him. He has answered, ‘I will be an attorney. I will be articled to Mr. Mark Raeburn, at Kirkdale. It is but ten miles away, so that I can run over to Stanbrook and see you and my aunt every Saturday if you wish it.’ Of course we wish it. The arrangement is most welcome to me every way, and shows in the boy as much good feeling as good sense.”

“And these Raeburns—these wretches who are depriving us of our Harry—are coming to dinner to-day, are they not?” inquired my aunt.

“Certainly; the coach has just stopped at the gate to leave the fish, no doubt.”

“Well, I suppose I must make myself agreeable to them.”

“Nay, my dear, that is unnecessary. Nature has taken that trouble off your

shoulders—you have only to be your charming self. The Raeburns are not much in your way, it must be owned.”

“Ah, I know them,” said my aunt, with a little shudder. “The man is not so bad, indeed, except for marrying the woman. He must have committed great crimes, however, to have deserved her.”

“No, no, Mark is a good fellow,” laughed my uncle; “you can’t judge of desert by marriages, else what an angel must I be to have been rewarded with such a prize as you, my dear. He is an excellent fellow, and as straight as a die; my only fear is that he has not quite enough business to teach Harry his trade. Mrs. Raeburn is a terrible woman, I allow, and sets one’s teeth on edge to look at her. I wouldn’t kiss her for a fifty-pound note.”

“Indeed, I hope not,” said my aunt, with a toss of her head; “and I hope Harry won’t. One thing is certain, if he does, he will never get another kiss from his Aunt Eleanor.”

“Then I am quite sure he won’t,” remarked my uncle, with confidence. “Moreover, she would never give the fifty-pound note; she is a thorough skinflint. You must give Harry some provisions to take away—jams, and hams, and so forth, as you did when he was going to school, else I’m certain he’ll be starved. She starves her own son John; no young fellow of his age could look so gaunt, and grim, and old, if he were not starved.”

“How can you think of going to live among such people, Harry?” inquired my aunt, throwing up her jewelled hands. “It is dreadful even to think that they are coming to dinner.”

“Well, I rather like Mr. Raeburn, aunt,” said I, cheerfully; “and John is a clever fellow, and a most excellent mimic.”

“Mimic! who is there to mimic at Kirkdale?” asked my aunt, contemptuously.

I felt very hot and uncomfortable; for, the very last time I had met John Raeburn, he had personated my respected aunt, even to that very manner of her throwing up her head, with an accuracy that had drawn tears of laughter from me.

“Oh, everybody about,” said I, carelessly; “his father and mother, for instance, and the new doctor, Mr. Wilde.”

“Nice, dutiful boy!” observed my uncle. “However, they are all coming to dinner, and Miss Floyd with them.”

“Miss Floyd!” exclaimed my aunt; “who is Miss Floyd?”

"Why surely I told you about her," said my uncle, in some confusion; "she is Mark Raeburn's ward, and, I believe, his cousin. When I took your invitation to the Briary——"

"The Priory, Uncle Ralph," suggested I.

"Yes, I know it is the Priory, but it ought to be the Briary, so I always call it so; a wilderness of a place, like the garden of the sluggard, and everything sharp, and prickly, and disagreeable about it. Not," added he hastily, "but that Harry will find himself quite at home there, no doubt, in time."

"But about this Miss Floyd," insisted my aunt; "for this is the first time I ever heard of her from either of you."

"Well, Harry ought to have told you, though I forgot it, since he knows all about her."

"My dear uncle!" remonstrated I.

"Knows all about her!" repeated my aunt, "and has never told me a word!"

"This is quite a mistake, Aunt Eleanor," stammered I. "I have seen the young lady once or twice, it is true, but as to forgetting that she was to come to dinner, I don't see what right Uncle Ralph has to shift the blame to my shoulders. When he took your note of invitation to Mrs. Raeburn, with an apology for your not calling in person, she was rather inclined to be offended—drew herself up——"

"Quite unnecessary," interposed my aunt; "she's always like a ramrod."

"Well, you see, you had never visited her, and perhaps it struck her that you would not have asked her to dinner if I had not been about to be articted to her husband."

"Therein she showed her sagacity," was my aunt's quiet comment.

"Well, at all events, that made her stiff as buckram, and she told Uncle Ralph that it would have given herself and Mr. Raeburn very great pleasure to dine at Stanbrook, but that his cousin Miss Floyd was residing with them——"

"No, no," interrupted my uncle, laughing, "you are spoiling the story. She said that they would be happy to come, but that there was her son John."

"Then bring him," said I, "we have plenty of room;" and, indeed, we had agreed, you know, to ask him."

"Nay, but there is Miss Floyd," said she."

"Mercy on us!" cried my aunt, "I wonder you did not invite a dozen of them."

"Well, my dear, you see it was like the fable of the fox, and the goose, and the

bushel of corn. She couldn't leave Miss Floyd alone—the prettiest girl, by-the-by, I've seen for many a day—and she couldn't leave her Don Juan of a son at home—you'll think him exceedingly like Don Juan—to keep company with her, so that, having once mentioned the young fellow's name, I had to ask them all four. It's only once and away, you know, and it will make them civil to the lad here. Then, having business matters to settle with Raeburn, the whole affair escaped my recollection. Besides, I made sure, since Harry was present, that he would have told you all about it.—Well, Richard, what's the matter?"

"Oh, please sir, the fish!" exclaimed the man-servant, who had approached my aunt with a frightened look, as though about to make a confession of some calamity, and now gladly turned towards my uncle, "there has something happened to the salmon."

"Something happened? What do you mean, man? Has it caught the small-pox? Bring it in and let's look at it."

"Not in here, I beg," observed my aunt. "Take it into the porch, Richard, and show it to your master. No, don't you move, Harry; I want to have a word with you."

I would very gladly have accompanied my uncle, but of course there was no escaping this command. I kept my seat, therefore, and looked up at my aunt with an air of as innocent surprise as it was possible to assume in such an emergency.

"So, nephew, you have embraced the profession of the law, have you, to please Mr. Hastings, and because, by doing so, you would be within reach of your dear uncle and aunt?"

"Those were some of the reasons, Aunt Eleanor."

"They are all that I have heard mentioned—that is, directly," observed the old lady, with meaning. "But it seems the law has other attractions for you?"

"Not many, that I am aware of," answered I, with a feeble laugh.

"Don't giggle," was my aunt's reproving rejoinder. "That is a girl's trick, which I conclude you have caught from this young person already. You need not look so simple. How old are you, sir?"

"I am just twenty-one."

"Well, at twenty-one a man does not forget that 'the prettiest girl one has seen for many a day' is coming to dinner; I doubt even whether your uncle did. You

didn't dare to tell me about her. She is doubtless a vulgar creature, of whom you are enamoured and yet ashamed."

"I am not ashamed of her. She has nothing to be ashamed of," cried I, rising from the chair and speaking with indignant vehemence. "She is as ladylike and accomplished as she is beautiful."

"Oh, Lud, it's as bad as that, is it, Harry?" cried my aunt—then burst into one of her rare fits of mirth, that sounded like the tinkling of sledge-bells. "Well, well, it's very natural, and a great pity that such little dears can't marry and settle in a doll's house at once. Has she any money, child?"

"I don't know," said I, with sullen sheepishness.

Then the silver laughter rose again and fell all about me like a fountain-song.

"Of course he doesn't know!" cried she, admiringly. "It would have been out of all keeping had he made inquiries about so superfluous a matter. Ah, youth! Ah, love! Ah, me!" A look of inexpressible sadness—the reflection, perhaps, of her own past, swept over her furrowed face. She laid a sparkling hand upon my shoulder, and in a voice in which the shrillness of old age was rendered musical by tenderness, said, "Leave all to me, Harry. If the girl is worthy of you, and I like her, you shall embrace—your profession."

I took her hand—to squeeze it was impossible, because of the rings—and raised it to my lips.

At that moment my uncle re-entered the room, with a purple face and a fish basket. He held his disengaged hand to his side, and appeared half suffocated with laughter.

"Never," gasped he, "since the world was made—never, at least, since the water was peopled—has such a sight been seen as this. Look at it, Eleanor!"

My aunt raised her double eye-glasses, and gazed into the basket with a supercilious air. "I see a large crab and a fish bone."

"Yes, a very large crab—a crab that weighs six pounds more than he did when he left town—and the bone of a salmon. The crab has boned that salmon."

"What, eaten it on the way?"

"Most certainly he has. It is magnificent! What martyr doomed to execution has ever shown such calmness, what hero such presence of mind?"

"Well, we have the salmon still," observed my aunt with satisfaction, "since it is inside the crab."

"My dear Eleanor, I am shocked at you; that is the reflection of a political economist. Harry, put your hat on; there is the dog-cart at the door. I must request you to drive this gentleman to Morecambe Bay, and put him carefully into the sea again—somewhere in the sand, where he will be able to be quiet and digest at leisure."

"But, my dear uncle——"

"Yes, I am sorry to trouble you," interrupted the rector, gravely, "but I couldn't trust him to Richard. He would only pretend to throw him in, as Sir Bedivere pretended to throw the sword Excalibur, and sell him to somebody for half-a-crown. A crab like that is worth his weight in gold, and shall never be eaten if I can help it."

So I drove the crab to Morecambe that morning—a good eight miles—and restored him to his native element.

OTHELLO AND THE PLAYERS.

It is unfortunate that the published accounts of the Revels at Court, during the reigns of Elizabeth and James, have to be regarded with such painful suspicion, whenever they contain reference to the plays of Shakespeare. Something of magic in the poet's name has had the curious effect of crazing the antiquaries. In their zeal to discover facts, they have been incited to invent fictions concerning him; so that we may not, however much inclined to credit it, place implicit reliance upon an entry in the accounts under date 1605: "Hallamas Day being the First of November, A Play in the Banketinge House, at Whitehall, called The Moor of Venis." Nor may absolute belief be extended to another record, a list of "Playes acted before the Kinge and Queene, this present yeare of the Lord 1636," which mentions a performance on the 8th December, at Hampton Court, of "The Moore of Venice."

It seems to be generally agreed that the tragedy of Othello was first represented in the year 1602, and that the chief character was originally sustained by Richard Burbadge, who seems, indeed, to have been the "creator," to employ the modern term, of all the great parts in Shakespeare's plays. A Funeral Elogy on his death, in 1618,

makes express mention of his performance of Othello :

But let me not forget one chiefest part,
Wherein, beyond the rest, he moved the heart;
The grieved Moor, made jealous by a slave,
Who sent his wife to fill a timeless grave,
Then slew himself upon the bloody bed.
All these and many more are with him dead.

The other Shakespearean characters undertaken by Burbadge, according to this Elegy, the authenticity of which has not been questioned, are Hamlet, Romeo, Henry the Fifth, Richard the Third, Macbeth, Brutus, Coriolanus, Shylock, Lear, and Pericles. It is plainly stated that the actor was of small stature, in that respect resembling his successors Garrick and Kean. There is a hint, too, that he was inclined to be corpulent. Shakespeare, it has been surmised, bore this fact in mind when, suiting Hamlet for performance by Mr. Burbadge, he described that prince as "fat and scant of breath."

Concerning the representations of Othello prior to the Restoration, no further particulars can be adduced. That the tragedy was performed forthwith upon the re-opening of the theatres, is proved by an entry in Mr. Pepys's Diary, on the 11th October, 1660: "Here, in the Park, we met with Mr. Salisbury, who took Mr. Creed and me to the Cockpit, to see the Moor of Venice, which was very well done. Burt acted the Moor, by the same token a very pretty lady that sat by me called out, to see Desdemona smothered." At a later date (20th August, 1666) Mr. Pepys has recorded his opinion of the play. "To Deptford, by water, reading Othello, Moor of Venice, which I have heretofore esteemed a mighty good play; but having so lately read The Adventures of Five Hours, it seems a mean thing." The gods had not made Mr. Pepys poetical.

Two months after the performance witnessed by Mr. Pepys, in company with his friends, Mr. Salisbury and Mr. Creed, a memorable representation of Othello took place at the Vere-street Theatre, Clare Market. As historians of the stage have related, there then appeared, for the first time upon the English stage, an English actress. A certain Mr. Thomas Jordan provided for the occasion "a prologue, to introduce the first woman that came to act on the stage in the tragedy called the Moor of Venice." Desdemona was the part she played. The actress, it would seem, was Mrs. Hughes. There can be little doubt that Emilia was also

personated by a woman; but, in regard to that matter, history is altogether silent.

Burt was not an actor of the first class, probably; at any rate, he eventually resigned the part of Othello to Hart, the Cassio of the cast of 1660, and from all accounts a performer of singular distinction. The next Othello of note was the great Mr. Betterton, who would seem to have first undertaken the part in 1683, and who certainly appeared as Othello in January, 1707, when Iago was played by Verbruggen, Cassio by Booth, and Desdemona by Mrs. Bracegirdle. Sandford, a famous personator of villains, seems also to have played Iago to the Othello of Betterton. But for Steele's account in the Tatler, written upon the occasion of the interment of the actor's remains in Westminster Abbey, in 1710, we should know little of Betterton's Othello. "I have hardly a notion," Steele writes, "that any performer of antiquity could surpass the action of Mr. Betterton, in any of the occasions in which he has appeared on our stage. The wonderful agony which he appeared in when he examined the circumstance of the handkerchief in Othello, the mixture of love that intruded upon his mind upon the innocent answers Desdemona makes, betrayed in his gesture such a variety and vicissitude of passions as would admonish a man to be afraid of his own heart, and perfectly convince him that it is to stab it, to admit that worst of daggers, jealousy. Whoever reads in his closet this admirable scene will find that he cannot, except he has as warm an imagination as Shakespeare himself, find any but dry, incoherent, and broken sentences; but a reader that has seen Betterton act it observes there could not be a word added; that longer speeches had been unnatural, nay, impossible, in Othello's circumstances. The charming passage in the same tragedy, where he tells the manner of winning of his mistress, was urged with so moving and graceful an energy that, while I walked in the cloisters, I thought of him with the same concern as if I waited for the remains of a person who had in real life done all that I had seen him represent." Upon the death of Betterton the part of Othello was inherited by Wilks, who had, indeed, already assumed the character upon the Irish stage so far back as 1689. The great success Wilks had obtained as a comedian, however, interfered with his appearances in tragedy. As Steele notes in the Tatler,

"There is a fault in the audience which interrupts their satisfaction very much; that is, the figuring to themselves the actor in some part wherein they particularly liked him, and not attending to the part he is at that time performing. Thus, whatever Wilks, who is the strictest follower of nature, is acting, the vulgar spectators turn their thoughts upon Sir Harry Wildair." It is hinted, however, that Wilks was apt to imitate Betterton overmuch. Upon a notification to the Tatler that the actor was about to act Hamlet, Steele requested of him "that he would wholly forget Mr. Betterton; for that he failed in no part of Othello but when he had him in view." Wilks first played Othello in June, 1710, on the occasion of the benefit of Colley Cibber, who took the part of Iago. "I shall steal incognito to see it," writes the Tatler, "out of curiosity to observe how Wilks and Cibber touch those places where Betterton and Sandford so very highly excelled." Cibber accounted Wilks's Othello a failure. Of Cibber's Iago, Tom Davies wrote, "He acted in a style so drawing and hypocritical, and wore the mask of honesty so loosely, that Othello, who is not drawn a fool, must have seen the villain through his thin disguises. The truth is that Cibber was endured in this and other tragic parts on account of his general merit in comedy. The public," Davies continued, "had not seen a proper outline of Iago till Charles Macklin exhibited a faithful picture of this arch villain in 1744 in the Haymarket Theatre, when Foote was his Othello." To Macklin, indeed, Davies attributes "the many admirable strokes of passion with which Barry surprised us in Othello." Still, he would not have this understood to mean any degradation of that great actor's abilities; "for if Barry had not possessed a soul capable of receiving the instructions of so great a master, he would not have so pathetically affected an audience." And much of Macklin's knowledge of his art is ascribed in turn "to the lessons he gained from Mr. Chetwood, prompter of Drury-lane Theatre."

The next great Othello was Barton Booth, who, like Wilks, acquired fame in Ireland, before presenting himself on the English stage. Booth first played Othello at Drury-lane in 1712. It was his masterpiece, Cibber states. No doubt his appearance in the Cato of Addison did more to secure his professional advancement; "but

in Othello I may safely aver that Booth showed himself twice the actor that he could in Cato. And yet his merit in acting Cato need not be diminished by this comparison." He was of middle stature—five feet eight; robust of form, but without clumsiness. "His air and deportment were naturally graceful; he had a searching eye and a manly sweetness in his countenance; his voice was completely harmonious, from the softness of the flute to the extent of the trumpet; his attitudes were all picturesque; he was noble in his designs and happy in his execution." Moreover, Mr. Booth was a scholar—as a boy at Westminster he had won the favourable notice of the great Dr. Busby himself—he was a sculptor and a painter, and possessed a pretty taste in poetry, as certain of his verses still extant demonstrate very sufficiently.

Wilks was jealous of Booth, envying him the full strong voice with which he was wont "to grace his periods;" although Booth was wont to declare that "if his ear had been equal to it, Wilks had voice enough to have shown himself a much better tragedian." According to Cibber, however, the two actors were of "so mixed a merit," that even in tragedy the superiority was not always on the same side. It seems that "in sorrow, tenderness, or resignation" Wilks had the advantage; while "in the more turbulent emotions of the heart" Booth left all competitors behind him. Both were clearly inferior to Betterton, and both were candid enough to admit as much. "I remember," said Booth, "that when I acted the Ghost to Betterton's Hamlet, instead of my awing him, he terrified me. But there was a divinity hung round that man!" Wilks, with modest grace, observed, "Mr. Betterton and Mr. Booth could always act as they pleased; but, for my part, I must do as well as I can." Cibber, admitting the great favour awarded to the Hamlet of Wilks, owns that "the half of what he spoke was as painful to my ear as every line that came from Betterton was charming;" and continues, "If I should add that Booth, too, was behind Betterton in Othello, it would be saying no more than Booth himself had judgment and candour enough to know and confess. And if both he and Wilks are allowed in the above-mentioned characters a second place to so great a master as Betterton, it will be a rank of praise that the best actors since my time might have been proud of."

Macklin, while professing the warmest admiration of Booth, yet admitted a preference for the Othello of Barry.

James Quin undertook the part at the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre in 1722; but as an actor of tragedy, Quin would seem to have presented many deficiencies, notwithstanding the fame and popularity he enjoyed. A contemporary critic describes his aspect in the part as very unlikely to engage the regard of Desdemona. "His declaration was as heavy as his person, his tones monotonous, his passions bellowing, his emphasis affected, and his under-strokes growling." The critic further records having once seen Quin perform Othello "in a large powdered major wig, which, with the black face, made such a magpie appearance of his head as tended greatly to laughter. One stroke, however, was not amiss: his coming on in white gloves, by pulling off which the black hands became more realised." Tom Davies, while more favourable generally to Quin's tragic assumptions, yet confesses that he could neither express the tender nor the violent emotions of the heart, and that his action was generally forced or languid, and his movement ponderous and sluggish. Quin, however, maintained his hold upon the leading characters in the tragic repertory, even in opposition to such actors as Barry and Garrick.

Foote, making his first appearance upon the stage, and conceiving himself to be rather a tragedian than a comic actor, played Othello at the Haymarket in 1744, the bills of the night announcing that "the character of Othello will be new dressed, after the custom of his country." Garrick first undertook the part a year later, and followed the fashion of dress which Foote had introduced. The assumption of Eastern robes was so far unfortunate, however, that it brought about Quin's well-known comparison of the actor with the turbaned Pompeys of fashionable tea-tables. It would have been more prudent, perhaps, to have adopted some such dress as Quin had always worn, and as Barry was subsequently to wear in the part—a regimental suit, of King George the Second's body-guard, with a flowing Rameses periwig. As Othello, Garrick is said to have failed: he seems to have played the part on three occasions only. In the first instance, he had only Quin to contend against. Quin was already something of a veteran—he was to retire altogether from the stage in

a few years; and Garrick had wrested from him almost every other tragic part of any importance. Surely his Othello must have been preferable to Quin's. It is true that he was of small stature; so had been, in the past, Burbadge, the first Othello; so was to be, in the future, Edmund Kean, the most famous of all the Othellos. Garrick played Othello for the last time in June, 1746; in the following October, Barry undertook the character. Garrick did not venture to contest his possession of it.

Barry's success was very great; it can hardly be doubted, indeed, that he was an actor of the first class. Yet he encountered severe critical opposition. Churchill, in the "Rosciad," derided him bitterly; and he was surnamed "the elegant automaton." He was very handsome; though, judging from his portraits, his face was rather expressionless; of noble figure, above the average height; gifted with a voice of peculiar and silvery sweetness, if weak in its middle tones. As Othello, Garrick introduced the scene of epilepsy, because, as Macklin alleged, he knew Quin was too large and corpulent to venture upon a sudden fall. In like manner he fell asleep, and was borne from the stage in King Lear, "because he knew that Barry, on account of his size, could not be carried off the stage with the same ease that he could." The critic cited above, who dealt so severely with the Othello of Quin, has nothing but praise for the Othello of Barry. "He happily exhibited the hero, the lover, and the distracted husband; he rose through all the passions to the utmost extent of critical imagination, yet still appeared to leave an unexhausted fund of expression behind. His rage and tenderness were equally interesting. . . . His figure was a good apology for Desdemona's attachment . . . and the harmony of his voice to tell such a tale as he describes must have raised favourable prejudice in anyone who had an ear or heart to feel." In 1749, the occasion being Barry's benefit, his Othello received the support of the Iago of Garrick. There was no new Othello of any eminence until John Kemble first essayed the character, at Drury-lane, in 1785, to the Desdemona of Mrs. Siddons.

The more critical accounts of Kemble deal chiefly with his acting during his later days, when his powers had undergone very serious decline. Hazlitt's essays are confined to the last two years

of Kemble's professional career, and contain no mention of his Othello. Boaden, his biographer, says rather vaguely of his performance in 1785: "Mr. Kemble was thought to have taken stronger hold than ever in the Moor, and terror was very highly wrought indeed in the awful ruminations of the chamber scene. . . . Without looking away from the page of Shakespeare to inquire what might be the native properties of the African, Mr. Kemble's Othello was a high poetical impersonation, and from his first entrance to his last, he wrapped that great and ardent being in a mantle of mysterious solemnity awfully predictive of his fate." Macready has left in his Memoirs a curious account of Kemble's Othello during his leave-taking of the Dublin playgoers in 1816—the year before he finally withdrew from the stage. "The majestic figure of John Kemble, in Moorish costume, with a slow and stately step advanced from the side wing. A more august presence could scarcely be imagined. His darkened complexion detracted but little from the stern beauty of his commanding features, and the enfolding drapery of his Moorish mantle hung gracefully on his erect and noble form. The silent picture he presented compelled admiration. . . . I must suppose he was out of humour, for, to my exceeding regret, he literally walked through the play. My attention was rivetted upon him through the night in hope of some start of energy, some burst of passion, lighting up the dreary dulness of his cold recitation; but all was one gloomy, unbroken level—actually not better than a school repetition. In the line, 'Not a jot! not a jot!' there was a tearful tremor upon his voice that had pathos in it; with that one exception not a single passage was uttered that exerted the audience to sympathy, or that gave evidence of artistic power. His voice was monotonously husky, and every word was enunciated with laboured distinctness. His readings were faultless; but there was no spark of feeling that could enable us to get a glimpse of the 'constant, loving, noble nature' of Othello. . . . The play went through without one round of applause. . . . The curtain fell in silence, and I left the theatre with the conviction that I had not yet seen Kemble."

No doubt Macready saw Kemble's Othello at its worst; but its best could scarcely have been very good. The character did not lie well within the scope

of Kemble's art. His method of acting was indeed opposed to any satisfactory portrayal of Othello. As Mrs. Siddons said of him, "My brother John, in his most impetuous bursts, is always careful to avoid any discomposure of his dress or deportment; but in the whirlwind of passion I lose all thought of such matters." Under such circumstances Kemble's "bursts" could hardly have seemed very impetuous. Yet unquestionably his acting had its grand moments. His form was cast in the heroic mould, his face was singularly handsome, and his bearing was most majestic, if, as age oppressed him, his limbs lost suppleness, and his movements became somewhat stiff. But he had disadvantages to contend with in the hoarse and untunable quality of his voice, "and in a constitutional asthma that necessitated a prolonged and laborious indraught of his breath, and obliged him, for the sake of distinctness, to adopt an elaborate mode of utterance, enunciating every letter in every word." He impressed his audience greatly; but he could rarely have carried them away. "In the torrent and tempest of passion he had not the sustained power of Talma or Kean," or, we may now add, of Macready himself, whose words we have been quoting.

It was said of Kean's acting that it was like reading Shakespeare by flashes of lightning. Shylock, Othello, and Richard were his most famous Shakespearean characters; and of these perhaps his Othello was the most admired. Mr. Kean was "terribly in earnest," as John Kemble happily observed. Hazlitt, in 1816, accounted Kean's Othello "the highest effort of genius on the stage." His acting during the latter part of the third act Hazlitt describes as "a masterpiece of profound pathos and exquisite conception, and its effect on the house was electrical." Nevertheless, Hazlitt does not hesitate to point out blemishes in the performance. Kean lacked not only stature, but stateliness; he was too much of the gipsy, too little of the Moor. And there was excess of vehemence. "Mr. Kean is in general all passion, all energy, all relentless will. He wants imagination, that faculty which contemplates events and broods over feelings with a certain calmness and grandeur; his feelings almost always hurry on to action, and hardly ever repose upon themselves. He is too often in the highest key of passion, too uniformly on the verge of extravagance, too constantly on the rack.

This does very well in certain characters, as Zanga or Bajazet, where there is merely a physical passion, a boiling of the blood to be expressed; but it is not so in the lofty-minded and generous Moor." It was as Othello that Kean appeared upon the stage for the last time on the 25th March, 1833. He was led from the stage, in a dying state, before the completion of the third act of the tragedy. He was only forty-six. He had made very cruel and wanton havoc of as noble gifts as ever actor was endowed with. Subsequent Othellos of note have been Macready, Kean the younger, G. V. Brooke, the French actor, M. Fechter; and last, but by no means least, in a translation of the play, the great Italian tragedian, Signor Salvini.

The early Othellos were, no doubt, coal black; the later Moors have preferred to be merely tawny. M. Fechter was, perhaps, the most pallid of Othellos; his complexion suggested the application of walnut-juice, but not to any seriously unbecoming extent. He was very picturesque in his Oriental robes, wearing them with pleasant ease and grace; but about his bearing there was less of Moorish stateliness than of French politeness. Of Macready's first appearance in the part, in 1816, Hazlitt wrote: "Mr. Macready is tall enough for the part, and the looseness of his figure is rather in character with the flexibility of the South; but there are no sweeping outlines, no massy movements in his action." Of old there had, no doubt, been somewhat ostentatious murdering of Desdemona, and Mr. Pepys's "pretty lady" had some reason to call out at the smothering. Our early theatre, knowing or caring nothing about Horatian maxims to the contrary, delighted in scenes of bloodshed and exhibitions of criminal violence. Gradually, however, there had been some amendment in this matter. When Macready, in 1828, played Othello, in Paris, he was much applauded by the French critics, in that he had withdrawn the actual murder of Desdemona from the presence of the audience. It was supposed to take place behind curtains, dividing the alcove which contained the bed from the front portion of the stage. M. Fechter, however, who had served a long apprenticeship to melodrama, treated his spectators to a complete representation of Desdemona's death. The bed now became a prominent object; no longer half hidden in an alcove, it became a pompous structure, raised on a dais, with

several steps, and occupying a large portion of the stage; "so that it looked," as a critic wrote, "portentous as a catafalque, prepared for a great funeral pomp." The Moor chased his victim hither and thither about the room, waving his scimitar above his head, until, dragging her at last violently to the bed, he piled the pillows above her, kneeling upon them to make sure of her suffocation. The Shakespearian stage direction—"he smothers her"—was certainly fulfilled in the most uncompromising way. Further, M. Fechter concluded the play by making believe to strike Iago at the words of the final speech—"and smote him thus"—but suddenly, as though moved by second thoughts, stabbing, not Iago, but himself. M. Fechter's success in Othello was incomplete; his new reading of the poet did not satisfy. He had forgotten that "terror affects the mind, horror the stomach." However, as we have seen lately, a disposition prevails to represent certain of the incidents of the play's catastrophe after a more vivid and violent manner than was approved of a generation ago.

Othello has not suffered, as have so many of the other plays, at the hands of the adapters. Acting editions have been from time to time prepared, and for the convenience of the performers and the audience, there have been transpositions of the scenes and abridgment of the speeches and dialogue; but the text has not been seriously tampered with. Interiors of the castle have been usually substituted for the exterior prescribed by the poet; and there has been suppression of such parts as Bianca, the Clown, and the Musicians. By way of increasing the sympathy of the audience for Othello, and fortifying his reasons for jealousy, M. Fechter restored Bianca to the play; but she, unwisely, appeared in the scene representing the room in the castle occupied by Othello and Desdemona, where it is clear so unworthy a person as Bianca could not, under any pretext, have presented herself. The version of the play in which Signor Salvini appears closely resembles M. Fechter's edition, save that Bianca is suppressed, while the dialogue between Emilia and Desdemona just prior to the murder is restored.

It must not be supposed, that any special regard for the poet's intentions saved Othello from molestation at the hands of the playwrights. A Short View of Tragedy, its original Excellence and Corruption, with

some Reflections on Shakespeare and other Practitioners for the Stage, written by one Mr. Rymer, servant to their Majesties, and published in 1698, clearly exhibits the extremely contemptuous feeling entertained for the poet at that date. Mr. Rymer was enamoured of classical example, and found great satisfaction in the severity of form lately adopted by the dramatists of France; notably in regard to their addition of a chorus to their tragedies, deeming that a very hopeful sign. Naturally he found much to condemn in Shakespeare; and he did not hesitate to express his opinion. He held that Shakespeare had altered the story from the original of Giraldi Cinthio in several particulars, and always for the worse. The moral he derides, as simply a warning to wives to take better care of their linen; and to husbands, that before their jealousy be tragical, the proofs may be mathematical. He proceeds: "Shakespeare in this play calls them the super-subtle Venetians. Yet examine throughout this tragedy, there is nothing in the noble Desdemona that is not below any country chambermaid with us. And the account he gives of their noblemen and senate can only be calculated for the latitude of Gotham. The character of that state is to employ strangers in their wars. But shall a poet thence fancy that they will set a negro to be their general, or trust a Moor to defend them against the Turk? With us a Blackamoor might rise to be a trumpeter; but Shakespeare would not have him less than a lieutenant-general. With us a Moor might marry some little drab or small-coal wench; Shakespeare would provide him the daughter and heir of some great lord or privy counsellor. . . . So much ado, so much stress, so much passion and repetition about an handkerchief! Why was not this called the Tragedy of the Handkerchief," he demands. There is much more criticism to the same effect. The catastrophe he finds to be "nothing but blood and butchery, described in the style of the last speeches and confessions of the persons executed at Tyburn." He concludes: "There is in this play some burlesque, some humour, and ramble of comic wit, some show and some mimicry to divert the spectators; but the tragical part is plainly none other than a brutal farce without salt or savour."

Assuredly, if Shakespeare has had his commentators, he has had his critics too.

THE BOATS.

A BOAT upon the margin of the waves,
With fluttering flag and ready cordage lies,
Waiting the tide that softly round her laves,
And the low winds that linger in the skies;
Waiting, to dance across the waters wide,
With snowy sails that, filling in the breeze,
Will bear her in her careless, joyous pride,
Like some glad living thing upon the seas.

Another, where dead weed and yellowed foam,
Tell where the breakers pause, their goal attained,
With bulwarks stove just as she staggered home,
And canvas torn, and timbers rent and strained,
Lies, shattered from the perils she has passed,
Yet still her innate strength and power are there;
Repaired, renewed, once more she'll meet the blast,
Prompt her brave part through storm and strife to bear.

But oh, the third! hauled where the sea-pinks grow,
And the dry rushes shiver in the sand;
Where the salt spray, when fierce north-easters blow,
Whirls in wild embassy across the land;
Where sun-burnt babies roll upon the turf,
And climb about her, rote the poor old boat,
Never again to breast the snowy surf,
Or spread her broad brown wings and dart afloat.

Oh, daring youth, all eager for the launch,
Who sees the sea so calm, the wind so sweet;
Oh, manhood, tossed and torn, yet true and staunch,
Ready, with fresh-healed wounds, new wars to meet;
For both, for both, the years are flying fast,
To the hushed rest of age all footsteps tend.
Reap joy from sunshine, wisdom from the blast,
And so, in trust and patience, wait the end!

BY GREEN COVE SPRING.

"HAVE you been waiting long, Phoebe, darling? I——"

The young man's speech, as he came hurrying up, was suddenly checked, as he gained a nearer view of the beautiful face of her to whom he spoke. For a moment that fair face had looked doubly fair as it brightened, unconsciously, at the first meeting with him for whom its owner had been long watching from among the water-oaks, the dwarf palms, and the silver pines, that grew so thickly at that spot, as to confer upon the wooded dell almost the aspect of some huge cavern hollowed in a mass of multi-coloured rock. Since first the sinking sun began to gild the crests of the tall gum trees and clumps of ilex on the distant hill, the girl had watched and waited, and now the sky was suffused with rich tints flung abroad in gorgeous confusion, and the white mists were beginning to rise ghost-like from swamp and canebrake.

"Phoebe—Miss Lynn—Nothing, I hope, has happened—nothing wrong?" said the new-comer, as he noted that the brief flush of gladness on the face of her whom he had come to meet had been succeeded by a look that he had never before seen there—sad, solemn, and all but stern.

"Wrong has been done, Morris Gresham," she answered, steadily; "and that is why I am here to-day, that the wrong may be righted. Not to me—no wrong to me," she made haste to add, as she saw the darkening of the young man's brow, "but to her to whom your troth was plighted before ever you and I met. For Nellie's sake, Mr. Gresham, all must be over between us from this hour."

"You are jesting with me, Phœbe," said he, half angry, half incredulous; "why, it was but yesterday——"

"Let the dead past bury its dead," interrupted the girl, resolutely. "Since then I have spent a sleepless night in wrestling with my own heart, and I see but too clearly that I must pluck out of it, at any cost, the love that I should never have allowed to harbour there. We were doing wrong, both of us, dear Morris, and must henceforth have done with stolen meetings and a courtship that is a treason to her to whom by every tie of honour and faith you belong."

"Still harping on my poor little cousin Nellie!" rejoined Morris, bitterly, as he struck his heel into the soft turf, enamelled with wild flowers.

"On your betrothed bride; on her whom you are pledged to marry," replied Phœbe; "on the sweetest nature and the purest heart that I have ever known. Yes, it is of her that I think, and for her that I urge upon you what true manliness exacts—that you should hold to your engagement."

The last words had been bravely said, but the speaker's pale cheek and trembling lip betrayed how painful it was to say them. These tokens of emotion were unseen, however, by Morris, who paced to and fro for some instants, and then halted, saying, in a deep, hoarse voice:

"I envy you, Miss Lynn. I envy the cool composure with which you English damsels can cast a man off, with as little apparent scruple as though you were tossing from you a soiled glove, or a faded flower. Your caprice is, it seems, to dismiss the admirer who no longer suits your fickle fancy, and at the same time to read me a lecture as to what I owe to Nellie Carthew."

He was unjust, and knew himself to be unjust in speaking thus, but Miss Lynn was by far too noble to be provoked by his words.

"It has cost me, Heaven knows, very dearly to speak as I have done;" such was her quiet rejoinder. "I am giving up all the sunshine out of a life that has hitherto

been grey, dreary, and dull enough, until your love gilded it; but all that must be over now. It has been a sweet dream, but I should be very base were I to prefer my own selfish enjoyment to the sacrifice which conscience demands."

Then she went on to remind him how long and intimately she had known Nellie, her former schoolfellow, and how good and gracious his cousin was.

"You have her whole heart," she said, and there was a pathos in the very fact of her pleading thus for her rival, that Morris could not help feeling. "I do verily believe that the breaking off of this betrothal would kill poor Nellie, and give much pain, too, to Mrs. Gresham. Your mother looks forward so hopefully to this union!"

"Yes, she looks forward to it," said the young man, tossing back the dark hair from his forehead, "because Nellie is an heiress, and because my uncle wished it. If it were not for the property——"

"Remember, it is not dear Nellie's fault if she has a fortune to bring to her husband!" exclaimed the girl, smiling. "She will be to you a good and tender wife, and you'll never live to repent that you kept faith with her. As for you and I, Morris, we are to be friends always—friends, but nothing more. Come, your hand upon the bargain!"

She held out her hand, and he took it, and without immediately speaking in answer, stood listlessly gazing down into the dell, still holding her hand in his.

The spot on which the two stood was a notable one. Three sides of the little glen were closed in by the dense growth of trees and shrubs, matted together by the tendrils of the wild vine, while the graceful Spanish moss trailed in picturesque profusion from branch and stem. But the fourth side was open, and thence a survey could be had of what seemed a natural basin, scooped out of the earth below, and carpeted with the smoothest turf, in the midst of which, nearly hidden by flowering bushes, was a rocky cleft, the blackness of which the eye could not pierce.

"True, true," said Morris, thoughtfully. "You are wiser and better than I am, Phœbe. Poor little cousin! I'm not in love with her, but I should not like to inflict a wound upon that gentle, trustful little creature. Yes, we have been designed for one another from our cradles almost, and I suppose I am bound to keep my word. Luckily, Nellie's artless nature has

prevented her from seeing the real state of my feelings. She no more imagines me as attached to another, than she conceives that yonder dried up spring, which gives its name to the Green Cove, should again pour forth its flood to be an affluent of the St. John's River, as of old."

"Was it ever so?" asked Miss Lynn, with a languid curiosity, glancing down at the cleft among the rocks below.

"It was, as old histories of the colony relate," answered Morris, half carelessly. "The hollow way in which we stand was doubtless once a channel whence the pent-up waters rushed forth into the light of day. These subterranean streams, which suddenly leap forth from their dark caverns, are reckoned among the chief wonders of Florida State. That at Chipola is bigger and more famous than ever was Green Cove, which has been extinct since the early days of the settlement. But enough of this. We are—to try—to forget." There was something of a sob in the young man's deep musical voice, as he slowly uttered these last words.

And then came a silence that lasted long. The sun had set with the sudden plunge with which, in those latitudes, he dives below the western horizon, and the mists rose thickly, and the bats whirled around on their leathern wings, while the harsh croak of the frogs in the swamp beyond blended with the shrill cry of the goatsucker among the boughs.

"It is getting late, and I must go, or I shall be missed at home," said Miss Lynn, after a while; and again she extended her hand, which Morris had released, in sign of adieu. He passed his arm around her waist, and drew her to him, and stood, looking down upon her fair face upturned towards his. The moon was beginning to peep forth, from between the scattered clumps of evergreen oak, and her light fell on those two lovers, who were to be lovers no more. A handsome, well-matched pair they looked, for Morris was a well-grown manly young fellow, and it was pretty to see with what a lingering fondness she clung to him as they exchanged a few whispered words, half of unavailing regret for the ending of their day-dream, half of mutual encouragement to be steadfast in the path of duty.

"Good-bye, my darling!" murmured Phoebe, as Morris stooped to kiss her tear-stained face, and so they parted.

Morris Gresham walked slowly towards his mother's house, situated on the out-

skirts of a straggling township which the early Spanish settlers had called Villa Real, but which, under American rule, was known as Tyler City. Mr. and Mrs. Lynn, Phoebe's parents, lived a mile or more from the town, at what was now styled Lynn's Clearing, a small estate, or rather farm, which the English immigrant had purchased years ago, and the cultivation of which afforded a maintenance, but little or nothing more, to himself and his family. Morris's father, once a wealthy merchant, had sustained a serious reverse of fortune before he died; and, on this account, his widowed mother was doubly anxious that he should fulfil the engagement entered into in early youth by himself and Miss Carthew, his cousin. That Miss Carthew was an heiress has already been told. It had been the wish of the relatives on both sides that these two young people should marry; and it seemed as though the time for the wedding had now arrived, when Morris, returning home on the completion of his legal studies in Philadelphia, for the first time encountered Phoebe Lynn, and felt that to know her was to love her. Then had come a brief, delicious period of stolen happiness, of hopes and fears, and all the rose-coloured visions that the great magician Love can cause to pass before the dazed eyes of mortals. No one suspected that any attachment had sprung up between young Mr. Gresham, and the beautiful English girl. The fact of Morris's engagement to his cousin was too well known to allow the friends of the family to regard him as one whose affections were disposable, while Nellie was herself little given to misgivings.

Then came a rude awakening. Some chance word of Nellie's had given the alarm to the sensitive conscience of her former schoolfellow, and, by revealing how much the former looked upon Morris as her very own, had caused the English girl, after a struggle, to decide on giving up what to her was dearer than anything on earth—the love of the only man whom she had ever deemed worth caring for. She had taken blame to herself, in that she had ever permitted the affianced of Nellie Carthew to address his vows to her, Phoebe Lynn, and, as a kind of expiation, had undertaken to persuade the young man to be true to her innocent rival, and had performed the task well and nobly. Morris went home from that last sad tryst firmly resolved to do his best to make poor trustful Nellie happy. But when he

found himself once more in presence of his mother and of his betrothed, he could hardly be blamed if his truant thoughts reverted, more often than would have been approved of by either, to the queenly image of her who had bidden him think of her no more, save as a friend. His cousin was a fragile little creature, who, although now one-and-twenty, looked still almost a child. Phoebe, although in reality the younger by a year, looked the elder of the two—a tall and graceful girl, in all the glow of her rich beauty. Nellie had a pleasant face, rather than any claim to actual prettiness. That Phoebe was more than pretty, was an acknowledged fact. There was something peculiarly winning, too, in her very manner—so fearless, and yet so womanly, that seemed the index to a brave and generous spirit. But he must give her up. Soon, very soon, it would be a sin to think of her. For now his mother began, with the fond persistence of mothers who seek to promote the happiness of their children, to press for the completion of the engagement between Morris and his cousin. And as the young man saw the timid joy, the perfect confidence, that shone in Nellie's eyes as she listened to this talk of Mrs. Gresham's, and then coyly turned towards himself, he could not but own that, to cast his cousin off would have been, indeed, a base and cruel deed.

Meanwhile, alone in the verandah of her father's house, Miss Lynn stood, heedless of the perfumed breath of the magnolias that was wafted around her by the balmy Southern breeze; heedless, too, of the notes of strange birds that, like the English nightingale, poured forth their trills of song from the flowering shrubs and leafy shade-trees around the settler's lonely abode. There she stood, looking listlessly up at the glorious star-spangled sky of that all but tropical latitude, and, as she gazed, her eyes grew dim, and the hot tears fell thick and fast, as for the first time she thoroughly realised how much she loved Morris Gresham, and how great was the sacrifice which her better nature had compelled her to make. It was quite right to act thus, nor did she repent what she had done. But she felt that something was gone from her that left her poor indeed, and that her life would now be very, very desolate.

"I can't make that young Gresham out," said a certain Judge Hopkins, the oracle of that district of which Tyler was the chief town. "It seems, at first jump,

as if no young chap ever found nicer waffle cakes ready buttered for him. A snug fortune drops into his lap, as it were, and a sweet little wife along with it, and if he would but play his cards well we'd send him to Congress by-and-by. Instead of that, and of making himself popular, he goes about without a word to throw to a neighbour, and looks as grim and as grave as if he were expecting to be hanged instead of married. I liked the looks of the lad well enough when first he came back, but now, I wish I may be chewed up by wild cats, if I can understand the change in his manners."

There was some truth, probably, in the judge's highly-coloured picture of the young man's moody demeanour. His was by no means the blithe and buoyant bearing that becomes, in general estimation, a bridegroom expectant. As a boy and as a stripling he had been a favourite with all, and when he went northwards to study for his profession—the one of all others in America which in quiet times forms the ladder to political success—great things had been predicted, by his numerous well-wishers, as to his ultimate triumphs. Even during the first few weeks that followed his return to the shelter of his mother's roof, he had seemed the same frank, high-spirited youth who had won the esteem of his home-staying neighbours; but now, just as everyone was preparing to congratulate him on a marriage from which all augured well, he became taciturn and almost morose, and seemed to shrink from the society of his former associates.

No one guessed the truth, that what depressed the spirits and dulled the wit of Morris Gresham was his unavailing regret for the loss of what appeared to him the earthly prize best worth the winning—the hand of Phoebe Lynn. It had never occurred to the gossips of the place, to contrast the rare beauty of the penniless English girl with Nellie's simple sweetness of expression. Marriage, in a new country, is regarded from a more prosaic point of view than is the case in an old one, and it was quite enough for the local tattlers to remember that Miss Carthew had a comfortable income at her disposal, while Phoebe's father could not afford to give her, in common parlance, "so much as a red cent for a portion." Miss Lynn's own conduct was now discretion itself, and such as lent no handle to criticism, since, without pointedly avoiding Morris, she contrived to be very seldom in his com-

pany, and never, for an instant, to converse with him save under circumstances which insured that the words spoken should be such as the public crier might have repeated, had that functionary been so minded, in the streets of Tyler City.

Time went on; the necessary preparations which precede the linking together, for weal or woe, of two lives, were completed. It was the eve of the wedding-day itself, and Mrs. Gresham was quite happy in the near accomplishment of her schemes for her son's welfare. No one knew better than worthy Mrs. Gresham, that in the United States, as elsewhere, the possession of adequate means produced a wonderful effect, in smoothing the road of the young aspirant to fame and power. She had, as good mothers should, made up her mind, long since, that her bright boy ought to become great and famous—a probable senator, or chief justice, a possible governor, or secretary of state. And her fear had been that Morris, who was very impulsive, should form some hasty attachment, break off the engagement with his cousin, and compromise his prospects in life by an imprudent marriage. That fear was now dissipated. To-morrow would behold him the husband of her well-endowed niece, Nellie Carthew; and if the young man would but have borne somewhat more of the radiant aspect fitted to the occasion, there would have been no cloud to mar her unselfish delight.

The day, a magnificent one, like most days in balmy Florida, was waxing towards its decline and fall. The sun, as it sank on its course towards the Mexican Gulf, threw on the flower-starred turf the giant shadows of the trees, relics of a primeval forest, that all but encircled Green Cove. On a mossy bank, overshadowed by a blossomed bush of the sumach, Morris Gresham and his cousin were seated. The spot was a favourite one with Nellie, nor did Morris care to acknowledge that her choice of a resting-place was fraught with pain to him, on account of the reminiscences which were conjured up by the sight of the fairy dell, where once he was wont to keep tryst with Phoebe Lynn. The young man's handsome face was somewhat thoughtful and careworn, and his betrothed bride strove, with only a partial success, to charm away the gloom from his brow. Nellie and Mrs. Gresham had held high consultation as to the cause of the too-evident moodiness of Morris, and had decided that his active mind was

chafing for lack of contact with more intellectual society than Florida could afford, and that the sooner the young husband assumed his place in life's battle the better. Whereupon Miss Carthew began to talk, with that pretty air of sage importance which a good girl sometimes puts on for a man's benefit, of the life which the young couple were to lead—in Washington or New York—and of the pride which she should feel when her own chosen one should have begun to make a name in the world, and to do work worthy of him.

Morris could not be insensible to the unselfish fondness of his poor little cousin, and to the artless simplicity of a disposition in which there was indeed much that was lovable. He bent forward and kissed her, as if she had been a child indeed. "My little Nellie!" he said, "it shall not be my fault if—but what is this, glinting through the papaw bushes!" And Nellie, her eyes following the indication of the young man's pointing finger, saw a dancing bell of water, crystal clear, glistening amidst the greenery of the tangled thicket below.

"How beautiful!" exclaimed the girl, breathlessly watching the bright fountain as it leaped and fell among the trailing pea-vines and tufted wild flowers. "Can it be, do you think, that the stream, long dried up, that gives its name to Green Cove—"

The answer was given by a rush and a roar, as forth from the rocky cleft there spouted a hissing column of water, boiling and bubbling like a Geyser in the first energies of its recovered power, and instantly overbrimming the turf-bordered hollow which lay, cuplike, at the bottom of the dell. For a moment, the spectators of this scene looked on, as the water rose and rose, seething and bubbling like the overflow of a witches' caldron, until Morris, becoming gradually aware of the approaching danger, exclaimed, "Nellie—dearest, we must not stay here. The whole of the glen will be flooded in a few minutes of time, and unless—" Another deafening roar, and, bearing away rock, and tree, and bank, there broke forth an imprisoned torrent of angry water, furious, resistless. Then, before Morris could realise what had occurred, he felt that he was waist deep in the turbid water, clasping Nellie to his breast, and then that the inundation had swept him and her away like straws before the blast of a tempest. A strong swimmer, he did battle bravely

with the raging flood, and by desperate efforts succeeded in clinging to poor little Nellie, who, but for him, would have been washed away, to drown, at the first outburst of the hidden spring. But the rush and onward force of the swift tide were such as human muscles could not stem, and already amidst the foam flakes on the surface were floating dead branches, saplings newly uprooted, logs half mouldered by age, and Morris sustained more than one severe blow in shielding Nellie's delicate form from the rough impact of the drifting wood. Then he clutched, instinctively, at the tough boughs of an evergreen oak, half submerged, and held his grip strongly, supporting Nellie's fair passive head upon his shoulder, and bidding her be of good cheer, since help must soon arrive. It was a situation of deadly peril. Within a few hundred yards of the oak tree to which Morris clung were the deep, sullen waters of St. John's River. To reach them was to perish. Should fatigue cause him to let go his hold, or should his strength prove unequal to the task of supporting Nellie's light weight against the furious rush of the inundation, death was imminent and certain. The darkling river would bear to the sea the bodies of both himself and his cousin, and, swept by the fast-flowing Gulf Stream into the measureless expanse of the Atlantic, neither would be seen again by mortal eye.

Roaring and leaping, the turbid waves washed over Morris as he held desperately on to the quivering boughs of the old oak tree, and felt the tough stem shiver and reel under the force of the hurrying tide. A new fear now assailed him. How if the tree itself, his one citadel of refuge, should be uprooted, like many a sapling and many a hollow stem, that now came driving past him, torn up by the violence of the current. The fast running flood was scooping away the soil with a cruel rapidity, as if impatient for its prey. And Morris, deafened and dazzled by the noise and flash of the water, that by this time had risen as high as his waist, began to despair of the arrival of aid. It was with increasing difficulty that he could support his precious, helpless burthen.

"Let me go, dear," whispered the girl, with white lips, but with a smile on her pale face as she looked up at him she loved. "Save yourself, Morris; you can swim. Why should both die thus? See, I am not afraid, except for you, my own!"

For all answer, as she gently strove to release herself from his grasp, he passed his arm round the bending branch of the ilex, and contrived to bind her firmly to himself with a silk handkerchief.

"Help may come! Heaven send it may be soon," he muttered through his clenched teeth; "but, come what may, our fates are not divided."

And yet, as Morris clung to the reeling boughs of the evergreen oak, now trembling like a reed in the rush of the yellow flood, it was another image than that of poor Nellie's that arose before his mental vision. Phœbe Lynn's beautiful face seemed to haunt him to the last. Would she mourn for him? Would she be very sorry, when— The end must come, very shortly, now. Drenched and chilled by the foaming water, Morris held on, but mechanically, while Nellie seemed to have sunk into a swoon, and made no reply when he addressed her in words of encouragement. The tree, too, was yielding, evidently, to the fury of the flood. The water broke over the young man's head as the waves rose higher, and the trunk began to droop. He bent down and kissed Nellie's forehead.

"Good-bye, dear one!" he murmured, but there was no reply. In fancy he again saw Phœbe, and in that moment of supreme anguish he seemed for the first time to realise how intensely he loved her—her whom he had schooled himself so diligently to forget. The oak was fairly giving way, and Morris could scarcely keep Nellie's cold white face above the surging water.

Ha! what was that? A shout, and then another, and a louder call, and then Morris caught an indistinct glimpse of canoes and boats, full of men, foremost of whom, bareheaded, and without his coat, was that very Judge Hopkins who had so lately expressed an unfavourable opinion of the bridegroom elect. He spoke very differently now, as he cried out:

"Heave the rope, Zack! Jerusalem! be quick, or he's lost, and the girl, too. Wonderful clear grit the young fellow must be, to have kept both alive so long—hurrah!" This last utterance being due to the fact, that a noosed rope had been cast by the dexterous hand of the boatman, Zack, around Morris Gresham's waist, and that he and his insensible charge were being rapidly drawn towards the side of the shallop, whence four strong fellows stretched out their arms to lift the

living freight across the gunwale. "May I never! killed, after all!" cried the judge, as a floating tree-trunk struck Morris on the left temple, and the water immediately crimsoned, within a yard of the boat.

Morris Gresham, however, was not dead, though it was not until far in the morning of the ensuing day that he recovered his senses, to find himself in bed, with feeble limbs and bandaged brows; his mother watching over him, and weeping for joy as the doctor gave his rough but welcome verdict.

"There! he's all right now. Nothing the matter that a little rest, and good nursing, will not cure. It was a smart knock; but the young squire is as tough as hickory, and he is safe now."

But when the young man asked for news concerning his cousin, Mrs. Gresham fell to weeping, and this time her tears were not, as those former ones had been, tears of joy. "Nellie is with the angels," she said, sobbing. And then Morris, himself, being weak and dizzy, fainted, and it was not till much later that he learned that Nellie's health had proved all too fragile to bear up against the hardships which she had endured. She had died of exhaustion and nervous excitement, within three hours of the time when she had been borne back to the house and laid in her bed, where she was still stretched, calm and peaceful, with the same smile on her innocent lips that we may often see in sleep on those of a tired child.

The tale is told. Green Cove Spring, so long extinct, has never, since the day of its sudden re-appearance, ceased to pour forth floods of water, crystal clear now, and takes a respectable position among those subterranean rivers which are the best known of Floridan phenomena. Mrs. Gresham was at first extremely distressed, when, after a lapse of some months since the date of the catastrophe, Morris asked her to receive, as her daughter-in-law, the only girl whom he had ever really loved. The worthy lady, though she could not venture to put forward any objections, personally, to Phoebe Lynn's union with her son, was yet convinced that so poor a marriage would be the ruin of his professional prospects. But Mrs. Gresham was immensely comforted when the trustee of Miss Carthew's fortune, on his return from a tour in Europe, announced, what neither Morris nor his mother had previously dreamed of, that Nellie's fortune passed unreservedly to Morris, in compli-

ance with her father's bequest, should she die before her cousin, and intestate. Nellie had left no will, and the property devolved on Morris as of right. He is a rich man, now, high in honour and in usefulness in one of the principal States of the Union, and he and his beautiful wife have troops of friends, and, loving and beloved, enjoy a deserved prosperity. But neither in the stir and bustle of public life, nor in the bosom of their happy home, have Mr. and Mrs. Gresham ever forgotten poor gentle Nellie, who sleeps, far away, in her lonely grave in distant Florida.

REMARKABLE ADVENTURERS.

CAGLIOSTRO.

IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

IN Joseph Balsamo, calling himself the Count Alessandro di Cagliostro, pupil of the sage Althotas, foster child of the Scherif of Mecca, probable son of the last king of Trebizond, named also Acharat and the "unfortunate child of nature," by profession healer of diseases, smother of wrinkles, friend of the poor and impotent, grand master and founder of the craft of Egyptian freemasonry, necromancer, transmuter of metals, grand coopta, prophet, priest, moralist, and vagabond, we make the acquaintance of a being in whom Mr. Carlyle, after his grim fashion, rejoices, as being no shabby compromise of good and evil, truth and falsehood, but an unmitigated scoundrel, a "Liar of the first magnitude." Not that this conclusion is by any means to be jumped at, for the evidence concerning this strange bird of darkness is puzzling and conflicting in the most extraordinary degree; and it is difficult, with the extant documents concerning Cagliostro open before one, to decide off-hand that all the evil written of this man is truth, and all the good mere lies, or the insane ravings of dupes and imbeciles. The information afforded by the said documents is of the most meagre description, and is invariably supplied either by a partisan or by an enemy. Lives, memoirs, and letters of Cagliostro to the English people exist, but all bear the same romantic tinge, except only the narrative on which Mr. Carlyle bases his opinion. This is a matter-of-fact little volume, the second edition of which bears date 1791, Paris and Strasbourg, and is entitled, "Vie de Joseph Balsamo, connu sous le nom de Comte Cagliostro," extracted from the proceedings

instituted against him at Rome in 1790, translated from the original Italian, printed at the Apostolic Chamber, enriched with curious notes and adorned with his portrait. It assumes to come to us through the medium of the Roman Inquisition, and it is supposed that the proofs to substantiate it lie in the Holy Office there. Despite all this, the book is of very doubtful authenticity, and at best is, as Mr. Carlyle points out, the work of a reporting familiar of the Inquisition, himself probably something of a liar, reporting lying confessions of one who was "not so much a Liar as a Lie! In such enigmatic duskiness and thricefolded involution after all inquiries does the matter yet hang." This enigmatical darkness is, if possible, intensified by the Italian version, which I may safely assume to be the original of the French. This is in the form of letters from a "learned person," residing in Rome during the arrest and trial of the prisoner, to a friend in Venice, where the book was published after being reviewed and approved by Tommaso Mascheroni, Inquisitor-General of the Holy Office at Venice. This "Corrispondenza Segreta" commences on the 28th December, 1789, concludes on the 22nd April, 1791, was licensed on the 30th May of the same year, and therefore has every appearance of a genuine work more or less extracted from the evidence brought forward at the trial; but, after all, it has no stronger guarantee than the possible veracity of the "dotta persona," "our secret correspondent" at Rome. The portrait affixed to the French version corresponds well with all descriptions of Cagliostro, and presents a man squat of build, broad of shoulder, with a bull-face and neck, and heavy, coarse features, dark tinted, unctuous, with eyes turned upwards with a look of greasy, overfed beatitude. Not only an unlovely countenance, but one which makes the gazer marvel that ever man or woman was imposed upon by this earthy or rather-muddy-looking creature, whose animal features are made yet more repulsive by their sanctimonious smirk. How did this being rise high in bemused Europe, and lead a life of high priesthood, coaches and six, out-riders, liveries at twenty louis d'or apiece, universal open-handedness and benevolence? How did he become the confidant of cardinals and princes, and learn to count his adoring followers by thousands? Whence came he? What was he?

Concerning his parentage, curious re-

ports were circulated, some holding that he was the offspring of the grand master of Malta by a Turkish lady, made captive by a Maltese galley; others, that he was the only surviving son of the last Prince of Trebizond, who was massacred by his seditious subjects, while his infant son (Cagliostro) was conveyed by a trusty friend to Medina, where the scherif had the unprejudiced generosity to have him educated in the faith of his Christian parents! The friend who nurtured the young prince was the sage Althotas, who instructed him betimes in the languages and lore of the East.

In the lifetime, however, of Cagliostro there were many who rejected these fables of Malta and Trebizond, and proclaimed him an Italian Jew. In truth, so far as truth can be arrived at, his name was Giuseppe Balsamo, and he was born at Palermo about 1743. His father was a more or less respectable shopkeeper, named Pietro Balsamo, who, not very long after being blessed with a son, departed this life, leaving his widow Felicita to provide for herself and cub as best she might. Giuseppe was favoured with uncles, who, after their clumsy good-natured fashion, tried to put the young ragamuffin in the right path, by placing him at the seminary of St. Roch, at Palermo, from which institution he ran away several times. At the age of thirteen he was handed over to the Father-General of the Benfratelli, who carried him off to the convent at Cartagirone. There he put on the habit of a novice, and being intrusted to the keeping of the convent apothecary, picked up, by degrees, that slight knowledge of medicine and chemistry which he afterwards turned to account. In these scientific pursuits, however, Giuseppe found but slight consolation for the dulness of monastic life, and his natural black-guardism peeped out in many odd ways, and brought upon his broad back many a thrashing. A favourite trick of his was, when ordered to read to the monks while sitting at table, to vary the dulness of the volume in hand by sundry alterations and additions, as they came into his head—thereby giving proof of his natural inventive power. The fast-feeding monks probably gave little heed to what the novice was reading, until one day, while reading out of the Martyrology, he went so far as to substitute for the names of holy women those of the most respectable females in Palermo. This joke

of young Balsamo brought upon him a shower of blows, multitudinous penances, and such mortifications as decided him on showing the Benfratelli a clean pair of heels. He now tried his hand at drawing and painting, became a practised swordsman, and put his powers of fence very frequently to the proof, by getting up "rows" for the enjoyment of his dissolute patrons and associates. To carry on the war he fabricated false theatre tickets, stole the money and plate of the uncle with whom he lodged; carried letters and messages between his fair cousin and her lover, making the latter pay smartly for his complaisance; and finally insinuated himself into the office of a notary—one of his relations—and found means to falsify a will in favour of a certain Marquis Maurigi, "to the great loss," ejaculates his Inquisitorial biographer with horror, "and injury of a holy house." He was also accused of forging passes for monks, who wanted the "key of the street," and was strongly suspected of having assassinated a reverend canon.

Often arrested and locked up, this slippery customer invariably contrived to escape punishment, but at last fled from Palermo, in bodily fear of a jeweller, whom he had swindled out of sixty gold "ounces," or about thirty pounds sterling. Supple, oily Balsamo had managed to persuade this goldsmith—an avaricious neeple named Marano—that a certain grotto, a little way out in the country, contained an immense treasure, which could be reached only by the employment of magic. Gradually extracting money from his victim "for preliminary expenses," Balsamo at last set out with him on a dark night to discover the enchanted grotto. Arrived near the supposed treasure, the confederates went through sundry magical performances, uttered incantations, grasped the divining-rod, &c., but no sooner did the wretched goldsmith begin to dig down, than some confederates of Balsamo, dressed like devils, fell upon him, and beat him within an inch of his life. The goldsmith not only complained to the proper authorities, denouncing his tormentor as a sorcerer—an ugly accusation—but followed up this by a declaration that he would kill him "at sight."

It was indeed time for our hero to try his hand at bigger game than Palermitan goldsmiths, and to show his conjuring tricks to more important audiences than Sicilian ne'er-do-weels. A natural born

quack, he could not have been born at a more appropriate time. It was the golden age of impostors and gamblers, "quacks simple, and quacks compound"—mesmerists, magicians, cabalists, Swedenborgians, Illuminati, Rosicrucians, and others. For a while the Sicilian prospered but moderately. With the money made out of the silly goldsmith he reached Messina, where, according to his own account, he met the sage Althotas, of no particular nationality, but speaking many languages, including Arabic. The probably mythical Althotas, who gave himself out for a great chemist, persuaded Balsamo to embark with him, and the precious pair travelled about the Greek Archipelago, and at last landed at Alexandria. Here they performed various feats of chemistry, and, among others, "the operation of making, with hemp and flax, stuffs which imitated silk, and made much money." From Alexandria they went to Rhodes, and again profited by their chemical operations. They then proposed to visit Cairo, but contrary winds drove them to Malta, where they remained, working in the laboratory of the Grand Master Pinto, until, on the death of Althotas, his companion made his way to Naples, with a Knight of Malta, who was also a great amateur of chemistry. After sundry adventures, more or less apocryphal, we find the future Egyptian freemason turning up in Rome, in circumstances calculated to shake any belief one might have had in the lucrative speculations of Althotas. Balsamo was clearly poor enough—to work, almost—but he preferred to sell engravings, washed with Indian ink, as veritable drawings, lodging meanwhile at the sign of the Sun, in the Botunda. It is rather a puzzle how this miserable fellow, who was not only ugly and dishonest but poor, contrived to secure a pretty wife, but the fact is undeniable. Lorenza Feliciani was a beautiful damsel, with the slenderest "tocher" imaginable, but yet not altogether dowdless. She was nothing loth to wed bull-necked Balsamo, and her parents were so overcome by his eloquence, that they not only gave him their daughter but lodged the young couple for several months, until the conduct of Giuseppe towards his wife made a change of apartments necessary. The poor young woman, pretty and simple, was far from comprehending the sublime heights of rascality in which her husband mentally soared. He was tired of being

a mere sordid villain, and, with the keen instinct of an inferior animal, felt that his beautiful wife might be made to introduce him to sumptuous palazzi, whence he, Balsamo, on presenting his credentials alone, would be summarily kicked. Like other long-winged birds of prey, however, he was slow at first, and as this early portion of his career is rather revolting than interesting, it may be rapidly passed over. We find him fabricating false notes at Rome and forged letters of recommendation at Bergamo; swindling in confederacy with sham marquises; developing—after degradation unutterable at Barcelona, Madrid, and Lisbon—himself into—the illustrious Marchese Pellegrini, and finally into Count Alessandro Cagliostro; always with the beautiful Countess Seraphina—no longer Lorenza—under his wing. Still only slowly growing into the quack of quacks, the count, none the richer for his rascality up to the year 1772, finds his way, as plain Signor Balsamo, to London, where, after many intrigues, he plants himself on a Doctor Benmore, on pretence of painting the country house of the aforesaid doctor. Having outraged the hospitality of Benmore, who had rescued him from prison, he finally makes London too hot for him, and departs hurriedly to Paris. Sometime during these early wanderings he makes a visit to Holstein, a pilgrimage to the shrine of the Count Saint-Germain, of whom he may possibly have learnt some curious secrets. Be this as it may, he makes a brilliant figure in Paris, thanks to the patronage of a Monsieur Duplaisir, the nobility and gentry male and female, and the sale of a certain beautifier of the skin, a restorative water bringing back the outward appearance of youth, smoothing wrinkles, abolishing pimples, and converting a hide like a drumhead into a silky integument tinted with strawberries and cream. This is not all the aid he gives—for ready cash, and plenty of it—to ancient courtiers and faded ladies of quality. As he restores the outside, so does he revivify the inner man and woman. Cagliostro's refreshing powders, of mysterious herbs, may be bought for a few shillings each; but it is far otherwise with the "Wine of Egypt," the true elixir of youth, capable of transmuting faded gentlemen of the (Eil de Bœuf into briak young gallants, not merely "arresting decay" à la Saint-Germain, but bringing back again the fire of youth. This treasure brings in much welcome grist

to the Cagliostic mill, for the quack's campaigning expenses are heavy, what with his couriers, his running footmen, his lackeys, his valets de chambre, his cooks and confectioners, and his domestics of all kinds, attired in liveries at "twenty louis apiece." The rooms of his house hard by the barrier are furnished in the latest style; a magnificent table is opened to numerous guests, Cagliostro and wife, poor gentle ill-used Lorenza-Seraphina, are sumptuously attired. My lord is generous, he cures the poor gratis and gives them alms into the bargain. Nevertheless there are murmurs. The twenty louis liveries are not paid for, and the insolent tradespeople complain that they have been swindled. Simple quackery is hardly buoyant enough to float that very crank vessel, the "Joseph Balsamo." Stronger measures must be taken. The world holds more than one Marano. Why not bring cabala, abracadabra, and the transmutation of metals to bear? Why not raise the dead? Schrepper has done it in Germany; why not Balsamo-Pellegrini-Cagliostro in Paris? The dupes are ready, and only too willing to be plucked!

Two "persons of distinction" fall in the way of quick-eyed Giuseppe. They imagine themselves to be chemists, or, rather, alchemists; they seek the impossible, and find—a Sicilian vagabond. The count makes them believe that he has the secret of "augmenting gold," nay, more than that, of making it; and, more precious yet, the science of prolonging life—dearest of all to one "person of quality," already old. Giuseppe melts a few Spanish pistoles with some other substances in a crucible, and produces a mass of gold much heavier than the pistoles. Apparently much gold is required for preliminary expenses, for the persons of distinction become alarmed and set a watch upon Giuseppe, who slips one evening out of his eyrie by the barrier and flies to Brussels, thence through Germany and Italy to Palermo once more, where he plumps into the arms of the duped goldsmith, and is forthwith laid by the heels in the city jail, on charges of swindling, forgery, and other smaller matters. Things look very black until Countess Seraphina intervenes, and by her influence with a great lord, who nearly murders the plaintiff's advocate, sets her husband free. He is, however, ordered to quit Palermo, and sets forth again on that curious pilgrimage of his, in course of which he cannot be said so much to leave one place or to travel to another, as to be forcibly ejected,

or kicked from one outraged city after another into space, to shake down or not, as Fortune may favour him. A great transmutter truly of fools and dupes into raging, pursuing furies.

Count and countess presently turn up again at Malta, driving a brisk trade in beautifying water, preservative pomade, and wine of Egypt, but making more profit out of alchemy and cabala. But three months suffice to suck the Maltese orange dry, and we next find Giuseppe at Naples, where his unquiet feet are permitted to rest for several months, chemistry and cabala again standing him in good stead. Here he finds a chemical monk who rules a chemical merchant, and is in turn completely the dupe of Cagliostro, who waxes fat, but is, at last, saluted with the inevitable chorus, "Move on." Away now to Marseilles, where an ancient dandy supplies funds (ample enough) to purchase ingredients for the philosopher's stone, which is to restore his youth and enable him to make gold.

Time wears on, but the old gentleman feels no younger, and burns for the moment when Balsamo's magic caldron shall be ready, but his impatience is a marching order for the Sicilian, who tells him that a long, difficult, and costly journey is necessary to find a certain herb, without which no philosopher's stone and no regeneration can be produced. Away drives Giuseppe in a handsome travelling-carriage, well supplied with money; and the cry is, "Ho! for Spain, anywhere, anywhere, over the border!" before the storm bursts. The carriage sold at Barcelona, Balsamo, now Don Thiscio, plunges like a vulture upon Valentia and Alicante, where his Prussian uniform, which he loves above other disguises, fails to protect him from dire disaster and humiliation. But there is no keeping him down. Crushed into kindred mud at Alicante, he crops out at Cadiz, finds another chemical fanatic, and extracts from him a bill of exchange for a thousand crowns, besides watches and jewels, and board and lodging during his stay in Cadiz. The old, old story repeats itself again. The dupe becomes first impatient, then suspicious, and Cagliostro finally takes his departure for London, where he fares little better than on his previous visit, but takes a step which makes his fortune for several years at least. On this occasion he makes the acquaintance of a certain Miss Fry, and of a Mr., alias Lord, Scott—lottery-maniacs after the fashion of 1776. Cagliostro comes at once to the

front, bold as brass. He can make gold chemically, he says, but, if they prefer a shorter way, he can pick them out good numbers. He, according to his own version of the story, picks out numbers so well in his lodgings, at Whitcomb Street, that Miss Fry wins two thousand pounds, and this lady presents his wife with a diamond necklace (only a little one, this necklace). Nevertheless Miss Fry proclaims herself a loser—robbed of considerable sums, and induced by the arch-quack to buy the diamond necklace, as he possessed the art of "augmenting" diamonds, by burying them for a considerable time in the earth, where they become soft, and swell, requiring only a pinch of a certain rose-coloured powder to become hard again, and increased in value an hundred fold. Numerous witnesses attest that they have heard him frequently boast of possessing the science of turning mercury into silver, and of increasing the bulk of gold by various chemical operations, into all of which enter the famous rose-coloured powder. At this, his second English avatar, Giuseppe is not known as Count, but, indifferently, as Captain or Colonel Cagliostro, of the Prussian service. His commission (forged, of course) is open to inspection, and he struts boldly about in his Prussian uniform, which gets him into many scrapes. Finally, his enemies overcome him, hunt him out of one jail into the other; lead him, in short, a terrible life; but, notwithstanding all this, he yet contrives, out of the very slough of despond in Whitcomb Street, to pluck the talisman which shall convert a mere second-rate jail-bird into a first-class impostor; the ugly grub dwelling in filthy mud-heaps into the gaudy wasp, whose buzz shall soon be heard from one end of Europe to the other, and shall finally be consigned to darkness and impenetrable night.

This talisman is freemasonry, into the ordinary mysteries of which he is initiated during his residence in England. When, exactly, or in what London lodge, is unknown; but the fact is clear enough that Giuseppe is not only an ordinary brother, but one aspiring to reign, to create a new order of masonry specially prepared and doctored to suit the palates of Rosicrucians, Illuminati, and the like. To us, writing or thinking barely a hundred years after this wonderful career of Giuseppe, that old world, before the French Revolution cleared the atmosphere, appears utterly and completely mad, as mayhap we of this learned and scientific nineteenth

century shall appear to the clever fellows of the twentieth. Before, then, pooh-poohing Cagliostro's impudent career as impossible and apocryphal—as it certainly was not—let us glance for a short while at the peculiar phase of insanity which favoured his audacious enterprise.

In treating of the age of Cagliostro, and of the eighteenth century generally, it should never be forgotten that it was peculiarly and especially a period of transition. Science was in his cradle, as yet overweak for the strangling of serpents. To astronomy still cling odds and ends of astrology; chemistry was very alchemical, and smacked strongly of the Black Art, as its name implies. Herb doctors still gathered their simples under certain aspects of the heavenly bodies; the whole positive knowledge of the period was curiously bemuddled with mystic twaddle, signs, and symbols. Science had not yet cut loose from the Supernatural, and the effect of new discoveries on old faiths and traditions was to produce a curious social salad, or rather salmagundy: Cavendish and Watt quarrelling over the discovery of the composition of water; Priestley discovering oxygen, and Johnson believing in the Cock-lane ghost. Freemasonry a hundred years ago was a very different organisation from the great brotherhood of to-day, and in Germany, especially, was intimately connected with the Illuminati. At Ingoldstadt we find, in 1773, Weisshaupt—a suppressed Jesuit, burning to found a sect of his own, to preach perfectibility and to regenerate the century—goaded into sudden action by an officer named Ecker, who, descending on the neighbourhood, founds a lodge of Freemasons in the next village, and produces immense excitement by alchemy, magic mirrors, and spirits evoked from the shades. Ecker draws after him a crowd of would-be adepts, to the despair of Weisshaupt, who at once launches the opposition Society of Illuminati to save the world from masonic superstition. After a while, however, we find the Freemasons and the Illuminati very good friends, until the formal suppression of the latter short-lived society. While freemasonry is thus for a time intermingled with magic, alchemy, cabala, and abracadabra, what could be a more natural thought to Captain Cagliostro than to graft his conjuring tricks upon a mystical stem, and bring before the masonic world an entirely new revelation of freemasonry? A name for the new masonry is quickly

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCIS ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XIX.

As the Spring advanced, letters from Algernon Errington arrived rather frequently at Whitford. His mother had ample scope for the exercise of her peculiar talent, in boasting about the reception Algy had met with from her great relations in town, the fine society he frequented, and the prospect of still greater distinctions in store for him. One or two troublesome persons, to be sure, would ask for details, and inquire whether Lord Seely meant to get Algy a place, and what tangible benefits he had it in contemplation to bestow on him. But to all such prosy, plodding' individuals, Mrs. Errington presented a perspective of vague magnificence, which sometimes awed and generally silenced them.

The big square letters on Bath post paper, directed in Algernon's clear, graceful handwriting, and bearing my Lord Seely's frank, in the form of a blotchy sprawling autograph in one corner, were, however, palpable facts; and Mrs. Errington made the most of them. It was seldom that she had not one of them in her pocket. She would pull them out, sometimes as though in mere absence of mind, sometimes avowedly of set purpose, but in either case she failed not to make them the occasion for an almost endless variety of prospective and retrospective boasting.

It must be owned that Algernon's letters were delightful. They were written with such a freshness of observation, such a sense of enjoyment, such a keen appreciation of fun—tempered always by a wonderful knack of keeping his own figure in a favourable light—that passages from them were read aloud, and quoted at Whitford tea-parties with a most enlivening effect.

"Those letters are written pro bono publico," Minnie Bodkin observed confidentially to her mother. "No human being would address such communications to Mrs. Errington for her sole perusal."

"Well, I don't know, Minnie! Surely it is natural enough that he should write long letters to his mother, even without expecting her to read them aloud to people."

"Very natural; but not just such letters as he does write, I think."

Minnie suppressed any further expression of her own shrewdness. Her confi-

and she made keen, motive-probing speeches much seldomer than formerly. And she could not but agree in the general verdict, that Algernon's letters were very amusing. Miss Chubb was delighted with them; although they were the occasion of one or two tough struggles for supremacy in the knowledge of fashionable life, between herself and Mrs. Errington. But Miss Chubb was really good-natured, and Mrs. Errington was unshakably self-satisfied; so that no serious breach resulted from these combats.

"Dormer—Lady Harriet Dormer!" Miss Chubb would say, musingly. "I think I must have met her when I was staying with Mrs. Figgins and the Bishop of Plumhunn. And the Dormers' place is not so very far from Whitford, you know. I believe I have heard papa speak of his acquaintance with some of the family."

"Oh no," Mrs. Errington would reply, "not likely you should have ever met Lady Harriet at Mrs. Figgins's. She is the Earl of Grandcourt's daughter; and Lord Grandcourt had the reputation of being the proudest nobleman in England."

"Well, my dear Mrs. Errington," the spinster would retort, bridling and tossing her head sideways, "that could be no reason why his daughter should not have visited the bishop! A dignitary of the Church, you know! And as to family—I can assure you the Figginses were most aristocratically connected."

"Besides, Miss Chubb, Lady Harriet must have been in the nursery in those days. She's only six-and-thirty. You can see her age in the Peerage."

This was a kind of blow that usually silenced poor Miss Chubb, who was sensitive on the score of her age. But, on the whole, she was not displeased at the opportunity of airing her reminiscences of London; and she did not always get the worst of it in her encounters with Mrs. Errington.

Mrs. Errington had one listener who, at all events, was never tired of hearing Algy's letters read and re-read, and whose interest in all they contained was vivid and inexhaustible. Rhoda bestowed an amount of eager attention on the brilliant epistles bearing Lord Seely's frank, which even Mrs. Errington considered adequate to their merits.

Often—not quite always—there would be a little message. "How are all the good Maxfields? Say I asked." Or sometimes, "Give my love to Rhoda." Mrs. Errington took Algernon's sending his love to Rhoda, much as she would have

taken his bidding her stroke the kitten for him. She did not guess how it set the poor girl's heart beating. It was only natural that Rhoda's face should flush with pleasure at being so kindly and condescendingly remembered. Still less could the worthy lady understand the effect of her careless words on Mr. Maxfield. Once she said in his presence, "Have you any message for Mr. Algernon, Rhoda?" (She had recently taken to speaking of her son as "Mr." Algernon; a circumstance which had not escaped Rhoda's sensitive observation.) "You know he always sends you his love."

"Oh, my young gentleman has not forgotten Rhoda, then?" said old Maxfield, without raising his eyes from the ledger he was examining.

"Algernon never forgets. Indeed, none of the Ancrams ever forget. An almost royal memory has always been a characteristic of our race." With which magnificent speech Mrs. Errington made an impressive exit from the back shop.

Old Max knew enough, to be aware that the tenacity, even of a royal memory, had not always been found equal to retaining such trifles as a debt of twenty pounds. But so long as Algy remembered his Rhoda, he was welcome to let the money slip. Indeed, if Algy behaved properly to Rhoda, there should be no question of repayment. Twenty pounds, or two hundred, would be well bestowed in securing Rhoda's happiness, and making a lady of her. Nevertheless, old Max kept the acknowledgment of the debt safely locked up, and looked at it now and then, with some inward satisfaction. Algernon was coming back to revisit Whitford in the summer, and then something definite should be settled.

Meanwhile, Maxfield took some pains to have Rhoda treated with more consideration than had hitherto been bestowed on her. He astonished Betty Grimshaw by sharply reproving her for sending Rhoda into the shop on some errand. "Rice!" he exclaimed, testily, in answer to his sister-in-law's explanation. "If you want rice, you must fetch it for yourself. The shop is no place for Rhoda, and I will not have her come there." Then he began to display a quite unprecedented liberality in providing Rhoda's clothes. The girl, whose ideas about her own dress were of the humblest, and who had thought a dove-coloured merino gown as good a garment as she was ever likely to possess, was told to buy herself a silk gown. "A

good 'un. Nothing flimsy and poor," said old Max. "A good, solid silk-gown, that will wear and last. And—you had better ask Mrs. Errington to go with you to buy it. She will understand what is fitting better than your aunt Betty. I wish you to have proper and becoming raiment, Rhoda. You are not a child now. And you go amongst gentlefolks at Dr. Bodkin's house. And I would not have you seem out of place there, by reason of unsuitable attire."

Rhoda was delighted to be allowed to gratify her natural taste for colour and adornment; and she shortly afterwards appeared in so elegant a dress, that Betty Grimshaw was moved to say to her brother-in-law, "Why, Jonathan, I'll declare if our Rhoda don't look as genteel as 'ere a one o' the young ladies I see! Why you're making quite a lady of her, Jonathan!"

"Me make a lady of her?" growled old Max. "It isn't me, nor you, nor yet a smart gown, as can do that. But the Lord has done it. The Lord has given Rhoda the natur' of a lady, if ever I see a lady in my life; and I mean her to be treated like one. Rhoda's none o' your sort of clay, Betty Grimshaw. She's fine porcelain, is Rhoda. I suppose you've nothing to say against the child's silk gown?"

"Nay, not I, Jonathan! She's welcome to wear silk or satin either, if you like to pay for it. And, indeed, I'm uncommon pleased to see a bit of bright colour, and be let to put a flower in my bonnet. I'm sure we've had enough of them Methodist ways. Dismal and dull enough they were, Jonathan. But you can't say as I ever grumbled, or went agin' you. Anything for peace and quietness' sake is my way. But I do like church best, having been bred to it. And I always did, in my heart, even when you and David Powell would be preaching up the Wesleyans. I never said anything, as you know, Jonathan. But I kept my own way of thinking all the same. And I'm only glad you've come round to it yourself, at last."

This was bitter to Jonathan Maxfield. But he had had once or twice to endure similar speeches from his sister-in-law, since his defection from Methodism. His autocratic power in his own family was wielded as strictly as ever, but his assumption of infallibility had been fatally damaged. To get his own way was still

within his power, but it would be vain henceforward to expect those around him to acknowledge—even with their lips—that his way must of necessity be the best way.

At the beginning of April there came to Whitford the announcement that Algernon had received and accepted an invitation to accompany the Seelys abroad in the late summer; and that, therefore, his visit to "dear old Whitford" was indefinitely postponed. This announcement would have angered and disquieted old Max beyond measure, had it not been that Algernon took the precaution to write him a letter, which arrived in Whitford by the same post, as that which brought to Mrs. Errington the news of his projected journey to the Continent. It was a very neat letter. Some persons might have called it a cunning letter. At any rate, it soothed old Max's anxious suspicions, if it did not absolutely destroy them. "I believe, my good friend," wrote Algernon, "that you will quite approve the step I am taking, in accompanying Lord and Lady Seely to Switzerland. They have no son, and I think I may say that they have come to look upon me almost as a child of the house. I remember all the good advice you gave me before I left Whitford. And when I was hesitating about accepting my lord's invitation, I thought of what you would have said, and made up my mind to resist the strong temptation of coming back to dear old Whitford this summer." Then in a postscript he added: "As to that little private transaction between us, I must ask you kindly to have patience with me yet awhile. I try to be careful, but living here is expensive, and I am put to it to pay my way. You will not mention the matter to my mother, I know. And, perhaps, it would be well to say nothing to her about this letter. May I send my love to Rhoda?"

In justification of this last sentence, it must be said that Algernon was quite innocent of Lady Seely's project regarding himself and Castalia; and that there were times when he thought with some warmth of feeling of the summer days in Llanryddan, and told himself that there was not one of the girls whom he met in society who surpassed Rhoda Maxfield in the delicate freshness of her beauty, or equalled her in natural grace and sweetness.

Algernon had really excellent taste.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

HALVES.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGBERD," "A PERFECT TREASURE," "AT HER MERCY," &c. &c.

CHAPTER II. MY SECRET.

My aunt was right in her view of what had been the magnet that had drawn me towards the legal profession. I had no particular liking for the law itself, nor, to say truth, for any profession. Though far from illiterate, I was by nature indolent, and disinclined to application of any sort. The Church, the Bar, the Army, had each been presented for my choice in turn by my good uncle, after his peculiar manner; not point-blank, as more business-like guardians would have put them, but in a half-playful, half-serious fashion. "Archbishop, Lord Chancellor, Field-Marshal; come, which shall it be, Harry?" He had never pressed the question home, partly because he was himself as indolent as I, and partly because he was averse to lose me. I had never grown weary of Stanbrook, but passed all my vacations there in great content. I loved the great green fells, the silver mere; I shot, I rode, I fished; and had enough of geniality of my own to appreciate the rector's humour. We liked each other's company, and though he knew the time was come for me to put my armour on, and mix in the *mêlée* of the world, he kept me with him, and I was glad to stay. I was his companion everywhere, and helped him all I could. In church I read the lessons for him; at the Sunday school I took a class beyond my powers, lest his own knowledge concerning the kings of Judah should be put to too severe a test; and when he went into Kirkdale, weekly, to

the Petty Sessions, it was I who drove his dog-cart.

It was on one of these occasions—though not at the Petty Sessions—that I had first met Gertrude Floyd. She was walking arm-in-arm with her cousin, John Raeburn, who introduced her to me; and my first thought, as I well remember, was what an ill-assorted pair they were. For John was short for a man, and thin and grim, though his features had great flexibility, and were capable, as I have said, of simulating the expression of persons widely differing from himself; and Miss Floyd was tall, though daintily shaped, and beautiful exceedingly; and yet, I swear, it was not her beauty—not the rippling fall of her brown hair, which flowed unrestrainedly from under her summer hat; nor the liquid gentleness that shone in her hazel eyes; nor the whiteness of her low broad brow; nor the colour, like that which tips the daisy, that adorned her cheeks—that made me hers from that eventful hour, but her gracious looks. She had a smile for everybody—not the simper that some girls wear, in acknowledgment of the admiration they are anxious of inviting, but a sort of heavenly radiance; as the genial sun shines both upon the just and the unjust, so did she seem to smile both on me and John. There are men who would have blamed her for that; but I felt no pang of jealousy. It was clear to me that, out of her charity and tenderness, she looked thus kindly on her cousin—who was nothing (or at least very little) to look at; while something whispered to my beating heart that I had already found favour in her eyes. It was very egotistic in me—very conceited, it may even be

said—but there is no need to argue upon that subject, because, as the event proved, I was right.

“This is Mr. Sheddon,” said John, with his crooked smile—he always smiled from one side of his face, and I felt a great inclination on the present occasion to make him smile upon the other—“Mr. Harry Sheddon, the poet.”

You may imagine the tone in which a budding attorney in a country town would make such an observation as that; it was with the intention, of course, of making me ridiculous in the eyes of his fair companion. I had had the imprudence to publish a small volume of immature verse, and what is true of a prophet in his own country was eminently so of a poet in Kirkdale. You can imagine, therefore, I say, the tone of Mr. John Raeburn; but you cannot imagine, unless you have heard a chorus of nightingales by daytime, the exquisite music of Miss Floyd’s voice, as she replied:

“I have read Mr. Sheddon’s poems with great pleasure.” If we had been alone, I should doubtless have found fit words to acknowledge this compliment; but with Mr. John Raeburn standing by, I showed an embarrassment with which he was pleased to make very merry.

When he saw that I was really annoyed, however, he desisted. “Come,” said he, “your uncle has got a long case at the sessions-house, and will not be out these two hours. Why not look in on us at the Priory? We have had our luncheon,” added he, naively, as though, if that meal had yet to come, the circumstance would have been an insuperable obstacle to the invitation, as indeed it doubtless would. The Raeburns were not famous for their hospitality. When they gave a dinner-party, it was said (for I had had no personal experience of the fact, since our families did not visit, though my uncle had business relations with the attorney) that, though champagne-glasses were placed at each guest’s side, the place of the sparkling liquid was supplied in summer time by flowers, in winter by Indian grasses, which tickled the nose without satisfying the palate. It was a favourite story of the rector’s, that he had once extricated himself from the meshes of Mrs. Raeburn’s conversation in Kirkdale, by dashing through the bridge toll-gate, whereby an impassable gulf—since it involved the payment of a halfpenny—had been placed between them. And yet the attorney had a tolerable practice in the district, and was reported rich.

The Priory was an ancient mansion of some pretensions, standing a little outside the town, and possessing a large walled garden—so ill-kept, however, that it well deserved my uncle’s name for it (the Briary)—in which the fruits and flowers bore but a small proportion to the vegetables. The house was surrounded by a grove of ragged elms, which gave it a gloomy appearance, and within, as I afterwards discovered, reigned a social gloom in every chamber, save those alone which Gertrude Floyd irradiated by her presence. Even on that first occasion it struck me that I had never seen a lady do the honours of her house with so ill a grace as Mrs. Raeburn. She was tall and big-boned, though flat and thin as a pancake, and had a hard suspicious eye. Nature had evidently intended her to be mistress of a reformatory, or abbess of a convent, where the rules were of the severest kind, but circumstances had restricted her sphere of usefulness and energy. She was one of those women, in short (of whom it must be owned there are a good many), who at once suggest the question to all beholders, “How could any man have married her?” and when you saw her husband, this query was repeated, with a difference, “How could Mark Raeburn, of all men, have ever married her?” For the attorney had an honest good-humoured face, which, though at this date careworn enough, must at one time have been the index of a cheery disposition; and even now, when free from the chilling influence of his wife’s presence, he was known to sing a good song with effect, and would drain his glass (with other people’s wine in it) as freely as any man.

“So, so; this is an unexpected pleasure, Mr. Sheddon,” said he, coming in from his office to the dining-room, with which it communicated by folding-doors, and shaking me cordially by the hand.

“An unexpected condescension, I call it,” observed Mrs. Raeburn, grimly. “I have just been saying that Mrs. Hastings has never deigned to set foot in the Priory.”

“My aunt is in very delicate health, my dear madam,” stammered I, “and goes out scarcely anywhere.”

“Of course, of course,” said the attorney, hastily; “that’s it, my dear, that’s it. The rector is, I am sure, a constant visitor of ours—”

“On business,” interpolated this inexorable woman.

“Well, well, on business or pleasure, it’s all one. Perhaps Mr. Sheddon is here

with an eye to business—thinks of being articulated to me, perhaps, and becoming one of the family for the next five years; no, since he has taken his degree at the university, it will be only three. But he might do worse, much worse."

Up to that instant I had had no more idea of being articulated to Mr. Mark Raeburn than of being a Christy Minstrel; but the phrase, "becoming one of the family," addressed to me, as it was, with beautiful Gertrude Floyd standing before my eyes, attracted me vastly.

"The fee would be three hundred guineas," remarked Mrs. Raeburn, as coolly as if she were asking me to take wine, which, however, she had shown no inclination to do.

"My dear, my dear! That's my affair," interposed the attorney, reprovingly; "a question to be settled between Mr. Sheddon's uncle and myself."

"The arrangement for his being here would be mine," continued Mrs. Raeburn, quite unruffled. "I could not think of taking less than one hundred and fifty guineas per annum, exclusive of washing."

"And he must bring a silver fork and spoon with him, which will not be returned," observed John Raeburn, in a voice so like his mother's, that the similarity made me shake with inward laughter, and even drew a suppressed chuckle from the attorney.

"John, leave the room," cried Mrs. Raeburn; an order that he instantly obeyed by vanishing into the office. "You are, doubtless, unaccustomed, sir, to hear a mother mocked by her own flesh and blood?"

To this I made no reply, for I dared not trust myself to speak. It was a very common remark with her, as I afterwards discovered, and was perhaps made use of, in refutation of those persons, of whom there were many in Kirkdale, who affirmed that Mrs. Raeburn was not made of flesh and blood at all, but of cast-iron.

"My uncle has not yet come to any decision as to my future profession," observed I; "but I will be sure to tell him what you say, Mr. Raeburn."

"Do so, do, my lad; the rector's a great favourite of ours, and his nephew would be very welcome to our circle. Matilda, give him a glass of wine."

Mrs. Raeburn sighed, and produced the keys of the cellaret. "Will you have sherry wine, or sweet wine? In the middle of the day, perhaps, a glass of raisin—"

"No, no; sherry, sherry," interposed

the attorney, impatiently; "gentlemen at the university do not drink home-made wines."

The hostess shook her head (which had a cap on trimmed with black bugles) in a hearselike fashion, as much as to say, "So much the worse for them, and for their friends who have to pay their wine bills," and unwillingly produced the decanter.

"Two glasses, my dear," said the attorney; "no gentleman likes to drink alone."

Mrs. Raeburn muttered an ejaculation, partly of contempt, partly, perhaps, of incredulity—for, indeed, it was whispered that the attorney himself had by no means a disinclination to that practice—and produced a second glass. The action was fatal to her scheme of economy, for, while she turned, her husband seized the decanter, and took advantage of its possession not only to fill my glass up to the brim, but, presently, to help himself a second time, notwithstanding an audible groan of reproach from his consort.

"Here's to our better acquaintance, Mr. Sheddon. I have often regretted, for my son John's sake, that he saw so little of you. I am sorry that I have no leisure this morning to do the honours of the Priory; but Gertrude here will doubtless show you at least the garden."

Nothing could have been more consonant with my wishes than this arrangement, as, doubtless, the attorney had foreseen. That unlooked-for proposal of my becoming one of his household would scarcely have been made, I fancy, had he not relied upon her attractions to make it welcome. Its abruptness was characteristic of his nature, and, so far from the proposition offending me, I even felt flattered by it, for it was absurd to suppose that the amount of my premium, or the few pounds a year his wife might make by my "keep," could be of moment to a man in his position.

Miss Floyd, however, I thought, looked pained and shamed. She led the way to the garden without a word, and when I remarked to her upon its beauty—for it was summer time, when even the wilderness is beautiful—she made no reply, but reverted to the previous topic.

"I hope, Mr. Sheddon," said she, "that you know my cousin well enough not to take all he says quite literally."

"Oh yes," replied I. "Everybody knows Mark Raeburn to be the most effusive of attorneys. What he must have been in

his youth, before the chastening influence of his wife mitigated his enthusiasm—”

“For shame, Mr. Sheddton!” exclaimed my companion, smiling, however, in spite of herself; “I am sorry to find a satirist where I had expected a poet. Seriously, though, I do hope you will not repeat my cousin’s proposition to your uncle.”

I knew very well that she was alluding to the terms in which it had been made, but I affected to misunderstand her.

“You have no wish, then, that I should be made one of the family at the Priory?”

“Nay, it would be as rude to say that as unbecoming to express the contrary. What concerns me more particularly in the matter is, that my kinsman should not be rendered ridiculous to others, by your representing the case as it actually occurred.”

Then for the first time the truth flashed upon me. The attorney had been intoxicated. I recalled his flushed face and hurried accents; his having been at home that day too, had not my mind been otherwise occupied, ought to have struck me with surprise, since he was clerk to the magistrates, and should have been in his place in the sessions-house. Miss Floyd had evidently given me credit for keener observation than I had possessed, and was now appealing to my good feeling, not to make her cousin’s condition a public scandal. How sad it seemed that this pure and fair young creature should have to plead in such a cause, and that to a comparative stranger such as I! How melancholy must be her days, thought I, passed in such a house as this, among companions so ignoble! There was one way only by which it was in my power to ameliorate her lot—namely, by sharing it; by accepting, in sober seriousness, the offer that Mark Raeburn had made to me in his cups, and I at once resolved to do so. It was a rash and impulsive decision; but I had really, as I have said, no preference for one profession over another, and it had become absolutely necessary to make a choice. Moreover, there was the most beautiful girl I had ever beheld appealing to me with dewy eyes, and a voice which emotion had rendered tremulous. I was but twenty-one years of age too, and a poet.

“I shall certainly come to the Priory,” said I, in a rapture, “and use my most heartfelt endeavours”—I was about to add, “to mitigate your unhappy position,” when her look of cold surprise checked me midway, and made me stammer in its place—“to become an attorney.”

I had forgotten that the ardent thoughts which had flashed through my brain had done so without her knowledge, and that to her I must have seemed to be merely considering whether I should tell people that her cousin Mark had had too much wine, or should conceal the fact. “Of course,” I continued, “what has happened to-day will never be repeated by me; and indeed, to say truth, Miss Floyd, I have paid but little attention to it. It is no flattery to say that in your presence—”

“You must bring a silver fork and spoon, which will not be returned,” croaked Mrs. Raeburn, close to my ear, in the person of her son John. “Don’t flatter yourselves that you were the only spectators of the ratification of the treaty,” he continued, bursting into laughter. “I was watching it all, through the baize door; I heard dad evade the ginger wine, and saw him collar the sherry. Oh dear! oh dear! what a scene it was!”

Of course I had no further private talk with the charming Gertrude. The quotations from “The Sensitive Plant,” which I had prepared in my mind for instant use, à propos of the garden, had to be suppressed, and nothing but the merest commonplaces could be indulged in.

But I was only the more resolved to seek other opportunities of speech with her, and that as soon as possible. Her voice haunted my ear throughout that day like wedding chimes; the touch of her hand, as she bade me simple farewell, lingered on it for hours and “filled my pulses with the fulness of the spring.” From that day my rides had always Kirkdale for their object, and when I chanced to see her there, I came back radiant to the rectory, to be congratulated by Aunt Eleanor on my high spirits, or rebuked for them, according to the state of her nerves. If I did not meet my charmer, I was as dull as ditchwater all the evening. But not a hint did I drop to any human creature of the cause of this rise and fall in my barometer, but hugged the precious secret to my heart as though it had been my Gertrude’s self. My proposition of being articulated to Mr. Raeburn, though utterly unexpected by my uncle, was much too welcome to him for any expression of surprise, and so it happened that, in but a week or two from my first visit to the Priory, it was arranged that I should become a resident there for the next three years; and that, on the very day on which my story opens, the Raeburn

family, accompanied by the object of my affections, were to be the guests of my aunt and uncle at Stanbrook.

Little did I guess, from the intimacy thus brought about by my own act, and induced by love and youth, in what a network of intrigue and fraud I was about to be entangled!

REMARKABLE ADVENTURERS.

CAGLIOSTRO.

IN TWO PARTS. PART II.

THE idea of Egyptian masonry is not Cagliostro's own—he being rather an adapter than an inventor. He buys from a Masonic bookseller the manuscripts of an entirely unknown freemason, one George Colton. Cagliostro sees at once that Colton was possessed with the idea of allying freemasonry with superstition and magic, and, seizing upon the notion, he takes advantage of his grade as a "Knight Templar" (it would seem) to launch the new system of Egyptian freemasonry. Manuals of this mysterious and extinct branch of the craft were in existence, when the familiar of the Inquisition penned his curious account. The familiar hardly appears to be prejudiced against Cagliostro as an individual. He merely considers him as a freemason, excommunicate and accursed, and concerns himself not much about minute differences between Egyptian and other masons. So far as can be seen, Egyptian masonry is a curious muddle of the Rosicrucian mystery of fixing the soul in the body, by arresting physical decay, and the doctrine of perfectibility preached by the Illuminati. "In his system he promises his sectaries to conduct them to perfection, by means of physical and moral regeneration; to enable them by the former to find the primary matter, or the philosopher's stone, and the acacia which consolidates in man the powers of the most vigorous youth, and renders him immortal; and by the second, to procure a pentagon, which restores man to his state of primitive innocence, which he has lost by original sin." This system is referred to Enoch and to Elias, and is declared to have been the original masonry—since degenerated into "buffoonery," saith Cagliostro, to the horror of the Inquisitorial scribe, who agrees with Clement the Twelfth in thinking all masonry devilish and worthy of death. Both males and females are to be admitted to the Egyptian lodges by the Grand Cophta, to whom almost divine honours are paid. No religion is

excluded. Jews, Calvinists, and Lutherans are admitted, as well as Catholics. "He who would obtain moral regeneration—that is to say, primitive innocence—must choose a very high mountain, to which he will give the name of Sinai, and upon its summit will construct a pavilion, divided into three stories, and call it Sion. The upper chamber will be fifteen feet square, with four oval windows on each side, with a single trap-door to enter it by; the second or middle chamber will be perfectly round, without windows, and capable of containing thirteen little beds. A single lamp suspended in the middle will afford the necessary light, and there will be no furniture but such as is absolutely necessary. The second chamber will be called Ararat—the name of the mountain on which the ark rested—in sign of the repose which is reserved for elect masons of God alone. The first chamber, situate on the ground-floor, will be of the size necessary for a refectory, and there will be in it three cabinets, to hold provisions, vestments, and masonic symbols." In this retreat, thirteen master masons of Egyptian lodges, having previously gone through all probationary steps, are to shut themselves up for forty days, passing their time in masonic work. After the thirty-third day, they will enjoy the favour of communicating, visibly, with the "seven primitive angels"—corresponding with the seven planets known in Cagliostro's time—and to know the seal and mark of each of these immortal beings. These signs will be stamped by the angels themselves, upon a lambskin properly purified. On the work being done, on the fortieth day, every master will receive this stamped lambskin or pentagon, on which the primitive angels have graven their monogram and seal. Furnished with this pentacle, the master will be filled with divine fire, and his body will become pure as that of a little child, his insight will be boundless, his power immense; he will no longer aspire to anything but perfect repose, in order to arrive at immortality, and he will be able to say of himself, "I am, that I am."

Moral regeneration achieved, there remains only physical perfection to be attained, by which the person possessing it may arrive at the spirituality of five thousand five hundred and fifty-seven years, and prolong his life in health and tranquillity until it pleases God to call him into His presence. The aspirant must retire once in every fifty

years, at the full of the May moon, into the country with a friend, and there, shut within a chamber and an alcove, must undergo for forty days the most austere diet, eating but little of light soup and tender herbs, drinking nothing but distilled water, or rain-water fallen in May. Each repast must commence with water, and finish with a biscuit or a crust of bread. All this would avail little were it not for certain white drops (composition not explained) and grains of primary matter. The effect of the first grain of primary matter is remarkable. "The patient loses all consciousness, goes into convulsions, and, after a violent perspiration, comes to, and is then served with refreshment. The second grain throws the patient into a fever, makes him delirious, and causes the loss of his skin, hair, and teeth. The third throws him into a deep sleep, from which he wakes with a new skin, teeth and hair, thoroughly regenerated."

Before we laugh at this ridiculous twaddle, and at the people who were imposed upon by it, let us recollect that the ideas expressed in it were none of them new or unfamiliar. To the mystics of that day, no superstition was more common than that the soul could be "fixed in the body" and ultimately "translated" into the next world—death, by proper treatment, being altogether abolished. To the Roman Catholic Church all these doctrines were, of course, abhorrent. Speaking of Egyptian freemasonry, the familiar of the Holy Inquisition says, "The whole breathes impiety, superstition, and sacrilege," and resembles "whatever is worst in ordinary masonry," thus giving the regular brotherhood a back-hander in passing.

Having taken his system of Egyptian freemasonry ready-made from George Colton, Ginseppe leaves London and hies him to the Hague, where he is received under the vault of steel, formed by two rows of brethren with crossed swords. His wife—useful Seraphina—officiates as grand mistress, and the count delivers one of those harangues for which he is famous—a kind of "hash" of all arts and sciences sacred and profane, of not one of which does he really understand anything. But what Giuseppe lacks in knowledge he makes up in impudence, and fees roll in gaily as he moves from town to town, founding Egyptian lodges. During this German tour he stumbles on the greatest adventurer of his or any other day—the celebrated Casanova. This worthy, to whom all

the secrets of Rougecroix are played-out machinery, bestows his benediction on Cagliostro, and gives him a word of caution, to keep clear of the Holy City—a warning which Giuseppe unluckily disregarded. Great success attends him at Leipzig, and in his honour a banquet is given, at which he fails not to denounce the magical operations of Schrepfer, busy just then in raising the dead. "This man," says Cagliostro, with magnificent impudence, "will feel the hand of God upon him before a moon has passed away." Within a month Schrepfer shoots himself; Cagliostro is a prophet, and all things are possible to him. At Mittau the regular masons admit him to their lodges, where he thunders out interminable harangues of senseless trash, accusing the brotherhood of magic, of superstition, of following the abominable Schrepfer, and of hankering after Swedenborg, and of a lurking regard for the Jew Falk and other chiefs of the Illuminati. All this must be abolished, saith the unblushing Sicilian, and Egyptian freemasonry set up in its stead. A lodge is founded, and the master at once gives proof of his power; at least, this is what he, Cagliostro, tells the judges at the Roman Inquisition. To a fall lodge meeting he brings a little child, the son of a nobleman, and places him on his knees before a table, on which is placed a bottle of pure water, having behind it a few lighted wax-candles. The hierophant pronounces an exorcism and imposes his hands on the child's head, after which they pray fervently for the success of their work. Cagliostro now tells the child to look into the water-bottle and say what he sees there. The child instantly cries out that he sees a garden. Cagliostro now tells him to pray for a sight of the archangel Michael, and the child first sees "something white," and afterwards an "angelic-looking child of about his own age." The father now asks his little one if he can see his sister, at the moment in a country house fifteen miles from Mittau. Exorcised and re-exorcised, having the hands of the Venerable once more imposed upon his head, and praying first abundantly, the child looks again at the water, and says that his sister at this moment is coming downstairs and embracing one of his brothers, known to be hundreds of miles away. This is declared to be impossible, but Giuseppe stands to his guns, tells the company they can go themselves and verify the fact, and after allowing them to kiss his hand, closes

the lodge with the usual ceremonies. The brethren of the Egyptian lodge fail not to verify the arrival of the supposed distant brother, who had, in fact, turned up suddenly and unexpectedly at home.

This little "coup" — easily enough arranged, like a similar trick played later on in Paris—produces an immense ebullition in Mittau. Enthusiastic believers prostrate themselves in worship before Giuseppe and Seraphina — surely the oddest prophet and prophetess that foolish people ever selected for adoration. Prophesying right and left, by the mouth sometimes of a little boy—well prompted—or by a young girl, the "niece of an actress, who saw all she was wanted to see," Cagliostro makes a few lucky shots in first-class fortune telling, increases his reputation, and lines his pockets at the same time. At St. Petersburg he is a failure. Prince Potemkin, thinking there may be some real science at the bottom of Cagliostro's quackery and rhodomontade, tries to set him to work out the resolution of some chemical problems. Cagliostro does not like this, talking being much more in his way than working, and after making many promises to transmute metals, &c., he comes down to the composition of a novel kind of pinchbeck for soldiers' buttons—failing signally therein.

At Warsaw he is successful in founding Egyptian lodges, and employing the pupil or "columb" to look into the water-bottle on grand occasions, but again comes to signal grief over an attempt at transmuting metals. Thence he works his way by Frankfort-on-the-Maine, where he has solemn converse with the Illuminati, to Strasbourg, where he remains for several years, enjoying great wealth and consideration, thanks to the patronage of that very weak-headed old voluptuary, the Prince Cardinal de Rohan, the purblind, grey-haired adorer of the unfortunate Queen of France. This period may be considered as that of his greatest elevation. Innumerable people, who ought to know better, believe in him thoroughly. Silly old de Rohan can never have enough of his company at Saverne. We must admit that he plays his cards with rare skill. Founding Egyptian lodges one day, the next sees him dispensing medicines to the poor on a magnificent scale, and curing many—so they say. Charles Henry Baron Gleichen pronounces him an excellent physician, never wearies of telling his marvellous cures, and even

goes the length of thinking the snub-nosed, oily-looking impostor good-looking, and of paying a certain respect to his Egyptian freemasonry. This part of Cagliostro's career—in Strasbourg and in Switzerland—is remarkable enough. He is undoubtedly able to heal the sick and feed the hungry—is rich, no one knowing whence his money comes. Is it all a sham, I wonder, this outbreak of benevolence on his part, or has he so often told others that he is the Grand Cophta—the regenerator of mankind, that he has at last come to believe it himself? Is he, after all, fashioned of a species of prophetic clay—rough, coarse, and inferior, it is true, and heavily charged with impurities, but still the stuff of which leaders of men are made? There must be something remarkable in the man. He is ugly and ignorant, vulgar and tedious, knows no science, can speak no language correctly, but yet leads thousands of his betters by the nose! The Baron de Besenoal, a sufficiently acute observer, writing, too, after the affair of the queen's necklace, says of Giuseppe: "He is one of those beings who appear from time to time—unknown persons who pass for adepts, meddling with medicine, alchemy, sometimes with magic—wonderful in themselves, and made more marvellous still by public renown, and who, after having ruined fools, finish their exploits in fetters. What is most singular is, that Count Cagliostro, having all the outward appearance of this kind of people, acted quite differently from them during his residence at Strasbourg and Paris; in fact, never took a sou from anybody. Living honourably enough, he always paid with the greatest exactitude, and gave a great deal away in charity, without anybody ever knowing whence he derived his funds."

The period of Cagliostro's glory was not fated to be lengthy. The unhappy patronage of the Prince Bishop of Strasbourg was the immediate cause of his ruin. Fain would I discourse herein of the famous Diamond Necklace, had not that work been already done in grand graphic English by inapproachable Thomas Carlyle, and in full accurate detail by painstaking Henry Vize-telly. The story is, therefore, too well known to need more than the remark, that the most recent and complete researches fail to convict Cagliostro of any share in the daring conspiracy. Lamotte and his wife (more or less of the House of Valois), Vilette, Leguay d'Olive (a mere tool), were

found guilty at the time, and the cardinal and Cagliostro duly acquitted. Lamotte himself escaped scot free and carried off all the booty, losing the proceeds at Newmarket. The Grand Cophta was liberated; but, according to his own account—probable enough—was infamously pillaged by the French police, who seem to have pretty well cleared him out. According to Cagliostro, they must have made a good thing of it: "Fifteen rouleaux, sealed with my arms, each of them containing fifty double louis d'or; a money bag, containing one thousand two hundred and thirty-three Roman and Venetian sequins; twenty-four Spanish quadruples in a rouleau sealed with my seal; and a green portfolio, containing forty-seven bills on the Caisse d'Escompte of one thousand livres each," melted away (if they ever existed) to two rouleaux of twenty-five double louis d'or each, and a few jewels.

A great demonstration was made by Cagliostro's followers on his release, but his joy was soon dashed by a command to leave France; and once more he was driven to England. In Sloane-street, Knightsbridge, dwelt the great conjuror, and there published his Letter to the English people—cruelly criticised by M. de Morande, editor of the *Courrier de l'Europe*. Cagliostro, on one point, gave a memorable answer to this gentleman, who was pleased to poke fun at a statement made by Cagliostro, in some public place, that, in Arabia the Stony people are in the habit of fattening pigs on food mixed with arsenic, whereby the pork becomes, as it were, arsenicated; the arsenical pigs are then let loose in the woods and are eaten by beasts of prey, who die in consequence. This pleasant custom, not entirely dissimilar from a practice which prevailed in the early days of Tasmania, was agreeably "chaffed" by M. de Morande in the *Courrier de l'Europe*, and defended by Cagliostro in the *Public Advertiser*, under date September 3, 1786, thus: "In physics and chemistry, Mr. Joker, arguments go for little and sneers for nothing—experience is all. Permit me, then, to propose a little experiment, which will divert the public either at your expense or at mine. I invite you to breakfast for the 9th November next, at nine o'clock in the morning; you will furnish the wine and the accessories; I will furnish one dish in my own style—a little sucking-pig, fattened according to my method. Two hours before breakfast I will present him to you alive, fat and healthy. You will engage

to have him killed and cooked, and I will not go near him till the moment when he is put on the table; you shall cut him yourself into four pieces, choose that which attracts you the most, and give me any piece you please. The day after this breakfast one of four things will have happened—either we shall be both dead or both alive, or I shall be dead and you alive, or you dead and I alive. Out of these four chances I give you three, and I bet five thousand guineas that the day after the breakfast you will be dead, and I shall be in good health. You will confess that no fairer offer could be made, and that you must either accept the wager or confess your ignorance, and that you have foolishly and dully cut your jokes upon a subject beyond your knowledge." This characteristic letter failed to persuade M. de Morande to a pig-breakfast, and he was fain to back out as best he might, getting well laughed at for his pains.

Despite the halo of bogus glory acquired in this contest, Giuseppe feels once more, for the third and last time, that the fogs of England disagree with the charlatan system; that the brutal inhabitants of gloomy Albion have small sympathy with Egyptian pills, vegetable powders, wine of Egypt, and so forth; and that his restless foot must once more take the road—not in excessively splendid style this time. France, where followers and sympathisers are many, is closed, and is, moreover, weightily concerned over business of its own; but Parisian sympathisers nevertheless convey money to their Grand Cophta, who sets forth in May, 1787, his old creditors having become unruly. He remains for some months at Bienne, in Switzerland, where Dame Lorenza-Seraphina shows signs of revolt, but is presently quieted and reduced to submission. By Aix les Bains he travels on to Turin, but is instantly ordered to quit the city. At Roveredo he fares no better; Egyptian freemasonry avails him nought at Trent; at Vicenza he pawns his diamonds. Wherever he places his foot the order comes promptly, "Get up! Away! Out of my dominions in twenty-four hours!" France and Sardinia reject him; England is too hot to hold him. The Prince Bishop of Trent catches a rare wiggling from the Emperor for permitting the outcast to rest in his domain; and the hunted creature is scared from Germany by this dread news. Where shall he rest, whither take shelter from the enemies who spring

up at every step? He turns to his wife, poor injured Lorenza, the once innocent girl, whom he had only married to drag through the slough of vicious Europe. Poor Lorenza-Seraphina, unhappy Grand Cophtess, is weary too, and entreats him—not suspecting that her wrongs have converted her into his Nemesis—to go to Rome, “to her family: among her husband’s friends.” To Rome then hies Cagliostro—unheeding prophetic Casanova—in the month of May, 1789. Poorer and poorer he becomes; his hand has lost its cunning. He practises medicine, but good fortune has left him. Something must be done; and desperate Cagliostro strives once more to evoke the phantom of Egyptian freemasonry, under the shadow of the Vatican—a fatal attempt. On the evening of the 27th December, 1789, he is arrested, and conducted to the Castle of St. Angelo, where, after being told that his wife, also under lock and key, has begun to confess, he supplies the Inquisition with a curious account of his life and misdeeds. He is condemned to death, but the sentence is commuted to perpetual imprisonment in the Castle of Santa Leone, in the Duchy of Urbino, where he lingers till the summer of 1795, when he is found dead in his cell. The unfortunate Grand Cophtess drags out a much longer span, immured in a convent. After once filling Europe with their name, they were both forgotten long before they died; lost in the turmoil of great events, vanished in the mighty storm which heralded the Period of Transition.

ROYAL NAVAL ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

SHORTLY after the commencement of the present year the loungers who affect the Thames Embankment as their place of promenade, became aware of a new object of attraction moored in the river opposite Somerset House. Much speculation was indulged in as to the purpose of the vessel. Many pipes of tobacco and much very choice English were expended in vain endeavours to make out the stumpy, snub-nosed-looking craft, as it loomed large and mysterious through the London fog. Some declared it to be a “hulk in training;” those of a more sanguine turn of mind pronounced it a “swimming bath;” others, again, thought it could be nothing but a powder magazine; while gazers of despondent habit could see in it no more than a new stronghold of that

pestilent body—the Thames police, whose interference with “business” had already become almost unbearable. The propinquity of the police-station at Waterloo Bridge lent additional colour to the last theory; and predatory “loafers,” after carefully knocking the ash out of their pipes, consigned the new-comer both loudly and deeply to the custody of Davy Jones, and slouched off in quest of a “drain.”

As the mists proper to winter, and to that prolongation of winter which is believed to be spring, rolled gradually away, it became evident that no additionally offensive measures against the riverside roughs were contemplated. The mysterious vessel was found to be Her Majesty’s gunboat Rainbow, a relic of the Russian War, during which, it may be recollected, about a hundred of these vessels were built in a hurry all over the country. Some of these saw service in the Baltic and in the Sea of Azof. Among these was the Rainbow, granted by the Admiralty as a training-ship for the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers—a recent addition to our auxiliary forces, which, mainly from the absence of show and parade which characterises its work, has hardly yet secured that attention from the public, to which the importance of its mission legitimately entitles it.

The idea of raising a naval auxiliary force to strengthen the defence of the country in case of invasion, is not now brought forward as a novelty. Not long after the great success of the Volunteer movement ashore, many voices were raised in favour of extending it to that domain which we choose to believe the peculiar heritage of England. It was urged, and with great reason, that, in the case of a threatened descent upon our shores, the difficulty of putting a large number of men under arms, and moving them rapidly to the spot required, would be as nothing compared with that of manning our coast defences, and in laying down those submarine weapons which would probably prove one of our most efficient means of defence. At that time, however, the effect of modern artillery, and of torpedoes, upon iron-clad ships was imperfectly understood, and it was generally thought that, supposing an invading army to have escaped the vigilance or overpowered the resistance of our fleet, the defence of the country would at once fall upon our numerous corps of volunteers, directed by such regular troops as might happen to be on the island. From

time to time the persistent detractors of amateurs of all kinds sneered at our national defences generally, while better instructed critics insisted that the loss of a sea-fight—an encounter peculiarly open to accidents of all kinds—ought not to be sufficient to ruin a country like England; but that, on the contrary, the coast might be rendered, if not downright impregnable, yet very difficult of attack if proper precautions were taken. This view was very strongly advocated by Mr. Vernon Harcourt, through whose exertions the Hastings Marine Artillery was enrolled about a dozen years ago; but it was soon objected that this corps—generally reviewed with the volunteers, who were more strictly landsmen—partook of the “horse marine” character, and had nothing marine about it but the name. The Admiralty of the period—represented by Lord Clarence Paget—declined to afford the movement any support whatever, and the scheme shared the fate of many other propositions for improving our coast defences. “As you were” remained then the order of the day, until the experience of the Franco-German War was accepted, as demonstrating the utter uselessness of half-trained troops against a regular army of invaders. It was noted with dismay that hastily-raised battalions and whole clouds of “Francs-tireurs” and other guerillas were brushed off like flies from the compact phalanx of a highly organised army, and that the operation loosely talked about as “rising like one man and declaring war to the knife” would avail little against the faultless battalions of a large army of occupation composed of trained soldiers.

While the public were slowly, and—like good patriots—sorely laying these unpleasant truths to heart, and suffering much uneasiness therefrom, a blister was suddenly applied by the author of the “Battle of Dorking,” wherein it was set forth that the existence of England might depend upon a solitary sea-fight, and that, when once an invading army was fairly landed, the country would be absolutely at its mercy. Opinion once more veered round in favour of coast defences, made more possible by recent improvements. Mr. Göschel, then First Lord of the Admiralty, in an extra-official speech at Liverpool, struck the key-note, by giving a distinct intimation that a movement in the direction of volunteer coast defence would meet with a certain measure of support from the Government. A reiteration

of these views at the East-end of London had the effect of inspiring a few gentlemen with the desire to form a Naval Artillery Corps, trained to serve in gun-boats, on mortar rafts, and practised in the art of laying and firing torpedoes, and in other boat work necessary to the defence of rivers and estuaries. They were fortunate in securing the sympathy and energetic co-operation of Mr. Thomas Brassey, M.P., who, in thoroughly characteristic fashion, set about the arduous task of bringing a minister of the crown to book, and goading him into acting up to the sentiments he had expressed, while under the inspiration of the genius loci of Liverpool and the London Docks. Poor Mr. Göschel, torn by the conflicting claims of the navy and the national cash-box, was having a hard time of it just then, and was a difficult man to get at. He was always engaged, more or less, and to fix his attention was no light undertaking. Mr. Brassey, patriotically and strategically, lay in wait for him, under the trees of Rottenrow, and when the incautious First Lord approached the spot, swooped down, and compelled that much-enduring man to listen to the claims of the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers. Oddly enough, this marine subject was talked over and settled on horseback, the Serpentine supplying the necessary aquatic scenery. On its being represented to Mr. Göschel that all the material required was ready, and was only lying idle in the Government depôts, he gave his consent to assist the movement to the extent of supplying ships, guns, rifles, pistols, cutlasses, &c., leaving the volunteers themselves to pay the cost of organisation. As a beginning, this was well enough, but the narrow limit of governmental assistance had the effect of preventing the formation of those artisan batteries, from which, in case of need, most vigorous help might be drawn. Looking at the vast army of skilled craftsmen of the highest class, employed in the engineering works and iron ship-building yards which fringe great rivers like the Thames, the Mersey, the Clyde, and the Humber, we cannot resist the conviction, that out of these iron-muscle ironworkers might be found such a corps for coast defence as the world has not yet seen. In such engineering shops as Mandalay's and Penn's are to be found in abundance the very men, whom an expert naval artillerist would select from all mankind, for service in gunboats and

coast batteries. The management of great guns, and the precautions necessary in what promises to be a more important work—that of dealing with torpedoes, would be mere child's play to a skilled mechanic, by whom also boat work, rifle, cutlass, and pistol drill would be regarded as agreeable variations from the monotony of existence. It may, perhaps, be objected that the artisan class have not, as a rule, shown much enthusiasm for volunteering; but to this it may be replied, that the encouragement shown them has been of the most slender kind. We must not forget that, when we ask an artisan to give his time to the service of his country, we invite him to sacrifice his well-earned hours of recreation, and that this is the utmost the most enthusiastic patriot can hope for from him. He cannot be expected to give money as well as time; but this is precisely what he must do under existing institutions. Resigning himself reluctantly to the view of the Grande Duchesse (whom we would not for one moment accuse him of having seen), "If we can't have what we love, we must love what we have got," Mr. Brassey, like a sensible man, took all he could get, and made the most of it. He secured the President, an old frigate—the mother ship of the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers, now moored in the West India Docks—and set the movement going, not only in London, but in Liverpool and Bristol. The next step was to obtain an Act of Parliament; the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteer Act of 1873 was duly passed, and the serious work of enrolment began. At the outset many difficulties were encountered. Men did not come forward with the alacrity anticipated, and, curious to remark, came at length from a different class from that which had been expected to supply the bone and sinew of the corps. It was hoped that yachtsmen would supply many volunteers, but whether it be that yachting is the amusement of a lazy man, or that before average mankind can afford to keep a yacht they have become middle-aged, "fat and scant of breath," no support was given by the fleet of amateur sailors. Hopes were also entertained that out of the rowing men who crowd the river between Putney and Kew on a summer evening not a few recruits would be met with, but it was soon found that on the rolls of the various rowing clubs a vast number of names remained of men who had long ceased to care for rowing

or hard work of any kind, beyond the pleasure of looking on at it; and that, moreover, the actual rowing men were for the most part rowing men "pure and simple," who loved their outrigger as their life, took a keen interest in the sublime mysteries of "catch," "swing," and "recovery," and were prepared to keep themselves in condition from March to November for rowing's sake, but were very Gallios so far as great-gun drill was concerned. Mr. Brassey, to begin like an Englishman, gave a big dinner to some four hundred gentlemen, whose aquatic proclivities justified the hope that they would themselves become recruits, or would help to recruit others. Mr. Göschen was again "laid on" by Mr. Brassey for an inspiring oration, but it was all in vain. The rowing men who were in training ate and drank carefully, and those out of training freely, and, after the manner of their kind, said very little. Whether they thought the more is not known, but one thing is certain—not more than four out of the four hundred enrolled themselves in the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers.

This double disappointment—the loss of the yachtsmen in the first and of the oarsmen in the second place—has been admirably compensated by the spirited manner in which the City clerk has come to the rescue. Perhaps, after all, it is natural enough that young men engaged throughout the day in routine sedentary work should hail with pleasure an opportunity of plunging into the mysteries of great-gun drill, which possesses the manifest advantage of exercising at once the intelligence, the muscles, and the lungs. Eye, ear, memory, hand and foot are all concentrated on the work of managing a sixty-four pounder, and it is therefore easy to understand the fascination which this pursuit exercises over lithe and clear-headed young men; for it is undeniable that a certain measure of mental and bodily agility are imperatively necessary in a gun's crew. Like cricket and football, the management of heavy ordnance demands deftness and precision, and in the early stages of drill calls into exercise a certain amount of mental promptness, combined with moderate physical strength. A course of naval artillery training has also the advantage of trying the muscles all round, by its combination of heavy-gun drill, rifle, cutlass, and pistol drill, and abundant practice in rowing in man-o'-warsman style and in the management

of boats. It may be in place to mention here that it forms no part of the scheme to make complete sailors of the men, but that the design is to make them handy fellows for a fight in river or estuary, and able to man a gun, or handle a rope, at a pinch, aboard a war-ship in the Channel. Their functions are strictly to defend the coast, a duty which could be only very inefficiently performed by pure landmen. Most of our great ports can only be approached by navigating extensive estuaries, and it is at this stage of invasion that an amphibious corps would prove invaluable. A foreign fleet endeavouring to force its way up the Thames or Medway might be encountered by such an array of floating batteries, armed rafts, and especially of torpedoes, as to set attack at defiance. To lay out torpedoes on an efficient scale, a flotilla of boats would be required, and in furnishing crews for these boats the well-trained oarsmen of the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers would render valuable service in releasing from similar duties an equal number of highly-trained seamen—never too numerous in time of war. A slight glance at the map will show that the tactics recommended for the defence of London would apply equally to all our greatest ports—Hull, Newcastle, Liverpool, Leith and Granton, Glasgow, Bristol, Southampton, Belfast, Dublin, and Cork. These great ports would surely afford a sufficient sphere of operation for many thousands of trained men, who, without being regular seamen, would fill their place well enough in the important work of defending our harbours.

When it is considered that the Act for forming the corps was passed as late as 1873, the progress made up to the present time must be held to afford excellent promise for the future. It must not be forgotten that, as no governmental encouragement is given in the way of capitation fees, every recruit is required to pay an annual subscription of one guinea—half of which goes to the brigade fund and half to the fund of the battery to which the member belongs—and to provide himself with an uniform at the cost of three guineas more. Nevertheless, in spite of this initial expense, the movement has been heartily seconded in London and Liverpool, and to a less degree, for some unexplained reason, at Bristol. Liverpool already possesses four batteries, containing two hundred and twenty-seven members, while the London brigade of eight bat-

teries numbers three hundred and sixty officers, petty officers, and men. In the London brigade drill is carried on every evening, between the hours of six and eight o'clock, on board H.M.S. President, in the West India Docks, reached by train from Fenchurch-street; and on H.M.G.B. Rainbow, moored in the Thames off Somerset House. The lieutenant-commander of the London brigade is Mr. Thomas Brassey, M.P. Lord Bury and Mr. Lambton Young, well known in connection with the Royal Humane Society, figure as honorary lieutenants; and Mr. W. A. Swears, of Fairholme, Surbiton, as honorary secretary. The important post of lieutenant-instructor is admirably filled by Commander St. Vincent Nepean, R.N., an officer possessing the highest credentials, who has thrown himself heart and soul into his work, passing his entire time between the temporary office of the Brigade, No. 4, Great George-street, Westminster, the President, and the Rainbow. This gentleman has under his command instructors who have attained perfection on H.M. training-ships, and the work is now being carried on in a thoroughly efficient manner. Captain Nepean, with true earnestness of purpose, discourages "paper men," and insists on all recruits going through a steady drill. By this course he has enlisted the entire sympathy of the men, who, not satisfied with working hard to pass muster as "efficient," are ambitious to carry on drill till they attain the higher rank of "trained men." Their attention is very properly rewarded by distinctive badges. "Efficients" wear a chevron of silver on the right arm above the wrist, and "trained men" two chevrons, while those diligent students who have been five times returned efficient may wear one star above the badge.

Let us cast a glance at the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers at work, and to that end stroll down the Thames Embankment on a summer evening, finding a large body of lookers-on congregated along shore. Taken off in one of the Rainbow's boats, manned by a volunteer crew, we find Her Majesty's gunboat the scene of much genuine honest hard work. While some of the men are taking a lesson in man-o'-war'smen's rowing, the guns' crews—the Rainbow mounts two sixty-four pounders—are mustered and proceed to drill, under vigilant eyes. The men, like the ship, present that smart and "taut" appearance dear to the eye of poor Jack. Ready for

work, they are not at this moment attired in the regulation blue jacket, but wear the equally neat blue slacks and serge frocks, in which a healthy youngster looks so well. As the moment for drill approaches, the blue frocks are discarded, and the crews, fourteen to a gun, appear in their white frocks with cuffs, and broad falling collar of blue jean neatly trimmed with a wavy border of white tape. The guns are now manned, every man falling into his proper position; and the ponderous gun, quickly answering to word of command, is run out, deftly levelled, and fired. It may be added, for the comfort of dwellers in the neighbourhood, that the firing is merely a flash and a slight bang, no actual charge or projectile being used. For the purpose of drill, however, "make believe" firing does well enough. The young fellows take to their work heartily, seizing the ropes and wielding the handspikes with right goodwill. There is a cool breeze fanning the face of Father Thames this evening; but, for all that, the exercise soon brings a bright glow on their healthy cheeks. Great-gun drill over, the supplementary blue frocks are donned, and the rifle, cutlass, and pistol drill gone through—making up a couple of hours of smart healthy exercise.

Recognising, as we do to the fullest and heartiest extent, the value of our national games as a means of physical education, we cannot refrain from pointing out that the course of instruction prescribed by the regulations of the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers combines a variety of wholesome and pleasant use of thews and sinews, with practical training of the most valuable kind, both to the volunteer and to the country. It is true that for many generations the smoke of an enemy's camp-fire has not affrighted the women of England, and that the sound of foreign cannon has not been heard near our ports since the Dutch entered the Medway; but we must not wilfully shut our eyes to the truth, that the conditions of national existence have changed materially within our own time, and that, while our commercial supremacy no longer remains unchallenged, our national dignity may one day require us to hold our own, as our forefathers held theirs, like true men. We may also note that, while the tendency of modern military science has hitherto been to eliminate the element of chance, and to reduce the value of individual inspiration and personal bravery, recent experiments

have shown that the battles of the future may not always be won by the "big battalions." On a fair-stricken field, weight of metal will probably prevail, but in war against ports and harbours, inferiority of numbers may be largely compensated by mechanical appliances, and skilled hands to make the best of them. Thus the organisation of the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers must command the sympathies of Englishmen as a move in the true direction, and we can only explain the apathy of many of our seaports, by the supposition that they know nothing of what has been done. It has been shown that guns' crews, trained in the midst of London, can do their work well afloat on the river Thames, and even in a seaway; and we are therefore encouraged to hope that the example of London, Liverpool, and Bristol will be followed by applications from other maritime towns, to the Secretary of the Admiralty, for permission to form new corps of Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers.

DREAM-ROSES.

A RARE rose-garden! Nay, some ground enchanted;
 No earthly garden ever glowed or gloomed
 With such soft interfuse of shine and shade,
 As mingled in the chequered shafts that slanted
 Through every winding walk, and leafy glade,
 And shadow-dappled, silent, still arcade
 Where those bright roses bloomed.
 No meaner flower might therein be seen,
 Only tall trees and roses. The thick green
 Of lavish leafage parted, to let peep
 Red roses! From the dusk, cool shadows deep,
 Of archèd alleys star-wise shone
 White roses, snowy-soft as Psyche's zone.
 And there were winding wildernesses walled
 With close-pleached thick espaliers of rose-bushes,
 Whence fluting trills and silver-rippling rushes
 Of mellow bird-song musically called,
 In low responses. And those bosky mazes
 Were dight with colours various as the graces
 Of a fair woman. Oh! a world of roses
 Crushed, clustered, clambered there. No dulcet closes
 Of Lydian lays voluptuously dying,
 Are so soul-satisfying
 As were the glories of that garden lonely,
 That rare rose-realm by rose scents incensed only.
 These stayed all yearnings that the entranced soul
 Might feel, and there the whole
 Of the swift-varying gamut of desires
 Was touched, and thrilled, as are the ethereal lyres
 Of finest spirits by quick-fingered fancies;
 For all the covert close and fair expanses
 Of that irradiant rose-realm seemed attuned
 To dainty thoughts, and delicate delights.
 Oh not the sweetest of all summer nights,
 By the most chaste of pearly crescents mooned,
 Might show so fresh, so fair,
 So bright, so bland, so perfect past compare,
 As that rare haunt of roses. There they dwell,
 By soft winds warded well,
 Home-ahrired, whose presence here were but a hint
 Of hidden glories. As the light footprint
 Of a strayed seraph, dimpling earthly sands,
 Might yield rapt fancy faint foreshadowings
 Of else unpictured things,

Uncharted seas, and undiscovered lands ;
 So each rose-odour seems to bring a breath
 Of life to this the pasture-world of death :
 Of life that lives in loveliness complete,
 And hence immortal. Ah ! our roses fleet
 Ere in their odorous hearts we wholly read
 Their mystic meanings, seeing these accord
 With spheres where loveliness hath life indeed,
 And love is lord.

But there, in that rose-realm, the roses breathed
 Unbroken life in deathless odours, wreathed
 Day with unfading garlands, and bedight
 With shadow-softened grace the argent brow of
 night !

A STORY OF CRANBORNE CHASE.

ALMOST in the centre of Cranborne Chase, once part of the New Forest, and which, as late as 1828, contained some twelve thousand deer, looked after by six rangers under the orders of Lord Waters, there stands, seven miles from Cranborne, a small public-house called the Bald-headed Stag, with half a dozen keepers' and shepherds' houses to keep it company.

The Chase, which once embraced half Dorset, Hampshire, and Wiltshire, is full of hills, which, towards Dorsetshire, turn to bare downs, with here and there a clump of beech trees on a knoll, a sunken line that indicates an ancient British pathway, or an old Roman road leading towards the coast.

Up one of these low grassy tracts, which are called in Wiltshire "ox drives," and round a shoulder of the rolling downs where three low lines of grassy rampart showed that a Roman camp had once stood, came a sturdy young keeper, his trusty gun on his shoulder and his dog at his heels. He was a fine well-knit young fellow of, say, three-and-twenty; his face shrewd and defiant; his step firm and light. His old brown-velvet shooting jacket was rubbed white on the right shoulder, and he wore in his grey felt hat, which was girt with trout flies, a little bright green tuft from a kingfisher's wing. His flesh had that peculiar hardness about it that implies perfect health, and he looked round with that sort of command that supervisors acquire, as he scanned the woodlands and copses scattered here and there below him.

The slightest thing seemed to catch his eye: a tuft of lark's feathers, where a hawk had been feeding; a few scattered badger's hairs; a fresh mole-hill; and the print of deer's feet, or a scrap of rabbit's fur he observed and noted as he passed. Once he stopped, and sat down on a little grassy mound, which a wheatear vacated for him, to scrape out his black brier-root and quietly reload, while his dog searched

the next tussock of dry grass for a rabbit, and just then an old gentleman rode round the corner of the camp and pulled up his horse when he saw him.

"Young Garge," as the keeper was always called, touched his wideawake with the forefinger of his right hand.

"Don't you stand up in this county when you meet a gentleman?" said the ranger, petulantly, at the same time striking one of his gaitered legs with his "crop."

"Only when we knows 'em, mister," said George, rising civilly as he addressed the ranger. "I know every one round here, but you be a stranger to me."

"Do you idle much of your time away smoking like that, my friend?" inquired the stranger, sharply.

"What right have you to inquire how I spend my time, mister," said George, a little "up" at this interference. "If you want to know, this is my meal time, and I choose to spend it smoking. Don't you never spend time worse?"

"You're an impertinent fellow," broke out the gentleman, in a fury, "and I beg to tell you I am Herbert Harcourt, Esq., of Beauchamp Lodge, the new ranger, and I have power to dismiss you or any other insolent keeper from his post at one word. I am not going to let things go to ruin as my predecessor did. The poachers kill the deer here, I am told, with impunity, and all owing to lazy fellows like you."

"There has been no buck ever shot in my walk," said George, bristling up, and throwing his gun carelessly on his right shoulder. "The one killed a fortnight ago was in Woodgates Walk, old Joe Levison's walk."

"Oh, then you have not heard," said the new ranger, "that a buck was killed last night, not a mile from Dowberry Rings?"

"No, sir, I have not."

"There was then, and the forequarter was found in a hollow tree near the big oak in Rushmere Walk. His lordship is very angry, and declares he'll turn away the next keeper who loses a deer from his beat. There is connivance with this gang suspected somewhere, and we must get to the bottom of it. I am a stranger here, but they tell me that a rascal named Black Jack, of Woodgates, actually makes a living, killing and selling his lordship's deer, and some, at least, of the keepers are conniving at the robbery. Were you at the Big Oak last night? Rushmere Walk is in your beat, I think. It is set down so in the book they showed me this morning."

"Rushmere was in my walk," said George, boldly, not flinching a hair's breadth; "but last week Lord Waters sent and ordered us all to change about; so old Bolton took Rushmere and I took Woodgates. There has never been a deer, sir, killed in any walk I've had since I've been here."

"Perhaps so, perhaps so; but, I can tell all you keepers, things are not going on as they have gone. I'm going to have better watch. Those rascals learn your beats from some of you. Now come, don't you ever get talking at the public-house about the line you're going to take at night, with threats and brags of what you'll do if you met a deer-stealer—now, come!"

"Never, sir!" said George, quietly. "I don't tell even my own father the line I'm going to take. I make it a rule."

"And have you no sweetheart—come, now—that you sometimes talk to about it, and who, perhaps, goes and tells some friend of these rogues?"

George's cheek alightly reddened, as he pulled about the dog-whistle at his button-hole, and made no reply; for the fact was, he often told pretty Hetty Dawson where he should be in the Chase at a certain hour, that he might meet her on her way home from Shaftesbury Market. In half an hour's time such a pleasant little meeting might, indeed, not improbably take place at Duncastle Rings.

"Ah! I see; I've hit it at last. So you men go and tell your sweethearts, and they tell their other lovers, who tell some of the gang, and so my lord's deer get killed."

The young keeper's cheek flushed quick and angrily. "Hetty," he said—"I mean the only young woman I ever mention my walks to—has no other lovers; and nothing, I am sure, ever escapes her lips."

"Oh, of course not! women are so reliable, and never have two strings to their bows! Take my advice—tell no one; for, so sure as another deer is killed, and the poacher not caught, away go the whole lot of you, and I'll try some of my Yorkshire men from the estate which I've been superintending. I will not have men who are in correspondence with deer-poachers."

"There is no stain on my character, sir," said the young keeper, proudly. "I've never been found off my post the seven years I've been here."

"I can only judge from what I find now," said the ranger's deputy; "and it is as bad as bad can be. If you had been all Border men, there would have been

none of this shameful deer-stealing. Now, mind what I have said: those who can't obey me, go. Keep to your own walk to-night, and I'll send and tell old Bolton to keep to his. I'll have none of this piece-meal business."

And so saying, the angry Jack-in-office struck the handsome chestnut cob he rode with his crop, and dashed off straight across the Downs at a sharp canter. He left the young keeper a thoroughly unhappy man—his pride hurt, his suspicions roused, his opinion of mankind lowered. If honest service brought no better return than this, and the reports of such men were to be all that Lord Waters heard, what chance had he of ever rising from the ranks? How came the deer-poachers to get intelligence of the keepers' walks? Which was the black sheep among his fellows? It could not be, surely, honest old Bolton or fiery Ned Holmes, who had been nearly killed in a poaching fray, or silent Fred Hume, who spent all his time trapping by himself?

A sudden thought struck him. He would not cross into old Bolton's walk, where Duncastle Rings were, but he would climb the hill above the camp, and, if he saw signs of Hetty on her way from market, signal to her to come across.

A few minutes' run brought him to the top of the highest wave of the Down. Here he waited and waited, ranging over the valley and scanning every rabbit that flashed from furze to furze, and every crow that alighted within five hundred yards. Suddenly, a little figure ran round the shoulder of the ring, of Druidical stones, and waved a handkerchief. George started, and held up his gun; and down the figure came into the valley, and up the hill to the camp. He strode down to meet her, and she, rosy with the run, came laughing towards him.

"Why, how late you are, George," she said, in reply to half a dozen kisses, "a nice, gallant lover, I'm sure, to let me wait up there ten minutes; and I'd prepared such a surprise for you. I'd hidden behind the big stone, ready to jump up like a ghost when you came into the Ring. Oh, George, eggs are so nice and dear at Shaftesbury to-day, and I got such a lot of money for Auntie. But you don't look yourself to-day; you're not ill? It's that horrid night-watching in the cold."

"Yes; I've been vexed, Hetty. The ranger's new deputy has been rating me about the deer-poachers. There was another buck killed last night, up by the Big Oak."

"But that was not your walk, George, last night."

"No, not mine. Old Bolton, you remember I told you, would exchange last night. It's that Black Jack again. Hetty, I'd give a year's wages to have my fingers on that man's throat."

"Oh, George, don't look like that. I never like to see you look like that. You did once, do you remember, when you were jealous with me for speaking to Black Jack, and accepting his present at Salisbury Fair."

"It would make you look so, Hetty, to be suspected by a stuck-up fellow like that; and, you know, I would rather cut off both my hands here, at once, than mix myself up with rascals like Black Jack and his gang, and lose my character with Lord Waters. Now listen here, Hetty." He took her hands as he spoke, and sat her down beside him on the grass.

"Is it anything very serious," said Hetty, laughing. "Am I going to be put on my oath like people at the 'Sizes?'"

"Don't laugh, Hetty; it is really very serious," said George, still holding her hands firmly in his, and looking straight into her clear, brown eyes. "Tell me, have you mentioned to any one that I and old Bolton were to change our walks last night? The deer-stealers have heard of that. They can do what they like with him. You know how he drinks."

"Am I on my oath—solemn, binding oath," laughed Hetty, shaking her lover's hands up and down.

"Yes, really."

"And you won't be very, very angry if I tell you?"

"Of course not, Hetty; how could I be angry with you?"

"Well, then, I did; but don't ask me who." There was a smile of good-natured mischief in her eye, as she looked down and then up.

"But I must know who. That is all I have to work upon."

"Oh, it wasn't a deer-stealer. Don't imagine it was Black Jack!"

"No. I am sure it wasn't, Hetty. But now tell me, Hetty, for I'm mad to get a clue to these fellows."

"Must I?" said Hetty, coaxingly.

"You must; if you love me, you must."

"And you won't be vexed or angry?"

"No. Why should I? Tell me at once."

"You'll be angry."

"Never mind. Tell me. I feel sure it will give me some clue. I know it is on

the strength of this the villains went to Rushmere."

"Can't you guess?"

"No."

"Then it was my uncle from the Bald-headed Stag."

"Your uncle!" gasped George, and his hand shook so that his gun almost dropped. "Then that's where they meet. I suspected it."

"Yes; but he would do no harm with it, you may be sure. He met me yesterday morning, and he began talking about the camp, and Duncastle Rings, and Rushmere, till I told him you were going to change walks that night with old Bolton. He smiled, shook hands with me, and drove on slowly, talking to himself in a peculiar sort of way, such as I had never noticed in him before."

"Hetty," said George, "I'll tell you a secret," with a hurried kiss at parting. "Old Bolton and I do not change to-night. We have orders to retain our usual posts; so that, if those rascals come after mischief, trusting to the old man's laziness, they will catch a Tartar. But, mind, not a word, even to the very air. Good-bye, my darling. I wish I could go back all the way with you."

"And is this the way you are going to leave me?" pouted Hetty, with a pretty affectation of injured dignity.

"It's a matter of life and death, Hetty; and if you love me you wouldn't keep me. I shall see or hear of these rascals at the Bald-headed Stag."

"Oh, do not go after them. That Black Jack will kill you. He fears nothing."

"No more do I, Hetty. There, good-bye," and he clasped her in his arms. "I think I'm on their track now. Wish me success."

"I do, George, I do!" and as the young keeper sprang down the hill, Hetty sat down on the grass and burst into tears.

A quick run straight across the downs soon brought George to a hilly spot that commanded a view of Woodgates. As he stood watching the Bald-headed Stag, there came a party of men out of the door who began pointing across the road to a high field near a wood on the opposite side. One of the party was waving a red handkerchief, but no return signal could be seen.

A few minutes more, and young George stood at the door of the Bald-headed Stag. He stepped quickly into the parlour of the little village public-house and looked round. All his suspicions were confirmed. There,

among one or two keepers and half a dozen disreputable loafers, sat old Bolton, his fellow keeper, very drunk, and shouting scraps of a hunting-song :

Oh, it's all my fancy is after Nancy,
And a hunting we will go, go, go,
And a hunting we will go.

By the fire, with his back to the door, sat Dawson, the landlord, Hetty's uncle, in close confabulation with a short, red-bearded man, well known as a comrade of Black Jack, the deer-poacher.

"Why, it's our young Garge," said old Bolton, staggering up to him and slapping him on the shoulder; "come and have some yell; there's no yell like Bald-headed Stag's in these 'ere parts, and we've had ranger here this morning, swearing away about that buck that was killed yesterday; and I told him it was the one Lord Wolverton's hounds worried when they came here, and that he'd never got over it. But he said, 'All very well; but that don't account for the hind-quarter being gone;' so I up and told him, that very likely you had taken that to the kennel to give to the younds. I tricked 'un at last, didn't I, Master Dawson? Stuck up fool! telling people their dooties, who know 'em better than he does. I say, George, if you ever comes across Black Jack in one of these businesses, you take my advice—square it as I do."

The half-drunken companions of the old keeper cheered this sentence, and called George to share the pot with them.

"We don't change walks to-night, George," said old Bolton, filling a long pipe with a shaky hand, "so you needn't go back till dusk. Ranger has ridden off Salisbury way, to see if he could trace the venison; but, bless yer! that's at Lunnontown by this time."

"I'll not drink with you, Bolton," said George, "nor with your companions either. They're not the sort of men I want to associate with. I'm after the men you signalled to just now. Dawson, I ask you, in Lord Waters's name, was not one of those men Black Jack? Your lease is nearly up; and I warn you that, unless you tell me the truth, I will indict you as an aider and abettor of deer-poachers. All I want to know is, was that Black Jack you signalled to, and the way he is gone?"

"Now, don't ee go after him, George; now, don't ee," mandered the frightened landlord; "he's a dead shot, and he's sworn he'll kill the first man who lays hands on him. He said it of you, not half an hour ago, in this very room. I like you,

lad, and my niece Hetty likes you. Now, don't throw your life away like that, for Jack is a desperate fellow when his blood's up. Take my advice: let well alone, or Jack'll shoot ee dead, as if you were only a wild cat."

"Then it was Black Jack; and I'll have him," said George, grinding his teeth; "you mind my gun, Bolton, for I won't be driven into murder."

"I wouldn't, George; he'd think no more of shooting ee than though you were a stoat," cried old Bolton. "Do as I do—square it. Here, men, hold him back; it's murder to let him go. Who'll mind our families if we get shot?"

The men closed round George, and tried to detain him with friendly grip, with coaxing and by force; but George struck them asunder, flew to the door, and was down the road and over the hedge in a moment, like a deer, in the direction he had seen the signal waved.

"I always thought they were a bad lot at Woodgates," he thought to himself as he stood and rested, holding on to a young sapling beech; "but I didn't think they had been bought over in a lump like that; but I'll have this rascal for all that, and then the whole gang will drop asunder. He's scared them all, and if I could nab him, who knows if I might not some day get head-keeper and live with Hetty in that fine house at Cranborne? One can't get such a prize without a tussle."

Rushmere Walk was one of the most favourite haunts of the Cranborne deer, being full of coverts and lurking-places, and full of leafy holly, which is the deer's favourite food. The scattered woodlands and copses abounded in hazel and young beech, and the fern grew thicker on the slopes and round the hedgerows than in any other part of the old forest. It was about five o'clock, and very hot, and George half thought it might be as well to go and get a cup of tea at a friend's close by, before starting on a four or five hours' search. The lad half turned back towards Woodgates, when, looking down over the covert from some high ground which commanded a view, he happened to cast his eyes up to the right towards Stock Cope hedgerow, when he saw two men walking slowly up the side of it, and one, as far as he could distinguish at such a distance, had a gun over his arms. With no longing now for the cup of tea, George at once stripped for work, threw off his shooting-jacket, hung it on a bough, the position of which he noted,

and started off in pursuit. There was a great price to win, whatever the risk might be.

He followed the two figures as long as he could see them, till at last they both disappeared through a gap in a tall thick hedge. Right across the fallow skimmed George, and in a moment was in the gap, and brushing away the hazels, when, to his surprise, he almost butted a man, who was quietly standing there upright, smoking a pipe, and with both hands in his pockets. "Ah!" thought George to himself, "this fellow is staying here to screen the other, and that other is Black Jack, I feel sure, and have him I will if I can keep my body and soul together; so here goes." And brushing past the man, who grumbled something sullenly, he passed through the gap by his side, taking no notice of him at all.

When George emerged into the light, and got into the stubble field, there was no glimpse of the man with the gun, but he pushed across the field, and presently, at one corner of a copse, he caught sight of some one creeping along under a hedge about four hundred yards ahead, and directly he saw George he rose up and pushed into a brisk walk. Now there happened to be sheep folded in that field, and there were several lines of hurdles running across the very path he had to go. "These at least will check my fine fellow," thought George; but, as he came up to each hurdle, over the man went like a buck. George could see him now; it was Black Jack, the man who had had seventeen of Lord Shaftesbury's keepers after him at one time and had outrun them all, as he had publicly boasted he could do. But let us tell this part of the story in young George's own identical words:

"When I saw it was he," said George, "I almost gave it up as a bad job. He was so far in advance of me, with all them sheep hurdles in between, and now and then he looked round in a mocking kind of manner, as much as to say, you are a stout man if you think to take me; and he seemed so lissome like, and so active, that I verily thought I should have had to put it off for that day at least. But, somehow, I considered within myself that I would not allow him to beat me; and I was a youngish man then, sir, and not easily daunted by anything, so I took a resolution to follow him, come what would. In a few moments I had bundled through the hurdles, and scrambled through an adjoining hedge, and looked about me for my man. Him I beheld at a good distance, off, making his

best pace to outrun me at once, and so get off clear. I started behind, and did my best, but it was trying work over the heavy land. I thought at one time that I should never make the distance shorter between us, but by degrees I got nearer, so near that I could hear his laboured breathing and puffing. This gave me some encouragement, and I continued to follow, though at several yards behind, hoping to snap him by-and-by. You may fancy that at this time I was not altogether in a state to keep up the chase, and if it had not been for a feeling that I would take him, if possible, I could not have persevered many minutes longer in following. A few minutes more brought us both to a place on the Blandford-road, having run four miles, and I was still jogging on, thinking how I should get up to him. All of a sudden he stopped short and turned round, at the same time presenting his gun full at my body, swearing, as he did so, that if I came nearer he would fire into me. The gun was cocked all the time, and loaded with twelve slugs (as afterwards ascertained). Almost immediately, however—I don't know what made him hesitate—he ran forward again, all down through an entrenchment. I was gaining on him—I felt it. My blood was up; I would have him, and was already within ten yards of him, by dint of sheer struggling; a few minutes more, and I should come to close quarters. I looked up and saw him again facing me—the gun pointed at my head, and his eye looking along the barrel.

"I saw his determined eye—I knew his piece was on full cock, his finger on the trigger, and the muzzle towards me; and yet, somehow, I did not hesitate to advance. I suppose my blood was up with that long run, and I always was thought staunch when I was once on the track of a thing, for I remember I sat a horse all day once before a fence he would not try, and had my dinner and tea on horse-back; but, by Joe, I made him do it at last. I did not, I can assure you, sir, think of the danger a bit, and I moved on him with my eyes fixed on him till I felt the cold ring of the barrel touch my forehead. I never could tell why he did not fire, but I suppose he thought he should be seen from Thorney Down public-house, which was only two hundred yards away up to the right. As he turned his face in that direction for an instant I knocked up the gun with one hand, and rammed the fingers of my other in his red neck-handkercher.

"Not a word was spoken; but Jack knew he had to fight for it, or his hour had come, and to it we went, sir, hot enough I can tell you. With his heavy-tipped boots he kicked at my legs, every kick cutting me as if you had slashed them with a reaping-hook. Jack was a practised wrestler, and this is the way he used to beat off the Shaftesbury keepers. The bones were bare before we had been ten minutes at it, and he leaped and struggled like a mad bull, and cursed himself, no doubt to himself, for not having fired when he had had the chance. I thought, when I tried to pinion him, that he would have torn my two arms off, and I had to beat him heavily in the face before I could quiet him and get his gun from him and in my left hand, and hold him fast with the other, as I tried (I was far from home) to drag him to the Thorney Down public-house.

"We had not proceeded far, even then, before he rebelled, so I was forced to put the gun down and tackle him again; and then we went at it again, up and down, throwing each other about; and sometimes I was undermost and he above; but, by good luck, at last I 'pacified' him, and took him on as before. During this process he held me by the cheek with his teeth; but, at last, I got him by the throat and choked him off, and held him till his face was as black as your hat.

"Not a quarter of a mile from this, and within sight of the public-house, he began again, and seemed fresher than ever. In all my life I never met with such a man. He never seemed to give in, and he kicked my shins so that I could scarcely stand. He gave me the hardest tumbles, but I gave him a squeeze or two I can tell you, and when he tried to get at his knife, I felled him three times running, and as for pounding we were both pretty well pounded; and the moment I had given the man into Lord Waters's custody at Rushmere, I fell down in what they call a faint. Yes; it had been a great struggle, sir."

George told my informant, a Wiltshire gentleman, the whole story in a modest and impressive manner. But we may be quite sure it was a desperate fight, a real unsparring grapple of anger and despair. At Lord Waters's the poor wounded keeper was placed in a cart full of soft straw and driven slowly home, to be nursed by Hetty and her mother.

I need scarcely say that, after this tumble, George's fortune rapidly rose.

after Black Jack's transportation for life, the deer-poaching gang of Cranborne Chase quickly disappeared. There was a rapid supply of new keepers, the deputy ranger's interference was promptly stopped, and George very soon rose to the dignity of head-keeper.

When I last saw him he was landlord of the Bald-headed Stag, and nailing up an immense pair of antlers over the parlour fireplace; three sturdy boys were holding the steps and shouting for joy; while Hetty, with a bonny baby in her arms, was endeavouring to keep order, as Lord Waters had just been seen at the turning of the road, and was evidently going to stop to inquire about the three bloodhounds which were left in George's care. There is a scar or two still on the brave keeper's face; but they were honestly earned, and George is not ashamed of them.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XL.

"So you are to come to Switzerland with us next month, Ancram," said Miss Kilfinane. She was seated at the piano in Lady Seely's drawing-room, and Algernon was leaning on the instrument, and idly turning over a portfolio of music.

"Yes; I hope your serene highness has no objection to that arrangement?"

"It would be of no use my objecting, I suppose!"

"Of none whatever. But it would be unpleasant."

"Oh, you would still go then, whether I liked it or not?"

"I'm afraid the temptation to travel about Europe in your company would be too strong for me!"

"How silly you are, Ancram!" said Miss Kilfinane, looking up half shyly, half tenderly. But she met no answering look from Algernon. He had just come upon a song that he wanted to try, and was drawing it out from under a heap of others in the portfolio.

"Look here, Castalia," he said, "I wish you would play through this accompaniment for me. I can't manage it."

It will be seen that Algernon had become familiar enough with Miss Kilfinane to call her by her Christian name. And, moreover, he addressed her in a little tone of authority, as being quite sure she would

"This?" she said, taking the song from his hand. "Why do you want to sing this dull thing? I think Glück is so dreary! And, besides, it isn't your style at all."

"Isn't it? What is my style, I wonder?"

"Oh light, lively things are your style."

At the bottom of his mind, perhaps, Algernon thought so too. But it is often very unpleasant to hear our own secret convictions uttered by other people; and he did not like to be told that he could not sing anything more solid than a French chansonette.

"Lady Harriet particularly wishes me to try this thing of Glück's at her house next Saturday," he said.

Miss Kilfinane threw down the song pettishly. "Oh, Lady Harriet?" she exclaimed. "I might have known it was her suggestion! She is so full of nonsense about her classical composers. I think she makes a fool of you, Ancram. I know it will be a failure if you attempt that song."

"Thank you very much, Miss Kilfinane! And now, having spoken your mind on the subject, will you kindly play the accompaniment?"

Algernon picked up the piece of music, smoothed it with his hand, placed it on the desk of the piano, and made a little mocking bow to Castalia. His serenity and good humour seemed to irritate her. "I'm sick of Lady Harriet!" she said, querulously, and with a shrug of the shoulders. The action and the words were so plainly indicative of ill temper, that Lady Seely, who waddled into the drawing-room at that moment, asked loudly, "What are you two quarrelling about, eh?"

"Oh, what a shocking idea, my lady! We're not quarrelling at all," answered Algernon, raising his eyebrows, and smiling with closed lips. He rarely showed his teeth when he smiled, which circumstance gave his mouth an expression of finesse and delicate irony, that was peculiar, and—coupled with the candidly arched brows—attractive.

"Well, it takes two to make a quarrel, certainly," returned my lady. "But Castalia was scolding you, at all events. Weren't you now, Castalia?"

Castalia deigned not to reply, but tossed her head, and began to run her fingers over the keys of the piano.

"The fact is, Lady Seely," said Algernon, "that Castalia is so convinced that I shall make a mess of this aria—which

Lady Harriet Dormer has asked me to sing for her next Saturday—that she declines to play the accompaniment of it for me."

"Well, you ought to be immensely flattered, young jackanapes! She wouldn't care a straw about some people's failures, would you, Castalia? Would you mind, now, if Jack Price were to sing a song and make an awful mess of it, eh?"

"As to that, it seems to me that Jack Price makes an awful mess of most things he does," replied Castalia.

"Ah, exactly! So one mess more or less don't matter. But in the case of our Admirable Crichton here, it is different."

"I think he is getting awfully spoiled," said Castalia, a little less crossly. And there was absolutely a blush upon her shallow cheek.

"And that's the reason you snub him, is it? You see, Ancram, it's all for your good, if Castalia is a little hard on you!"

Miss Kilfinane rose and left the room, saying that she must dress for her drive.

"I think Castalia is harder on Lady Harriet than on me," said Algernon, when Castalia was gone.

"Ah! H'm! Castalia has lots of good points, but—I daresay you have noticed it—she is given to being a little bit jealous when she cares about people. Now you show a decided liking for Lady Harriet's society, and you crack up her grace, and her elegance, and her taste, and all that. And sometimes I think poor Cassy don't quite like it, don't you know?"

"What on earth can it matter to her?" cried Algernon. He knew that Castalia was no favourite with my lady, and he flattered himself that he was becoming a favourite with her. So he spoke with a little half-contemptuous smile, and a shrug of impatience, when he asked, "What on earth can it matter to her?"

But my lady did not smile. She threw her head back, and looked at Algernon from under her half-closed eyelids.

"It's my opinion, young man, that it matters a good deal to Castalia," she said; "more than it would have mattered to me when I was a young lady, I can tell you. But there's no accounting for tastes."

Then Lady Seely also left the room, having first bidden Algernon to come and dine with her the next day.

Algernon was dumfounded.

Not that he had not perceived the scornful Castalia's partiality for his charming self; not that her submission to his wishee, or even his whims, and her jealous anxiety to keep him by her side whenever there

appeared to be danger of his leaving it for the company of a younger or more attractive woman, had escaped his observation. But Algernon was not fatuous enough to consider himself a lady-killer. His native good taste would alone have prevented him from having any such pretension. It was ridiculous; and it involved, almost of necessity, some affectation. And Algernon never was affected. He accepted Castalia's marked preference as the most natural thing in the world. He had been used to be petted and preferred all his life. But it truly had not entered into his head that the preference meant anything more than that Castalia found him amusing, and clever, and good-looking, and that she liked to keep so attractive a personage to herself as much as possible. For Algernon had noted the Honourable Castalia's little grudging jealousies, and he knew as well as anybody that she did not like to hear him praise Lady Harriet, for whom, indeed, she had long entertained a smouldering sort of dislike. But that she should have anything like a tender sentiment for himself, and, still more, that Lady Seely should see and approve it—for my lady's words and manner implied no less—was a very astonishing idea indeed.

So astonishing was it, that after a while he came to the conclusion that the idea was erroneous. He turned Lady Seely's words in his mind, this way and that, and tried to look at them from all points of view, and—as words will do when too curiously scrutinised—they gradually seemed to take another and a different meaning, from the first obvious one which had struck him.

"The old woman was only giving me a hint not to annoy Miss Kilfinane; not to excite her peevish temper, or exasperate her envy."

But this solution would not quite do, either. "Lady Seely is not too fond of Castalia," he said to himself. "Besides, I never knew her particularly anxious to spare anyone's feelings. What the deuce did she mean, I wonder?"

Algernon continued to wonder at intervals all the rest of the afternoon. His mind was still busy with the same subject when he came upon Jack Price, seated in the reading-room of the club, to which he had introduced Algernon at the beginning of his London career, and of which Algernon had since become a member. It was now full summer time. The window was

Patrick was lounging in a chair near it, with a newspaper spread out on his knees, and his eyes fixed on a water-cart that was besprinkling the dusty street outside. He looked very idle, and a little melancholy, as he sat there by himself, and he welcomed Algernon with even more than his usual effusion, asking him what he was going to do with himself, and offering to walk part of the way towards his lodgings with him, when he was told that Algernon must betake himself homeward. The offer was a measure of Mr. Price's previous weariness of spirit; for, in general, he professed to dislike walking.

"And how long is it since you saw our friend, Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs?" asked Jack Price of Algernon, as they strolled along, arm-in-arm, on the shady side of the way.

"Oh—I'm afraid it's rather a long time," said Algernon, carelessly.

"Ah, now that's bad, my dear boy. You shouldn't neglect people, you know. And our dear Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs is exceedingly pleasant."

"As to neglecting her—I don't know that I have neglected her—particularly. What more could I do than call and leave my card?"

"Call again. You wouldn't leave off going to Lady Seely's because you happened not to find her at home once in a way."

"Lady Seely is my relation."

"H'm! Well, would you cut Lady Harriet Dormer for the same reason?"

"Cut her? But, my dear Mr. Price, you mustn't suppose that I have cut Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs!"

"Come, now, my dear fellow, I'm a great deal older than you are, and I'll take the liberty of giving you a bit of advice. Never offend people, who mean to be civil, merely because they don't happen to amuse you. What, the deuce, we can't live for amusement in this life!"

The moralising might be good, but the moralist was, Algernon thought, badly fitted with his part. He was tempted to retort on this new mentor, but he did not retort. He merely said, quietly:

"Has Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs been complaining of me, then?"

"Well, the truth is, she has—in an indirect kind of way; you know—what?"

"I'll go and see her this evening. Today is Thursday, isn't it? She has one of her 'At home's' this evening."

Jack Price looked at the young man admiringly. "You're an uncommonly

my honour I never knew a fellow of your years take advice so well. By Jove! I wish I had had your common sense when I was your age. It's too late for me to do any good now, you know, what? And, in fact" (with a solemn lowering of his musical Irish voice) "I split, myself, on the very rock I'm now warning you off. I never was polite. And if any one told me to go to the right, sure it was a thousand to one that I'd instantly bolt to the left!" And shaking his head with a sad, regretful gesture, Jack Price parted from Algernon at the corner of the street.

Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs received the truant very graciously that evening. She knew that, during his absence from her parties, he had been admitted into society, to which even her fashionable self could not hope to penetrate. But, though this might be a reason for a little genteel sneering at him behind his back, it was none whatever, Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs considered, for giving him a cool reception when he did grace her house with his presence. She said to several of her guests, one after the other: "We have young Ancram Errington here to-night. He's so glad to come to us, poor fellow, for my people's place is his second home, down in the West of England. And, then, the Seelys think it nice of us to take notice of him, don't you know? He is a relation of Lady Seely's, and is quite in that set—the Dormers, and all those people. Ah! you don't know them? They say he is to marry Castalia Kilfinane. But we haven't spoken about it yet out of our own little circle. Her father was Viscount Kauldkail, and married Lord Seely's youngest sister," and so on, and so on, with a set smile, and no expression whatever on her smooth, fair face.

To Algernon himself she showed herself politely inquisitive on the subject of his engagement to Castalia, and startled him considerably by saying, when she found herself close to him for a few minutes near a doorway:

"And are we really to congratulate you, Mr. Errington?"

"If you please, madam," answered Algernon, with a bright, amused smile and an easy bow, "but I should like to know—if it be not indiscreet—on what special subject? I am, indeed, to be congratulated on finding myself here. But, then, you are hardly likely to be the person to do it."

At that moment Algernon was wedged into a corner behind a fat old gentleman,

who was vainly struggling to extricate himself from the crowd in front, by making a series of short plunges forward, the rebound of which sent him back on to Algernon's toes with some violence. It was very hot, and a young lady was singing out of tune in the adjoining room; her voice floating over the murmur of conversation occasionally, in a wailing long-drawn note. Altogether, it might have been suspected by some persons that Mr. Ancram Errington was laughing at his hostess, when he spoke of his position at that time as being one which called for congratulation. But Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs was the sort of woman who completely baffled irony by a serene incapability of perceiving it. And she would sooner suspect you of maligning her, hating her, or insulting her, than of laughing at her. To this immunity from all sense of the ridiculous she owed her chief social successes; for there are occasions when some obtuseness of the faculties is useful. Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs tapped Algernon's arm lightly with her fan, as she answered, "Now, Mr. Errington, that's all very well with the outside world, but you shouldn't make mysteries with us! I look upon you almost as a brother of Orlando's, I do indeed."

"You're very kind, indeed, and I'm immensely obliged to you; but, upon my word, I don't know what you mean by my making mysteries!"

"Oh, well, if you choose to keep your own counsel, of course you can do so. I will say no more." Upon which Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs proceeded to say a great deal more, and ended by plainly giving Algernon to understand that the rumour of his engagement to Miss Castalia Kilfinane had been pretty widely circulated during the last four or five weeks.

"Oh, Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs," said Algernon, laughing, "you surely never believe more than a hundredth part of what you hear? There's Mr. Price looking for me. I promised to walk home with him, it is such a lovely night. Thank you, no; not any tea! Are you ever at home about four o'clock? I shall take my chance of finding you. Good night."

Algernon was greatly puzzled. How and whence had the report of his engagement to Castalia originated? He would have been less puzzled, if not less surprised, had he known that the report had come in the first place from Lady Seely herself, who had let fall little words and hints, well understanding how they would

grow and spread. He had not committed himself in his answer to Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs. He had replied to her in such a manner as to leave the truth or falsehood of the report she had mentioned an open question. He felt the consciousness of this to be a satisfaction. Some persons might say, "Well, but since the report was false, why not say so?" But Algernon always, and, as it were, instinctively, took refuge in the vague. A clear statement to which he should appear to be bound would have irked him like a tight shoe; and naturally so, since he was conscious that he should flexibly conform himself to circumstances as they might arise, and not stick with stubborn stupidity to any predetermined course of conduct, which might prove to be inconvenient.

After saying "Good night" to his hostess he elbowed his way out of the crowded rooms, and went downstairs side by side with Jack Price. The latter knew everybody present, or thought he did. And as, when he did happen to make a mistake and to greet enthusiastically some total stranger whom he had never seen in his life before, he never acknowledged it, but persisted in declaring that he remembered the individual in question perfectly, although "the name, the name, my dear sir, or madam, has quite escaped my wretched memory!" his progress towards Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs's hall-door was considerably impeded by the nods, smiles, and shakes of the hand, which he scattered broadcast.

"There's Deepville," said he to Algernon, as they passed a tall, dark, thin-faced man, with a stern jaw and a haughty carriage of the head. "Don't you know Deepville? Ah, then you should! You should really. The most delightful, lovable, charming fellow! He'd be enchanted to make your acquaintance, Errington, quite enchanted. I can answer for him. There's nothing in the world would give him greater pleasure, what?"

Algernon was by this time pretty well accustomed to Jack Price's habit of answering for the ready ecstasies of all his acquaintances with regard to each other, and merely replied that he dared to say Sir Lancelot Deepville was a very agreeable person.

"And how's the fair Castalia?" asked Jack, when they were out in the street.

"I believe she is quite well. I saw her this morning."

"Oh, I suppose you did," exclaimed

Jack Price with a little smile, which Algernon thought was to be interpreted by Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs's recent revelations. But the next minute Jack added, very unexpectedly, "I had some idea, at one time, that Deepville was making up to her. But it came to nothing. She's a nice creature, is Castalia Kilfinane; a very nice creature."

Algernon could not help smiling at this disinterested praise.

"I'm afraid she does not always behave quite nicely to you, Mr. Price," he said. And he said it with a little air of apology and proprietorship which he would not have assumed yesterday.

"Oh, you're quite mistaken, my dear boy; she's as nice as possible with me. I like Castalia Kilfinane. There's a great deal of good about her, and she's well educated and clever in her way—not showy, you know, what?—but—oh, a nice creature! There's a sort of bitter twang about her, you know, that I like immensely."

"Oh, well," cried Algernon, laughing outright, "if you have a liking for bitters, indeed——"

"Ah, but she doesn't mean it. It's just a little flavour—a little soupçon. Oh, upon my word, I think Miss Kilfinane a thoroughly nice creature. It was a pity about Deepville now, eh, what?"

"I wonder that you never thought of trying your fortune in that quarter yourself, Mr. Price!" said Algernon, looking at him curiously, as they passed within the glare of a street-lamp.

"Is it me? Ah, now, I thought everybody knew that I wasn't a marrying man. Besides, there never was the least probability that Miss Kilfinane would have had me—none in the world. Sure, she'd never think of looking at a bald old bachelor like myself, what?"

Algernon did not feel called on to pursue the subject. But he had a conviction that Jack Price would not, under any circumstances, have given Miss Kilfinane the chance of accepting him.

The allusion, however, seemed to have touched some long silent chord of feeling in Jack, and set it vibrating. As they sat at supper together, Jack reverted to the sage, mentor-like tone he had assumed that morning, giving Algernon much sound advice of a worldly nature, and holding up his own case as a warning to all young men who liked to "bolt to the left when they were told to go to the right," and presenting himself

in the unusual light of a gloomy and disappointed person; and when a couple of tumblers of hot punch smoked on the table, Jack grew tender and sentimental.

"Ah, my dear Errington," he said, "I wish ye may never know what it is to be a lonely old bachelor!"

"Lonely? Why, you're the most popular man in London, out-and-out."

"Popular! And what good does that do me? If I were dead to-morrow, who'd care, do you think? Although that doesn't seem to me to be such a hard case as people say. Sure, I don't want anyone to cry when I'm dead; but I'd like 'em to care for me a little while I'm living. If I'd been my own elder brother, now; or if I'd taken advantage of my opportunities, and made a good fortune, as I might have done— But 'twas one scrape after another I put my foot into. I did and said whatever came uppermost. And you'll find, my dear boy, that it's the foolish things that mostly do come uppermost."

"It's lucky that, amongst the other foolish things, an imprudent marriage never rose to the surface," said Algernon.

"Oh, but it did! Oh, devil a doubt about it!" The combined influence of memory and hot punch brought out Jack's musical brogue with unusual emphasis. "Only, there I couldn't carry out my foolish intentions. It wasn't the will that was wanting, my dear boy."

"Providence looked after you on that occasion?"

"Providence or—or the other thing. Oh, I could tell you a love story, only you'd be laughing at me."

"Indeed, I would not laugh!"

"On my honour, I don't know why you shouldn't! I often enough have laughed at myself. She was the sweetest, gentlest, most delicate little creature!—Snowdrop, I used to call her. And as for goodness, she was steeped in it. You felt goodness in the air wherever she was, just as you smell perfume all about, when the hawthorns blossom in May. Ah! now to think of me talking in that way, and my head as smooth as a billiard-ball!"

"And—and how was it? Did your people interfere to prevent the match?"

"My people! Faith, they'd have screamed to be heard from here to there, if I'd made her the Honourable Mrs. Jack Price, and

contaminated the blood of the Prices of Mullingar. Did ye ever hear that my great grandfather was a whisky distiller? Bedad, he was then! And I believe he manufactured good liquor, rest his soul! But I shouldn't have cared for that, as ye may believe. But they got hold of her, and told her that I was a roving, unsteady sort of fellow; and that was true enough. And—and she married somebody else. The man she took wasn't as good-looking as I was in those days. However, there's no accounting for these things, you know. It's Fate, what? Destiny! And she told me, in the pretty silver voice of her, like a robin on a bough, that I had better forget her, and marry a lady in my own station, and live happy ever after. 'Mary,' said I, 'if I don't marry you, I'll marry no woman, gentle or simple.' She didn't believe me. And I don't know that I quite believed myself. But so it turned out, you see, what? And so I was saved from a més-alliance, and from having, maybe, to bring up a numerous family on nothing a year; and the blood of the Prices of Mullingar is in a fine state of preservation, and Mary never became the Honourable Mrs. Jack Price. Honourable—bedad it's the Honourable Jack Price she'd have made of me if she'd taken me; an honourabler Jack than I've been without her, I'm afraid! D'ye know, Errington, I believe on my soul that, if I had married Mary, and gone off with her to Canada, and built a log-house, and looked after my pigs and my ploughs, I'd have been a happy man. But there it is, a man never knows what is really best for him until it's too late. We'll hope there are compensations to come, what? Of all the dreary, cut-throat, blue-devilish syllables in the English language, I believe those words 'too late' are the ugliest. They make a fellow feel as if he was being strangled. So mind your p's and q's, my boy, and don't throw away your chances whilst you've got 'em!"

And thus ended Jack Price's sermon on worldly wisdom.

ERRATUM.—In the article, "A Very Low Restaurant in Paris," at line 29, second column, p. 254, by a very obvious misprint, "one shilling and two pence" (1/2) is given as the price of each dish at the bibine, instead of one halfpenny (½d.).

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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HALVES.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGBERD," "A PERFECT TREASURE," "AT HER MERCY," &c. &c.

CHAPTER III. OUR LITTLE DINNER-PARTY.

I MUST have been very much in love in those days, for I remember that, throughout that long drive to Morecambe Bay, the absurdity of my errand did not occupy my mind, though humour was by nature welcome to it. I had laughed when my uncle had intrusted me with the task, and I laughed again when I had accomplished it: when the huge ungainly object of my care was squatting on the sand in front of me, so astonished to find himself there, instead of on a fishmonger's slab, that for a minute or two he could do nothing but stare and slobber, and presently, still staring, disappeared in the wet sand, in a grave of his own digging; but for the most part I thought of nothing but Gertrude. Did she like shell-fish, I wondered, and should I be able to afford to give it her when we were married? When those three years of apprenticeship should be over—no servitude like that which Jacob endured for his Rachel, but a blessed state of existence, since it would be passed in her society—and I should be a full-fledged attorney, and competent, if clients came, to mate with my angel. It would be necessary, perhaps, to live in a town, but in the summer time we should pass a month or two, at all events, in some beautiful district, such as that I was now traversing—perhaps that very one. Oh to be driving her (instead of the crab) to the shore of the silver sea, that she might bathe there (a salt-water Undine),

or to wander over the sparkling sands together; to be walking home with her along that very road, by moonlight, with my arm round her dainty waist, and nought but the silent hills—and those at a great distance—to watch our proceedings. I remember that drive for its sweet visions, as though I took it but yesterday, and how they were rudely broken in upon by the wheel of the dog-cart coming into contact with the fourth milestone—which reminded me of the distance on the road of life, that yet lay between me and their accomplishment.

In later years I have talked of love to many men, and their first acquaintance with that passion, as related by themselves, has been something very different from my own; the view that the poets take of it, even in youth, would seem to be a greatly exaggerated one, when tested by the common experience. If his Belinda is unkind to a man, he seeks consolation, not in vain, in Betsey. Nay, Betsey present has as great attractions for him as Belinda—kind—but absent. Whether it was that I was really something of a poet, or that Gertrude's beauty was so superlative that no comparison with that of others was possible, I did certainly justify in my own case the most extravagant assertions that have been made concerning the power of love. There were several young ladies in our neighbourhood who were more or less admired, and about my "intentions" towards whom I had been even rallied by Aunt Eleanor, but I regarded them now with no more emotion than if they had been of the other sex. The very face of Nature was more fair to me since I had seen Gertrude's; I beheld her smile in the sunbeam, I felt her kisses

(though she had never kissed me) in the summer breeze; and in the night I trembled with joy to think that she was but ten miles away. Imagine my transport then, in the reflection that that very evening she was coming to the rectory, and that it would be my lot to take her in to dinner! I had never sat beside her yet; my eyes had never yet pastured on her fair face at leisure, as they might do a few hours hence, without reproof; there was a fragrance about her such as no scent could give, and it would encompass me; her dress would ripple over me; her round white arm would perchance touch mine. Bountiful Heavens!

I am told that some sensitive persons, even in middle age, experience similar emotions at the prospect of sitting by a lord; if so, I do not envy them. It was a sickening, swooney sensation after all, and for one thing, I remember well that it entirely destroyed my appetite. I dressed for dinner with infinite care and pains, but should not have taken half the time but for the trembling of my limbs. The arrangement of my white cravat in particular was a work of extreme difficulty, and I had as many "failures" in it as Brummell. Then I tottered down to the breakfast-room, which commanded the approach to the house, and flattened my nose against the window-pane until the sudden thought struck me that I was defacing that feature, which was agonising. There was such a singing in my ears that I did not hear the carriage till I saw it at the door—a yellow "fly" from the George at Kirkdale, about which no pleasant associations had hitherto lingered, for it had been wont to take me to school; but it was henceforth to be a sacred vehicle.

"Harry!" cried my aunt's voice, from the drawing-room, with which the breakfast-room communicated, "why on earth are you not here, sir? Your uncle is not down, and these people are your friends, remember, not mine."

She had doubtless forgotten for the moment all about Gertrude, and was in no very pleasant frame of mind at having to welcome the Raeburns, whose acquaintanceship she had always studiously avoided. Otherwise, to my great envy, she was completely at her ease. I heard the shuffling of feet in the little hall, the sweeping of dresses (one of them her dress!), and a sharp "Stop a minute, Mark," from Mrs. Raeburn, whose cap perhaps had fallen on one side—what did it matter how she

looked! Then the door opened, and Richard announced, "Mr., Mrs., and Mr. John Raeburn, and Miss Hoyd." I knew he had made some stupid mistake by John's giggle, but was too occupied with my duties as deputy-master of the ceremonies to hear what it was.

Aunt Eleanor welcomed Mrs. Raeburn with the most polished urbanity, to which that lady responded by an acid smile; properly speaking, she had no mouth at all, but only a slit between her nose and chin, which it seemed to give her pain to widen. "So glad to see you," said my aunt.

"So glad to see you, madam—after so many years," was the unconciliatory response.

"Yes," sighed my aunt, quite unabashed, "ill-health has deprived me of many pleasures. I have been a prisoner—to the house at least—I may almost say for life."

I had not been very studious of the classics, but the phrase "splendide mendax" involuntarily occurred to me. My aunt had at one time been a woman of fashion, and had not forgotten her accomplishments.

"My husband's cousin and ward, Miss Floyd," continued Mrs. Raeburn. It seemed to my sensitive ear that she laid a particular emphasis on the word "ward," as though to imply that her hand was at the attorney's disposal.

"Very pleased to see you, my dear," was my aunt's gracious welcome; youth and beauty were always passports to her favour, which surely was to her credit, since she had herself once possessed and lost them.

Mr. Raeburn came up rubbing his hands, a little nervous, but with a cheerful smile. Mrs. Hastings did not consider him quite a gentleman, or one that was in his proper place as a guest in her drawing-room; but, being there, he had nothing to complain of in his reception.

As for Mr. John (perhaps with the remembrance of his powers of mimicry in her mind), my aunt gave him but a couple of fingers, and a "How do you do, sir?" the manner and tone of which he afterwards reproduced to perfection.

We were all a little stiff and formal, till my uncle came down, whose genial influence thawed the social atmosphere; and as, moreover, with a desperation that his sense of the duties of hospitality could have alone inspired, he at once laid himself

yard-arm to yard-arm beside the majestic Mrs. Raeburn, and engaged her with volleys of small talk, I was able to get a few words with Gertrude. Then dinner was announced—it was always served to the moment at the Rectory—and she laid her little hand on my trembling arm, and we were wafted into the dining-room together, as on pinions. During soup time conversation languished, but when the fish period arrived my aunt explained the absence of the salmon with great applause.

"Capital, capital!" cried the attorney, helping himself to the sherry, which, in country fashion, stood on the table; "he must be a noble crab, as I daresay he will prove. For my part, I think that a dressed crab is as good a dish as a salmon."

"But I am sorry to say the crab is gone too," said my aunt ruefully. She was rather ashamed of the rector's eccentric benevolence, and had hoped to have been spared the relation of it.

"Ho, ho! so somebody ate him too, did he," observed Mr. Raeburn; then catching the smile upon my face, he added, "It must have been a young digestion that tackled such a fellow as that, and I think I can guess whose it was."

"Yes," said I, "I made away with the whole of it."

Mrs. Raeburn gasped audibly, and laid down her knife and fork. "If this lad eats a crab with a salmon in it for luncheon," was her private reflection, "a hundred and fifty pounds a year is too little by half to charge for his keep."

"Why you are quite a Jonah, Sheddon!" exclaimed the attorney, with some slight confusion of metaphor.

"No, no!" exclaimed my aunt, "my nephew didn't eat the crab. The fact is, my husband was so struck with the creature's pluck, as he termed it, that he actually sent Harry to put it back in Morecambe Bay."

"And did you?" inquired John Raeburn, with simplicity.

"Did he, sir?" exclaimed my aunt with indignation; "do you suppose he sold it for half-a-crown upon the sly, and kept the money?"

"How pleasant it must be to be rich enough to indulge oneself in such eccentricities," observed Mrs. Raeburn, coldly.

This observation annoyed my aunt, I could see, even more than the remark of Mr. John, but she made no reply.

"Well, the crab is in the bay, Mrs. Raeburn," said my uncle, turning a little

red, "and will probably be caught and sent to Kirkdale, so that you will have the benefit of it after all."

"Oh, we don't indulge in such luxuries at the Priory, I do assure you," replied Mrs. Raeburn, shooting a significant glance in my direction, as much as to say, "so don't expect them, young man." "I must say, Mr. Hastings, that I think you committed a wicked extravagance."

"I don't see why you must say it, my dear," expostulated Mr. Raeburn, "even if you think it."

"I always speak my mind, Mark, as you know," was his lady's stern rejoinder, at which the attorney sighed, and again resorted to the sherry.

"For my part, I think it was very nice of your uncle," whispered Gertrude timidly, "though it was certainly very funny."

This observation enchanted me, independently of its sentiments; for, since she said it was funny, I was clearly privileged to smile in adhesion, and also to reply in the same hushed and tender key. How the general conversation proceeded from henceforth I took no note; but it struck me that there were gaps and pauses in it, and that every time Mr. Raeburn spoke it was with an access of confidence and gaiety. The champagne-glasses at Stanbrook Rectory were neither filled with Indian grasses nor suffered to stand empty before its guests.

I was sometimes addressed by others, of course, in which case I answered them civilly enough, but not without an effort; I could not readily detach my mind from my divinity. Once, for instance, I replied, "Beautiful," when Mr. Raeburn asked me what I thought of the new medical man at Kirkdale, Dr. Wilde. But whenever Gertrude was spoken to I was all ears, and it did not escape me that John Raeburn twice addressed her as "Miss Hoyd," in allusion to Richard's mistake in her introduction—a jocularly which, considering that that domestic was waiting at table, filled me with unspeakable disgust.

John was one of those anomalous individuals who, though really clever and quick-witted, are wholly without discrimination; vulgar he was to the backbone, and what was worse, he was absolutely unaware when a pleasantry was calculated to give offence. Nervous persons—and especially ladies—who knew John, grew hot all over, when, after a preparatory grin, he opened his mouth for a sally; and

many and many a time have I wished him choked. Such slapdash humorists, the oracles of their "office," or of the "commercial room," bring humour itself into disrepute, just as some pious folks, who have more zeal than knowledge, do discredit to true religion.

I am afraid I must have become more and more rapt up in my fair neighbour, since, when she suddenly whispered "Hush," I replied, "Why, hush?" and the next instant was turned into stone by my aunt's "Harry! Grace!" for it seemed I had been interrupting the rector in that function. Moreover, when the ladies rose to go, I was wholly unprepared for it, having missed the stately bow interchanged between the hostess and Mrs. Raeburn, and did not fly to open the door for them, as was my bounden duty: from which occurred the absurdest circumstance, for John Raeburn, either from politeness, or to contrast his chivalry with my neglect, rushed at what he thought was the door, and opened a cupboard full of jam pots, kept there because the preserve-closet was damp—a revelation which annoyed my aunt beyond all measure.

Amongst us men, however, there was a roar of laughter, and we sat down to our wine in high good humour. Though I would infinitely rather at once have "joined the ladies," I felt that my behaviour to Miss Floyd had been already somewhat exclusive, and was quite resolved to make up for it, by making myself pleasant to my uncle's guests; for which, indeed, little credit was due to me, since they had been invited solely upon my own account. Mr. John, too, by no means cast down by his fiasco with the cupboard, and evidently relieved by the absence of the ladies, chuckled over his walnuts with a gusto that could not have been exceeded if he had been an ape, and had stolen them; while the attorney manifested an hilarious garrulity which, even had Miss Floyd's appeal to me concerning him on the occasion of our first interview never been made, I could not fail to have attributed to the effects of liquor. He was not indeed what even the most ill-natured could have termed intoxicated; but the professional caution for which, despite his good humour, he was rather remarkable, had vanished before the genial hospitality of my uncle, and also perhaps from his sense of satisfaction at finding himself a welcome guest at Stanbrook.

Mr. Hastings was not only personally very

popular in the county, but his marriage with my aunt had given him a certain social position and importance, much beyond that commonly enjoyed by a country rector; and though singularly free from pretence or pride, his wife had compelled him to behave with a certain exclusiveness, which had kept such families as the Raeburns at a distance, and would without doubt have continued to do so, but for the accident of my electing to be an attorney-at-law. Thus Mr. Raeburn felt "elevated" in more than one sense, while his host's genuine kindness of manner warmed him into frankness and confidence. The sherry at the Priory was far from first rate, nor was the key of the cellar easily attainable from the lady who was so good as to take charge of it, so that it was the custom of the attorney to make "a wet night" of it, whenever he had a favourable opportunity, while the absence of his wife and master always gave him a certain elasticity. His geniality, moreover, generally evaporated very harmlessly in a smoking or drinking song—a safety-valve unfortunately denied to him on the present occasion. He seldom lost his professional wariness; and never, as his son afterwards assured me, had he been so communicative—and that, too, with respect to his own affairs—as on that evening over the rector's mahogany. We were speaking, as was natural, about the law and its prospects, when some guarded expression of opinion on the attorney's part caused my uncle to rally him upon his caution. "Directly one touches on the subject of your profession, Raeburn, I notice that you shrink into your shell. In one so prosperous and trusted as yourself, I cannot understand such reticence—though, of course, in an incapable or 'shakey' practitioner, it would be explicable enough. When one speaks of military matters to a soldier, it is as though he heard the call of a trumpet, and his tongue is loosened instantly. Talk to my Harry here about poetry, and he will astonish you with his eloquence. But you lawyers seem always afraid of letting some cat-out-of-the-bag."

"We don't like giving advice gratis, you see, my dear sir," answered the attorney, silyly, yet with a somewhat disconcerted and embarrassed air; "or, perhaps," added he, "we are afraid lest we should make the law intelligible to laymen, and that the familiarity should breed contempt."

"Upon my life, I do think there's some-

thing in that," replied my uncle, frankly. "You hedge about every legal operation with forms and ceremonies, such as would become an act of fetish-worship, rather than a transaction between civilised men, and hide your meaning in such a wearisome labyrinth of terms and phrases, that every one shrinks from exploring it; and then you affect to wonder how sensible men can be ignorant of their own affairs. Wherever there is designed obscurity, I must confess it is my conviction that there is always more or less imposture."

"That is pretty well for a clergyman, and a steward of divine mysteries," answered the attorney, roguishly.

"Nay, nay, I was only speaking of mundane matters," said my uncle; and then, with a pleasant smile, as if to condone his momentary gravity, he added, "besides, I have never heard a clergyman—at all events in the pulpit—accused of reticence. Now when you are in your pulpit you have not a word to say. It's the training that has done it—and on that account I fear it for my boy here, lest he should lose his frankness. Why, thirty years ago, Raeburn, I remember you as open as the day, just like your poor brother Alec."

"Aye, aye, rector, that is true enough," answered the attorney. "Thirty—years—ago." He drained his glass of port, and sighed deeply.

"He was your elder brother, if I remember right, was he not?" inquired my uncle, tenderly.

"He was, though we might have been almost twins for our likeness to one another, both in feeling and feature; but if he were alive now, it is likely, as you say, that our dispositions would be as different as the poles. No one would believe, who did not know me then, of what enthusiasm of affection I was capable. If the details of our last interview should be written down, they would be thought too fanciful for a romance. Poor Alec!"

"You have never heard of him from that day to this, have you, Mark?"

"Never, Hastings, never. It is my own conviction that he died within a very few months of our parting. That took place at Liverpool, from which he sailed next day to America, to seek his fortune; for each of us had then to seek it. Not even my young friend Harry, yonder, with his taste for novel reading and verse writing, would ever guess the resolve that Alec and I arrived at on that occasion."

The air and manner of the attorney had

become altogether altered while he thus spoke, and his tone had a pathos of which I had not conceived it capable.

"I think I can guess," said I, not without a feeling of secret triumph at my own sagacity; "you made an agreement with him that whoever should die first should appear to the other, and inform him of the fact!"

"Not so," answered the attorney gravely, "for what my brother promised he would have performed, and in that case I should have beheld him long ago. No, it was no spiritual compact, but a material one, and yet of so fanciful a nature that it might well pertain to another world than ours. We solemnly vowed to one another that, when we met again, we should make common lot of our fortunes—should divide in equal parts whatever property we might have both acquired in the interim."

A shrill whistle, which made my uncle "jump," dissolved the silence that followed this remarkable statement.

"I beg your pardon, sir," explained John Raeburn, "but I couldn't help it. Only imagine how awkward it would be, if Uncle Alec was to come back with only a stick and bundle, saying, 'Divide, divide,' like they do in the House of Commons!"

Of this ill-timed pleasantry the attorney took no notice, his thoughts, to all appearance, being occupied with recollections of the past. The click of the decanters, however, as the rector passed them round, aroused him, and he helped himself to a bumper of sherry.

"That is to the governor," whispered John in my unwilling ear, "what 'God save the Queen' is to a band of music. When he has had his 'whitewash' he never drinks anything more."

And, indeed, within five minutes my uncle's old-fashioned inquiry of, "Gentlemen, shall we join the ladies?" was answered in the affirmative, and we adjourned to the drawing-room.

As we entered it, my eye chanced first to fall upon Mrs. Raeburn, and though it was in search of someone else, the expression of her face arrested it. Her cold impassive features wore a strange look of anxiety upon them, as she fixed her gaze upon her jovial-looking husband.

"What folly have you been committing now? what secret have you let out over your cups?" it seemed to say.

In answer to which query the attorney's flushed features had, to my fancy, a depre-

cating air. "There is nothing to be alarmed at, my dear; but, I must confess, I have been a little imprudent in my confidences, and that's the fact."

I must have been highly imaginative at that period of my life, for I distinctly remember a horrible idea suggesting itself to me out of that supposed dialogue between man and wife. Was it possible, in years to come, that Gertrude and I should ever look at one another like that, or have the same sordid hopes and fears in common?

The next moment I caught sight of my darling, leaning over my aunt's blue sofa cushion, like an angel on a cloud, and endeavouring to grapple with the mysteries of a new knitting-stitch, which her hostess was teaching her.

"Here is Harry," whispered the old lady slyly, as I drew near them; "you see, my dear, he wants to learn it too."

SERVANTS—ANCIENT AND MODERN.

ANCIENT as domestic servitude is, its existence forms one of those social milestones, whereby national progress may be measured. The struggling tribes that are never certain of the morrow's meal, such as the Esquimaux, the Andaman islanders, the Mayals of Australia, have neither the means nor the desire to fill more months than necessity dictates. Even the Laplander, master of some hundred reindeer, leaves his hut and his antlered property to the exclusive care of wife and children. Among all primitive races household toils devolve, as a matter of course, upon the married women. It is in semi-civilised countries that we first find servants forming an important constituent of the census. Nor is it a little remarkable that we discover scanty traces of the institution of domestic service, in those graphic accounts which the Spanish conquerors of Peru and Mexico have left behind them. We gather, indeed, that Montezuma and Atahualpa had households of Oriental splendour; while something is said as to the power and luxury of the great caciques who, in the Western world, reproduced the satraps of old Persia. But the frugal habits and simple lives of the bulk of the population, no less than the subservience of all to the good pleasure of Inca or Emperor, left no place for ordinary servants.

In Asia, from very early times indeed, servants were mostly, although not invari-

ably, slaves. It was not alone in the highly-organised empires of Egypt and Mesopotamia that the demand for servile labour was constant. Under the free tent of the wandering Arab dwelt those who did not share the liberty of their lord. Hagar, plying the goatskin churn, or turning the rude handmill, in Abraham's encampment, is as completely a type of Eastern manners as Joseph's being sold into slavery at Memphis. But bondmen and bondwomen were, after all, less valued in the nomad life of the patriarchs than were the strong-limbed volunteers—such as was Jacob in the days of his exile—who did vigorous and intelligent work for their hire. In the Thebaid matters were differently ordered. Pharaoh and his courtiers, the warlike nobles who went in chariots to battle, like Homer's car-borne heroes, and the learned priesthood, who were the props of the whole fabric of government, required a large supply of attendants on whose obedience they could rely. It was no easy matter for a discontented slave to escape from the fat Nile valley, into the lean and hungry desert which guards the Egyptian border. It was, doubtless, from the mysterious land brooding beside the endless river that the early Hellenes derived the traditions of that domestic servitude which was rife among them. Old Greece, so far as its wave-washed cities were concerned, partook somewhat of the character of both a counting-house and a workshop, the managers of which were the ready-witted and fair-spoken citizens of the Demos. The rougher and simpler tasks of handicraft, or of manual labour, were allotted to slaves, those offices which required more dexterity being reserved for native citizens. The servile population of Athens or Corinth, as compared to the free-born, was large to a degree that a less energetic race might have esteemed dangerous; but the Greek was neither timid nor unduly harsh to those over whom he ruled. The plays of Terence and Plautus combine with those of Aristophanes to show us how completely the household slave in Hellas identified himself with the interests and wishes of his master. Shakspeare's witty, roguish, but attached domestics find their antetype in such as Sósia; and low as was the position of the live chattel from Thrace or Ionia, the speeches of Demosthenes inform us that actual neglect or ill-treatment of the slave was accounted as disgraceful.

Harder masters than the Greeks were presently to bear sway over millions, to whom all rights were arrogantly denied. The household of a wealthy Roman comprised many varieties of domestics. There were singers, buffoons, dancers, as well as cooks, and charioteers, and running footmen. The lute player was as necessary as the carptor or butler, whetting his official carving-knife for the dissection of the roasted sucking-pig, stuffed with leeks and ambergris, that was the favourite dish of his most noble master. The very bath necessitated the keeping up of a group of attendants, skilful with the strigil, cunning as to the exact temperature of the tepidarium, deft at those shampooing exercises, which were as highly prized as among the Easterns of to-day.

The freedmen formed a special class of retainers, answering to the trusty non-commissioned officers of a well-disciplined army, and their attachment to the master, who had set them free, really appears to have been genuine. In the hour of adversity the Roman found no friend so true. Pompey, left deserted by the remnant of his host, might wander away to die obscurely; Cato might open his veins in the bath sooner than sue for pardon from the victorious foe; in both cases the favourite freedman, like some faithful dog, was with his lord to the last. This caste of enfranchised thralls, ready at any risk to do their masters' bidding, in some sense represented the sturdy clients, who, in an earlier time, used their voices and clubs for Claudius or Fabius.

As for the ordinary slaves—whose plump forms and unthinking laughter, as they lounged at the gate of Memmius or Plancus, must often have stirred the envy of gaunt Quirites, whose tattered togas and patched sandals contrasted with the spotless robes and shoes of Spanish leather worn by their political inferiors—they were precisely such as, under the artificial conditions of their existence, they might have been predicated to be. Fat and indolent they were, for food was plenteous and housework light. That they lied and pilfered, that they spied and slandered, was no more than might be looked for. Every man and woman of the crew had his or her own scheme for future life, which generally entailed the amassing of a little hoard of ill-got money. Mœnicus would buy his freedom and keep a tavern in the Suburra. Phillis, who has quantities of the cast-off

finery of the ladies Julia and Flavia, her young mistresses, prudently plans to set up a small shop for the retail of frippery. Fat Nonus has not marketed so many years for his noble patron without putting together a considerable lump of savings, and aspires to be a purveyor of British oysters and truffles from Gaul, or perchance to let lodgings at the fashionable bathing-place of Baiæ. None of these persons were very scrupulous as to the means by which they clawed together the sesterces, that were indispensable for the carrying out of their pet projects. After all, Roman masters and mistresses were human, and, as such, gullible. The drudges who worked in the scorching sunshine or drenching rain, under the driver's whip, had a hard time of it certainly; but those who crouched and fawned, spaniel-like, within doors, were often able to find the length of my lord the Senator's buskined foot. Nonus knew, to a nicety, the over-charge to which the proconsul would submit, and how to ask a boon, when the choice Chian wine had warmed his master's heart into a vague good-nature. The Lady Flavia, although she had an ugly trick of pinching and slapping when displeased, and would sometimes make a pincushion of her maid's arm, after the wont of Roman ladies in their capricious moods, was very free with her money, and not inquisitive as to the fate of a lost bracelet or missing fibula. Her sister, the Lady Julia, paid high to have her letters privately carried to young Flaccus, of whom her parents disapproved. All these and other frailties brought in grist to the mill, and gave hope to the parasites and hangers-on of Roman grandeur.

Servitude took a more simple form among our hardy ancestors. The free-born men who hired themselves out, for a specific period, to plough and to fight, to reap the barley-crop and row the galley, were not thought to have done anything derogatory to their position, in accepting wages and obeying orders. To be free was to be noble, among Goths and Frisons, Lombards and Englishmen. The earlier kings of Norway beat their opponents by employing the axes of their "hired lads," the body-guard whose services their superior wealth enabled them to enlist; and of a similar composition was the band of household warriors with which our own Harold conquered at Stamford Bridge, and all but conquered at Hastings. Of a distinctly lower grade were the slaves,

the theowe and esné of Anglo-Saxon chroniclers, who were usually sprung from captives taken in war, or from criminals whose outlawry had never been reversed. These performed the ruder tasks of allotted labour, and were held of but slightly more account than the cattle they tended. But there was something patriarchal in the character of a pre-feudal household among the northern nations, which may have deprived domestic slavery of many of its worst features. High and low, young and old, sat at meat around the long oaken table, gathered round the fire on winter evenings, carolled the same songs, and went into ecstasies of laughter at the wit of the minstrel or the drollery of the juggler. The master went afield, at the head of his men, to hunt down the boar, or to cut the rye; the mistress sat spinning among her maidens; there was no culture—where none could read, and all shared the same superstitions and prejudices—to operate as a barrier between employers and employed. So far the picture may seem tolerably pleasing, but the fact that slaves very often ran away, in spite of the iron collar, and the many stripes that awaited the recaptured deserter, proves that the condition of these despised beings was not invariably a happy one.

In feudal times the consequence, and even the personal security, of every man of rank depended so much upon the number of men-servants beneath his roof, that the muster-roll of the household was often swollen to exaggerated dimensions. As for the actual work to be done, there must have been a minimum of that, as regarded indoor service, to divide amongst that host of able-bodied loungers. To change the rushes which did duty for carpets; to fetch logs for the two cavernous fireplaces of kitchen and hall; to burnish the various tankards, hanaps, and platters, of pewter or of silver; to set out the long black table for the mid-day dinner, and the late rere supper, could never have required the maintaining of a legion of blue coats, or tawny coats, all with fine appetites for beef and an insatiable thirst for ale. The real reason, for keeping up so cumbersome an establishment, was the facility with which every groom and footboy could be converted into a soldier. Was the mansion suddenly beset, contrary to the King's peace, by armed enemies, little time was lost in calling the domestics to the congenial task of fighting. Down from their

pegs came the steel caps and the shining breast-plates; there was bending of tough bows and brandishing of brown-bills; the few maid-servants ran screaming up the turret stairs, as the arrows and bullets began to fly; the many men strove hard, with steel and shot, seething pitch and scalding water, to beat off the besiegers. It was not until private warfare became obsolete, that a household ceased to be considered as a probable garrison, and a possible regiment.

Shakespeare and his contemporaries, writing at a transition epoch, show us the decay of the old and the dawning of the new system of domestic service. Their servants have not yet forgotten the old play of sword and buckler, or how to ruffle it for the credit of the house. They are still willing to fight, and in some cases to face fearful odds, and brave inevitable death, in defence of a beloved master. Their attachment is, however, no guarantee that they will not occasionally play tricks for their own peculiar profit, and indeed they have much in common with the witty, graceless knaves of Greek comedy. Faithful, but fertile in tricks and lies, they are true Scapins of the ante-chamber. That they expected to be beaten for their many sins of omission and commission was evident, and also that they took the correction in good part, and without any sense of degradation. John Thomas of nowadays, hair-powdered, frigid, passionless demeanour, would unquestionably feel very differently, should an angry master approach him with uplifted cane, than did his predecessors of the three last centuries. It may be doubted, however, whether he would acquit himself as valiantly in a street battle with the followers of odious Capulet, as did that earlier John who merely roared and winced under the hearty pommeling with which his employer punished his misdeeds. In the days of civil war and conspiracy, when great rewards could often have been got by denouncing the hiding-places of Jesuit, Jacobite, or Malignant, the dogged fidelity of servants was proof against the greed of gain. The gentleman's gentleman of Addison or Steele, and still more the liveried domestic of whom Johnson discoursed, might not be quite as trusty a retainer as the stubborn blue coat of Elizabeth's reign, but he was more prone to use his inventive talents for his master's benefit than against him. There really does seem to have been some sympathy between the

dicing, claret-drinking young blood of Anne's time, and the supple valet who combed his periwig and adjusted his ruffles.

Meanwhile, French serving-men, by far more numerous, arrogant, and gorgeously arrayed than their brethren in England, were regarded not merely as a pest, but also as an actual danger to the state, by that parliament of Paris which was never weary of fulminating edicts to restrain them. Modest suitors, having to crave an interview with Monseigneur or Monsieur le Maréchal, shrank from entering the ante-rooms crowded with noisy popinjays, glittering in gold lace and bright colours, and whose chartered insolence was little likely to spare any stranger not of noble birth. The aristocracy of the sword and of the robe, the presidents, the bishops, the foreign ambassadors, vied with one another in keeping on foot extravagant numbers of these gaudily-clad attendants, whose pranks in the streets and public places not seldom escaped punishment, on account of the rank of their employers. When, however, a lackey did come before a court of justice higher than that of the Châtelet, the merciless severity of the judges showed how strong was the inference against these pampered menials. Tallemant des Réaux relates an instance of a footman's having been condemned, though not executed, for having struck a magistrate, of whose official position he was ignorant; and pages, in especial, appear to have been obnoxious to the Rhadamanthine justice of Paris.

It is the great demand for domestic service in the Mohammedan countries of the Levant, in Barbary, and in Central Asia, which maintains the evil vitality of the African slave trade. Turks and Moors, Persians and Egyptians, would scarcely know how to get their house-work done, without importing black cooks and nurses, black grooms and gardeners, from the hot lands of the Soudan. The slave trade from the West Coast, more familiar to Europeans than that of Zanzibar or of the White Nile, was kept up for commercial purposes, and black labour was merely a convenient means of cultivating the rice, sugar, and tobacco of the Antilles and the tropical mainland. But a rich Moslem buys his servants; and, to do him justice, he deals gently enough with them when once he has got them. A slave who has embraced the religion of Islam—and the

pagan negro's conversion is easy and certain—has little to complain of save the loss of liberty. It is strange to contrast the life of one of these living chattels—proud of his new faith, well fed and well clad, and sure of being cared for in sickness or old age—with the half-forgotten horrors of his transplantation from Africa to his present home. He can remember, yet, his agony of terror when he fled from the blazing huts of his native village, suddenly surprised by the Arab kidnappers and their negro allies; can remember the flash and rattle of the guns, as the fighting-men of the little community were shot down like so many noxious animals; the chase through the woods, the capture, and the cold-blooded massacre of all who were too young or too old to command a price. He can scarcely have forgotten, too, the toilsome march to the coast, and how heavy was the yoke and how galling the thongs that bound the wrists; or how many of the weaker drooped and died, or perished miserably in fording some swollen river; still less the stifling air, the putrid food, the nauseous water, in the hold of the slaving dhow that made the voyage to the Persian Gulf, disease raging amongst the human cargo beneath hatches—a poor residuum of which would eventually reach the market and be purchased. But Ibrahim, sleek, strong, and a believer, under the roof of an indulgent master, seldom finds time to sigh over the sufferings of Kaffir blacks, not yet brought into the Mahomedan fold.

Indian housekeeping is at once very simple, and paradoxically complex. The fact that all servants are on board wages, from the moonshee, who takes a temporary engagement as secretary or tutor, down to the humblest punkah-wallah or grass-cutter, renders it comparatively easy for a master to know his expenses. But then there is something bewildering in the subdivision of labour, in having to harbour tailors and cobblers, washermen and watchmen, and florists and sweepers. It is perplexing to find that every servant so well knows his or her place, that a palki-bearer would scorn to fetch a pitcher of water; that hereditary poultry keepers attend the hens; hereditary grooms the horses; and that not a meal can be cooked, or a carpet spread, except by the agency of somebody, whose caste points him out as the appropriate person to perform the duty. An English resident, also, is apt to be puzzled by that habit of the native

domestics, strange to our notions, of collecting around them a clan of relatives, old and young, more or less dependent for sustenance on the monthly wages of the bread-winner. These "followers," like others of their plastic race, are by no means obtrusive, and are content to be tucked away in sheds and huts, or to lie about the passages of some rambling villa, while a pipkin of grain and a spoonful of ghee comprise, with a little cotton cloth, their few wants. But many a Briton unused to the country, yet drawing high pay, must marvel at the number of mouths that he indirectly has to fill, and must feel at times uncomfortably uncertain as to whether he has not made a gigantic mistake in supposing that the monthly payment of a few pounds sterling expunges his liabilities towards his servants, and as to the prospect of a little bill being sent in for all the rice and currie, all the wheat, and pulse, and clarified butter consumed by the domestic army that salaams at his approach. Servants in India have two merits to counterbalance such faults as are inherent in a race remarkable for the subtle ingenuity with which, on occasion, it can cheat and lie. They are grateful, not merely for exceptional kindness, but for the bread and salt that they have eaten; and breach of trust is abhorrent to even the elastic conscience of a Hindoo, so that the very man who takes the lead in plundering the Sahib's store-room, when pitting his wits against the duller fancy of his European employer, may be rendered honest by being appointed dragon in ordinary over the treasures that it contains.

That in Australia and in America domestic service is very dear, very scarce, and very bad, is notorious. The conditions of our Old World experience are of course reversed, where labour is rare and food abundant, but in the Great Republic, at any rate, local habits of thought have more to do with the scarcity of tolerable servants than the actual state of the market for industry. Whatever may be the case in the corn-growing prairie lands of the virgin West, the Eastern States are no El Dorado for unskilled workers, and there is poverty enough stagnating in squalid by-streets of the stateliest cities of the Atlantic seaboard. Yet the American help, whose irreverent answers and dawdling indolence evoked the wonder of a bygone generation of travellers from the Old Country, has absolutely become as extinct as the moa or the dodo.

In Washington, New York, and Philadelphia, a very few genuine citizens may deign to be coachmen or butlers, but no native American girl will now accept the duster of office. Raw recruits from Ireland, negroes, and, in some few cases, Chinese, execute, in a manner more or less perfunctory, the highly-paid household duties which to their uninstructed minds imply no peculiar degradation. None of these classes quite satisfy the requirements of a fastidious employer. The velvet tread, the supple dexterity, the wonderful frugality of the yellow-skinned importations from Kathay, can hardly conquer the instinctive repugnance with which the sly eyes, the crooked claws, and the dangling pigtail of Ah Sin are regarded by an Anglo-Saxon master or mistress. Biddy, from Connaught, who brings with her a fine talent for the demolition of crockery, and a rooted aversion to soap and water, is more quick to learn the lesson of Republican equality than the rudiments of bed making or cookery. Juba and Aunt Polly are kind, polite, and gifted with a natural turn for the arts of the kitchen, but punctuality and sustained capacity for work are not African virtues, and it takes a good many blacks to get through the daily task of a few well-drilled white servants. It is the Nemesis of the "almighty dollar" that it can but hire such sorry Ariels to do its behests.

This is essentially an era of change, of transition from one system to another, and we in England, and in a less degree our neighbours of Continental Europe, have to grumble at the alteration in those who sweep our floors and dress our dinners. Many causes have co-operated to produce the result which occasions, in the best-regulated families, so much heart-burning and complaint. The clock of Time has not stood still with servants, or with the social strata whence servants come. The purchasing power of money is not what it was, and as a corollary of the proposition, it is easier to earn than was the case twenty or thirty years ago. The old saying, that when one door shuts another opens, is a great deal truer, as applied to domestic service, than at the time of its invention. This is an age, less of travel than of migration, and continual changes of residence, with the hurry and recklessness which such flittings from one roof-tree to another involve, make it impossible for employers to choose their servants as carefully as of old. Dean Swift's ras-

cally serving-man would, nowadays, have laughed at the bad character which his caustic master penned in punishment of his guilt, and which reduced him to mendicancy, until, long afterwards, the author of Gulliver's Travels received him back into his service. Roguery is no novel device, and when Anne was queen there must have been knaves, as ready to pen flourishing certificates for a fraudulent footman or light-fingered lady's-maid, as any of those amiable optimists, who sometimes expiate their offences in this line by a severe sentence of hard labour at Millbank. But in a comparatively small society, where everyone knew something of his neighbour, such stratagems were of small avail. Until the modern passion for locomotion reached its present pitch of restlessness, a disgraced servant found it very hard indeed, even if penitent, to get a new start in life. There was a sort of unwritten contemporary chronicle kept up by gossiping tongues, and which did not forget to register the peccadilloes of Betsey Jane and John Thomas. The fear of being discharged is no longer the awful apprehension of kitchen outlawry that it once was, before the rapid growth of suddenly-made fortunes combined with the fashion of frequent changes of abode to make us all take things on trust, of which our slow-moving forefathers required evidence. It is not only that haste and carelessness induce employers to take many a leap in the dark, so far as the engagement of servants is concerned. Household service is now only one avenue, and that by no means the most popular, of the many roads that lead to the gilded temple of the Diva Pecunia. The modes of bread-winning have been multiplied of late years, almost in geometrical ratio, and there is also a growing impatience of the irksome restraints, and steady discipline, which indoor servitude implies. The more independent spirits probably make a wise selection in preferring salaries to wages, and some other task to the labours of the household. To be a pattern servant is no easy matter; nor is the position of the employer wholly free from difficulties. There always were, no doubt, masters and mistresses who were secretly afraid of their domestics, and their number is not likely to have been diminished by the abolition of the really confidential intercourse which once linked the two diverging classes together. Sir Plume may not have been precisely a hero to his valet, nor Lydia Languish a heroine to her chattering

Abigail, but there was a genuine sympathy between those frivolous young persons and their attendants, scarcely to be reproduced in our colder and less communicative epoch. There are, no doubt, as excellent servants, and as well-intentioned masters and mistresses now, as at any time in the world's history, but their relations to one another can never again be such as the past generations have witnessed, and perhaps it is well for mankind that this should be so.

THE HOUR-GLASS.

SPARKLING, dancing downwards,
Merrily drop the sands.
While the golden hours so gaily pass,
Amid rose, and lily, and soft green grass;
Wherefore so eager to turn the glass,
Oh dimpled baby-hands?

Glittering, flashing downwards,
In the glow of the April sun.
Ah, sweet white fingers, and sky-blue eyes,
And cheeks as rosy as western skies;
'Tis pity in Youth's first Paradise,
That the sands so swiftly run!

Stealing for ever downwards,
Grey tinging their virgin gold.
Pulses still quiver, and hearts still beat,
But the road grows hard for the tired feet;
Surely the sky had more warmth and heat,
And the sands showed brighter of old!

Dropping drearily downwards,
The evening is well-nigh o'er.
The brightest and best the river have crossed,
The bolt is shot, and the venture lost;
The barge on the last long wave is tossed,
The glass needs to turn no more.

REMARKABLE ADVENTURERS.

CASANOVA.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I. THE SHADOW OF THE PRISON.

UNLIKE many of the eccentric brotherhood, Casanova was of no doubtful origin. Other birds of prey have shown themselves chary of disclosing the eyrie where they were hatched, but no such modesty restrained this adventurer "par excellence" from boasting of his pedigree. He was born and bred a free-lance, and took a certain pride in vaunting his buccaneering strain. His remote progenitor, Don Jacopo Casanova, himself a natural son of one Don Francisco, carried off from a convent, the day after she made her vows, Dona Anna Palafox. This event occurred in the year 1428, and the valiant Don Jacopo, who was secretary of King Don Alfonso of Arragon, escaping with the nun to Rome, passed a year in prison, when Pope Martin the Third re-

lieved the lady from her obligations and gave the nuptial benediction, at the recommendation of Don Juan Casanova, master of the Holy Palace and uncle of Don Jacopo. Of this extraordinary marriage only one child survived, Don Juan Casanova, who, in 1475, married Dona Eleonora Albini, had issue a son, named Marc Antonio, and for a while lived respectably enough.

Blood, however, will tell, and in 1481 Don Juan having killed an officer belonging to the King of Naples, was obliged to show a clean pair of heels to the Eternal City; enlisted under Christopher Columbus, and died in 1493. Marc Antonio found the "pen mightier than the sword," wrote rhymes in the style of the period, and became the secretary of Cardinal Pompeo Colonna. A satire against Giulio de' Medici, then a cardinal, obliged this learned gentleman to leave Rome and retreat to Como, where, to pass the time, he got married. Shortly after, Giulio de' Medici, having become Pope, under the title of Clement the Seventh, recalled him to Rome, where he died of the plague, after Rome was taken and pillaged by the Imperialists in 1526. His son fought through the long wars which desolated France in the sixteenth century, and died there full of years, if not of honour. The grandson of this worthy man seems to have forsaken the sword for the stage, for he became first a dancer and then an actor, and finally married the daughter of a shoemaker, who in turn became an actress, and nine years after was left a widow with six children, of whom Giacomo Girolamo Casanova, the eldest, was born in 1725.

This descendant of an adventurous line was endowed not only with the mother-wit and readiness of resource, common to those who have rather scratched their names on the edges of society than written their record upon its face, but with an extraordinary industry, energy, and force of character which, while getting him into many scrapes, enabled him to get out of them in a fashion which, at times, was almost creditable. His mother, travelling as a comedian from one city of Europe to the other, appears to have left her child under the guardianship of a certain Abbé Grimani, who put him out to board at Padua, where he received his first instruction from the Abbé Gozzi, under whose care he, although instructed in the systems

of Aristotle and the cosmography of Ptolemy, at which he laughed consumedly, nevertheless imbibed the art of writing Latin and Italian verse; and, moreover, acquired a fair knowledge of Greek. Young Casanova could knock off a couplet at the age of eleven, and, continuing his studies at the University of Padua, took the degree of doctor of laws at sixteen. The scholars of this famous university enjoyed extraordinary immunities, and used, or rather abused, them atrociously. They carried weapons openly, came frequently into collision with the police, and led a life generally which throws the German "renowners" completely into the shade. This life was well suited to Casanova, who to his last day made love and literature, science and gambling, necromancy and duelling, his chief occupations. He often complained of his evil star, but, so far as can be seen, his maleficent planet was made up of his own qualities—a certain mania for being thought a wit, a trenchant and insolent tone, and a burning desire to settle every dispute sword in hand. He was by no means an oily insinuating adventurer, but a dangerous mixture of the wit, schemer, and swash-buckler. He knew excellently well how to ingratiate himself with his victims and to practise on their credulity, but when "bowled out" his diabolical temper and his personal courage forbade him to make a swift and ignominious retreat. He retired slowly, snarling and gnashing his teeth, and those who drove him to bay often found him, to their cost, an ugly customer.

Being endowed with these happy qualifications for a sacred mission, he was destined for the Church, and received the tonsure at the hands of Monsignor Carreri, patriarch of Venice. At the City of the Sea he still pursued his studies, and in his position as a young abbé, under the protection of Signor Malipieró, an ancient patrician, enjoyed an excellent opportunity of "forming himself in the great world." Doubtless he acquired a certain ceremonious varnish of good manners, but throughout his life the coarse internal structure showed through the cracks with painful distinctness. Allowing for every difference between the manners of the last century and those of our own, Casanova must always appear destitute of thorough good breeding. Stately upon occasion, ceremoniously polite when in a good humour, and brave always, he yet continually

betrayed that want of ease which characterises the promoted bravo.

Of a singularly positive turn of mind, the young abbé turned his attention to physics, and neglected no opportunity of acquiring the natural sciences. Meanwhile, he was permitted to preach and gad about in Venice, and getting into a few scrapes, was relegated to a seminary, among a set of "dirty little rascals." Disgusted at this treatment, he conducted himself in fashion to be imprisoned in a fort, and on his return to Venice was engaged, as his librarian, by a southern bishop, whom he was to rejoin at Rome.

Setting out from Venice, to reach Rome *viâ* Ancona, he went first to Chiozza to take shipping, and got into trouble at once. The young rook, whose plumage was not yet fully grown, had to pass through the pigeon stage, and was plucked of all his money by a gang of scapegraces, headed by a one-eyed monk. Without a sequin he went on board, and there picked up the acquaintance of a young Franciscan, thanks to whom he made his way on foot to Loretto, and thence to Rome. Tramping along with the mendicant friar, begging food, lodging gratis, and borrowing money, the young Venetian at last reached the Eternal City, with seven pauls in his pocket, and found that his bishop had gone on to Naples, after franking his follower through. He soon reached Naples, only to find the episcopal bird flown to Martorano, in the Terra di Lavoro, some two hundred miles off. This was a long way to walk, and having only eight carlini, Casanova was obliged to draw at sight upon his intelligence—a bank which rarely failed him. Having walked to Portici, he ate a good dinner, slept the slumber of the just, and sauntered out in the morning, seeking whom he should devour. Here a Greek merchant was delivered into his hands. The man sought to sell Muscat wine, and attracted by Casanova's appearance, approached him, telling him that he also had quicksilver to sell. After sundry bargainings and much haggling, the young scamp showed the elder how to "augment" his store of mercury, by adding to it lead and bismuth. Not knowing how the Neapolitan laws of the period affected augmentation—i.e., adulteration—I cannot pronounce on the lawfulness of this trick, but the Greek was glad to buy it for a hundred ounces, and threw a box of silver-mounted razors and

a barrel of Muscat into the bargain. Refitting his wardrobe at Salerno, Casanova went on merrily to Martorano, but disgusted by the poverty of the bishop and his diocese, made up his mind to try his fortune in Rome. The excellent bishop supplied him with several letters of introduction and a little money, and after finding at Naples a remote cousin, who gave him more introductions and more money, the young abbé landed at Rome, was received into the household of Cardinal Acquaviva as an assistant secretary, and lived joyously, but devoted many hours to the study of French—an indispensable accomplishment for a sucking diplomate. His knack of verse-making here stood him in good stead. A puissant cardinal employed him in writing his own supposed amatory verses; he was introduced to the Pope, and was apparently on the high-road to fortune, when an intrigue in which he was—for a wonder—blameless, compelled him to leave Rome. This unhappy event crushed poor Casanova. He was utterly cast down. To his logical mind it was a double punishment, as he was not consoled by the agreeable consciousness of guilt. He groaned, but was compelled to submit; but, as the cardinal did things handsomely, he was to be sent on a foreign mission. When asked where he would like to go, he answered at random, "Constantinople." As this city was outside of Christendom, the worthy cardinal was a little puzzled at first, but finally gave him a passport for Venice and a letter addressed to Osman Bonneval, Pacha of Karamania, at Constantinople. Furnished with these documents, he set out for Venice—this time well provided with funds—and after sundry adventures, more or less scandalous, fell like a bomb among his friends in that city. He now decided on throwing off the ecclesiastical habit and becoming a soldier, and purchased an ensigncy in a Venetian regiment stationed at Corfu, reserving to himself sufficient leave to visit the famous Count de Bonneval, a renegade of the good old type. On the voyage he quarrelled with a Slavonic priest, and during a storm narrowly escaped being thrown overboard as a second Jonah, but ultimately landed safely in the Golden Horn. Lodged in the Venetian embassy, he soon made his way to Osman Pacha, otherwise Count de Bonneval, and was well received by that eminent Franco-Turk. As the letter of Cardinal Acquaviva announced Casanova as a man of

letters, the pacha rose and said he would show him his library. The stout old Frenchman waddled across the garden and introduced him into a room furnished with iron-trellised bookcases hung with curtains, behind which the books were supposed to be concealed. Taking a key out of his pocket, the old soldier disclosed, in the place of priceless tomes and rare folios, rows of bottles of the rarest wines. "This," said Bonneval, "is my library and my harem." This very easy-going pacha assured Casanova that his friends in Venice need not make themselves unhappy about his apostacy, and that he was at least as bad a Turk as he had ever been a Christian. "I am sure," said the veteran, "that I shall die as happily as Prince Eugene. I wear the turban, as a soldier is obliged to wear the uniform of his master. I knew only the trade of war, and I only determined to become the lieutenant-general of the grand Turk when I was unable to live otherwise. When I left Venice the soup had eaten the dish, and if the Jewish nation had offered me the command of fifty thousand men I would have laid siege to Jerusalem."

Thanks to Bonneval, Casanova was introduced into Turkish society, and succeeded in so strongly impressing a certain Yussuf—a man of great wealth and power—with his superior intelligence, that the Turk begged him to remain in the country, marry his daughter, and become his heir; but our Venetian, whose self-esteem was enormous, thought he could do as well among Christians as Turks, and at length took his leave loaded with presents. These he converted into cash at Corfu, to provide funds for a faro bank, which, in those days, was considered a reputable speculation for a Venetian gentleman—so much so, indeed, that the privilege of faro banking at the Ridotto was confined to patricians only. For a while he was exceedingly successful; but luck turning at last, he became disgusted with a military life, and contrasted the condition of a soldier with that of a galley slave—very much to the advantage of the latter. Suffering from a vein of bad luck, Casanova was additionally irritated by losing his promotion, and on his return to Venice determined to sell his commission. Receiving from the Venetian War Office a hundred sequins in ready money, he determined to become a professional gambler; but Fortune seldom favours a small capital, and our young

friend was "cleaned out" in a week. Being now in a desperate strait, he, for once, performed the feat of working for his living, and played the violin in a theatre for a crown a day, which he philosophically thought would suffice him till something better turned up. Thoroughly down in the world, the priest-soldier-fiddler was clever enough to keep out of the way of his grand acquaintances, but consoled himself with the companionship of a set of young scamps, who combined to render night hideous to peaceable Venetians. Brutality apart, they conducted themselves like the Mohocks of London. They unhitched gondolas and let them swim away from their owners; they woke up priests, doctors, and midwives at midnight, and sent them on "bogus" errands; they broke down bells, and opened doors, and generally conducted themselves very much in the Waterfordian style.

This life went on for a while; but a great change was in store for our hero. About the middle of April, 1746, he was performing his functions as a violin player at the nuptials of Girolamo Cornaro, when, feeling tired, he walked off, and in descending the stairs observed a senator in his scarlet gown getting into his gondola. The worthy patrician, in the act of taking out his handkerchief, let fall a letter which the violinist picked up and handed to him, and was forthwith offered to be "set down" by the gondola of the ancient gentleman. On the way the Signor Bragadino was stricken with apoplexy, and here the curious and varied knowledge of Casanova came in à propos. He stopped the gondola; sought a surgeon, to bleed the senator; and conducting him home, was clever enough to establish himself as his nurse. After an illness which lasted many days, and during which Casanova showed himself a good amateur doctor, the old gentleman recovered, and, pronouncing his young friend the saviour of his life, introduced him to all his friends, and notably to his two particular cronies, also patricians.

During the convalescence of this eminent Venetian came the great opportunity of Casanova, which, as a fine natural liar, he did not fail to seize. An old bean, a superannuated man of the world, a godless bigwig, the Signor Bragadino had yet considerable knowledge of such science as existed at the time when astronomy had not quite escaped from the trammels of astro-

logy, and chemistry yet lingered in the arms of alchemy. Cabala and abracadabra were yet familiar words, and the illustrious Signor, overpowered by the learning of Casanova, was inclined to attribute to him supernatural powers. The young man was equal to the occasion. At this period he was certainly no conjuror, but on being taken for one, felt bound to justify the good opinion of his patron, and became a magician malgré lui. Not wishing to disgust the old gentleman by telling him that he was mistaken, he took the wild resolution to tell him, in the presence of his two familiar friends, that he possessed a certain numerical calculation by which, on transposing a certain given question into numerical equivalents, he could obtain answers which informed him concerning things of which he could possess no other possible knowledge. Signor Bragadino said this was the clavicle of Solomon, and asked him where he had found it. Ready invention described a hermit in the mountain Carpegna, as the individual who had communicated this invaluable secret. The ancient Venetian was delighted, and informed Casanova that his imaginary hermit had united him to an invisible intelligence, as numbers alone could not possess the faculty of reasoning, and added that his protégé ought to make a good thing out of such a valuable gift. Casanova trumped this trick by saying downright that he owed their meeting to the oracle, which had commanded him to leave the ball at a particular hour. He was now called upon to work his oracle, and to ask his familiar spirit, whom he dubbed Paralis, a question or two. The young *ci-devant* officer—but very “old soldier”—brought his knack of verse-making into play, and worked out some obscure rhymes, which, apparently by good luck, hit the mark. Their three excellencies now put their grey heads together, and requested Casanova to communicate to them his precious secret, but again the grey beards proved no match for their young friend. He told them that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to expose the whole secret to them, but that the hermit had told him—although he, for his part, did not believe it—that he would die suddenly, three days after he communicated his science to any person. This audacious coup was successful, for Signor Bragadino begged him not to run this risk, and it thus fell out that these three old originals

“took up” the adventurer. Bragadino adopted him, and had the pleasure of paying his numerous gambling debts, for the oracle—equal to many things—could not tell the hierophant the right card to back at *faro*. Signor Bragadino also gave him a sage piece of advice: “If you must play, keep the bank. Never play against it. The percentage in your favour appears small, but it is constant. Moreover, the bank has no emotions, while the ‘punter’ loses his head.” This bit of philosophy was thrown away at the time, but in his later career Casanova proved its truth, and failed not to profit largely by it.

For a while he was the spoiled child of Bragadino and Fortune, but having indulged in a few freaks, one of which consisted in frightening a man into insanity—permissible enough in a patrician, but in his case looked glumly upon by the Council of Ten—his adopted father recommended him to try a change of air, as that of the lagoons smelt ominously of the dungeon. Scampering over Italy he enjoyed many adventures, more curious than edifying, and by a species of compensatory action in people of his composition, became, after a fit of illness in Switzerland, excessively devout. Recalled to Venice, he astounded his patrons by his newly acquired habits of devotion; but their joy at the conversion of the prodigal was not destined to be of long duration. Bit by bit our hero dropped back into his old habits, narrowly escaped trouble in consequence of a breach of promise of marriage, and made a lucky stroke during the carnival of 1750 by gaining at the lottery a “terne” of three thousand ducats. He had also been fortunate in keeping a *faro* bank, and feeling himself in funds, did precisely what any *nouveau riche* would do—made up his mind to visit Paris.

On his road hither, Casanova made a considerable stay at Lyons, was there initiated into the secrets of freemasonry, and got into numerous scrapes by his abrupt manner and his slight knowledge of French. At Paris he found himself among friends—Baletti the dancer and Silvia, a famous actress of the day—and by degrees became acquainted with the French literati. Crébillon, who had now reached the age of eighty, took a fancy to him, undertook to “coach” him in the French language, and even deigned to listen to his verses.

This famous old man of letters was a colossus, considerably over six feet in height, lived well, and talked well, but passed the greater part of his time at home, smoking a pipe—a wonder in those days—and surrounded by a score of pet cats. His housekeeper was not unlike that of Molière, and looked carefully after the wants of the old gentleman, whose face was as the face of a lion. He filled the important office of Censor Royal, and declared that his occupation amused him immensely. His housekeeper read to him the books submitted, and paused when she came to a passage which to her seemed to require excision. Crébillon, whose opinions and practice were not unduly severe, often differed, and terrible discussions then took place, pending which official opinion was often deferred for a week or two. Crébillon was full of anecdotes of Louis the Fourteenth, and declared that the famous ambassadors from Siam were only "supers" hired to perform the character by Madame de Maintenon—a thoroughly stogy explanation of a curious episode.

At Paris Casanova made the acquaintance of the famous Marshal Duke de Richelieu, the conqueror of Port Mahon, as the French love to call him. This incarnation of all that was bright and brave, witty and wicked in the old French noblesse, and who died just in time to escape seeing his order abolished, was much taken with the Venetian, as was also a far more worthy person, Marshal Keith, an illustrious Scot in the service of the King of Prussia. Going to Fontainebleau he saw the handsome King Louis the Well-beloved, of luxurious memory, going to mass with the royal family, and was astonished at the scarcity of good looks among the great ladies of the court, who appeared to be falling on their noses from the extreme height of their shoe heels, which often attained an altitude of six inches. The queen appeared among this bepainted, bew powdered, and bepatched bevy of belles without rouge, simply dressed, her head covered with a great cap, looking old and excessively devout. Her Majesty dined alone at a table large enough for a dozen persons, and was served amid a ghostly silence by a couple of nuns.

Casanova found that the fame of his cabala had preceded him in the great city of shams. By an adroit combination of his medical knowledge, which was doubtless

considerable, with his cabalistic oracle, and aided somewhat by chance, he succeeded in imposing himself upon the Duchess de Chartres as a great magician. He cured boils and eruptions, and pretended to unveil court intrigues. His patroness, the duchess, was on very friendly terms with the king, who, nevertheless, sometimes took it into his royal head to expend his royal wit upon her. Once he met his match. Madame de Chartres asked him one day if it was true that the King of Prussia was coming to Paris. "No," said the king, "it is only idle gossip." "Ah," replied the duchess, "I am sorry for it, for I am dying to see a king."

Two years of Paris and a duel satisfied Casanova, who then went to Dresden, Prague, and Vienna. At the latter city he found the famous Metastasio; but was dull in a town where the bottle and the pipe took the place of all other pleasures, except gambling, which appears to have been largely patronised. A certain prince-bishop kept a great faro bank, and met all comers in a truly noble spirit. One evening, as his highness was dealing, a Chevalier de Talvis, whom Casanova had fought with in Paris, came up to the table, and the prince-bishop invited him to play. The Frenchman seeing on the table some thirteen or fourteen thousand florins, called out, "The bank on this card." The bishop, not to be frightened, accepted, and went on dealing till Talvis's card won. The victor immediately pocketed the proceeds, when the prince-bishop, somewhat astonished, and seeing his folly rather late in the day, said, "Sir, if your card had lost, how would you have paid me." "That, sir," answered the chevalier, "is my business," and walked off; but not too quickly for Casanova, who, being "hard up" at that moment, promptly borrowed a hundred gold pieces of the winner. This stroke reveals a man of genius. In Paris he had given Talvis a sword thrust: in Vienna he borrowed money of him.

On his return to Venice, Casanova was received with open arms by his old friends, made the acquaintance of the abbé, afterwards Cardinal de Bernis, and resumed his ancient style of life. His existence was a compound of cabala, intrigue, and faro—jovial enough while it lasted, but destined finally to bring him under the notice of the dreaded Inquisitors of State, the awful Council of Three.

MANY ARROWS IN THE QUIVER.

IN TWO PARTS. PART I. MANY AT ONCE.

WHEN human creatures come into this rackets world of ours with a rapidity far in excess of average experience, speculative economists and philosophers are prone to ask how we shall all find house-room or elbow-room in future centuries; how we shall avoid crowding out one another. The Earth, it is true, is eight thousand miles in diameter, and the square miles of its surface are denoted by a long row of figures. Still its size is strictly defined and limited; we can (some of us, that is) tell almost exactly the extent of dry land on which the foot of man can tread, and of water on which boats and ships can float. We can ascertain, approximately, the acreage of land that is necessary to grow corn and rice, vegetables and fruit, butchers' meat, dairy produce, &c., for the annual food of an average human being; and we can picture to ourselves a state of things in which the world's policeman, A 1, will bid us "Move on." However, it will not be just yet; and perhaps a survival of the fittest, on Mr. Darwin's principle, will set everything to rights. With regard to the increase of population, so far as our own country is concerned, the Government and the Legislature let it pretty well alone. In past ages the interference—what there was of it—cut both ways. In the closing years of the seventeenth century a tax was imposed on bachelors and widows, from which husbands and wives were exempt. This was so far a small incentive to matrimony; but, more money being wanted to carry on a war, a tax was soon afterwards laid on marriages and births; and this told in the opposite direction. These taxes were accompanied by another on deaths and burials, which might be interpreted as the expression of a wish on the part of the Legislature that the subjects of the sovereign would endeavour to live as long as they possibly could. But, in truth, there was no sentiment in the matter; the taxes were imposed simply because hard cash was wanted by the State.

It is an admitted fact, we believe, that when births are more numerous than one at a time, nobody seems delighted at it. The parents have more cares to look forward to than they desiderate; the domestic establishment is subject to much disarrangement and overturning; the daily or weekly outlay increases; and the com-

plimentary "Welcome, little stranger!" is sadly wanting in sincerity. The Registrar-General, it may be presumed, can tell pretty nearly the ratio of twins to single births, in the average of years, over the whole kingdom. The excess beyond twins is more frequent than might perhaps be supposed; and is sometimes such as to be not a little startling. If it be true, as writers on vital statistics assert, that once in about eight thousand times a birth consists of triplets, we need not marvel that so many little coffins are made every year; for the poor triplets do not often grow up to be men and women.

When quadruplets occur, four at a birth, the incident is one—not for sounding of trumpets, perhaps, nor for beating of drums, but—for newspaper comment; and no small amount of celebrity attaches to the home of the family connected with the event. The Registrar-General's annual reports, supplemented by entries in various periodicals, furnish many examples of these quadruplets; to be read, however, with a wholesome recognition of the fact that popular statements are sometimes in need of verification. Some years ago there was a favourite book called *A Residence on the Shores of the Baltic*; the authoress is said to have been one of four brothers and sisters born on the same day. This touches a subject which has been much discussed—the intellectual capacity of what may be called multiply children. The question has been put, Are twins, triplets, and quadruplets as clever as other people? but it is generally admitted that the materials for an answer have not yet been duly collected and examined. If it be asserted, as many persons do assert, that twins are not often intellectually distinguished, we are at once confronted with the case of two famous brothers, Lord Eldon and Lord Stowell, prodigies of judicial learning; although not twins to each other, each had a twin sister.

Setting aside, however, this question of intellectual capacity, we will jot down a few examples of quadruplets. About twelve years ago, a poor woman near Cork had four children at a birth, two boys and two girls; whether the little Paddies all lived and flourished, we have no record. A parish register at Cambridge tells of a shoemaker, Henry Coe, whose wife had two boys and two girls at a birth; a procession of sixteen sponsors walked to church at the christening, four to answer for each of the little Crispins and Crispinas.

Many years ago, the Rev. Mr. Ryder, Vicar of Nuneaton, was blessed with four children in one day. The vicarage had, in truth, been a scene of momentous events in that year; for triplets had made their appearance barely twelve months before. One can imagine Mrs. Vicar feeling some of the perplexities attributed on lyrical authority to the Old Woman who Lived in a Shoe. About eight years ago, a Glasgow newspaper announced a birth of quadruplets, all girls, and all born alive. Mrs. Shury, a cooper's wife at the West-end of London, had twins early one year, and twins again before the year had quite expired; but the vicar's wife beat her by a long distance, and must have had a very vocal household. It must be a sad thing for the poor mother, when not a single tiny one is left to her after such an ordeal. This was the case at Seaton, in Devonshire, where a tombstone in the churchyard records that "Here lyeth y^e Bodys of John and Richard and Edward, sons of John Roberts, and Elizabeth his wife, together with a daughter of the same persons, born at one birth. They dyed y^e 9 day of September, 1697." At Bromsgrove, in 1819, were born four little girls at once, baptised Maria, Mary, Sarah, and Elizabeth. When eleven years of age, they were seen in a cluster by a gentleman, who placed on record the result of his inquiries; the girls were dressed alike, and bore such a striking resemblance in form, features, and general appearance, that he could not identify or discriminate them one from another. We might perchance imagine that, if these damsels grew up to womanhood, and to sweet-hearting affairs, there would occur a rare Comedy of Errors; no lover being able to determine which was his own particular pet treasure. But Nature has an easy way of getting out of such difficulties. Maria, it appears, lived to the age of seventeen; Mary married, and had two children; Eliza lived to her thirty-second year; while Sarah married, had a son, and survived until a recent period. The brave mother of this bevy of girls did not quit the scene until she had counted eighty-three summers. More melancholy was the experience of a Bavarian mother some considerable number of years ago. Maria Thomanic, the wife of a mason at Augsburg, gave birth to quadruplets, who were baptised Andreas, Nicolaus, Maria Anna, and Barbara. A broadside sheet is still extant, containing two wood engrav-

ings: one represents a woman in bed, visitors around her, and four dead infants laid out like so many dolls; while the other represents a funeral procession of acolytes, priests, bearers carrying four little coffins, and fifty couples of women attired in the quaint old Bavarian costume.

Quintuplets—the shortest name we can devise for five children at a birth—are of course very rare; but if the recorded statements are reliable, instances have actually occurred. The Globe newspaper, somewhat under twenty years ago, recorded the fact that the wife of a railway guard at Birmingham had five infants at a birth, three boys born alive and two girls still-born. Mr. Thom, it is well known, has for many years been indefatigable in ferreting out the truth concerning centenarianism, and has made woful havoc with many of the stories: showing how numerous are the ways in which exaggeration takes place in the estimates of the ages of very old persons. We do not know whether he has taken up, in a similar spirit, the statements relating to specially prolific births; but a search of an analogous kind was made by a gentleman into the truth of the Birmingham story; and the result came out in this form—that the children born at once were three instead of five, and that they were all still-born. The Lancet, in a notice of medical gossip some years ago, stated that an Italian woman at Rovigo had five female children at a birth; so we find the statement, and so we leave it. The Elgin Courant, just about the same period, recorded that Elizabeth Gordon, of Rothes, had quintuplets, two girls still-born and three boys who lived a few hours after their birth. The celebrated discoverer of the circulation of the blood, Dr. Harvey, in a letter to Aubrey, spoke of "One Mr. Palmer's wife, of Kent, who did beare a child every day for five daies together;" but it is not clear from the context whether Harvey gave it as the result of his own knowledge and investigation, or merely repeated a rumour. Southey, in an article in the Quarterly Review, quoted a statement from Hakewill's "Apology," to the effect that an epitaph in Dunstable church records the death of a woman who had had quintuplets twice, besides triplets three times! We can only ask, "Is there such an epitaph now; and does it speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?" When a learned college believes a statement of facts

coming within the range of its own special subjects, we usually feel that there must be "something in it." On this ground we notice a statement to the effect that the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, is said to contain, preserved in spirits, the bodies of five female infants, children of Margaret Waddington, a resident at Darling, near Blackburn; the five girls were born at once, three still-born and two that died soon afterwards. One more instance. Quintuplets are recorded as having made their appearance at a village near Sheffield, forty-six years ago—one born dead, one that died before being baptised, and three that outlived that ceremony.

What shall we say of multiply births exceeding even the mystical number five? Shall we reject them at once, as altogether unbelievable; or shall we jot down the narratives as we find them, and leave each to fight its own battle as it may? One narrative travels across the Atlantic, and is to the effect that at Dayton, in the State of Ohio, a German woman was taken ill while passing through the town; and that the result of the illness was in the form of six children, which she placed altogether in a basket. "A lady of character saw and counted the children, and was told by the mother they were one birth." Perhaps most persons will opine that more reliable proof than this is necessary to insure belief. We find in Aubrey's *Natural History of Wiltshire*, published somewhat more than two centuries ago, a statement to the effect that Edith Bonham, of Wishford Magna, in that county, had seven children at a birth. "In this parish," Aubrey says, "there is a confident tradition that these children were all baptised at the font in this church; and that they were brought thither in a kind of chardger, which was dedicated to the church, and hung on two nails, which are to be seen there yet, near the belfree on the south side. Some old women are living that do remember the chardger. This tradition is entered in the register-book there, from whence I have taken this narrative." Here we find, then, that the testimony from Aubrey himself was limited to seeing an entry in the parish register and two nails in the church wall; the old women could speak to having seen a chardger, charger, or dish; but, beyond this, information is lacking. Another story of septuplets runs thus:—In the *Kleyne Chronycke*, published at Amsterdam in

1655, we are told that an engineer was told by an alewife that she was told by a burgomaster that he had been into a house near the Znyder Zee, and saw seven children sitting by the fire, each with a porringer in his (or her) hand, and eating rice-milk with a spoon. The burgomaster said to the woman of the house, "Mother, you are very kind to your neighbours, since they leave their children to your care." "No, they are all my children, which I had at one birth; and if you will wait a moment, I will show you more that will surprise you." She went and fetched seven older children, similarly born on one day! How far the truth had been magnified in successive stages by the mother, plus the burgomaster, plus the alewife, plus the engineer, plus the chronicler, we are left to imagine as we may. Whether septuplets or sevenfold triplets are the more wonderful, 'twould not be easy to decide; but an old volume of the *Mémoires de l'Académie Française* solemnly tells us that a baker's wife at Paris had triplet children every year for seven years in succession. Happy baker! But this, according to a Brussels journal, was actually exceeded in 1851, when a tradesman's wife had, for the eighth time, three children at a birth—twenty-four of them in eight births in nine years; "a desperate case for the husband," as the journalist sympathetically remarked, "who desired to transmit his family name to his offspring; for they were all girls."

Six, seven—are not these numbers high enough? We shall see. The Stamford Mercury, a few years ago, recorded eight children at a birth, three boys and five girls; but the paragraphist had to go all the way to Trumbull County, in Ohio, for the locality. There is a statement in the *Journal des Savants*, on the authority of M. Seignette, to the effect that a woman at Rochelle had nine children at a birth, all still-born! In 1851 a wonder-working rumour spread about Sheffield, concerning the appearance of ten children at a birth! An old dame, widow Platts, born in 1781, stated that she was one of the ten, and declared her mother had told her so! No other corroboratory evidence was attainable than an old copy of the Leeds Mercury, quoting a letter received from Sheffield, with the additional statement that nine of the decuplets were still-born.

But, oh! what a bouncer was that in a London daily paper, assigning to a Hindu woman at Ballygunge, near Cal-

cutta, twenty-one boys at a birth! And in what sense are we to interpret an entry in the Gentleman's Magazine, to the effect that Mrs. Lilly, of Grantham, "was twice mother of twenty-two children?" Either that there was forty-four babies at two births, or that she was twice married, and had in all twenty-two children. We prefer to believe the latter, although the words seem to imply the former. Eclipsing every other marvel of this peculiar class is the assertion that a Dutch lady, the Countess of Hennesby, had exactly three hundred and sixty-five children at a birth! The story goes that this lady on one occasion discourteously rebuked a woman who asked for alms, and said something which irritated her to express a wish that the lady might soon have as many children as there are days in the year; and so it was. Pepys declared that, when at Utrecht, he "saw the hill where they say the house stood wherein they were born"—a kind of evidence that just suited gossip Samuel. An ingenious conjecture has been hazarded that the interview may have taken place on the 3rd of January, when the year was three days old; that the woman wished the countess might have as many children as there had been days in that year; and that the birth consisted of triplets.

Glancing at the above strange recitals we perceive that, whichever of them are true or partly true, they do not prove any abnormal increase in the sum-total of humanity. The poor bantlings are either still-born, or mostly die at an early age. In other words, a large family, a numerous progeny, a quiver full of arrows, does not depend on having a great number of children at a birth, so much as on the total number born to the same parent or parents during the whole of married life. This we shall show in another article.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCIS ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXI.

MINNIE BODKIN had loyally tried to keep the promise she had given to the Methodist preacher respecting Rhoda Maxfield, but in so trying she had encountered many obstacles. In the first place, Rhoda, with all her gentleness, was not frank, and she opposed a passive resistance to all

Minnie's efforts to win her confidence on the subject of Algernon.

"It is like poking a little frightened animal out of its hole, trying to get anything from her!" said Minnie, impatiently.

Not that Rhoda's reticence was wholly due to timidity. She knew instinctively that she was to be warned against giving her heart to Algernon Errington; that she should hear him blamed; or, at least, that the unreasonableness of trusting in his promises, or taking his boyish love-making in serious earnest, would be safely set forth by Miss Bodkin. Rhoda had not perceived any of the wise things which might be said against her attachment to Algernon in the beginning, but now she thought she perceived them all. And she was resolved, with a sort of timid obstinacy, not to listen to them.

"I'm sure Algy's fond of me. And even if he has changed"—the supposition brought tears into her eyes as the words framed themselves in her mind—"I don't want to have him spoken unkindly of."

But, in truth, latterly her hopes had been outweighing her fears. In most of his letters to his mother Algernon had spoken of her, and had sent her his love. He was making friends, and looking forward hopefully to getting some definite position. Even her father spoke well of Algernon now;—said how clever he was, and what grand acquaintance he was making, and how sure he would be to succeed. And once or twice her father had dropped a word which had set Rhoda's heart beating, and made the colour rush into her face, for it seemed as if the old man had some idea of her love for Algy, and approved it! All these circumstances together made Minnie's task of mentor a rather hopeless one.

And then Minnie herself, although, as has been said, loyally anxious to fulfil her promise to David Powell, began to think that he had overrated the importance of interfering with Rhoda's love-story, if love-story it were. Powell lived in a state of exalted and, perhaps, overstrained feeling, and attributed his own earnestness to slighter natures. Of course, on the side of worldly wisdom there was much to be said against Rhoda's fancying herself engaged to Algernon Errington. There was much to be said; and yet Minnie did not feel quite sure that the idea was so preposterous, as Powell had

appeared to think it. True, Mrs. Errington was vain, and worldly, and ambitious for her son. True, Algernon was volatile, selfish, and little more than twenty years of age. But still there was one solid fact to be taken into account, which, Minnie thought, might be made to outweigh all the obstacles to a marriage between the two young people—the solid fact, namely, of old Maxfield's money.

"If Algernon married a wife with a good dower, and if the wife were as pretty, as graceful, and as well-mannered as Rhoda, I do not suppose that anybody would concern himself particularly with her pedigree," thought Minnie. "And even if any one did, that difficulty would not be insuperable, for I have no knowledge of Mrs. Errington, if within three months of the wedding she had not invented a genealogy, only second to her own, for her son's wife, and persuaded herself of its genuineness into the bargain!"

As to those other convictions which would have made such a marriage horrible to David Powell, even had it been made with the hearty approval of all the godless world, Minnie did not share them. She did not believe that Rhoda's character had any spiritual depth; and she thought it likely enough that she would be able to make Algernon happy, and to be happy as his wife. "Algy is not base, or cruel, or vicious," she said to herself. "He has merely the faults of a spoiled child. A woman with more earnestness than Rhoda has would weary him; and a wiser woman might, in the long run, be wearied by him. She is pretty, and sufficiently intelligent to make a good audience, and so humble-minded that she would never be exacting, but would gratefully accept any scraps of kindness and affection which Algy might feel inclined to bestow on her. And that would react upon him, and make him bestow bigger scraps for the pleasure of being adored for his generosity."

And there were times when she felt very angry with Rhoda;—Rhoda, who turned away from the better to choose the worse, and who was coldly insensible to the fact that Matthew Diamond was in love with her. Nay, had she been cognisant of the fact, she would, Minnie felt sure, have shrank away from the grave, clever gentleman who, as it was, could win nothing warmer from her than a sort of submissive endurance of his presence, and a

humble acknowledgment that he was very kind to take notice of an ignorant little thing like her.

It was with strangely mingled feelings that Minnie, watching day by day from her sofa or easy-chair, perceived the girl's utter indifference to Diamond. How much would Minnie have given for one of those rare sweet smiles to beam upon her, which were wasted on Rhoda's pretty, shy, down-cast face! How happy it would have made her to hear those clear, incisive tones lowered into soft indistinctness for her ears, as they so often were for Rhoda's, who would look timid, and tired, and answer, "Yes, sir," and "No, sir," until Minnie's nervous sympathy with Diamond's disappointment, and irritation against him for being disappointed, grew almost beyond her own control.

One May evening, when the cuckoo was sending his voice across the purling Whit from distant Pudcombe Woods, and the hyacinths in Minnie's special flower-stand were pouring out their silent even-song in waves of perfume, five persons were sitting in Mrs. Bodkin's drawing-room, the windows of which looked towards the west. They were listening to the cuckoo, and smelling the sweet breath of the hyacinths, and gazing at the rosy sky, and dropping now and then a soft word, which seemed to enhance the sweetness and the silence of the room. The five persons were Minnie Bodkin, Rhoda Maxfield, Matthew Diamond, Mr. Warlock (the curate of St. Chad's), and Miss Chubb. The latter was embroidering something in Berlin wools, as usual; but the peace of the place, and of the hour, seemed to have fallen on her, as on the rest, and she sat with her work in her lap, looking across the stand of hyacinths, very still and quiet.

The Reverend Peter also sat looking silently across the hyacinths, but it was at their owner. Minnie's cheek rested on her thin white hand, and her lustrous eyes had a far-away look in them, as they gazed out towards Pudcombe Wood, where the cuckoo was calling his poet-loved syllables with a sweet, clear tone, that seemed to have gathered all the spirit of the spring into one woodland voice.

Rhoda sat beside the window, and was sewing very gently and noiselessly, but seemingly intent upon her work, and unconscious that the eyes of Mr. Diamond—who was seated close to Minnie's chair—were fixed upon her, and that in some

vague way he was attributing to her the perfume of the flowers, and the melancholy-sweet note of the bird, and the melted rubies of the western sky.

"What a sunset!" said Miss Chubb, breaking the silence. But she spoke almost in a whisper, and her voice did not startle any ear. Mr. Warlock, habituated to suppress his feelings and adapt his words to those of his company, answered, after a little pause, "Lovely indeed! It is an evening to awaken the sensibilities of a feeling heart."

"It makes me think of Manchester-square. We had some hyacinths in pots, too, I remember, when I was staying with the Bishop of Plumbum."

Miss Chubb's odd association of ideas was merely due to the fact that her thoughts were flying back to the rose-garden of youth.

"Do you not like to hear the cuckoo, Miss Bodkin?" said Diamond, softly, speaking almost in her ear. She started, and turned her head towards him.

"Yes; no; I like it although it makes me sad. I like it because it makes me sad, perhaps."

"All sights, and sounds, and scents seem to me to be combined this evening into something sweeter than words can say."

"It is a fine evening, and the cuckoo is calling from Pudcombe Woods, and my hyacinths are of a very good sort. It seems to me that words can manage to say that much with distinctness!"

"What a pity," thought Diamond, "that head overshadows heart in this attractive woman! She is too keen, too cool, too critical. A woman without softness and sentiment is an unpleasant phenomenon. And I think she has grown harder in her manner than she used to be." Then the reflection crossed his mind that her health had been more frail and uncertain than usual of late, and that she bore much physical suffering with high courage; and the little prick of resentment he had begun to feel was at once mollified. He answered aloud, with a slow smile, "Why yes, words may manage to say all that. I wonder if I may ask you a question? It is one I have long wished to ask."

"You may, certainly."

"There are questions that should not be asked."

"I will trust you not to ask any such."

"Now when she looks and speaks like that, she is adorable!" thought Diamond, meeting the soft light of Minnie's lovely, pathetic eyes, which fell immediately before his own. "I wish I might have you for a friend, Miss Bodkin," he said.

"I think you have your wish. I thought you knew you had it."

"Ah, yes; you are always good, and kind, and—and—but you—I will make a clean breast of it, and pay you the compliment of telling you the truth. I have thought latterly that you were hardly so cordial, so frank in your kindness to me as you once were. It would matter nothing to me in another person, but in you, a little shade of manner matters a great deal. I don't believe there is another human being to whom I would say so much. For I am—as perhaps you know—a man little given to thrust myself where I am not welcome."

"You are about the proudest and most distant person I ever knew, and require to be very obviously implored before you condescend to easy friendship with anyone."

Minnie laughed, as she spoke, a little low rippling laugh, which she ended with a forced cough, to hide the sob in her throat.

"No; not proud. You misjudge me; but it is true that I dread, almost more than anything else, being deemed intrusive."

"If that fear has prevented you from putting the question to which you have so long desired an answer, pray ask it forthwith."

"I think it has almost answered itself," said Diamond, bending over her, and turning his chair so as to cut her and himself off still more from the others. "I was going to ask you if I had unwittingly offended you in any way, or if my frequent presence here were, for any reason, irksome to you? It might well be so. And if you would say so candidly, believe me, I should feel not the smallest resentment. Sorrow I should feel. I can't deny it; but I should not cease to regard you as I have always regarded you from the beginning of our acquaintance. How highly that is, I have not the gift to tell; nor do you love the direct, broadly-spoken praise that sounds like flattery, be it ever so sincere."

"No; please don't praise me," said Minnie, huskily. She was shadowed by his figure as he sat beside her, and so he

did not see the tears that quivered in her eyes. After a second or two, during which she had passed her handkerchief quickly, almost stealthily, across her face, she said, "But your question, you say, has answered itself."

"I hope so; I hope I may believe that there is nothing wrong between us."

"Nothing."

"I have not offended you in any way?"

"No."

"Nor unwittingly hurt you? I dare say I am awkward and abrupt sometimes."

"Pray believe that I have nothing in the world to blame you for."

"Thank you. I know you speak sincerely. Your friendship is very precious to me."

She answered nothing, but hesitatingly put out her hand, which he grasped for an instant, and would have raised to his lips, but that she drew it suddenly away, murmuring something about her cushions being awry, and trying tremblingly to rearrange them.

He moved the cushions that supported her shoulders, with a tender, careful touch, and placed them so that her posture in the lounging-chair might be easier. She clasped her hands together and laid her head back wearily.

"You don't know how precious your friendship is to me," he went on, lowering his voice still more. "I never had a sister. But I have often thought how sweet the companionship of a sister must be. I am very much alone in the world; and, if I dared, I would speak to you with fraternal confidence."

"Pray speak so," answered Minnie, almost in a whisper. "I should like—to be—of some comfort to you."

There was a silence. It was scarcely broken by Miss Chubb's murmured remark to Mr. Warlock, that the moon was beginning to make a ring of light behind the poplar trees on the other side of the Whit, like the halo round the head of a saint. The twilight deepened, Rhoda's fingers ceased to ply the needle, but she remained at the window looking over at the moonlit poplars, while Miss Chubb's voice softly droned out some rambling speech, which jarred no more on the quietude of the hour than did the ripple of the river.

"You have been so good to her!" said Diamond suddenly, under cover of this murmur; and then paused for a moment

as if awaiting a reply. Minnie did not speak. Presently he went on. "You know her and understand her better than any of the people here."

"I think every one likes Rhoda," said Minnie at length.

"Yes," Diamond answered eagerly. "Yes; do they not? But it requires the delicate tact of a refined woman to overcome her shyness. I never saw so timid a creature. Has it not struck you as strange, that she should have come out from that vulgar home so entirely free from vulgarity?"

"Rhoda has great natural refinement."

"You appreciate her thoroughly. And then, the repulsive and ludicrous side of Methodism has not touched her at all. It is marvellous to me, to see her so perfect in grace and sweetness."

"I do not think that Methodism has ever taken deep hold on Rhoda."

"And yet it is strange that it should be so. She was exposed to the influence of David Powell. And, although he has fine qualities, he is ignorant and fanatical."

"His ignorance and fanaticism are mere spots on the sun!" cried Minnie. And now, as she spoke, her voice was stronger, and she raised her head from the cushion. "In his presence the Scripture phrase, 'A burning and a shining light,' kept recurring to me. How poor and dark one's little selfish self seems beside him!"

Diamond slightly raised his eyebrows as he answered, "Powell has undoubtedly very genuine enthusiasm and fervour. But he might be a dangerous guide to undisciplined minds."

"He would sacrifice himself, he does sacrifice himself, for undisciplined and ungrateful minds, with whom, I own, my egotism could not bear so patiently."

But it was not of Powell that Matthew Diamond wished to speak now. Under the softening influences of the twilight, and the unaccustomed charm of pouring out the fulness of his heart to such a confidante as Minnie, he could talk of nothing but Rhoda.

"Perhaps I am a fool to keep singeing my wings," he said. "It may be all in vain. But don't you believe that a strong and genuine love is almost sure to win a woman's heart, provided the woman's heart is free to be won?"

"Perhaps—provided—"

"And you do not think hers is free?"

"How can I answer you?"

"I know that Powell thought there was some one trifling with her affections. It was on that subject that he begged for the interview with you. I have never asked any questions about that interview, but I have guessed since, from many little signs and tokens, that the person he had in his mind was young Errington."

"Yes."

"Then the matter cannot be serious. He was little more than a boy when he left Whitford."

"But Rhoda was turned nineteen when Algernon went away."

Diamond started eagerly forward, with his hand on the arm of her chair, and fixing his eyes anxiously on her face, said:

"Minnie, tell me the truth! Do you think she cares for him?"

It was the first time he had ever addressed Minnie by her Christian name; and she marked the fact with a chilly feeling at the heart. "You ask for the truth?" she said, sadly. "Yes; I do think so."

Diamond leant his head on his hand for a minute in silence. Then he raised his face again and answered, "Thank you for answering with sincerity. But I knew you would do no otherwise. This feeling for Algernon must be half made up of childish memories. I cannot believe it is an earnest sentiment that will endure."

"Nothing endures."

"If I know myself at all, my love will endure. I am a resolute man, and do not much regard external obstacles. The only essential point is, can she ever be brought to care for me?"

There was a pause.

"Do you think she might—some day?"

"Is that the only essential point?"

"Yes; to me it is so. I do believe that it would be for her happiness to care for me, rather than for that selfish young fellow."

"And—and for your happiness——?"

"Oh, of that I am not doubtful at all!"

"There's the moon above the poplar trees!" cried Miss Chubb. And as she

spoke, a silver beam stole into the room and lighted one or two faces, leaving the others in shadow. Amongst the faces so illuminated was Minnie Bodkin's. "Did you ever see anything so beautiful as Minnie's countenance in the moonlight?" whispered Miss Chubb to the curate. "She looks like a spirit!"

Poor Mr. Warlock sighed. He had been envying Diamond his long confidential conversation with the doctor's daughter. "She is always beautiful," he replied. "But I think she looks unusually sad to-night."

"That's the moon, my dear sir! Bless you, it always gives a pensive expression to the eyes; always!" And Miss Chubb cast her own eyes upwards towards the sky as she spoke.

"Dear me, you have no lamp here!" said a voice, which, though mellow and musical in quality, was too loud and out of harmony with the twilight mood of the occupants of the drawing-room to be pleasant.

"Is not that silver lamp aloft there sufficient, Mrs. Errington?" asked Diamond.

"Oh, good evening, Mr. Diamond," returned Mrs. Errington, with perhaps an extra tone of condescension, for she thought in her heart that the tutor was a little spoiled in Whitford society. "I can hardly make out who's who. Oh, there's Miss Chubb, and Mr. Warlock, and—oh, is that you, Rhoda? Well, Minnie, I left your mamma giving the doctor his tea in the study, and she sent me upstairs. And, if you have no objection, I should like the lamp lit, for I am going to read you a letter from Alg."'

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HALVES.

BY JAMES PAYN,
AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGER," "A PERFECT
TREASURE," "AT HER MERCY," &c. &c.

CHAPTER IV. A REVELATION.

OUR little dinner at the Rectory, though perfectly satisfactory in its material details, could scarcely be said to be a success in a social point of view. It certainly did not bring the two families into closer connection with one another. At breakfast next morning my aunt pronounced Mrs. Raeburn to be a monstrosity, from which term, either in the way of mitigation or explanation, she was not to be moved an inch. As for John, she had read of such young persons in books, but had always thought them too hateful to have a real existence. Of Mr. Raeburn, she could only say in his favour that he was not a whit more vulgar than she had expected him to be. She allowed, however, as to the men, that they were the victims of circumstances. "When Harry becomes an attorney, he will doubtless grow like the father, and if he had not gone to college"—this had always been a strong point with my aunt, and, indeed, it was to her views upon the matter that I owed my university career—"he would now be like the son. There must be attorneys"—this in answer to a mild observation of my uncle's to that effect—"quite true, my dear, though it is much to be regretted; and there must also always be young men who are not brought up at Oxford or Cambridge; but they have no business in society, and if they are found there, ought to be removed—or at all events avoided."

So she disposed of the whole family;

and when I questioned her about Gertrude, she clashed her rings together with a little shriek of despair.

"My dear boy, don't speak of her. I couldn't help playing into your hands last evening, because I like to see young people happy, and the impulse of the moment overpowered me. She is charming, modest, beautiful—anything and everything you please; but there is an insuperable obstacle to my contemplating her as the future Mrs. Sheddon. You must dismiss her from your mind, once and for all, Harry."

"Why?"

"How can you ask me why? She is Mr. Raeburn's cousin, and if you suppose that I will ever submit to be connected with that family, you don't know your Aunt Eleanor."

My uncle's views respecting our guests were, as usual, of a much less decisive kind. Mrs. Raeburn was, indeed, he confessed, "a gorgon." "But what does it matter, my dear? There are two toll-gates between here and Kirkdale, and she will never call." As for the attorney, though the rector had had no intimacy with him for years—their business relations in the meantime, however, being continuous—he had known him when they were lads together, and was not inclined to pass any severe judgment on so old an acquaintance. His good nature saw nothing particularly objectionable in John, whom indeed that escapade with the preserve-cupboard had, I think, rather endeared to him. "He's a pleasant young fellow enough, if he wouldn't whistle at table."

"And what do you think of Miss Floyd?" asked my aunt, whose conversation with me upon that subject had

occurred, before my uncle had made his appearance at the breakfast-table.

"Well, 'pon my life," answered the rector, laughing, "I think what Harry thinks. She has money too, you sly dog," added he, approvingly; "ten thousand pounds of her own, as Mark informed me, in a most unusual fit of confidence. I never saw him so communicative as he was last night. A strange story that he told about himself and his brother Alexander, was it not?"

"Very," observed my aunt contemptuously, to whom the narrative had doubtless been already communicated above stairs; "very strange if true; though to believe that your friend the attorney ever acted on an affectionate impulse is out of my power."

In spite of these unfavourable sentiments respecting the Raeburn family, the arrangements respecting my residing with them had of course to be carried out, and I migrated from Stanbrook to Kirkdale that very day.

My reception at the Priory was by no means enthusiastic. Mrs. Raeburn had, I fancy, been no better pleased with her visit to the Rectory than her host and hostess had been to see her there, for she never even so much as asked after them; while the attorney himself was far from cordial. Either from the sense that my premium was secure, and that there was no further need to make himself agreeable, or (which I think more probable) from the consciousness of having somewhat committed himself before me the previous evening, his manner was reserved and formal; he wasted no time in hospitable courtesies, but at once proceeded to introduce me to my duties, the sphere of which was of course his office. This was a spacious apartment, built out from the dining-room, and furnished with two monstrous desks and one nondescript article of furniture with curious legs, which served the same purpose, though it more resembled a pulpit. I had heard of persons being "sold up" by the lawyers, and it struck me that this might be the rostrum from which their goods were knocked down to the public.

"What is that?" inquired I.

"Why a desk, of course; John's desk: he likes it high."

The fact being, as I afterwards discovered, that it was an old "upright grand" piano, long past service, which Mrs. Raeburn had caused to assume this

questionable shape, to avoid the necessity of procuring a new desk on my arrival. Many a time did John play on it, as though the keys had still been there, choice airs of his own composing. Many a sermon did he preach from it, in imitation of the Rev. John Merrick, Vicar of Kirkdale; and many a time, in the character of the local auctioneer, did he dispose of the title-deeds of his father's clients to an imaginary audience, at exceedingly low figures. The walls were lined with shelves, on which reposed tin boxes, each containing some precious parchment, labelled without, Kirkdale-Manor Trust; Hawley Estate; Lord Belcombe's Deeds, &c.

"Why, you have everybody in the county for your clients, Mr. Raeburn," said I.

"Well, pretty near all the good names, sir. There's your uncle Ralph's, you see. His father, the late rector, did business with my father, and I hope his nephew and my son will be equally good friends. Yes, yes, for a mere local lawyer, he will have a tolerable practice, I flatter myself." The mention of my uncle's name seemed to have mellowed the attorney.

"What is that box with West Indies on it?" asked I; "they are not in the county."

"Well, John calls it 'Hot Pickles,'" replied Mr. Raeburn, with a grim smile; "for the fact is, it is rather a warm subject. There lie my wife's titles to her West India estates, which are no longer in existence. If you want to air your legal knowledge in this house, never choose the Emancipation Act as your topic. You are looking at Miss Floyd's box; and that reminds me that you rather 'put out' my wife last night, by your marked attention to Gertrude; and the poor girl caught it in consequence. Of course it was but natural on your part; but, in future, you must be more careful. Perhaps it will be better to let you know at once that she is engaged to John."

Here was a fiasco! Three hundred guineas paid out of my very moderate fortune, and three years' imprisonment before me in the Briary—besides the adoption of a profession for which, to say the least of it, I had no sort of liking—and all for nothing. If the attorney had taken down the large county map that hung over the fireplace, and knocked me down with the rollers, I could not have been more astonished, or more prostrated.

"Gertrude is my ward," he continued, "and my veto as to the disposal of her hand, while a minor, would have been absolute; but though they were cousins—which Mrs. Raeburn thought an objectionable circumstance—I had not the heart to refuse the young folks."

"Then their marriage is to take place immediately?" observed I, with as much indifference as I could assume.

"Well, no, there is no hurry; some time within the next three years."

A gleam of hope illumined my inward gloom. Within three years her judgment would have matured, and she might change her mind. The idea of that lovely and graceful girl, who could appreciate true poetry, becoming the wife of John Raeburn, was too terrible to contemplate; but, then, what shocking contrasts matrimony did afford. The head of my college, a septuagenarian, had married a girl of seventeen, who had been the cynosure of all our eyes in chapel.

Mr. Raeburn's disclosure had taken me so utterly by surprise, for the moment, that I did not question its authenticity. Stunned and cast down, I listened with heedless ears to his details of my future office work and office hours; but when at last he concluded them, and had shown me my own apartment, and left me there, and I sat down to contemplate my catastrophe at leisure, some uncertain lights broke in upon me.

It might, of course, have been the embarrassment of the topic itself that had caused him to avert his eyes from me while speaking of it; to play with the ruler; to use a tone of marked emphasis that contrasted strangely with his nervous manner; but it might also have been that he was not speaking the truth—or, at all events, speaking something more than the truth. I could not believe, upon a reviewal of what had passed between Gertrude and myself, that she was actually engaged to John Raeburn. No word of love, it is true, had been exchanged between us, or had, even on my part, been actually expressed; yet she could scarcely have been mistaken as to the nature of my attentions, and these she had undoubtedly encouraged. The thought that she had been playing into the attorney's hands, merely to insure my becoming his articulated clerk, flushed my cheek with shame for having entertained it even for an instant, and was dismissed at once and for ever. No; whatever arts had been used in that

procedure, she at least was guiltless of them, though she might have been the innocent instrument of others. Perhaps Mr. Raeburn thought to pocket my three hundred guineas, and at the same time rid himself of an unwelcome pupil, by this unlooked-for revelation. In that case I would show him that I was tenacious of my rights, resolute to have my money's worth, and so far evidence a capacity for my new calling; I would not be starved out of my present quarters, though Mrs. Raeburn should diet me on home-made wine and periwinkles; and, above all, I would seek an early opportunity of hearing from Miss Floyd's own lips whether her guardian had told the truth or lies.

In the drawing-room I found the whole family assembled, awaiting the announcement of dinner, which was at the Briary a movable feast, varying with the seasons; being in summer time at the fashionable hour of seven, in the autumn at six and five, and in the winter at three, the object of which complicated arrangement was to avoid the necessity and consequent expense of dining by candle-light. Miss Floyd rose to meet me with a quiet smile and the very faintest change of colour; if her manner was not absolutely cordial, it was as much so as, considering the presence in which we stood, it could have been expected to be; and when I pressed her hand, the pressure—and I watched for it as a doctor watches for a beat of pulse—was perceptibly returned. It might have been but as a sign of welcome, though even so I should have been thankful for it; but my heart, which had been low and cold, leaped up at that touch, like flame from ashes, taking it as a more tender token. Her speech was gentle as usual, but quite unembarrassed; that of one of two things I felt convinced—either Mrs. Raeburn had not rebuked her for my conduct of the previous evening, in which case her husband had told me an untruth; or if she had, that it had had no effect upon her. Of the two, I inclined to the latter opinion, for I knew that Gertrude had a spirit of her own that would resist unjustifiable censure, while the fact of her pecuniary independence placed her out of the reach of absolute harshness. To her servants, to her husband, to every one over whom she could exercise supremacy, Mrs. Raeburn's manner was dictatorial; to her equals, or those she fancied to be her equals, it was morose and taciturn; but to Gertrude she was always

patronisingly civil. She did not, indeed, call her "Gerty," as John Raeburn did, but she termed her "cousin"—which, as a matter of fact, she was not—and in the morning and at night she applied that gash between her chin and nose to Miss Floyd's cheek (like a pike smelling at a water-lily) in motherly salutation.

It devolved on me, of course, to take Mrs. Raeburn into dinner, her husband followed with Gertrude, and behind came John, with a mincing gait, in supposed imitation of the ladies, which turned the servant girl in waiting purple with suppressed mirth. To my chagrin, I was placed by myself at Mrs. Raeburn's right hand, while Gertrude sat opposite with John. This, however, I reflected, was no less than what was to be expected from Mr. Raeburn's announcement, whether true or not; and certainly my vis-à-vis did not conduct themselves, at least to my thinking, as engaged persons. If a single covert glance had been exchanged between them; if their hands had strayed together for one instant below the table-cloth; if, with a stolid glance at his father's picture on the wall, John had even ventured to press her fairy foot with his own—I should without doubt have been cognisant of it, so strict was my watch upon them; but none of these significant events occurred. They seemed on intimate terms indeed, but only such as might be looked for in the case of two young people living under the same roof, and related—although, indeed, but distantly—to one another.

Our dinner had one merit—it was not pretentious. There were two small soles, which being set before my hostess, I offered to carve, a proposition which to my great satisfaction she declined. It required a mathematical genius to divide them into five portions, and yet leave a fragment on the dish. There was a boiled scrag-end of mutton, which was a dire cause of discomposure to me, since it naturally suggested caper sauce; and when I asked for it, there was none. "Cook has forgotten it, I'm afraid," said my host, apologetically. "The cook has done nothing of the kind," was his wife's stern rejoinder. "In this house, Mr. Sheddon, though I trust you will find everything good and wholesome of its kind, you will find no luxuries. We avoid them upon principle. Some people, for instance, indulge in a profusion of foreign liquors; now, in my opinion, the manufactures of our own country should

be encouraged, rather than those of France or Spain; so, although there is sherry, for those to whom a vicious custom has rendered it necessary"—here she shot a glance at the attorney—"it is our usual custom to drink raisin or ginger wine." Having had experience of the sherry, my own opinion was that the charge of foreign manufacture could scarcely be laid against it; but, nevertheless, I took Mrs. Raeburn's hint, and a glass of ginger wine.

Anything more objectionable I did not remember to have put in my mouth, since I had been a school-boy; and I suppose the expression of my countenance betrayed the fact, for she added hastily, "It is a most excellent stomachic."

At this, John Raeburn, who was in the act of taking a dose of it himself, was seized with an irresistible fit of laughter.

It was necessary, of course, to swallow this admirable tonic remedy before its beneficial attributes could take effect upon the human system. In John's case, this preliminary operation had not been completed, and for some minutes I thought he would have been choked.

"It went the wrong way," observed Mrs. Raeburn, either in explanation of this catastrophe, or as an apology for her wine.

"If it went the right way," muttered the attorney, gloomily, "it should go into the hog-tub, every bottle of it."

The observation was a partially just one; but "By what an atmosphere," thought I, with indignation, "of vulgarity and meanness is yon angelic creature surrounded in this house!"

I felt like some heroic young seaman to whom a "cutting out" expedition has been for the first time intrusted; and from under the frowning battery of Mrs. Raeburn's guns I swore to myself to rescue the charming Gertrude, to haul down her cousin's colours (if indeed she wore them) from the mast, and to substitute in place of them my own. I was not so sanguine, or so venturesome, as to think of asking her for the present whether I possessed her love; but I was resolved to know, that very evening, in what position she really stood with relation to John Raeburn, that I might shape my course accordingly.

CHAPTER V. AN ARRIVAL.

OUR sordid meal did not occupy much time; nor was there any great temptation to linger over the plate of biscuits—"mixed," said the hostess, but, in fact,

consisting of five small abernethys and one infinitesimal macaroon—which, with some mystic preserve, the basis of which seemed to be damaged damsons, formed the dessert. After one more glass of ginger wine, to which she must have assimilated her constitution, for it never did her any harm, Mrs. Raeburn thawed a smile at Gertrude, then froze again with dignity, and carried my charmer away with her into the drawing-room.

“John, bring the brandy,” was the ejaculation uttered by the attorney, as the door closed upon his wife’s majestic figure. “Your mother may call that wine of hers a stomachic, but I pronounce it stomach ache. I am sure Sheddon must be suffering tortures.”

John instantly dived into the office and produced a decanter of what looked like sherry, and of which his father insisted upon my partaking, under the transparent pretence that it had been sent for upon my account. The occurrence was evidently an habitual one, and when he had helped himself to a bumper, the host—for fear, as I concluded, of a sudden inroad from his better half—placed the bottle on the carpet beside his chair, as though it had been champagne in ice. Every hour that I had been at the Priory seemed to present some painful illustration of the character of one or other of its inmates.

My host was a drunkard, my hostess a screw,
John a clown, only Gertrude was tender and true,

was the verdict my experience passed upon my new acquaintances, and which my habit of verse-making cast into the above poetic form. I had plenty of leisure, both for reflection and composition, for Mr. Raeburn and his son began to talk over the business transactions of the day, which had no interest for me even when intelligible—how Farmer Dod had called about renewing his lease, and how Lord Belcombe’s steward had objected; how Gafer Gardon’s will, which he had insisted on making himself, would not prove very profitable to his niece, by the time the law had done with it; and how the superintendent of the borough police had been “squared” by the landlord of the Dove with Two Heads.

Through the monotonous buzz of their talk, which, together with the effects of the unaccustomed glass of brandy, was fast lulling me to slumber, my ear suddenly caught the sound of wheels. The house stood quite apart by itself, with only

a private road leading to it from the town, so that if any vehicle were coming that way it must needs be to the Priory. Any visitor would be welcome to me, as not only putting a stop to the present conversation, which seemed interminable, but as enabling me to escape to the drawing-room. I listened, however, to the rumble of the wheels upon the hard road; to the click of the entrance gate; and then to the crunch upon the gravel, with an interest that could scarcely have been warranted by such considerations. I seemed to have an odd presentiment that something of importance was about to happen.

“I hear a gig,” remarked John, presently.

“Nay,” said I, to whom the sound was by this time quite familiar, “it is a four-wheeler of some sort.”

“It is the brandy that makes you hear double,” rejoined John, with his odious titter, which had this time a touch of malice in it, perhaps because his father had not offered him a glass. The old man knew too well the bitterness of the fruit of that tree of knowledge, to offer it to his only son; and perhaps even foresaw a time wherein, even though he were yet alive, there should be but one head left to manage affairs the intricacy of which needed careful steering.

“It has passed the office-door and is coming to the house. What a fool that little Jerry is! he is always making some mistake,” said Mr. Raeburn, peevishly. “They should put some other man at the station.”

“It isn’t Jerry driving,” answered John, who had risen, and was looking out of window. “It’s a dog.”

“A dog? You must be drunk, John!” exclaimed his father, rising also, but not without some difficulty.

As we all three stood at the window, we beheld this portent. A railway fly, with such an enormous bull-dog sitting on its front seat, that he absolutely concealed the driver (who was, however, but of very small dimensions) on the other side of him. Above the fly were some nondescript and shapeless articles of luggage, made of some wild animal’s hide, with the hair outside (afterwards found to be a bison’s). Within the fly, and looking out of its window, from which it nodded to us with an air of familiar recognition, was a very large scarlet bird, which, from the height at which it stood, might have been an ibis, but it had a parrot’s beak.

"What the deuce is it?" murmured the attorney. There was positive apprehension in his tone, which in his case too might well have been presentiment, but which I believe to have been caused by the suspicion that his vision was playing him false; that the Nemesis of delirium tremens, of which he stood in fear, had already overtaken him.

"It's a menagerie," replied John, quietly. "They think you are the mayor this year, instead of Wilnot, and are come to ask permission to exhibit in the Town Hall. There's the proprietor—that fellow with the white beard and the straw hat—and he has probably got a Bengal tiger under his seat."

The man alluded to had left the vehicle, and was standing at the front door, with the bird upon his wrist, whilst the driver, evidently in abject terror of the bull-dog, was cautiously taking down the luggage.

"Who can it be?" reiterated the attorney, with a tremor in his voice even more perceptible than before.

"It is Robinson Crusoe, father," answered John, with imperturbable gravity. "His man Friday is to arrive by the next train, and they are come to stop with us over Christmas."

It was clear indeed that the visitor was not making an afternoon call, but intended to stay the night at all events. A considerable number of "effects" had been by this time taken out of the fly: a large brass cage, probably the residence of the parrot; two small deal boxes with slits in them, as though to hold money for some charitable institution; two or three packages, looking like the offspring of the larger ones, and equally shapeless and hairy; and an enormous umbrella.

"I thought so," ejaculated John, as this last article made its appearance; "you will soon see his two guns and his tame goat."

But at that moment the front door opened, and the owner of all these wonderful properties disappeared within the house. There was a tumult of voices in the hall; the chatter of the parrot; the growl of the dog; and a shriek from the maid-servant, who presently came flying into the room, with—

"Please, sir, a gentleman wants to see you."

"What about? What does he want?" inquired the attorney, looking very pale and embarrassed.

"I am sure I don't know, sir; he has a lot of birds, and beastesses, and serpents,"

added she, with terrified emphasis. "But missis has gone out to him."

It was plain that, in the maid's opinion, there was no man, nor beast, nor creeping thing, for whom her mistress was not fully a match; and yet we could now hear Mrs. Raeburn's voice, pitched many degrees lower than her usual tone.

"In that case, you had better see my husband at once, sir," she was saying, and the next moment the door opened and she entered, followed by the stranger and his myrmidons.

It looked like a segment of the procession into the ark, and yet John's simile of Crusoe held better than ever, for the parrot had left the stranger's wrist and was sitting upon his shoulder. He was a fine handsome fellow, though his face, bronzed by a tropical sun, looked, by contrast with his long white beard, less like a copper kettle than the bottom of it after being exposed to the action of fire.

"Here's a gentleman who says he is your brother, Mr. Raeburn."

"Mark!" cried the stranger, opening his long arms, and looking earnestly at the attorney. "Dear Mark, don't you know me?"

Mr. Raeburn came hurriedly forward, and since the offer of his hand would evidently have fallen short of what was expected, yielded to his brother's embrace.

The absurdity of the scene was beyond description; for the attorney, quite unused to such a display of affection, was not only awkward in his accomplishment of it, but was evidently in mortal terror of the parrot, who, from his post on the stranger's shoulder, emitted a series of discordant shrieks, ending with, "Kiss and be friends! kiss and be friends! kiss and be friends!"

There was one thing, however, which, to my mind at least, invested the proceeding with pathos. The tall white-bearded man was shedding tears of joy.

"Thirty years ago, Mark; thirty years ago," reiterated he, in broken tones; "and yet that you should know me still."

"I knew you, Alec," answered the other, not without corresponding tones of emotion, "when you first got out of the fly."

"Well, that is so far satisfactory," observed Mrs. Raeburn, who had been regarding the scene with considerable impatience and contempt; "because, really, nowadays, there is no knowing who's who."

"God bless you, Alec, and welcome home," cried the attorney, hoarsely.

"Yes; welcome home to England,"

added Mrs. Raeburn, with some slight stress on the last two words. "You are come from abroad, of course; and in health and prosperity, I hope. Mark has often and often talked about you."

The visitor turned his face towards his hostess with a questioning look: then, after a little pause, exclaimed, "I do not doubt it, madam; though, if I did, I should still thank you for saying so. When we were lads, we were all in all to one another. Now, of course, it is different. He has his wife—what's her name, Mark?"

"Matilda."

"Let me salute you, Matilda." She stood like a graven image while her brother-in-law stepped up to her, parrot and all, and kissed her cheek; though, from the expression of that bird's countenance, I should not have been a whit surprised had he picked her eye out. "This is your son?"

"Yes; John," explained the attorney, absently, for the bull-dog was walking round and round his legs.

"And this your second?" continued the visitor, addressing me with the same genial smile that he had bestowed on my supposed brother. "Since your eldest son was not named after yourself, I can scarcely hope to find an Alexander in the family."

"He does not belong to the family at all," observed Mr. Raeburn.

"I am sorry for it," answered the visitor, drily; "he looks a frank young fellow enough. I trust, however, I have at all events a relation in this charming young lady."

Gertrude had entered the dining-room, unobserved, in the confusion, and was standing close behind me.

"If you are Mr. Alexander Raeburn, my father, Robert Floyd, was your first cousin," answered she, sweetly. "I remember to have heard my mother speak of you," she added, with a little blush.

"Are you Maggie Warden's daughter?" exclaimed the bearded man, with a tremor in his manly voice. "I ought to have known as much. Would you mind if an old man like me should ask to kiss you?"

"That's nice! that's nice! that's nice!" shouted the parrot, as its master suited the action to the word. "Kiss and be friends! kiss and be friends! kiss and be friends!"

"I hope we shall, Chicot; I am sure we shall," ejaculated the visitor, gravely. "God bless all in this house, and thanks be to Him that, after so many years, he has permitted me to come amongst them."

REMARKABLE ADVENTURERS.

CASANOVA.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II. UNDER THE LEADS.

STUDENTS of Hogarth will recollect that that great painter and greater moralist pitched upon Covent Garden as the scene of his famous "Morning." The stiff devotee is walking primly and demurely to matins, without deigning to perceive sundry roisterers in gay attire, who, after a night spent among the wine-pots, and enlivened by the rattle of the dice-box, have reeled out of Tom King's Coffee-house, and are playing "Meg's diversion" in the market. Their rich clothes are in disorder, their sumptuous ruffles and "jabots" crumpled and torn, their faces wan and sickly in the grey light of the winter sun. The ground is covered with snow, and on this pure surface the revellers stand out like foul blotches on the face of nature. Changing the venue from London to Venice, transposing summer for winter, and southern for northern manners, we stumble on a very similar scene by the shores of the Adriatic. It is a fine July morning, in the year of grace 1755. The first yellow streak of sunrise is gradually reddening into more perfect day. Slowly wending their silent way towards the Grand Canal are the fruit and vegetable boats, laden to the water's edge with cool greenery, gorgeous purple egg fruit, melons of every shape and size, and huge pumpkins, making up in show what they lack in flavour. Towards one spot, on the quay of the Grand Canal—the Erberia, the flower and fruit market—all this wealth of beauty is tending. As the boats arrive, their contents are flung in picturesque heaps by the peasants, whose cheeks of ruddy bronze contrast strangely with the greenish-yellow hue of fashionable visitors, for it is the fashion, in this year 1755, to take a stroll in the Erberia before going to bed, and to "assist" at the unloading of the fruit boats and the opening of the market. It is not good "ton" to look fresh and lively at this merry meeting. Ladies and gentlemen think it good style to air their haggard looks—after a night spent in dancing or dicing—among the flowers of the Erberia. Abbés, nobles, captains, more or less coppery in hue, professional gamblers, actresses, dancers, debauchees of every type, saunter listlessly among the verdure. It is an odd scene to look upon at sunrise. Not

so, however, does it seem to that tall dark-visaged cavalier of almost Moorish aspect who has just arrived. He has evidently been passing the night in brilliant company, for his costume is sumptuous in the extreme. His broad shoulders and long muscular limbs are encased in a suit of light-coloured taffety, profusely adorned with many an ell of silver lace. Truly a superb dandy this young Casanova, but yet ill at ease in his splendid raiment. Luck has been against him of late, and his once goodly pile of sequins has vanished. The last five hundred have vanished to-night, and the young rake is at his wits' end for ready cash. But this is not the worst. He has been advised by persons of prudence and authority to make himself scarce, as the air of Venice is not healthy for him, and he cannot quite make out these obscure hints. An empty pocket and an aching head oppress him sorely, as he paces moodily to and fro, scarcely heeding the beauties of nature and art by which he is surrounded.

Suddenly he turns away and makes briskly for his lodgings; and, thinking that nobody can be up at this early hour, applies his key to the door. Unnecessary trouble; the door is open, and the lock broken. Inside all is confusion, everybody is up, and the hostess complaining bitterly that the police functionary, known as Messer-grande, has entered the house by force, turned everything inside out and topsy-turvy, saying that he is looking for a certain box said to be filled with salt—a contraband article. The Signor Casanova's room has not been respected; in fact, has been subjected to a rigorous perquisition. Casanova vows vengeance and goes to bed, but cannot sleep, the loss of his last sequin and the mysterious police visit being too much for his nerves; and four hours later the adventurer, now seriously alarmed, betakes him to his protector, the old patrician Bragadino, whom he finds in company with his two inseparable friends. Casanova recounts the outrage on his dwelling, and insists that his landlady shall have ample reparation made her; but the three old gentlemen, who know the inner life of the Venetian police, shake their heads at their scamp of a protégé, and tell him to come again at dinner-time. With an appetite by no means improved, he again presents himself in this goodly company. There has been talk in Venice to-day of the odd association of our hero with three venerable old gentle-

men, perfectly respectable and infinitely devout. Venetian gossips cannot fathom this mysterious friendship. "Virtue," say they, "may be indulgent to Vice, but should hardly select it as an ally. There is only one solution possible—sorcery! The youngster is a wizard, and has bewitched the old patricians." An ugly word this "sorcery" in the domains where the Holy Office yet retains influence. Dinner over, the four oddly-assorted friends take counsel, and old Bragadino addresses his young scapegrace: "The box, my dear young friend, be it filled with salt or with gold, is but a pretext. It was thou whom they sought, beyond all doubt, thinking themselves sure to find thee. Since thy good genius has preserved thee thus far, be off, escape; to-morrow it may be too late. I have myself been for eight months inquisitor of state, and I know the kind of captures that the tribunal commands. They do not break down doors to find a box of salt. Mayhap—knowing thee to be out—they made a descent on purpose to give thee time to fly. Believe me, my dear son, fly instantly to Fucino, and thence to Florence, where thou canst remain till I write thee to return. If thou art without money, here are a hundred sequins to go on with. Think that prudence commands thee to depart." Blustering Casanova declares himself an innocent and injured lamb—guiltless of crime, and having, therefore, nothing to fear. The old man shakes his wig. "The redoubtable tribunal may think thee guilty of crimes—real or supposed—whereof it will render thee no account. Appeal to thy oracle, but depart." Good advice, entreaties, tears, all are in vain. Casanova goes to his lodgings. Night descends on the lagoons. It is the night of the 25th of July, 1755. The returning sun brings a terrible visitor—the redoubtable Messer-grande. "Are you Giacomo Casanova?" "Yes. I am the same." "Get up, dress, give up your papers." "From whom do you bring this order?" "From the tribunal."

Caught in the net, too confident Casanova! Books, papers, and desk open! "Take them," says the prisoner, with a cold feeling creeping over his heart. "Bound manuscripts. Where are they?" Too well informed messer-grande! Here they are, a pretty collection for a young sorcerer—as yet in a small way of business—the "Clavicula of Solomon," the "Zecor-ben," a "Picatrix," a "Treatise on the Planet-

ary Hours," and the incantations necessary for raising demons of every class, cruelly damnatory just now! Messer-grande seizes upon these precious volumes, while his prisoner, in a species of dream, rises, shaves, and dresses mechanically, combs himself carefully, puts on a shirt of finest lace and the famous taffety coat, with the silver-lace upon it, and goes forth among the archers dressed like a bridegroom. Messer-grande puts his prey into a gondola, takes him to his office, and locks him up, without a word—neither captor nor captive being conversationally given just now. Dull hours of waiting ensue; until, about three o'clock, the chief of the archers enters with an order to conduct the prisoner to the famous state prison of Venice—"Under the leads." Another silent journey in a gondola, through the smaller canals till the Grand Canal is reached, and the gloomy party descend at the quay of the prisons. Up and down they go over many stairs and through the closed bridge—the communication between the prisons and the doge's palace over the canal called Rio di Palazzo—through a gallery into a room occupied by one in the robe of a patrician. This noble gentleman looks keenly at the prisoner, and says, "It is he. Put him in the depôt." The prisoner, still silent, follows the gaoler of the Piombi, armed with a mighty bunch of keys, up more stairs and through more galleries into a dirty but roomy garret, where the guardian, seizing an enormous key, opens a door lined with iron, pierced with a hole about nine inches in diameter, and orders the prisoner in, while the latter is attentively considering a machine fixed to the wall. The gaoler kindly explains, "When their excellencies order anybody to be strangled, he is seated on a stool and his neck adjusted to this collar, which is worked by a tourniquet till the patient renders up his soul to the Lord, for the confessor never quits him till he is dead." Casanova is locked in his cell; the gaoler asks if he wants anything to eat after the interesting description of the garotte; and the prisoner replies mechanically that he has not thought of such a thing.

It is a low-browed wretched room, barely six feet high, and some twelve feet square, lighted, after a fashion, by a grating two feet square, crossed by six iron bars, each an inch thick, making sixteen rectangular openings. A heavy beam cuts off a portion of the light. There is no bed, no table, no chair, no furniture in-

deed but a shelf. Venice is hot in July, so Casanova doffs his gorgeous mantle of poul-de-soie, his unhappy silken coat, and his hat, trimmed with Spanish point lace, and decked with a handsome white feather. The prisoner clings to the grating, shaking it with impotent rage, like a caged beast of prey, and strives to catch a breath of fresh air; until at last he sinks down, crushed by his misfortune, and neither speaks, thinks, nor moves for eight mortal hours of suffocation and despair.

The din of St. Mark's clock awakes him to life. Night has come, but with it neither bread nor meat, bed nor water. Has the man been flung into this den to die, to become food for the rats which skirmish so fearfully in the garret outside? He waits, waits, waits—three live-long hours. Still no sound but the clock of St. Mark remorselessly crashing the hour into his ears. Fury seizes upon him. He stamps, shrieks, howls, dashes himself against the cruel walls, rends his hands against the senseless bars. At last nature asserts her power, and the wretched captive sinks in a shapeless heap on the floor of his dungeon, and falls asleep. The inexorable clock strikes midnight, and the wearied man awakes suddenly. He puts out his hand into the darkness and grasps another, cold as ice. His hair stands on end. Is this the hand of the last tenant of this hideous chamber, the last victim of the garotte? It is only his other hand, deadened by the weight he has rested upon it!

Early morning brings the gaoler. "Have you had time to think what you would like to eat?" asks this grim functionary. Casanova, now calm, asks for soup, bouilli, roast meat, water, and wine, and bethinks him that his effects may as well be brought to him. He takes a pencil, and writes for his clothes, his bed, table, chairs, mirrors, razors, books, paper, and pens. "Strike out," saith the gaoler, "books, paper, pens, mirrors, and razors; all this is forbidden fruit here, and give me money for your dinner." Three sequins survived in the pockets once well filled. One of these is handed to the gaoler, and about mid-day appear furniture and food. No knives and forks however, but simply an ivory spoon—cutting instruments being forbidden.

A dismal meal this first prison dinner. Dim light, stifling air, crushing burning heat, the summer sun pitching down vertically upon the leaden roof. Another

dreadful day, made more hideous by vermin, rats, and the crash of the eternal clock. Morning brings books, conceded by the mercy of the Signiory; not those asked for by the prisoner, but improving works selected for prisoners: "The Mystic City," by Sister Mary, of Agrada, and "The Adoration of the Sacred Heart," neither of them quite in Casanova's line of reading. They are better than nothing, however.

At the end of ten days the three sequins are exhausted, and the tribunal assign fifty sous a day for the prisoner's board; a sufficient sum for a man "under the leads" in the dog-days, almost roasted alive in his cell. Next come fever, the surgeon, convalescence, and weary days. No accusation, no trial, no news of the outer world—nothing but heat, vermin, and occasional fits of frantic fury, as week after week passes by, and the hope of deliverance grows ever fainter and fainter. Despair at last brings courage, and the desperate resolve to escape or perish becomes more and more clearly defined. Scheme after scheme is revolved in the busy brain, recalled to health by the cool breezes of winter; but, to make Casanova's plans intelligible, a few words of explanation are necessary.

The Piombi are no other than the garrets of the doge's palace, and it is from the large sheets of lead with which the roof is covered that they take their name. They are accessible either by the gates of the palace, by the building devoted to prisons, or by the covered bridge already mentioned—the Bridge of Signs. The dungeons can only be reached, under ordinary circumstances, by passing through the hall where the inquisitors of state assemble. The secretary alone has the key, which he confides to the gaoler but once a day, in the early morning, to enable him to attend to the wants of the prisoners. This service is performed at daybreak, as at a later hour the archers passing to and fro would be seen by all those having business with the chiefs of the Council of Ten. This council meets every day in a contiguous hall called Bussola, which the archers are obliged to cross every time they go to the Piombi.

The prisons are under the roof of two sides of the palace: three on the west—in one of which unlucky Casanova is safely hived—and four on the east. The gutter on the western side descends to the court of the palace; the other, perpendicularly, upon the canal called Rio di Palazzo. On this side the cells are all lighted, and the

prisoners can stand upright; but on the west, enormous rafters partially shut out the light of day. The floor of Casanova's cell is actually just above the hall of the Inquisitors, where, as a rule, they meet at night after the sitting of the Council of Ten, of which the Three are members. Casanova is perfectly well aware of all these particulars, and thinks the only possible mode of escape is to bore through the floor of his cell, to let himself down into the Hall of the Inquisitors at the right moment—that is, say when it is empty—and to make off. This project is no easy one to carry out without weapons, tools, or money to bribe the archers. Nevertheless, the prisoner has taken heart, and, with rare strength of purpose and true Italian patience, goes to work. First of all, he persuades the gaoler to allow him one half-hour's walk every day in the garret adjoining his cell. In this place he finds—growing bolder and more inquisitive by degrees—great heaps of manuscripts, and under them articles most precious—a fire-shovel, some old candlesticks, tongs, &c., the relics of an ancient prisoner of condition; but what interests him most is a straight bolt, as thick as his thumb and at least a foot and a half long. Meanwhile, he has had inflicted upon him a gaol-mate, a companion whom he wishes "five fathoms under the Rialto." Once more alone, on the 1st of January, 1756, he receives a present from his patron, Bragadino—a fine dressing-gown, lined with fox-skin, and a bear-skin bag to sleep in; for, as the heat is unbearable in the summer, so is the cold merciless in the winter. He also obtains a more cheerful assortment of books and better treatment generally. First and foremost, he secures a block of marble from the adjoining garret, then pounces upon the bolt he has long since marked for his own, and now commences a patient course of toil in the hope of conquering freedom.

Taking his piece of black marble as a whetstone, he works on, day by day, to convert the formidable bolt into a spontoon, and gradually grinds the bolt down in eight facets of an inch and a half long, bringing it at last to a tolerably sharp point. His arms become stiff with this painful work and his hands covered with sores; but hope sustains him, and he surveys his bolt, converted into a powerful weapon, with pride and exultation. To hide this treasure is the first thought, and the arm-chair provides a

spot; the next is, to go to work with it and pierce the floor. Clear-headed Casanova has no doubt about his locality, and doubts nothing that—the floor once perforated—he can let himself down into the hall by his bedclothes torn into strips. Concealed under the table till the door is opened, he can then escape, or, if an archer should come in his way, the spontoon will remove him. But there is a terrible drawback to this scheme: the floor may be of any thickness, and how are the archers to be kept from sweeping with exasperating cleanliness under the bed? This difficulty must be approached with care, for fear of awaking suspicion. Dust, it presently appears, is a killing thing to Signor Casanova, bringing on fits of sneezing and bleedings of the nose, copious and serious. The doctor is called in, and affirms that these sweepings must not go on, as the patient's life might be sacrificed. The gaoler bows assent; and now, at last, the caged creature can begin to gnaw his bars. Long winter nights are against him, and his next idea is to construct a lamp. Things are now easier. Oil is obtained for salad, and flint for steeping in vinegar for the toothache. A wick is easily made, and a steel buckle will help the flint to produce a spark. Sulphur and tinder are still wanting; but a supple and ingenious mind, bent on one object, is not likely to want for these. The Signor Casanova is unwell, afflicted with irritation of the skin. Sulphur is wanted to make an unguent, and is supplied by the gaoler. Now for the tinder. Has the tailor done as he was commanded—put "amadou" (German tinder) under the arms of that taffety coat, to prevent the perspiration spoiling the silk? A nervous moment! Liberty may depend on the memory of a tailor. That careful workman has done as he was bid; the interior of the coat contains the precious sheet of "amadou." Sacrifice of the salad being made, the oil will suffice for a night's work, but as the Carnival has commenced, work must be deferred for fear of unwelcome companions. An unhappy Jew, thrust upon Casanova for a couple of months, delays his operations, and worries him nearly to death, but a few days after Easter he is alone again, and work commences in earnest. The bed removed and the lamp lighted, the prisoner lies flat on the floor, spontoon in hand, furnished with a napkin to collect the fragments as they are rent away. Digging down through the

flooring he patiently collects the bits, and flings them next day behind the heap of rubbish in the outer room. Like a gigantic rodent, Casanova nibbles away nightly at the massive planks, and at the end of three weeks has pierced a triple flooring. But now a serious obstacle interposes, in the form of a layer of the little pieces of marble known at Venice as terrazzo marmorin—the ordinary pavement of rich men's houses. The sharpened bolt will not bite on this material. The anxious workman toils patiently and painfully, nay, pours vinegar into the hole, in the hope of softening the stone à la Hannibal, and at last recollects that, by attacking the cement which joins the little pieces together, he will lighten his labour. Action follows thought quickly enough, and four days suffice to tear up the pavement, when another plank becomes visible—probably the last of its series. Meanwhile, time passes even under the leads, on which a midsummer sun again pours down his scorching rays. Stified with heat, and dripping with perspiration, the strong determined man lies flat on the ground, his cherished lamp by his side, his spontoon still at work, slowly gnawing through the net. One day he has a terrible fright. In the midst of his work he hears the grating of the bolt in the passage outside—a sound betokening an unwelcome visitor. There is barely time to blow out the light and drag the bed over the aperture, when the gaoler Lawrence introduces a companion in misfortune, an unhappy abbé, nearly suffocated by the heat and horrible stench of the cell, and frightened out of his life at the appearance of his companion, whom he at first takes for a maniac. Soon recognising him, however, the new prisoner tells the veteran the news of the town, to his infinite delight. In eight days the abbé is again at liberty, and Casanova flies back to work, now nibbling very tenderly at the last thickness of the plank. Piercing a small hole through, he claps his eye to it and sees, as he has expected, the chamber of the Inquisitors. A less welcome sight is a perpendicular surface some eight inches deep—what he has dreaded and expected all along—one of the huge beams which support the ceiling. This involves the extension of the opening on the opposite side, as the beam would prevent the passage of an athletic adventurer. Anxious moments now till the work is done and the small holes carefully closed up, lest

the light of the lamp should be seen from below. By the 23rd of August all is ready, and the 27th fixed upon for the attempt, but on the 25th comes a crushing blow.

At mid-day the bolts rattle and the gaoler enters with, "I wish you joy, sir, of the good news I bring you. Follow me." The first thought of the prisoner is of course of liberty.

"Give me time to dress," he cries, overcome with joy.

"There is no occasion for that, as you are only to be removed from this vile cell to another bright and new one, with two windows, out of which you will see half of Venice, and where you can stand upright."

Poor, patient prisoner, struck down as by a thunderbolt, sinks into a chair. His head swims round and round. "Give me some vinegar, and tell the secretary that I thank the tribunal for this favour, but that I pray I may be left where I am." This appeal is only laughed at by Lawrence; the fruit of months of labour is lost, and, worse than all, the hole in the floor will be discovered. In the midst of all this misery and disappointment there is one crumb of consolation—the spontoon, concealed in the arm-chair, is removed with it into the new quarters. There is a terrible uproar when the hole is discovered, and much seeking and poking among mattresses and cushions, but the precious weapon escapes notice. Nevertheless, nothing can be done with it. The new cell is perfectly fresh and clean, and would show the slightest scratch on its surface. Escape seems farther off than ever.

One day Casanova orders the gaoler to buy him the works of Maffei; but as that worthy comes in for any surplus that may be in hand at the end of the month, he is terribly averse to any extraordinary expenses, and suggests that other people in the prison have books, and that they might advantageously lend them to each other. The "Rationarium" of Petau is exchanged for the first volume of Wolf, and a correspondence is opened by means of the hollow backs of the vellum-bound books, which sit flat when the books are closed, but form a kind of pocket when it is opened. Backwards and forwards pass letters between the tenants of cells on the same perpendicular. Casanova finds that overhead are two occupants, one Father Balbi, of noble Venetian family, and a Count Andrew Aschino of Udine, a fat old man. Casanova writes with his finger-nail trimmed to a point, and dipped in mul-

berry-juice, the books themselves supply fly-leaves to be torn out, written over, and slipped into the hollow book-backs. One subject occupies the minds of all the prisoners—their escape; but the mind of the reverend father Balbi is more critical than inventive, and Casanova knows that he at least cannot go to work for a while. Nevertheless he informs the monk of the existence of his precious spontoon, and offers to convey it to him, if he will use it in making an opening through the ceiling of his own cell into the superior garret, and in cutting his way through the floor to Casanova, who then will answer for the success of the operation. His opinion of the discretion and skill of the reverend father is not very great, but the great adventurer must work with such tools as he has. He writes Balbi to provide himself beforehand with a couple of score of pictures of saints to cover over the damaged ceiling and floor. The difficulty now is to convey the working tool from one cell to the other. The wadded dressing-gown lined with fox fur is thought of, but abandoned; and at last, after severe cogitation, the true device is hit upon. Casanova compels the gaoler to buy him a new folio edition of the Vulgate, just out; the volume is brought—and he finds that the unhappy spontoon is just two inches longer than the book.

New difficulties and delays supervene, but the inventive brain of the magician is equal to the task. St. Michael's day is coming on, and a dish of macaroni and cheese would be a friendly gift from one prisoner to another. Lawrence, the gaoler, now says that the neighbour would be glad of the great book, which cost three sequins. "Good," says Casanova, "I will send it him with the macaroni; but bring me the biggest dish you have, for I like to do things well." The spontoon is wrapped in paper, and stowed in the back of the book, care being taken that it shall project only an inch on either side. If the macaroni dish be now only big enough to hide the book on which it is to be placed, the weapon will be transferred safely. By good fortune the dish is enormous. Casanova himself fills the dish with macaroni, seasons it deftly, and fills up the interstices with a copious dose of melted butter. Brimful, the dish will require all the steadiness of Lawrence to keep it from spilling over on to the valuable book, against which dire disaster he is duly cautioned. Lawrence grumbles

at the brimming dish, but carries it—book and all—safely to Balbi, who now goes to work. In a week he succeeds in making a hole of sufficient size in the ceiling, and in masking it with a saintly picture. This done, the monk works away, groaning much over the severity of the work, but encouraged by his correspondent, who assures him it is child's play. Taking more kindly to his work as he goes on, Balbi soon removes thirty-six bricks, and on the 16th of October, at ten o'clock in the morning, a slight tapping overhead assures Casanova that all is going on well. He has now no doubt that, with the help of a companion, he will in three or four hours bore a hole in the roof of the ducal palace, and place himself upon the leads instead of under them. All is ready for the attempt, when once more the bolts squeak, and the archers of the Seigniorie again inflict upon Casanova a hideous visitor, at whose apparition thoughts of immediate flight vanish like a morning dream.

There seems to be no end to the ill-luck of the Signor Casanova!

GROETHODE'S LEATHER BREECHES.

A STORY OF THE CAPE POLICE.

"You want a horse to go to Alexandersfontein to-morrow? I don't think we can spare one, except Jumps. But, look here! our new inspector has borrowed the green cart, to look round camp on that side, and he may as well give you a lift."

We were at Bultfontein-house, on the South African Diamond Fields. I believe there are a score of mansions built at this time, compared with which the old Residence would seem a pretentious cow-house. But, when I knew it, we were desperately proud of our dwelling, and defied even the great New Rush, that marvellous pit of gems, to show its equal. Seldom then, and never now, I should suppose, did you ask for a horse in vain. But on this occasion, as the manager explained, I must either take a "cart in Dutoitspan Camp below, or share the inspector's vehicle, if I would shoot plovers for breakfast on the flats of Alexandersfontein." Of course, I chose to go somewhat out of my way, and thus came to hear the story which I propose to tell you.

At the hour conventionally known as daybreak in those early climes, we started. The faintest hue of grey overspread the

sky, and a man unused to African travelling would have thought it madness to drive over Bultfontein digging in such a light; but one learns there a fatalism beyond that of Turk or Fellah, and without an extra throb I lit the early pipe and took my seat behind the stalwart "boy," who had to pilot us amongst the "claims" of Bultfontein. At the bottom of the hill we stopped to pick up the inspector. I don't know why I should not name him, for my tale is true, every word, so far as memory serves me; but British custom is against the naming of names, and I will call the excellent fellow MacDavid, so that those who know may recognise.

MacDavid was a short, wiry man, such as recruiting sergeants love to enrol for the light cavalry. He had a face burnt red on cheeks and brow, almost black on temples. The grinding dust of the veldt had roughened it all over; a stiff black beard, dashed with grey, girdled it about; and his eyes had that steely brightness which I have always noticed in men who laugh and fight with equal heartiness. I know nothing of Inspector MacDavid's family or condition, for we never met, unless for a smile and a nod, after this occasion. But in the gallant corps to which he belonged, and belongs still, I trust—the Frontier Police—there are not a few privates who could, if they would, show their quarterings.

He took his seat beside me under the tilt of the "cart," and we bowled along behind a pair of the company's horses round the outskirts of the camp. The inspector kept his eyes about him, asking questions of this matter or that. I said, after a while:

"They say your men dislike this police work in camp?"

"Well," he answered, "it's not surprising; they didn't enlist for any such service. The proof of it is, that we are a mounted corps, and yet I have to borrow your friend's horses to take me round my beat. The men don't understand that it's just a temporary service: they call each other Bobby, and have a score of jokes. Our horses are eating their heads off in the big stable yonder. Isn't that a drinking-shop, under the tree?"

I explained how the tent in question was occupied by a man to whom all this land, and many a mile around, once belonged, and how the authorities dealt with him leniently. And then I said:

"Surely you men find excitement enough in camp? This place is not so peaceful as it was twelve months ago."

"Excitement?" repeated MacDavid. "It might be exciting for London peelers, but not for the frontier police; our fellows want it hot and strong, like "Cape Smoke" (Cape brandy). Half of them went through the Coranna war, and grumbled at that. Our proper business is to guard the frontier against those little imps of Bushmen, who are the natural enemies of the human race, white or black. A man who has campaigned with them is difficult to suit in a fight."

"But you haven't Coranna wars every year," I said, "nor even brushes with a Kaffir kraal. Come now, Mr. MacDavid, the frontier police are soldiers, of course, but they are policemen, too, and they catch even pickpockets sometimes upon the veldt."

"I don't know about pickpockets. They'd certainly catch any one they looked after; but our crimes don't run in that line. Horrors are done in this lonely veldt that beat all the fancy of civilisation."

We had skirted round the purlieus of Bultfontein, and once more struck the road which led me to my hunting-grounds. The sun was up. Each tall ant-hill beside the track threw its long blue shadow over the thin grass. No object more striking; neither tree, nor rock, nor water; broke the grey level. Wave beyond wave of colourless herbage the veldt stretched round, until it melted hazily beneath the flat-topped barren hills. The blue shadow of our rapid cart danced beside us. Could men, born in such a desert landscape—not Bedouins, but Christian men—conceive the crimes that we in Europe know? I had seen something of the boers, and had marvelled at their simplicity, whilst recognising that it was not always amiable. But they have no such passions, no such desires nor wants, as lead to crime with us. They know hunger but as a feeling of their black servants, greed of wealth only as a passion of those strange men who dig and dig for stones with which, a while ago, they plastered their mud cottages. Of love they are capable most certainly; but in its best, its sacred form. Of course I had heard stories. But MacDavid's tone seemed to suggest a sort of crime differing from that stolid and matter-of-fact immorality which Cape Town judges are sometimes called upon to punish.

"You have had some rough police work," I said.

"It was I arrested Groethode," he replied; adding, after an instant, "Perhaps

you've not heard of that man? But ask Mr. F—— up at the Residence, and he'll tell you stories to make your hair rise."

"I would rather hear yours," I answered.

And he told it me. No doubt I shall make some errors in transcribing it here, after four years have elapsed. I am not even certain that my ghastly hero's name was Groethode. But Cape readers will excuse me when they observe that I have at least got all my important facts correct, and of that I feel assured.

"I had served five years in the Eastern province," began MacDavid, "when I was transferred to the Colesberg district. They gave me a fortnight to report myself in, and I determined to ride the distance, crossing the Drakenburg mountains. On the fifth day out we rather lost ourselves, the Totty groom and I. After wandering for a few hours we came to a kloof—what they should call in England a cleft. You know the gap by Belmont, through which the road passes from this to Hopetown? It was just as lonely, just as grand as that, if you could fancy the valley before it was inhabited. And at the mouth stood a boer farmhouse."

MacDavid's comparison enabled me to realise the scene. I could paint the long desert flat, blazing with sunshine, and awl with dust. Though called pasture land, it bears no grass. Rugged bush of heath, dwarf tufts of carnomile, great bulbous roots of daphne, spring at six-inch intervals, and everywhere the sand shows red between. Above the dreary waste huge cliffs tower suddenly, rising from amidst a burnt heap of pebbles. Down below, brown and ragged spikes of herbage frizzle in the sun, but on the rock there is not foothold for a weed. Vultures lumber up to perch upon the cliff-tops; hawks swing and circle rapidly, their shadows flitting over the sand. On the little tufts of heath, lizards countless lie and bask. For miles and miles behind is grey desert; there is not a tree, not a break in the landscape; only hills on the far horizon, blue and misty at this distance, but, in fact, as hard and pitiless and baked as those in front.

And the boer farmhouse at entrance of the kloof! With an unconscious imitation these boers build to match the scenery; bare and colourless are their houses as the rocks above. The farmer steps from his rude front door and finds himself upon the veldt. He has no garden, nor does he want one, not even for vegetables. A half-dozen

peach trees, may be, green some sheltered corner of the kloof. Not a touch of paint, nor any ornament, sets off his house, inside or out. Days come and go therein, and bring no news. He has actually no knowledge of the world's affairs; months and years pass uncounted. The giant father becomes old and dies, but giant sons succeed. The girls do their courting at midnight, in the old Dutch fashion, with a lover who gallops in from twenty miles away. Presently they one by one announce the intention to get married, and their father gives them a few square miles of veldt for dowry; which, when the old man dies, his sons, if strong enough, will take away. The boer saves no money. His father left him twenty pounds, and that he leaves in turn. Never in life has he wanted anything, and his existence is a standing negation of this nineteenth century, whereof we are so proud.

All this passes through my mind as I recall MacDavid's story. The digression is not needless, but probably you think it long enough. He went on:

"In the house I found an old woman, who appeared, as I remembered afterwards, struck all of a heap by my appearance. I was in uniform. But she gave me coffee, of course, and said breakfast would be ready soon. There was a settle by the door, protected by a plank from the draught, and I sat down on it. After talking with the old woman for awhile I got drowsy, and so, I think, did she. You know how boers sleep, especially the women. It was very hot.

"Presently there was a clatter in the stoop, the door opened, and I jumped up. 'Take those crackers, and wash them!' said a gruff voice in Dutch. A big man, a giant, was standing in the middle of the room, with the leather breeches in his hand. The old woman made a movement, I suppose, for he turned suddenly, and looked me in the face. There was a stare in his eyes which your regular policeman would have recognised at once, I daresay, but it only seemed a strange look to me. I said something in Dutch, and he answered roughly, 'God has brought you, uncle!' going with that to the back room, where I saw a couple of Totty women cutting at a sheep. He threw the crackers into a corner, took the knife and hacked off three or four ribs, tearing them from the carcass, pitched them to the women, and came back, his hands all bloody."

"Was this Groethode?" I asked.

"The very man! A giant he was, a huge hill of flesh. His mother, that I'd been talking to, was every inch of six feet high, though stooped with age. Groethode measured nearly seven feet, if not quite. You know to what a monstrous height these boers run, but when the trial came he topped witnesses and jury by half a head. We sat down——"

"But what sort of face had he?"

"Oh, fair, you know, with a big rough beard all round, like the rest of them. Large blue eyes, looking wild, and a trick of moving his eyebrows up and down—what people would call a handsome man, but with a queer expression. I rather liked him. He had great spirits for a boer—indeed, I thought him rather drunk—slapping his mother on the back, and throwing the mutton-bones at his Totty women as fast as he cleaned them. He made me laugh a good deal, though he didn't laugh himself. I had never seen a boer like that, and I thought, if the Colesberg people should be as lively, I'd made a good exchange.

"When I came to have the police reports, a few days afterwards, I found that Groethode bore a most suspicious character, and that crime was rife in the country I very soon had evidence. First came news of a man and horse pitched headlong into a ravine; but when I got to investigate it, the thing resolved itself into a mere accident. Then, at a wedding feast, half a dozen guests were said to have been pounded like clay, but no complaints arrived, and even when I called to ask—silence! Just a common quarrel! After that happened a terrible affair, which I won't say much about, for there was a lady in it, who's living still. But no accusations! In fact, I found that terror—terror of what or of whom [I could not quite make out—ruled the country. Every man of English blood in town kept on saying to me, 'It's Groethode! Will you have the veldt depopulated before you hang him?' I couldn't go to the club, nor to Martin's bar, but they put Groethode on my back. The boers, when in town, didn't say much, but they looked a lot. I got regularly vexed with Groethode.

"Perhaps he took alarm; anyway he set off for a hunting trip to the Transvaal, and we had peace for a matter of three months. There wasn't a report in all my district except of cattle-lifting, and that. But Groethode came back, and the row began again. I de-

clare that anyone who had eyes could see his return in the boers' looks. Whatever he'd done up yonder, it hadn't taken the devil out of him, and our doctor soon noticed the difference. I'd long since given up any doubts about Groethode, and no man on the country-side hated him as I did. The magistrate and I had many a talk, thinking how we could get evidence, for all the boers were as silent as mice. If anyone had told me then that I myself, at that moment, held damning proofs against him, I should have stared. But here we are at Alexandersfontein, and the plovers are walking about yonder like barn-door fowls with their legs painted."

"You see they're not impatient," I said. "Please finish your story."

"Well, there isn't much more. One evening I sat in Martin's bar, which is not exactly a bar, of course, but a sort of club. Martin put his head in at the door, and said, 'A word, captain!' That proved to be the word we had been wanting for seven years. He told me there were two tramping bricklayers in the public room, who had crossed from the Eastern province. Upon the way they had seen a skeleton, with clothes about it, lying under a cliff. Of course it was my business to make inquiries, and I sent for them. They proved to be Afrianders, and knew quite well where they had been, and what they had met with. I supposed the poor dead man to be one of those who perish every year upon the lonely veldt, unknown and unmissed. But as they went on with their tale, a thought struck me. I didn't say anything, but just brought them to a map. It was as I thought! The body lay in the kloof, beside Groethode's house. The men had stopped there for a drink of coffee. Lucky for them that he was not at home! The old woman pressed them to stay, and when she heard they had come up the kloof, wanted to—well, I don't wish to be uncharitable, but Cape smoke does no one any good, does it? and if those men happened to be teetotalers, so much the better for them, of course.

"I was never so excited after Kaffir or Bushman! The men had passed three days before, and what couldn't Groethode do in that time? I got a search-warrant from the magistrate, and started with six men long before daylight, taking one of the bricklayers along with us. Just after sunrise we reached the kloof, entering it on the farther side. Our guide led us straight, and we found the skeleton in a hollow,

amongst the pebbles, heaped against a cliff. Vultures and jackals had picked it clean, but they had not carried the clothing out of that hole. We found a jacket shapely enough, and the remains of a 'jumper' and long stockings. The boots had been too much for bird or beast, and they still hung to the skeleton feet. Of trousers there was no sign. I just drew up a report of the attitude in which the body lay, put the whole into a sack, and off we went again.

"We took the bones to our doctor first thing, and I went to breakfast. Ten minutes afterwards he ran across.

"That man's been murdered!" cries he.

"So I thought," I said, and went on with my breakfast. 'How?' The doctor was a nervous man, and I wanted to cool him down.

"'Slug shot!' he says, half sullenly.

"Where?' says I.

"Through the back! Round the top of the trousers."

"How long ago, do you think?"

"That poor fellow's breeches were spoilt before your time, I should think. Probably he has been two years in the kloof."

"I hadn't thought of it! I know it struck me like a bullet. Two years, mark you, two years before, within a day or two, Groethode had brought home crackers to be washed. And he had come from the veldt, where crackers don't grow, that ever I heard of. As it flashed upon me that the corpse was dressed, except for trousers, the case seemed to me clear as daylight, and I left the doctor there with my breakfast.

"It was no use moving the magistrate in a touch-and-go business like that. My men were tired. I ordered out a Kaffir groom, who would be more than a match for all the Hottentots about Groethode's farm, and started, with only the search-warrant in my pocket. Half a mile away I sent my boy back to fetch a Totty; they overtook me long before I reached the kloof. Towards four in the afternoon we got to the cottage, the door of which, as usual, stood open, and by the fireplace sat Frow Groethode. I asked pleasantly after her son, and learned that he had but returned that morning, and had gone away again afoot an hour before. With that I went through the house, and locked the door looking on the yard. The women were all inside. I posted my Kaffir boy to watch, and when the Totty had hobbled all the horses he

could find, brought him in to interpret. Five minutes sufficed to gather evidence enough to hang twenty men. Frow Groethode could do no more than cry—these big women are like that—but the Totties, if one had believed them, would have made out Groethode more fearful than an ogre, more devilish than the fiend himself. I brought them back to the only case we had, and they told me that he was wearing the crackers to this day, that his mother had washed and mended them. They knew all about that murder in the kloof, even to its details. The man was working at Filjie's (Villiers') near by, about fourteen miles off. Groethode found him picking peaches in the kloof, and told him to go home. When he turned, this incarnate devil shot him through the back, stripped off his leathern trousers, hid the body, and came to breakfast with me!

"Suddenly Smike ran in, and reported Groethode coming from the kloof. I went to the door and saw my man, still far away, trudging over the sand; his giant form loomed monstrous in the declining light. He carried something on his shoulder. Looking round for Smike, whose eyes were better than most telescopes, I saw Frow Groethode just grasping the ancient roer, with which, no doubt, so many foul deeds had been done. My men looked on carelessly, whilst the Totty servants grinned with all their lips. In one spring I disarmed the old woman, and she went moaning to the fireplace. Smike told me, at a glance, that the man approaching had a spade and pick across his shoulder. We had still ten minutes. I tied the black women, and gave them in charge to Moses, their countryman. Smike brought round two hobbled horses to the corner, where stood our own beasts, and saddled them. Then I gave Frow Groethode into his charge, and stepped out to meet her son."

"He knew me well enough, and cried, 'Heaven brings you, uncle!'

"'At last!' I said. 'Groethode, you are my prisoner!—Stand! If you come a step nearer, or an inch, I drop you as you dropped Filjie's man in the kloof!' He stood about twenty yards off. His eyebrows moved up and down like a wild beast's. But he said nothing.

"'Moses!' cried I, 'bring me the hobbled horses.' He brought my own and had to go back. Meanwhile, Groethode and I stood opposite each other. In the red light, his twisted face was horrible to look at, and his shadow stretched twenty

yards behind. Suddenly I saw Groethode's eyes move and fix. I glanced aside, and sprang back. Just in time. The old woman's bullet hummed past me, and raised the dust fifty yards beyond. Like a flash Groethode leaped forward, but my rifle covered him. He stopped at ten feet distance, and walked back at my command, whilst Smike held that terrible old woman.

"Then Moses brought up a horse, and Groethode mounted. The boys lifted up his mother, who was very feeble, and we set off, the dreariest cavalcade that ever crossed the veldt. There was a moon, luckily. It was near midnight when we reached the first house, and then I tried to have my prisoner handcuffed; but not a man would touch him. They stood round in their night clothes, pale as the moonlight, and Groethode looked down on them, grinning and working his brows. Not a man would touch him, and I dared not lay down my carbine. But they agreed to put the old woman, who was almost spent, to bed, and sent off a boy full gallop to fetch my police. I would not go farther. Three hours we sat in the saddle, glaring at each other, before the police came. He asked to dismount, but I wouldn't let him. It was the weariest guard I ever kept.

"The moon was nearly down, when we heard the gallop of my men across the misty veldt. They came nearer and nearer. I made up my mind for a bolt, but Groethode seemed much easier, observing how fearful they all were of him. I put my carbine within two inches of his arm, and swore I'd drive a bullet through it if he didn't submit to be handcuffed, and he knew I'd keep my word. So he bore it like a lamb, only when my sergeant, who was a big fellow, had done tying his legs beneath the horse, he just seemed to let his hands drop on him, and poor Thorpe went down like a bullock. We left him there and galloped home. A month afterwards Groethode was hanged, with eight murders sworn against him, and many another suspected."

"I hope you'll have no such captures to make on these fields," I said.

"I almost hope not; but you see, when a man thinks of adventures like that, life here seems a bit dull. What-d'you think that incarnate devil's first crime was? He had a bit of a quarrel with a neighbour, so small a thing, that the man accepted a supje when they met along

the road. Groethode made him drunk, plastered his head with tar, and set it alight! He was not eighteen then! Good-bye, sir, and I wish you sport with the plovers!"

MANY ARROWS IN THE QUIVER.

IN TWO PARTS. PART II. MANY IN THE LONG RUN.

In the former article we narrated some of the stories (with a prudent reserve as to crediting the more startling among them) of multiple births; beginning with triplets, proceeding to quadruplets and quintuplets, and so advancing to higher numbers. Let us now turn to the cases in which a large number of children are added to a family in the course of several years, not subject to the unfavourable contingencies that affect multiply births.

A few years ago, when a family of twenty brothers and sisters was much talked about, a question was propounded, "Are there any well-authenticated examples of a father or a mother having had two dozen children or more?" Answers were forthcoming in great number, in Notes and Queries and other publications; and some of them are really surprising, as the reader will presently admit. There is reason to suppose that most of the statements are tolerably reliable.

The late Sir Robert Wigram is said to have had twenty-four youngsters; how many of them grew up to man's (or woman's) estate we do not know. A publican's wife at Chester, living twenty years ago, and possibly many years later, had had twenty-six children in sixteen years; among the births were, as may be guessed, many repetitions of twins. A member of the family of the late Earl St. Vincent was often spoken of as being the twenty-third among twenty-seven children born to the same mother; unless the lady's husband was a peer of the realm, perhaps we must not look for a verification of this in Burke, Lodge, or Debrett. In a curious collection of celebrated trials, one Colonel James Turner is mentioned as having said concerning his wife, who was involved in the same trial as himself, "She sat down, being somewhat fat and weary, poor heart! I have had twenty-seven children by her, fifteen sons and twelve daughters." The public journals, about the beginning of the present century, recorded the fact that a Mrs. Edwards, residing in the New Road, brought into the world her twenty-eighth

child; all the twenty-eight had been single births, and all the children lived several months, but she had never more than ten of them living at one time. In the time of George the Second, when marvellous recitals were more in vogue than in later times, one Mrs. Rogers, wife of a 'Change broker, was credited with being the mother of twenty-nine children, all of whom lived to be baptised.

We go beyond the twenties, and enter the region of the thirties. The death of Mrs. Agnes Milbourne was recorded in an old number of the Gentleman's Magazine. We are told that she was a hundred and six years old, and had had thirty children. Exactly the same number is credited to a woman in humble life, living in the White-chapel district, who died at an advanced age about twenty years ago; as Mrs. Berry she had had twenty-six children in twenty years (four times twins), all of whom survived infancy; after a widowhood of a few years she became Mrs. Taylor, and added four more to her progeny. The further statement may without difficulty be believed, if the narrative is true thus far, that she had a hundred and twenty-two descendants living at the time of her decease, of the second, third, and fourth generations. Thirty was also the number that answered to one mother, of whom twenty-three died before manhood or womanhood. And thirty in the case of a poor Essex wife, who, after having had fifteen boys, was disconcerted at the non-representation of her own sex—or her husband was disconcerted, we do not know which; the couple were, thereafter, gratified (if gratification it was) with fifteen girls. The parish register of a church at Marlborough contains an entry concerning John Jones, who died in 1743, after having had thirty-one children, all of whom lived to be baptised. Quite a bit of history is attached to the name of Oliver Minjan, whose wife, Amalberga, brought him twenty-one boys and ten girls. When the Emperor Charles the Fifth made his public entry into Ghent, as Count of Flanders, Minjan appeared at the head of his twenty-one sons, all dressed alike in uniform—probably some of them mere toddlers. The emperor, naturally interested in so unexampled a sight, settled a pension on the father. Sad, however, is the sequel of the story. All the children died of the dreadful plague known as the black death in 1526; and grief soon carried off the bereaved parents. The city

of Ghent contains a memorial relating to this most remarkable family. At Kirton-le-Moor, in Cumberland, a very unusual—perhaps unprecedented—family procession was witnessed towards the close of the last century: a man, his wife, and their thirty children walked to church, to be present at the christening of the thirty-first child. The Count of Abendsberg, when the Emperor Henry the Second of Germany was travelling through that country, presented to him his thirty-two children, as the most acceptable offer he could make to his sovereign. If many of the progeny were men of fighting age, the gift was so far welcome in those belligerent times; but whether the emperor really wanted the juveniles, we are not told. Returning again to England, we find a record that, in 1623 died Catherine, youngest of thirty-three children of William Tothill, a Devonshire man; she survived all the other thirty-two, and lived to a good old age. The Gentleman's Magazine of 1756 made short work of a long story:—"A woman in Vere-street, of the thirty-fifth child by one husband;" how many more were still to come, Sylvanus Urban did not venture to predict.

Beyond thirty-five? Tradition, more or less trustworthy, answers in the affirmative. About the year 1700 one Lady Elphinstone died, the mother of thirty-six bairns, of whom twenty-seven were living at one time. The late Bishop Bathurst, of Norwich, was the twenty-sixth child of Mr. Bathurst, youngest brother of the first Lord Bathurst. But this is only part of the story; for Mr. Bathurst, who had had twenty-two children by his first wife, was destined to have fourteen by his second, making a good round three dozen altogether. Rather distinguished in this way were the Bathursts; for two brothers and a sister of his had, during their respective married lives, sixty-four children, which, with his thirty-six, made just an even hundred. Another married couple, Thomas and Helen Urquhart, are ranked among those who have had thirty-six children. The parents lived at Cromarty Castle, in the early part of the sixteenth century; their twenty-five sons all grew up to manhood, and many of them became distinguished, while the eleven daughters all lived to be married, and many of them to be the mothers of large families. The Urquhart blood, therefore, must have been rather extensively diffused in Scotland by the end of the century. An authenticated case of

thirty-nine brothers and sisters was afforded by the Greenhill family, in the closing years of the seventeenth century. Thomas Greenhill, a surgeon, afterwards author of a treatise on the Art of Embalming, addressed in 1698 a memorial to the Duke of Norfolk, in his capacity as Earl Marshal of England: "That in consideration of your petitioner being the seventh son and thirty-ninth child of one father and mother, your Grace would be pleased to signalise it by some particular motto or augmentation in his coat of armour, to transmit to posterity so uncommon a thing." The College of Arms, or Heralds' College, of which the hereditary Earl Marshal is the official head, assented to the application of Thomas Greenhill, by granting an addition to the armorial bearings of the family. In the language of heraldry, which is not very intelligible to outsiders, the addition was in the form of "a demi-griffin, powdered with thirty-nine mullets."

Whether the reader's power of belief will allow him to follow us into the forties, or even beyond, everyone must decide for himself; but there are unquestionably recorded instances, whether well or ill founded. The parish register of Bermondsey contains an entry relating to James Harriott, under date 1625; he is described as having been one among forty children by the same father. Pennant, in his Tour in Wales, transcribes the following epitaph: "Here lyeth the body of Nicholas Hooker, of Conway, gent., who was the forty-first child of his father, William Hooker, by Alice his wife, and the father of twenty-seven children, 1637." This is pretty well; if Nicholas's forty brothers and sisters filled their quivers with arrows to anything like the same extent as himself, William's grandchildren must have been rather formidable in number, and the Principality somewhat in danger of being overpopulated. We go to the North of England, and find on a tombstone in Heydon churchyard, Yorkshire, an inscription to the effect that William Stratton, who was buried in 1734, at the age of ninety-seven, had had forty-five children, twenty-eight by his first wife and seventeen by her successor. Bayle records the fact that a French advocate of the sixteenth century—an advocate of water-drinking as well as of the law—was the father of forty-five children. The Americans tell of one David Wilson, of Madison, Indiana, who had been blessed with five wives and forty-seven children;

thirty-five of the progeny were living at one time—enough to stock a village in a newly-settled region. We are left to conjecture whether this was the same person as a negro witness at Detroit, who about twenty years ago stated that he had had five wives and forty-eight children, of whom twenty-eight were then living; if so, the arithmetic of the two stories does not quite tally.

Even if we overpass half a hundred, we still find averments claiming more or less attention. Lord Braybrooke has noted the fact that a Florentine noble, the Marchese Frescobaldi, possesses a portrait of an ancestress, Dionora Salviati, painted by Bronzino; underneath is an inscription, declaring that the lady had had fifty-two children, never less than three at a time, and on one occasion six at a birth! Whether Bronzino drew the long bow, or made an unintentional mistake, or told the veritable truth, who shall say? The *Collectanea Topographica*, in the Harleian collection, records that a weaver in Scotland had by one wife sixty-two children; that they all lived to be baptised; that forty-six sons lived to be men, but only four daughters lived to be women; that Mr. Delawell, a Northumbrian gentleman, rode thirty miles for the purpose of seeing the old couple, who at that time had none of their children living with them. Mr. Delawell, whose visit was made in the year 1630, learned that four Scottish gentlemen had undertaken to provide for forty of the children—ten each; and that most of the others had been similarly cared for. The *Gentleman's Magazine* is responsible for two marvels, which must be left to make their own impression on the mind of the reader—that in 1790 a man died who had had seventy-two children by two wives; and that a few years earlier died a husband whose first wife had brought him sixty-nine children, and the second eighteen!

In several of the above-recorded instances of large families (we confine ourselves to the best authenticated cases) the number of descendants living at one time is surprisingly large. In a foregoing paragraph has been mentioned the name of Mrs. Taylor; she had a hundred and twenty-two descendants living at the time of her decease. A narrative from Rheims tells that, among a family of eight brothers and fourteen sisters, one of the latter had had born to her twenty-six children, and was followed to the grave by a hundred and fifty-three children, grand-

children, and great-grandchildren, a few of them lame or blind old folks. Her numerous brothers and sisters had, like herself, such large families, that when she died, at the advanced age of a hundred and two, she had nearly a thousand nephews and nieces, grandnephews and grandnieces, &c. Another veteran whose name we have had occasion to mention, William Stratton, counted up two hundred and fifty-one descendants of the second, third, fourth, and fifth generations; he lived to see one of his grandchildren become a grandfather. This reminds us of a joke by one of our humorists, to the effect that an old man of seventy was seen crying by the roadside; on being asked the cause of his grief, he said that his father had been beating him; and the father corroborated the statement, adding, "The young rascal has been throwing stones at his grandfather!" But to proceed. One Yoland Baillie, a Parisian woman, who died about the middle of the seventeenth century, had at the time of her death two hundred and fifty-five direct descendants. A famous instance was that of Mrs. Honeywood, of Charing, in Kent. When this venerable matriarch died, in 1620, she had attained her ninety-third year; her children were sixteen in number; they had been blessed with a hundred and fourteen children, who had had two hundred and twenty-eight children, who had had nine children. Otherwise expressed, she lived to witness or hear of the births of three hundred and sixty-seven direct descendants—viz., sixteen sons and daughters, a hundred and fourteen grandchildren, two hundred and twenty-eight great-grandchildren, and nine great-great-grandchildren. One of her grandsons, Dean Honeywood, used to relate that he was once present at a dinner given by the old lady to a family party, comprising two hundred of her own descendants. In this instance all the accompanying circumstances tended towards the remarkable result—for she married at sixteen; she had sixteen children; she lived to celebrate the seventy-seventh anniversary of her wedding-day; and many of her descendants had large families, from eleven to twenty children each. She was followed to the grave by no fewer than three hundred and thirteen descendants. Not so well authenticated, perhaps, is the case of Lady Temple, of Stow, who died in 1656; although a statement is generally regarded as worthy of some reliance, when

found in Fuller's Worthies:—"Dame Hester Temple had four sons and nine daughters, which lived to be married; and so exceedingly multiplied, that this lady saw seven hundred descendants from her body." More details are necessary to render this statement satisfactory.

A regular poser—a clincher—is the case of an Irishman named Dennis, if true; if not true, the Annual Register must be held responsible. He died at Athenry in 1804, at the age of one hundred and seventeen; he had been married seven times, the last time at the age of ninety-three. He survived the births of forty-eight children, two hundred and thirty-six grandchildren, four hundred and forty-four great-grandchildren, and twenty-five great-great-grandchildren!

Without including so large a number of descendants living at one time, there have been instances of aged persons surviving a larger number of generations. Thus, Dr. Plot, in his Natural History of Staffordshire, mentions Old Mary Cooper, of King's Bromley, who lived to see the sixth generation, and could have said:—

"Rise up, daughter, and go to thy daughter, for her daughter's daughter hath a daughter." This was either an imitation of, or suggested by, a statement made by Zuingerus, to the effect that a noble matron of the family of Dolburus, in the archbishopric of Mentz, could have thus spoken to her daughter: "Daughter, bid thy daughter tell her daughter that her daughter's little daughter is crying." Horace Walpole speaks of an ancient lady whom he visited, one Mrs. Godfrey; she had a daughter who had a daughter (Lady Waldegrave), who had a son (Lord Waldegrave), who had a daughter (Lady Harriet Beard), who had a daughter (Countess Dowager of Powis), who had a daughter (Lady Clive), who had an infant son! Horace Walpole saw all the eight generations at different periods of his life. The secret here was—early marriages, one after another.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCIS ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXII.

"Now isn't that charming?" said Mrs. Errington, finishing a paragraph descriptive of some brilliant evening party at which Algernon had been present, and looking round triumphantly at her audience.

"Very, indeed," said Minnie, who had been specially appealed to.

"Quite a graphic picture of the bow mong," said Miss Chubb. "I know all about that sort of society, so I can answer for the correctness of Algy's description."

Miss Chubb had the discretion to lower her voice as she made the latter remark, so that no one heard it save Mr. Warlock, and thus Mrs. Errington was not challenged to contradiction.

"How well Algernon writes," observed Mr. Diamond. "He has the trick of the thing so neatly, and puts out what he has to say so effectively! I wonder he has never thought of turning his pen to profit."

"My son, sir, has other views," returned Mrs. Errington, loftily. "But as to what you are pleased to call 'the trick of the thing,' I can assure you that literary talent is hereditary in our family. I don't know, my dear Minnie, whether you have happened to hear me mention it, but my great uncle by the mother's side was a most distinguished author."

"Really?"

"What did he write?" asked Miss Chubb, with much distinctness. But Mrs. Errington took no heed of the question. "And my own father's letters were considered models of style," she continued. "A large number of them are, I believe, still preserved in the family archives at Ancram Park."

"How did they come there?" asked Miss Chubb. "Unless he wrote letters to himself, they must have been scattered about here and there."

"They were collected after his death," Miss Chubb. You may not be aware, perhaps, that it is not an unfrequent custom to collect the correspondence of eminent men. It was done in the case of Walpole. And—Mr. Diamond will correct me if I am wrong—in that of the celebrated Persian gentleman, whose letters are so well known. Mirza was the name, I think?"

Miss Chubb felt herself on unsafe ground here, and did not venture farther.

"Well, at all events, Algernon appears to be getting on admirably in London," said the Reverend Peter, pacifically.

Minnie threw him an approving glance, for his good-natured words dispelled a little cloud on Miss Chubb's brow, and brought down Mrs. Errington from her high horse to the level of friendly sympathies. "Oh, he is getting on wonderfully, dear fellow!" said she.

"I'm sure we are all glad to hear of Algy's doing well, and being happy. He is such a nice, genial, unaffected creature! And never gave himself any airs!" said Miss Chubb, with a side-long toss of her head and a little unnecessary emphasis.

"Oh no, my dear. That sort of vulgar pretension is not found among folks who come of a real good ancient stock," replied Mrs. Errington, with superb complacency.

"And we are not to have the pleasure of seeing Algernon back among us this summer?" said Mr. Warlock. In general, he shrank from much conversation with Mrs. Errington, whom he found somewhat overwhelming; but he would have nerved himself to greater efforts than talking to that thick-skinned lady, for the sake of a kind look from Missie Bodkin.

"Oh, impossible! Quite out of the question. He is sorry, of course. And I am sorry. But it would be cruel in him to desert poor dear Seely, when he is so anxious to have him with him all the summer!"

"Is there anything the matter with Lord Seely?" asked Minnie.

"N—no, my dear. Nothing but a little over-work. The mental strain of a man in his position is very severe, and he depends so on Algy! And so does dear Lady Seely. I ought almost to feel jealous. They say openly that they look on him quite as a son."

"It's a pity they haven't a daughter, isn't it?" said Miss Chubb.

Mrs. Errington did not catch the force of the hint. She answered, placidly, "They have an adopted daughter; a niece of my lord's, who is almost always with them."

"Oh, indeed," said Diamond, quickly. "I had not heard that!"

Mrs. Errington bestowed a stolid, china-blue stare on him before replying, "I dare say not, sir."

The fact was that Mrs. Errington had not known it herself until quite recently; for Algernon, either mistrusting his mother's prudence, or for some other reason—had passed lightly over Castalia's name in his letters, and for some time had not even mentioned that she was an inmate of Lord Seely's house. In his latter letters he had spoken of Miss Kilfinane, but in terms purposely chosen to check, as far as possible, any match-making flights of fancy, which his mother might indulge in with reference to that lady.

"I am not sure, my dear," proceeded Mrs. Errington, turning to Minnie, "whether I have happened to mention it to you, but Castalia—the Honourable Castalia Kilfinane, only daughter of Lord Kauldkrail—is staying with the dear Seelys. But as she is rather sickly, and not very young, she cannot, of course, be to them what Algy is."

"Oh! Not very young?" said Miss Chubb, in a tone of disappointment.

"Well, not very young, comparatively speaking, Miss Chubb. She might be considered young compared with you and me, I daresay."

Fortunately, perhaps, for the preservation of peace, much imperilled by this last speech of Mrs. Errington's, Dr. Bodkin and his wife here entered the drawing-room. Although it was May, and the temperature was mild for the season, a good fire blazed in the grate; and on the rug in front of it Dr. Bodkin, after saluting the assembled company, took up his accustomed station. Diamond rose, and stood leaning on the mantle-shelf, near to his chief (an action which Mrs. Errington viewed with disfavour, as indicating on the part of the second master at the Grammar School a too great ease, and absence of due subjection in the presence of his superiors), and the Reverend Peter and Miss Chubb drew their chairs nearer to the fireplace, thus bringing the scattered members of the party into a more sociable circle. The doctor was understood to object to his society being broken up into groups of two or three, and to prefer general conversation; which, indeed, afforded better opportunities for haranguing, and for looking at the company as a class brought up for examination, and, if needful, correction, according to the doctor's habit of mind. Only Rhoda remained at her window, apart from the others, and Doctor Bodkin, seeing her there, called to her to come nearer.

"What, little Primrose!" said the doctor, kindly. "Don't stay there looking at the moon. She is chillier and not so cosy as the coal fire. Draw the curtain, and shut her out, and come nearer to us all."

Rhoda obeyed, blushing deeply as she advanced within the range of the lamp-light, and looking so pretty and timid, that the doctor began smilingly to murmur into Diamond's ear something about "Himuleo similis, non sine vano aurarum et silvæ metu."

The doctor's prejudice against Rhoda had long been overcome, and she had grown to be a pet of his, in so far as so awful a personage as the doctor was capable of petting any one. To this result the conversion to orthodoxy of the Maxfield family may have contributed. But, possibly, Rhoda's regular attendance at St. Chad's might have been efficacious to win the doctor's favour, good churchman though he was, without some assistance from her blooming complexion, soft hazel eyes, and graceful, winning manners.

The girl came forward bashfully into the circle around the fire, and nestled herself down on a low seat between Mrs. Errington and Mrs. Bodkin. A month ago her place in that drawing-room would have been beside Minnie's chair. But lately, by some subtle instinct, Rhoda had a little shrunk from her former intimacy with the young lady. She was sensitive enough to feel the existence of some unexpressed disapproval of herself in Minnie's mind.

"We have been hearing a letter of Algernon's, papa," said Minnie.

"Have you? Have you?"

"Mrs. Errington has been kind enough to read it to us."

The doctor left his post of vantage on the hearth-rug for an instant, went to his daughter, and bending down kissed her on the forehead. "Pretty well, this evening, my darling?" said he. Minnie caught her father's hand as he was moving away again, and pressed it to her lips. "Thank God for you and mother," she whispered. Minnie was not given to demonstrations of tenderness, having been rather accustomed, like most idolised children, to accept her parents' anxious affection as she accepted her daily bread—that is to say, as a matter of course. But there was something in her heart now which made her keenly alive to the preciousness of that abounding and unselfish devotion.

"I think it is quite touching to see that father and daughter together," said Miss Chubb confidentially to her neighbour the curate. "So severe a man as the doctor is in general! Quite the churchman! Combined with the scholastic dignitary, you know. And yet, with Minnie, as gentle as a woman."

As to Mr. Warlock, the tears were in his eyes, and he unaffectedly wiped them away, answering Miss Chubb only by a nod.

"And what," said the doctor, when he had resumed his usual place, and his usual

manner, "what is the news from our young friend Algernon?"

Mrs. Errington began to recapitulate some of the items in her son's last letter—the "lords and ladies gay" whose society he frequented; the brilliant compliments that were paid him by word and deed; and the immense success which his talents and attractions met with everywhere.

"Yes; and Algernon is kindly received by other sorts and conditions of men besides the aristocracy of this realm," said Minnie, with a little ironical smile. "He has shone in evening receptions at Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs's, and sipped lawyer Leadbeater's port wine with appreciative gusto."

"He has to be civil to people, you know, my dear," said Mrs. Errington, smoothly. "It wouldn't do to neglect—a—persons, who mean to be attentive, merely because they are not quite in our own set."

"I trust not, indeed, madam!" exclaimed the doctor, with protruded lips and frowning brow. "It would be exceedingly impolitic in Algernon to turn away from proffered kindness. But I will not put the matter on that ground. I should be sorry to think that a youth who has been—I may say—formed and brought up under my tuition could be capable of ignoble and ungentlemanlike behaviour."

Mrs. Bodkin glanced a little apprehensively at Mrs. Errington after this explosion of the doctor's. But that descendant of all the Ancrams had not the slightest idea of being offended. She was smiling with much complacency, and answered mellifluously to the doctor's thunder, "Thank you, Dr. Bodkin. Now that is so nice in you, to appreciate Algy as you do! He is, and ever was, like his ancestors before him, the soul of gentlemanliness."

"Algernon was always most popular, I'm sure," said Miss Chubb. "He was a favourite with everybody. Such lively manners! And at home with all classes!"

"Yes," said Diamond in a low voice.

"Superis Deorum gratus, et imis."

"Now what may that mean?" asked Miss Chubb, who had quick ears.

"The words were applied to a mythological personage of very flexible talents, madam," replied Diamond.

"Oh, mythological? Well, I never went very far into mythology. Now, it's a singular circumstance, which has often struck me, and perhaps some of you learned gentlemen may be able to explain it, that none of the studies in 'ology' ever seemed to have much attraction for me; whereas

the 'ographies' always interested me very much. There was geography, now. I used to know the names of all the European rivers when I was quite a child. And orthography and biography. We had a translation of Pluto's Lives at the rectory, and I was uncommonly fond of them. But, as to the 'ologies,' I frankly own that I know nothing about them."

The effect of this speech of Miss Chubb's was much heightened by the mute commentary of Dr. Bodkin's face during its utterance. When she came to Pluto's Lives, the scholastic eyes rolled round on Mr. Diamond and the curate with an expression of such helpless indignation, that the former was driven to blow his nose with violence, in order to smother an explosion of laughter. And even Mr. Warlock's sombre brow relaxed, and he ventured to steal a smiling glance at Minnie.

But Minnie did not return the glance. She had shaded her eyes with her hand, and was leaning back in her chair, unheeding the conversation that was going on around her.

"But now, really, you know, there must be some reason for these things, if philosophers could only find it out," pursued Miss Chubb, cheerfully. "Mustn't there, Minnie?"

"Eh? I beg your pardon!"

"Oh you naughty, absent girl! You have not heard a word I've been saying. I was merely remarking that——"

But at this point Dr. Bodkin's patience suddenly snapped. He found himself unable silently to endure a recapitulation of Miss Chubb's views as to the comparative attractions of the "ologies" and the "ographies;" and he abruptly demanded of his wife, in the magisterial tones which had often struck awe into the hearts of the lowest form, "Laura, are we not to have our rubber before midnight? Pray make up the table in the next room. There are—let me see!—Mrs. Errington, Miss Chubb, you will take a hand, Laura? We are just a quartet." And the doctor, giving his arm to Mrs. Errington, marched off to the whist-table.

On this occasion Mr. Warlock escaped being obliged to play. Indeed, the curate's assistance at whist was only called into requisition when a second table besides the doctor's had to be made up; for, although Dr. Bodkin co-operated very

comfortably with his curate in all church matters, he found himself not altogether able to do so at the green table, the Reverend Peter's notions of whist being confused and elementary. To be sure, Mrs. Bodkin was not a much better player than the curate; but then she offered the compensating advantage of enduring an unlimited amount of scolding—whether as partner or adversary—with-out resenting it.

So Diamond, and Warlock, and Minnie, and Rhoda remained in the big drawing-room when their elders had left it. Minnie had the lamp shaded, and the curtains opened, so that the full clear light of the climbing moon poured freely into the room. Warlock timidly drew near to Miss Bodkin's chair, and ventured to say a word or two now and then, to which he received answers so kind and gracious, that the poor fellow's heart swelled with gratitude, and perhaps with hope, for hope is very cunning and stealthy, and hides herself under all sorts of unlikely feelings.

Minnie had grown much more gentle and patient with the awkward, plain, rather dull curate of late. She listened to his talk and replied to it. And all the while she was taking eager cognisance, with eye and ear, of the two who sat side by side near the window, Diamond bending down to speak softly to Rhoda, and the girl's delicate face, white and sprite-like in the moonlight, turning now and then towards her companion with a pretty, languid gesture. Once or twice Rhoda laughed at something Diamond said to her. Her laugh was perhaps a little suggestive of silliness, but it was low, and musical, and rippling; and it was not too frequent.

Minnie sat with her hands clasped in her lap; and when she was carried to her own room that night, Jane exclaimed, as she removed her young mistress's ornaments, "Goodness, Miss Minnie, what have you done to yourself? Why that diamond ring you wear has made a desperate mark in your finger. It looks as if it had been driven right into the flesh, as hard as could be!"

Minnie held up her thin white hand to the light and looked at it strangely.

"Ah!" said she, "I must have pressed and twisted the ring about, unconsciously. I was thinking of something else."

“THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR”

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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HALVES.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF “LOST SIR MASSINGBERD,” “A PERFECT TREASURE,” “AT HER MERRY,” &c. &c.

CHAPTER VI. BROTHER ALEC.

THE explanation that I had promised myself to obtain from Gertrude had, after all, to be postponed, for it was impossible for any of us to speak or think that evening, except of “Brother Alec.” He was by far the most interesting and striking personage that had come within the range of my small experience, and the effect he produced upon us all was prodigious. Mrs. Ræburn, in particular, entertained, or affected to entertain, a very grave interest in her new-found brother-in-law, though it was manifested with her usual caution. She made no pretence to affection for him; she could not even overcome her niggardly disposition so much as to offer him refreshment.

“This room smells unpleasantly of dinner; had we not better go into the drawing-room?” was all the allusion she made to food: but she listened to him—especially when he spoke of his own fortunes—with rapt attention, and watched him like a cat at a mouse-hole.

As generally happens when a man returns to his own country, after long and distant travel, brother Alec’s talk was at first confined to questioning those who had remained at home, and afterwards to his own later and English experiences—how he had fared at the hotel at Southampton; how the swiftness of the London express had astonished him; how the official had tried to compel his dog “Fury” to travel under the seat (which, however, a station-master and four aids had entirely failed to

accomplish); and how his fellow-passengers had stared at his parrot, and laughed to hear it enter into conversation. We were by no means astonished at these two last statements.

“Where did you get that dog from, Uncle Alec?” was one of John’s first inquiries.

“Ah, my pretty Fury!” returned the other. This dog, by-the-way, was of a super-canine ugliness. His immense weight seemed to have bowed out his legs even more than is customary with bull-dogs; his head was very nearly of the same size as his body; and he had no tail whatever, but only a stump, which protruded in such a manner that it needed most careful adjustment before he could sit down. The most remarkable feature, however, of this attractive animal—I say attractive, because it was impossible to withdraw your attention from him for a single instant, if he happened to be in your neighbourhood—was his eyes, which were fearfully blood-shot, and seemed to resent the fact that they had been fitted into inappropriate sockets. They were not large eyes, whereas the sockets were very large, and the unoccupied portions of the rims were red and ragged, which heightened exceedingly the truculence of his general expression.

“My pretty Fury, yes; he was the first thoroughly English face, as it were, that saluted me when I touched the land. His master was bound the next day for a foreign shore, as I found upon making acquaintance with him in the afternoon, and one of his chief regrets was that his dog could not be taken with him; he had no friend that really loved the animal with whom he could leave him with confidence, and since it took a marvellous fancy to

myself, he made me a present of it. For all its formidable looks, it would not hurt a child."

"That is not so much consequence to us," observed John, rather pertinently, "as that it will not hurt grown people."

"No, no, it will hurt nobody; see how it already has taken to Miss Floyd yonder," observed its owner, "and is licking her hand," which indeed it was; and a more complete contrast of Beauty and Beast than the pair afforded it was impossible to imagine. "Fury is as harmless as Chico here."

Chico was the parrot, who, on hearing his name pronounced, pressed his scarlet head against his master's cheek and clawed his waistcoat lovingly, and, being answered with a finger of acknowledgment, took it

with all care,

And bit it for true heart and not for harm.

"That is surely not a common parrot, Mr. Raeburn," observed Gertrude, admiringly.

"You are right, my dear young lady, though I must beg you to call me cousin, as you do my brother. It is a very uncommon parrot, as I have had to explain to everybody who has seen him. I do not believe there is another such a bird in England. He is called the Night Talker, because all night long he makes conversation with himself, and is generally silent in the day, though my locomotive habits of late have put him out. The kind is rare even in the place from which I brought him; which, by-the-by, I have not yet named. For these last five-and-twenty years, while you have thought me dead, Mark, my home has been in Peru."

"Peru!" exclaimed we all. It seemed so strange that he should speak of home in connection with so outlandish a country.

Let observation with extensive view
Survey mankind from China to Peru,

was the couplet that at once suggested itself to me. I had read but very little else about it.

"I have been living at Cuzco," he continued mildly, "which, as perhaps you may have heard, John, was the ancient residence of the Incas."

"Black people, are they not?" replied John, tentatively. He had a general notion that persons born out of Europe are black, and perhaps he thought Incas were spelt with a k.

"Indeed they are not," answered Uncle Alec, smiling. "They are of a beautiful bronze colour; at least the natives are,

the upper classes being Spanish. I had thought, until an hour ago"—here he bowed with a certain quiet grace that made one forget his absurd surroundings altogether, and, notwithstanding his ill-fitting and hastily-made European garments, showed the true gentleman within them—"that no woman in all the world could be compared with the Peruvians for loveliness."

"And is it possible, sir, that you should have lived among all these beauties for so many years," inquired Mrs. Raeburn, in a tone of raillery very foreign to her tongue, and which, as it seemed to me, was adopted in order to conceal the interest she felt in the expected reply, "and yet remained unmarried?"

"No, madam," answered Uncle Alec, with grave frankness. "I was a bachelor for many years; the remembrance of one I had left in England"—he kept his eyes fixed on Gertrude with such sorrowful tenderness that it was easy to guess that he was alluding to her mother—"was too strong to be easily broken; but in the end the present outwore the absent, and I married."

"Did you have any children?" inquired Mrs. Raeburn. The whole topic, it was plain, was painful to her brother-in-law; but no consideration of such a fact had the least influence with that indomitable woman.

"I had one baby boy, and when he died his mother died with him," answered Uncle Alec, in a voice that went to our hearts.

There was silence amongst us all, while the tears stood in tender Gertrude's eyes, and Mrs. Raeburn sighed—a very satisfactory sort of sigh indeed. I had not forgotten her husband's revelation at my aunt's table, of the facts of which she had doubtless long been cognisant, and by that light it was not difficult to read to what end her questions had been put. If Uncle Alec were poor, I knew her well enough to feel convinced that he would find himself no better off by reason of the solemn covenant made with her husband thirty years ago; but if he were rich, and without incumbrance in the shape of wife or child, it would be worth her while to conciliate this man—frank, impulsive, simple-hearted, as he seemed to be—to the uttermost. Mark, on the other hand, had asked no questions of his brother, but, with his eyes fixed constantly upon him, had stood with his chin in his hand, his usual attitude when in thought.

He was now, however, the first to break silence.

"You have never told us, Alec, how it was that for all these many, many years we have heard nothing from you, and had learnt to think you dead. How was it?"

"That is a question hard to answer, Mark; having to go so far back in my mind for the materials of the reply. It was something of this sort, I think, however. When we two last parted at Southampton—you have not forgotten that occasion, Mark?"

"I have not, brother," answered the attorney, a slight flush rising to his face, which had been deadly pale.

"When we parted then, you remember how light and buoyant were my spirits; how sanguine I felt of coming back in a few years, with a fortune reaped beyond the Atlantic; how confident I was in my youth, and strength, and wits. Well, not only did I reap no harvest in the field I had selected, but I lost there the few grains—you know how few they were, for you had the like—which I had gleaned at home. You said it would be so; you advised my staying here in England, and showed how, standing shoulder to shoulder (as we should have stood, Heaven knows), we might have pushed our way in the old world; and because your warning had been justified, and because I had a devil of pride within me, I could not bring myself to confess the truth—that you were right, and I had been over sanguine. If I succeeded, I said, then I will go back to Mark, with both hands full of gold, and one hand full for him——"

"One moment, my dear sir," interrupted Mrs. Raeburn, with a smile almost as wide as the bull-dog's; "entranced by your interesting talk, and overcome by the emotions natural to the occasion, I have, up to this moment, wholly forgotten that you are not only our brother, but our guest; your journey has been a long one, and you have doubtless much to tell. Do let me offer you some sherry and a biscuit, until something more substantial can be got ready."

"Thank you, dear madam, I have already dined," answered Uncle Alec, courteously; "but if you would be kind enough to get something for Fury, here; he likes a beefsteak, underdone, better than anything; and a little something hot for my serpents——"

"Your servants!" ejaculated Mrs. Rae-

burn, with an involuntary groan. "I did not know you had brought any."

"Nor have I, dear madam" (I noticed he never called her "Matilda" after that first time); "though, in one sense, my serpents are my servants, since they do whatever I bid them. In those flat boxes, left in the hall, there are a couple of diminutive anacondas, who have been my companions throughout the voyage, and, indeed, have occupied the same berth. They are perfectly harmless, and require nothing but warm bread and milk, with an occasional rabbit."

"He means Welsh rabbit—toasted cheese," whispered John, in my ear. "As for his parrot, it requires human flesh, and will begin with my mother's cheek."

That remarkable bird, indeed, evidently regarded our hostess with no favour, and was craning towards her from its master's shoulder, with open beak and ruffled plumes, in a highly cannibalish way.

"Soft, Chico, soft," said Uncle Alec, rebukefully; "if you happen to have a cocoa-nut in the house, dear madam—but no, that is not likely: a fine fig then, or even an orange, will suit him admirably."

"I will get an orange for him, and see to the other things, Mrs. Raeburn, if you will give me the keys," observed Gertrude, "so that you need not leave cousin Alec."

Our visitor cast on her a grateful look, doubtless more in acknowledgment of her having used that title, than of her readiness to supply the wants of his favourites, about which there probably seemed to him no sort of difficulty. But Mrs. Raeburn's countenance was a study. The idea of giving beefsteaks to the dog, bread and milk to the serpents, and a fine fig to her declared enemy, the parrot, was almost intolerable: yet the thought of that "handful of gold," that was to have been, and perhaps still was, for Mark, overcame her repugnance, and with a muffled groan she surrendered her keys.

"Well, Mark," continued his brother, "I made up my mind, as I was saying, to send you no news of me, unless it was good news; and, alas! the 'good' was years and years in coming to me; so long that I grew ashamed, and almost afraid of writing at all. It is a lame excuse, I feel. But you don't know—I thank Heaven you have never known—what a change can come over a proud spirit, bent beneath the yoke of almost unremunerated toil, bowed by degrading servitude, crushed by the pitiless feet of those whom it would

fain have despised. You, who are rich, respected, and surrounded by those near and dear to you, cannot understand what happens to a lonely, friendless, poverty-stricken creature, such as I was; how hope dies out within him, and the bitterness of despair enters in instead, and turns his blood to gall. I loved you, Mark, at all times, even at my worst, but it was a different sort of love than that of old; there seemed a gulf between us, and as I was changed, I knew, so I thought might you have been. If I had had the means to have come back, haggard and ragged as I was, I should not have dared to do it, lest my welcome might have been cold, dear Mark, and all that was human in me, still, should have been frozen by it. I did you wrong, you would say," added the speaker hastily, laying his hand upon the other's shoulder; "I know it, nay, I knew it then. Forgive me, and forget it."

It is impossible to reproduce the tender earnestness with which these words were uttered. The attorney's face showed signs of an answering emotion, though a certain hesitation seemed to mix with it, that made it very unlike that of his brother. Even "my son John" forbore to utter his ill-timed pleasantries; and Mrs. Raeburn kept a silence, which was really creditable to her in the eyes of those who knew how strongly tempted she must have been to express contempt.

"And when was it, cousin Alec," inquired Gertrude, softly, "that your fortunes began to mend?"

"Thanks, Gertrude, thanks," said the old man. "I am grateful to you for cutting short the recollection of a grievous time—of such dark and weary years, that they cast their shadow even on this happy present. My luck did change at last. A southern gentleman, whom I had the good fortune to rescue from some unpleasant customers in New York one night, became my friend. It was perhaps sent for a reproof to me, Mark, that the talents on which I had reckoned so proudly to win my way in the world were fated to go for nothing, while my mere thews and sinews placed me on the first round of the ladder of prosperity. This gentleman, who had a great estate, and was a politician of some mark in his own country, made me his secretary, treated me in every respect as his equal—for which I felt more grateful to him than for all besides—and took me with him to New Orleans. I felt another man there; recovered my self-respect,

and found, to my great joy, that I could make myself useful to my benefactor, Mr. Pittsburg. My salary was liberal, and, thanks to him, I was introduced into good society, and began once more to hold my head up in the world.

"It was a life not only new to me, but one that would have seemed strange to any Englishman. Among the rich were the greatest luxury and idleness; no literature, no arts; no business was ever transacted among them; splendid hospitalities, diversified by quarrels and duels, alone occupied their time. There was a young man of my own age, a planter, named Redman, who was said to have killed a dozen men with his unerring pistol, and who was greatly respected in consequence. His estate bordered upon that of Mr. Pittsburg, and he was a constant, though, I fancied, not a very welcome, visitor at his house. Mr. Pittsburg had a son, a mere stripling, whom he passionately loved, and for whose sake I soon found out that he kept on friendly terms with Redman, lest he should pick a quarrel with the lad, and add him to his numerous victims. For this reason, I have no doubt, it was that when this Redman behaved himself very contemptuously towards myself—taking advantage, as no other man did, of my dependent position—my patron besought me not to resent it. I obeyed him. I protest that that scoundrel's insults to me were comparatively unfelt, so much more did I burn to avenge the social oppression which he exercised over my benefactor and his family. He was by nature a tyrant, and his cruelty to his numerous slaves was, even in that country, where a black skin is held of such small account, spoken of, though with bated breath, with reprobation and disgust."

"By persons who had no slaves to deal with, I conclude," observed Mrs. Raeburn, coldly.

"Nay," answered brother Alec, surprised at this unlooked-for interruption, "by everybody. Indeed, there were, unhappily, but very few persons in Richmond who had no slaves to deal with."

Mrs. Raeburn concentrated her outraged feelings into one sniff of contemptuous defiance, and the interjection "Oh," whereupon her relative resumed his story.

"I had been nearly twelve months at Rosemount, as Mr. Pittsburg's country house was called, when, walking one morning in the grounds alone, my ears

were pierced by the most appalling cries of 'Help' and 'Mercy.' Running in the direction from which the sounds proceeded, I found myself the spectator of a frightful scene. A negro girl lay stretched upon the ground, while two white men stood over her, one of whom was applying a cowhide to her naked flesh. I had seen black men beaten often, but this was the first time that I had ever beheld the punishment inflicted upon a woman. My blood boiled within me, and, without thinking of consequences, I rushed between the torturer and his victim, and confronted him with an indignant, 'Stop, you coward!' I thought that it was some overlooker of my patron who was thus indulging his brutality, in defiance of his master's orders, for, though by no means what we term a 'sentimental' man, Mr. Pittsburg always opposed himself to harshness in the treatment of his black people. To my intense astonishment (for I thought that I stood on Mr. Pittsburg's land), I found myself opposite Hugh Redman. For the moment he was abashed at my discovering him in the commission of an act which, even among the harshest masters, was usually delegated to their subordinates only.

"Are you aware that this is my plantation?" inquired the ruffian, with his whip still raised over his shoulder.

"I care not," said I, "whose plantation it is. To whip a girl like that is a disgrace to any human being, and an insult to the God who made her."

"We do what we like with our own here, Mister," replied Redman, with a contemptuous laugh, "and you had better get out of my way, or you will taste the cowhide yourself."

"The girl was skulking work," explained the overseer, who stood behind his master, in an apologetic tone. He knew the tales that were told about 'Hell-gates,' as the plantation was termed, from the sufferings of its hands, and did not desire that a new witness to the appropriateness of that title should be added in my person.

"What is that to him?" continued Redman, passionately. "I shall whip whom I please, without excusing myself to any soul alive, far less to an upstart hanger-on like this fellow, who has nothing white about him except his liver."

"I well understood this taunt to refer to the patience with which I had so long submitted to this ruffian's insolence, and

which he naturally enough attributed to my cowardice; but, furious as it made me, I take Heaven to witness that it raised not half the fury which consumed me when he once more brought down the sounding lash upon that poor defenceless creature. Her cry to him for mercy, to God for death to relieve her from such frightful torture, still rings in my ears. In an instant I had snatched the whip from the scoundrel's hand, and laid it over his face with such good will that the blood spurted from his cheeks, as it had done from his victim's limbs. The overseer, who had sprang upon me in aid of his master, I saluted with the butt-end, which, as it happened, was heavily weighted, and it felled him insensible to the ground. Hugh Redman was not a brave man—how could so base a wretch be brave?—unless he had a pistol in his hand, his skill in which gave him so deadly an advantage over his fellows; and with a shriek of rage and pain he fled from my second blow, with his hand clapped to his disfigured face. I was left alone with the tortured girl, who had crept towards me, as a protector sent from Heaven itself, and was embracing my knees.

"Poor soul, what is to be done with you!" was the involuntary exclamation that escaped me.

"Never mind poor nigger girl," was her piteous moan; "she is used to be whipped. Get away, or massa will come with pistol and kill you."

"That is very likely," thought I; but I endeavoured to comfort her all I could. I felt no doubt that, when Redman had called me out and shot me—which it would be his immediate business to do—this poor girl would become the only object left on which to wreak his vengeance; my interference would, in fact, so far from doing her service, be the cause of untold wretchedness to her; so, therefore, it was only right that I should, if possible, secure her safety. I gave her what money I had about me, and certain instructions, which, if carried out—though it must needs be at great risk—would put her into communication with some friends of mine, who were connected with the 'Underground Railway,' the system by which runaway slaves were helped by abolitionists to the land of liberty. She was to make no attempt in the matter until after the result of the duel, which, I felt sure, was inevitable. If I fell, she was to fly; and if—though of that indeed there was but a slender chance—I

should kill my adversary, I would get my patron to purchase the girl's freedom.

"When I reached home and told Mr. Pittsburg what had taken place, he looked grave indeed. I well knew what was passing through his mind, and pitied him from the bottom of my heart. Hugh Redman would not be satisfied with one victim in reparation of the insult that had been put upon him; his hatred would extend to those who had harboured and been friendly to the man that had slashed his sneering face for him, and he would seek his quarrel with him who was far dearer to my host than his own life—namely, his only son. My heart bled for my kind friend; and yet I could not wish that night's work undone, nor that I had held my hand when that poor slave had invoked its aid.

"'Raeburn,' said Mr. Pittsburg, after a long silence, during which he had been pacing thoughtfully up and down the room, 'you must shoot this scoundrel, and I will teach you how to do it. You have no experience with the pistol, I believe?'

"'None whatever.'

"'So much the better: you will have nothing to unlearn. You have a keen eye and good nerves, I know; can you measure distances? Well, no matter—we shall have time for practice, if you have marked Redman as severely as you say. The dainty gentleman will not come out to fight till his wounds have healed, I'll answer for it.'

"I had long known that my enemy was no favourite with Mr. Pittsburg, but I had no idea how cordially he hated him, till I heard him say those words. From that moment he devoted himself to preparing me for the approaching conflict, and though I understood the intention of but half his teaching, I set myself diligently to acquire all he would have me learn. A billiard-room of very large proportions was built on to one side of Rosemount, and out of this he caused the table and other furniture to be taken, in order to use it as a shooting-gallery; but that very night, and before I took pistol in hand, he set me to judge my distances, bidding me stop short when I considered that I had approached a certain object, within four-and-twenty feet. In the billiard-room, but mostly out of doors, I practised this unceasingly, so that at last I was never wrong, beyond a few inches. In the meantime—indeed on the very morning after his cow-hiding—Redman sent me a challenge, and a meeting was

appointed for ten days hence, the unusual length of time being my adversary's own stipulation, upon the plea that his eyesight had been injured in our recent 'conflict,' as he termed it. The interval, however, was of immense advantage to myself.

"On the outer wall of the billiard-room, Mr. Pittsburg sketched out a human figure, of about the size and bulk of my future opponent, and at this I practised with the pistol for many hours a day; walking slowly from the other end of the room, and then discharging the weapon when I had come exactly within twenty-four feet of the object. By incessant application, aided by a keen eye and a steady hand, I had learnt, before the appointed ten days had elapsed, to hit an imaginary spot on the waistcoat of the figure (exactly over its breast) three times out of every four, nor was the fourth shot very wide of the mark. But while acknowledging my progress, my tutor was well aware that firing at a fixed object was a very different matter from firing at an advancing one, especially when the latter had a loaded pistol in his hand wherewith to return the compliment; and I went on perfecting my aim as much as possible, even to the very morning of the duel. Mr. Pittsburg himself accompanied me to the place of meeting as my second.

"'This Redman will endeavour to frighten you,' said he, 'by his boastful talk and also by his ugly looks, which the whipping you gave him has, I hear, not improved; but pay no heed to him. You will be arranged one hundred feet apart, and when the handkerchief is dropped you will advance upon each other, pistol in hand, firing when you please. It is this man's invariable custom to reserve his bullet until he comes within twenty feet, at which distance he can split a pea. When he comes within twenty-four feet, therefore, be sure to fire; it is your only chance of life.'

"Just as my patron had predicted, Redman came upon the ground, talking loudly to his friends—of whom he had several with him—and taking care to let me hear at what hotel in the city he was to dine that day after our affair was over. A livid seam crossed his grim cheek and made him horrible to behold, as he cast his cruel eyes upon me.

"When the handkerchief was dropped he did not, as I expected, cover me with his pistol, but held it loosely downwards,

while he advanced with a menacing air, slightly swaying his arms. At twenty feet from his victims it was his habit to become suddenly rigid, and to discharge his weapon as from a fixed battery. My heart beat fast, as I beheld him thus approaching, but I did not omit to calculate my four-and-twenty feet; and when, as I judged, that exact distance lay between us, I fired and shot him dead.*

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated the attorney; "why that was murder."

"Not in Richmond county, however," answered brother Alec, gravely; "nor, as I humbly hope, in the statutes of Heaven. For my part, I had no more compunction in killing such a wretch, than I should have felt in slaying any other ferocious wild beast. The thought of that tortured girl, and of the miseries that would have been in store for her, had my aim been unsuccessful, nerved hand and eye, as I covered him with my weapon, and I felt as though I were myself an instrument in the hand of avenging Heaven. Everybody congratulated me (and himself) upon the result of the encounter; yet, strange to say, when it leaked out that the quarrel had taken place about a negro slave, public opinion turned against me, and it became absolutely impossible for me to continue at Richmond."

"That is generally the result of the enterprises of knights-errant nowadays," observed Mrs. Raeburn.

"At least, dear madam, there was nothing Quixotic in my conduct, I hope," returned brother Alec mildly. "I only did what your husband, your son, or this young gentleman here, would surely also have done in protecting a woman from most infamous and degrading treatment."

"A black woman, however," answered she, contemptuously. "What does the Scripture say concerning bondsmen: 'He shall be brought unto the doorpost, and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever.' People will never persuade me, no matter how they cant and whine, that black folks feel as we do."

"That is a very soothing argument for whites, madam; but suppose you had been born black yourself?"

To look at Mrs. Raeburn at that moment, you would have thought she had been born so, and had kept her colour particularly well. She was naturally swarthy, and the thunder-cloud which formed upon her brow at this rejoinder, in spite of all

considerations of prudence, would have raised the "drum" at any meteorological station. She answered not a word; but all of us, save the new comer himself, were aware that, from that moment, Alec Raeburn had made an enemy for life in the woman he had chosen for his hostess. Though ignorant of the full extent of his fiasco, our Ulysses perceived that he had given offence, and, on the plea of being used to early hours, desisted for that time from narrating his adventures, and asked permission to retire for the night. The attorney accompanied his brother to his apartment, but leaving Mrs. Raeburn in the drawing-room, before whom it was impossible to discuss the new arrival, so we presently followed his example and went to bed.

The last thing I remember before I went to sleep was, my door being cautiously opened, and a voice, half-suffocated with laughter, repeating the words, "Divide, divide, divide," in parrot-like tones, as though Chico had been elected a member of the British senate.

THE TIRING-ROOM.

THE information that has come down to us in relation to the wardrobe department of the Elizabethan theatre, and the kind of costumes assumed by our early actors, is mainly derived from the diaries or inventories of Philip Henslowe and his partner Edward Alleyn, the founder of Dulwich College. Henslowe became a theatrical manager some time before 1592, trading also as a pawnbroker, and dealing rather usuriously with the players and playwrights about him. Alleyn married the step-daughter of Henslowe, and thereupon entered into partnership with him. Malone has made liberal extracts from Henslowe's inventories, which bear date 1598-9, and were once safely possessed by Dulwich College, but have now, for the most part, disappeared. Among the articles of dress enumerated appear "Longshank's suit;" "Tamberlane's breeches of crimson velvet," and the same hero's "coat with copper lace;" "Harye the Fifth's velvet gown and satin doublet, laid with gold lace;" Dido's robe and Juno's frock; Robin Hood's hat and green coat; and Merlin's gown and cape. Then there are gowns and caps for senators, suits for torchbearers and janissaries, shepherd's coats, yellow leather doublets for clowns,

robes of rich taffety and damask, suits of russet and of frieze, fools' caps and bells, cloth of gold, French hose, surplises, shirts, farthingales, jerkins, and white cotton stockings. From another document, the cost of theatrical apparel may be fairly estimated. A list headed, "Note of all such goods as I have bought for the company of my Lord Admiral's men, since the 3rd April, 1598," has the sum paid for each article plainly stated, and contains such items as: "Bought a damask cassock, garded with velvet, eighteen shillings;" "bought a payer of paned rownd hose of cloth, whiped with silk, drawn out with taffety, and one payer of long black woollen stockens, eight shillings;" "bought a robe for to go invisibell and a gown for Nembia, three pounds ten shillings;" (Malone conjecturing that the mysterious "robe for to go invisibell" pertained to some drama in which the wearer of the garment specified was supposed to be unseen by the rest of the performers); "bought a doublet of white satten layd thick with gold lace, and a pair of rowne paned hose of cloth of silver, the panes layd with gold lace, seven pounds ten shillings," and so on.

Alleyn's inventory still exists, or did exist very recently, in his own handwriting, at Dulwich College. It is without heading or date, and relates almost exclusively to the dresses worn by himself in his personation of various characters upon the stage. It is of interest, seeing that it demonstrates the assumption by Alleyn of various parts, if not in Shakespeare's plays, at any rate in the earlier dramas upon which the poet founded certain of his noblest works. Thus the actor's list makes mention of "a scarlet cloke with two brode gould laces with gould down the same, for Leir"—meaning, doubtless, King Lear; "a purple satin cloke, welted with velvett and silver twist, Romeo's;" "Hary the VIII. gowne;" "blew damask cote for the Moore in Venis;" and "span-gled hoec in Pericles." Such entries as "Faustus jerkin and cloke," "Priam's hoec in Dido," and "French hose for the Guises," evidence that the actor took part in Marlowe's *Faustus* and *Massacre of Paris*, and the tragedy of *Dido*, by Marlowe and Nash. Then there are cloaks and gowns, striped and trimmed with gold lace and ermine; suits of crimson, and orange tawny velvet; cloth of gold and silver; jerkins and doublets of satin taffety and velvet, richly embroidered; and

hose of various hues and patterns. The actors' wardrobe was clearly most costly and complete, and affords sufficient proof that theatrical costumes generally, even at that early date, were of a luxurious nature. In considering the prices mentioned in Henslowe's list, the high value of money in his time should of course be borne in mind.

It is plain, however, that splendour was much more considered than appropriateness of dress. Some care might be taken to provide Robin Hood with a suit of Lincoln green; to furnish hoods and frocks for friars, and royal robes for kings; but, otherwise, actors, dramatists, and audience demanded only that costly and handsome apparel should appear upon the scene. Indeed, as we have shown on a former occasion, the desire for correctness of dress upon the stage is of modern origin.* Still now and then may be found, even in very early days, some inclination towards carefulness in this respect: as when, in 1595, Thomas Nevile, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, applied to Lord Treasurer Burghley for the loan of the royal robes in the Tower, in order to perform, "for the exercise of young gentlemen and scholars in our college," certain comedies and one tragedy, in which "sondry personages of greatest estate were to be represented in ancient princely attire, which is nowhere to be had but within the office of the roabes of the Tower." This request, it seems, had been granted before, and probably was again complied with on this occasion. Indeed, at a much later date there was borrowing from the stores of the Tower for the decoration of the stage; as Pope writes:

Back fly the scenes and enter foot and horse:
Pageant 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 beams on Cibber's breast.

By way of reflecting the glories of the coronation of George the Second, Henry the Eighth, with a grand spectacle of a coronation, had been presented at the theatres, the armour of one of the kings of England having been brought from the Tower for the due accoutrement of the champion. And here we may note a curious gravitation of royal finery towards the theatre. Downes, in his *Roscius Anglicanus*, describes Sir William Davenant's play of

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, May 30th, 1874, p. 163. "Correct Costumes."

Love and Honour, produced in 1662, as "richly clothed, the king giving Mr. Betterton his coronation suit, in which he acted the part of Prince Alvaro; the Duke of York giving Mr. Harris his, who did Prince Prospero; and my lord of Oxford gave Mr. Joseph Price his, who did Lionel, the Duke of Parma's son." Presently we find the famous Mrs. Barry acting Queen Elizabeth in the coronation-ropes of James the Second's queen, who had before presented the actress with her wedding suit. Mrs. Barry is said to have given her audience a strong idea of Queen Elizabeth. Mrs. Bellamy played Cleopatra in a silver tissue "birthday" dress that had belonged to the Princess of Wales; and a suit of straw-coloured satin, from the wardrobe of the same illustrious lady, was worn by the famous Mrs. Woffington in her performance of Roxana. The robes worn by Elliston, when he personated George the Fourth, and represented the coronation of that monarch upon the stage of Drury Lane, were probably not the originals. These became subsequently the property of Madame Tussaud, and long remained among the treasures of her wax-work exhibition in Baker-street. A tradition prevails that Elliston's robes were carried to America by Lucius Junius Booth, the actor, who long continued to assume them in his personation of Richard the Third, much to the astonishment of the more simple-minded of his audience, who naïvely inquired of each other whether the sovereigns of Great Britain were really wont to parade the streets of London in such attire? Among other royal robes that have likewise descended to the stage, mention may also be made of the coronation-dress of the late Queen Adelaide, of which Mrs. Mowatt, the American actress, became the ultimate possessor.

Many noblemen and fine gentlemen also favoured the actors with gifts of their cast clothes, and especially of those "birthday suits"—Court dresses of great splendour, worn for the first time at the birthday levees, or drawing-rooms of the sovereign. As Pope writes:

Or when from Court a birthday suit bestowed,
Sinks the lost actor in the tawdry load.

Indeed, to some of the clothes worn by actors a complete history attached. The wardrobe of Munden, the comedian, contained a black Genoa velvet coat, which had once belonged to King George the Second; while another coat boasted also

a distinguished pedigree, and could be traced to Francis, Duke of Bedford, who had worn it on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's marriage. It had originally cost one thousand pounds! But then it had been fringed with precious stones, of which the sockets only remained when it fell into the hands of the dealers in second-hand garments; but, even in its dilapidated state, Munden had given forty pounds for it. Usually, however, fine clothes, such as "birthday suits," became the property rather of the tragedians than the comedians. Cibber describes the division, on the subject of dress, existing in the "Commonwealth" company, of which he formed a member, in 1696. "The tragedians," he writes, "seemed to think their rank as much above the comedians as the characters they severally acted; when the first were in their finery, the latter were impatient at the expense, and looked upon it as rather laid out upon the real than the fictitious person of the actor. Nay, I have known in our own company this ridiculous sort of regret carried so far that the tragedian has thought himself injured, when the comedian pretended to wear a fine coat." Powel, the tragedian, surveying the dress worn by Cibber as Lord Foppington, fairly lost his temper, and complained, in rude terms, that he had not so good a suit in which to play Cæsar Borgia. Then, again, when Betterton proposed to "mount" a tragedy, the comic actors were sure to murmur at the cost of it. Dogget especially regarded with impatience "the costly trains and plumes of tragedy, in which, knowing himself to be useless, he thought they were all a vain extravagance." Tragedy, however, was certainly an expensive entertainment at this time. Dryden's *All for Love* had been revived at a cost of nearly six hundred pounds for dresses—"a sum unheard of for many years before on the like occasion."

To the hero of tragedy a feathered head-dress was indispensable; the heroine demanded a long train borne by one or two pages. Pope writes:

Loud as the wolves on Orca's 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.

Hamlet speaks of a "forest of feathers" as part of an actor's professional qualification. Addison, writing in the *Spectator* on the methods of aggrandising the persons in tragedy, denounces as ridiculous the

endeavour to raise terror and pity in the audience by the dresses and decorations of the stage, and takes particular exception to the plumes of feathers worn by the conventional hero of tragedy, rising "so very high, that there is often a greater length from his chin to the top of his head, than to the sole of his foot. One would believe that we thought a great man and a tall man the same thing." Then he describes the embarrassment of the actor, forced to hold his neck extremely stiff and steady all the time he speaks, when, "notwithstanding any anxieties which he pretends for his mistress, his country, or his friends, one may see by his action that his greatest care and concern is to keep the plume of feathers from falling off his head." The hero's "superfluous ornaments" having been discussed, the means by which the heroine is invested with grandeur are next considered: "The broad sweeping train that follows her in all her motions, and finds constant employment for a boy who stands behind her, to open and spread it to advantage. I do not know how others are affected at this sight, but I must confess my eyes are wholly taken up with the page's part; and as for the queen, I am not so attentive to anything she speaks, as to the right adjusting of her train, lest it should chance to trip up her heels, or incommode her as she walks to and fro upon the stage. It is, in my opinion, a very odd spectacle to see a queen venting her passion in a disordered motion, and a little boy taking care all the while that they do not ruffle the tail of her gown. The parts that the two persons act on the stage at the same time are very different; the princess is afraid lest she should incur the displeasure of the king, her father, or lose the hero, her lover, whilst her attendant is only concerned lest she should entangle her feet in her petticoat." In the same way Tate Wilkinson, writing in 1790 of the customs of the stage, as he had known it forty years before, describes the ladies as wearing large hoops and velvet petticoats, heavily embossed, and extremely inconvenient and troublesome, with "always a page behind to hear the lovers' secrets, and keep the train in graceful decorum. If two princesses," he continues, "meet on the stage, with the frequent stage-crossing then practised, it would now seem truly entertaining to behold a page dangling at the tail of each heroine." The same writer, referring to the wardrobe he

possessed as manager of the York and Hull theatres, describes the dresses as broadly seamed with gold and silver lace, after a bygone fashion, that earned for them the contempt of London performers. "Yet," he proceeds, "those despicable clothes had, at different periods of time, bedecked real lords and dukes," and were of considerable value, if only to strip of their decorations and take to pieces. He laments the general decline in splendour of dress, and declares that, thirty years ago, not a Templar or decently-dressed young man but wore a rich gold-laced hat and scarlet waistcoat, with a broad gold lace, also laced frocks for morning dress."

Monmouth-street, St. Giles's, is now known by another name; but for many years its dealers in cast-off clothes rendered important aid to the actors and managers. It was to Monmouth-street, as he confesses, that Tate Wilkinson hastened, when permitted to undertake the part of Fine Gentleman in Garrick's farce of *Lethe*, at Covent Garden. For two guineas he obtained the loan for one night only of a heavy embroidered velvet spangled suit of clothes, "fit," he says, "for the king in *Hamlet*." Repeating the character, he was constrained to depend upon the wardrobe of the theatre, and appeared in "a very short old suit of clothes, with a black velvet ground and broad gold flowers, as dingy as the twenty-four letters on a piece of gilded gingerbread"—the dress, indeed, which Garrick had worn, when playing *Lothario*, in the *Fair Penitent*, ten years before. And it was to Monmouth-street that Austin repaired, when cast for a very inferior part—a mere attendant—in the same tragedy, in order to equip himself as like to Garrick as he could—for Garrick was to reappear as *Lothario* in a new suit of clothes. "Where did you get that coat from, Austin?" asked the great actor, surveying his subordinate. "Sir!" replied Austin, boldly, "it is part of my country wardrobe." The manager paused, frowned, reflected. Soon he was satisfied that the effect of Austin's dress would be injurious to his own, especially as Austin was of superior physical proportions. "Austin," he said at length, "why, perhaps you have some other engagement—besides, the part is really beneath you. Altogether, I will not trouble you to go on with me." And not to go on as an attendant upon *Lothario* was precisely what Austin desired.

O'Keefe, in his memoirs, has related a

curious instance of the prompt bestowal of an article of apparel upon an actor attached to the Crow-street Theatre, Dublin. Macklin's farce of *The True-Born Irishman* was in course of performance for the first time. During what was known as "the Drum Scene" ("a 'roul' in London is called a 'drum' in Dublin," O'Keefe explains)—when an actor, named Massink, had entered as the representative of Pat FitzMongrel—a gentleman, who with a large party occupied the stage-box, was seen to rise from his chair, with the view, as it seemed, of interrupting the performance. It should be stated that the gentleman was known to have recently inherited a large fortune, and had evinced a certain eccentricity of disposition. He was now of opinion that an attempt was being made to personate him on the stage. "Why, that's me!" he cried aloud, pointing to the figure of Pat FitzMongrel. "But what sort of a rascally coat is that they've dressed me in! Here, I'll dress you, my man!" So saying he stood up, divested himself of the rich gold-laced coat he wore, and flung it on to the stage. "Massink took it up smiling, stepped to the wing, threw off his own, and returned upon the stage in the gentleman's fine coat, which produced the greatest applause and pleasure among the audience."

To suit the dress demands the actor's art,
 Yet there are those who over-dress the part.
 To some prescriptive right gives settled things—
 Black wigs to murderers, feathered hats to kings.
 But Michael Cassio might be drunk enough,
 Though all his features were not grimed with snuff.
 Why should Poll Peschum shine in satin clothes?
 Why every devil dance in scarlet hose?

Thus, in regard to the conventionalism of stage costumes, wrote Churchill's friend, Robert Lloyd, in his poem of *The Actor*, 1762. And something he might have added touching the absurd old fashion of robing the queens of tragedy invariably in black, for it seemed agreed generally that "the sceptred pall of gorgeous tragedy" should be taken very literally, and should "sweep by" in the funereal fashion of sable velvet. "Empresses and queens," writes Mrs. Bellamy, the actress, in 1785, "always appeared in black velvet, with, upon extraordinary occasions, the additional finery of an embroidered or tissue petticoat; the younger actresses in cast gowns of persons of quality or altered habits rather soiled; whilst the male portion of the dramatis personæ strutted in tarnished laced coats and waistcoats, full bottom or tie wigs, and black worsted

stockings." Yet the lady once ventured to appear as *Lady Macbeth* in a dress of white satin. This took place at Edinburgh, and the startling innovation was only to be accounted for by the fact that the wardrobes of the actresses and of the company she had joined had been accidentally consumed by fire. Some portion of the theatre had been also destroyed, but boards were hastily nailed down and covered with carpets, so as to form a temporary stage until the damage could be repaired. Meantime appeal was made to the ladies of Edinburgh to lend clothes to the "burnt out" actress, who estimated the loss of her theatrical finery at nine hundred pounds, there being among the ashes of her property "a complete set of garnets and pearls, from cap to stomacher." Dresses of various kinds poured in, however. "Before six o'clock I found myself in possession of above forty, and some of these almost new, as well as very rich. Nor did the ladies confine themselves to outward garments only. I received presents of all kinds and from every part of the adjacent country." But inasmuch as "no black vestment of any kind had been sent among the numerous ones of different colours which had been showered upon me by the ladies," the necessity arose for dressing *Lady Macbeth* for the very first time in white satin.

Mrs. Bellamy, according to her own account, had been wont to take great pains and to exercise much good taste in regard to the costume she assumed upon the stage. She claimed to have discarded hooped skirts, while those unwieldy draperies were still greatly favoured by other actresses, and to have adopted a style of dress remarkable for an elegant simplicity then very new to the stage. Still the lady has freely admitted that she could be very gorgeous upon occasions; and concerning one of two grand tragedy dresses she had obtained from Paris, she has something of a history to narrate. The play was to be the *Alexander* of Nat Lee; the rival actresses were to appear—Mrs. Bellamy as *Statira*, and the famous Mrs. Woffington as *Roxana*. The ladies did not love each other—rival actresses oftentimes do not love each other—and each possessed a temper. Moreover, each was a beauty: Mrs. Woffington, a grand brunette, dark browed, with flashing eyes and stately mien; Mrs. Bellamy, a blonde, blue-eyed and golden-haired—an accomplished actress, if an affected one. Now

Mrs. Bellamy's grand dress of deep yellow satin, with a robe of rich purple velvet, was found to have a most injurious effect upon the delicate straw-coloured skirts of Mrs. Woffington; they seemed to be reduced to a dirty white hue. The ladies fairly quarrelled over their dresses. At length, if we may adopt Mrs. Bellamy's account of the proceeding, Mrs. Woffington's rage was so kindled "that it nearly bordered on madness. When, oh! dire to tell! she drove me off the carpet and gave me the coup de grâce almost behind the scenes. The audience, who, I believe, preferred hearing my last dying speech to seeing her beauty and fine attitude, could not avoid perceiving her violence, and testified their displeasure at it." Possibly the scene excited mirth in an equal degree. Foote forthwith prepared a burlesque, *The Green-room Squabble*; or, *A Battle Royal between the Queen of Babylon and the Daughter of Darius*. The same tragedy, it may be noted, had at an earlier date been productive of discord in the theatre. Mrs. Barry, as Roxana, had indeed stabbed her Statira, Mrs. Boutell, with such violence that the dagger, although the point was blunted, "made its way through Mrs. Boutell's stays and entered about a quarter of an inch into the flesh." It is not clear, however, that this contest, like the other, is to be attributed to antagonism in the matter of dress.

The characteristics of the "tiring-room" have always presented themselves in a ludicrous light to the ordinary observer. There is always a jumble of incongruous articles, and a striking contrast between the ambitious pretensions of things and their real meanness, between the facts and fictions of theatrical life. Mr. Collier quotes from Brome's comedy, *The Antipodes*, 1640, a curious account of the contents of the "tiring-house" of that time. Byeplay, an actor, one of the characters, is speaking of the hero Peregrine, who is in some sort a reflection of Don Quixote:

He has got into our tiring-house amongst us,
And ta'en a strict survey of all our properties.

Whether he thought 'twas some enchanted castle,
Or temple hung and piled with monuments
Of uncouth and of various aspects
I dive not to his thoughts.

But on a sudden, with thrice knightly force,
And thrice thrice puissant arm, he snatcheth down
The sword and shield that I played Bevis with;
Rusheth among the foresaid properties,
Kills monster after monster, takes the puppets
Prisoners, knocks down the Cyclops, tumbles all
Our jigabobs and trinkets to the wall.
Spying at last the crown and royal robes

! the upper wardrobe, next to which, by chance,
The devils' vizors hung and their flame-painted
Skin-coats, these he removed with greater fury,
And (having cut the infernal ugly faces
All into mammocks), with a reverend hand
He takes the imperial diadem, and crowns
Himself King of the Antipodes, and believes
He has justly gained the kingdom by his conquest.

A later dealing with the same subject may be quoted from Dr. Reynardson's poem of *The Stage*, dedicated to Addison, and first published in 1713:

High o'er the stage there lies a rambling frame,
Which men a garret vile, but players the tire-room
name:

Here all their stores (a merry medley) sleep
Without distinction, huddled in a heap.

Hung on the self-same peg, in union rest
Young Tarquin's trousers and Lucretia's vest,
Whilst, without pulling coifs, Roxana lays,
Close by Statira's petticoat, her stays.
Near these sets up a dragon-drawn calash;
There a ghost's doublet, delicately alashed,
Bleeds from the mangled breast and gapes a frightful
gash

Here Iris bends her various painted arch,
There artificial clouds in sullen order march;
Here stands a crown upon a rack, and there
A witch's broomstick by great Hector's spear:
Here stands a throne, and there the cynic's tub,
Here Bullock's cudgel, there Alcides' club.
Beards, plumes, and spangles in confusion rise,
Whilst rocks of Cornish diamonds reach the skies;
Crests, corselets, all the pomp of battle join
In one effulgence, one promiscuous shine.
Hence all the drama's decorations rise,
Hence gods descend majestic from the skies,
Hence playhouse chiefs, to grace some antique tale,
Buckle their coward limbs in warlike mail, &c. &c.

Of the theatrical wardrobe department of to-day it is unnecessary to say much. Something of the bewildering incongruity of the old "tiring-room" distinguishes it—yet with a difference. The system of the modern theatre has undergone changes. Wardrobes are now often hired complete from the costume and masquerade shops. The theatrical costumier has become an independent functionary, boasting an establishment of his own, detached from the theatre. Costume plays are not much in vogue now, and in dramas dealing with life and society at the present date, the actors are understood to provide their own attire. Moreover, there is now little varying of the programme, and, in consequence, little demand upon the stock wardrobe of the playhouse. Still, when in theatres of any pretension entertainments in the nature of spectacles or pantomimes are in course of preparation, there is much stir in the wardrobe department. There are bales of cloth to be converted into apparel for the supernumeraries; yards and yards of gauze and muslin for the ballet; spangles, and beads, and copper lace in great profusion; with high piles of white satin shoes. Numerous stitchers of both sexes are at

work early and late, while from time to time an artist supervises their labours. His aid has been sought in the designing of the costumes, so that they may be of graceful and novel device in fanciful or eccentric plays, or duly correct when an exhibition, depending at all upon the history of the past, is about to be presented by the manager.

PANSY.

WHAT blossom have you brought to-day,
Beside my pillow, dear, to lay?

Come let me see my prize.

A velvet pansy, large and fair,
With petals yellow as your hair,
And purple as your eyes.

I think I know the very spot,
Where, bordered with forget-me-not,

This lovely blossom grew;
We knew that pansy bed of old,
A sweet, swift story there was told,
Between black eyes and blue.

It seems but yesterday we stood,
Each unto each God's greatest good,
Beneath the morning sky!

We stood as lovers stand, to part
(But hand from hand, not heart from heart),
With lingering good-bye.

Upon your snow-white dress you wore
One blossom, plucked an hour before,
While still the dew was wet.

A purple pansy, fair as this,
I took it, with your first shy kiss;
I have that blossom yet.

We thought our fate was hard that day,
But, darling, we have learned to say,
"Whatever is, is best."

That far-off parting which is o'er,
Foretold one longer, on before,
Awaiting which we rest.

We wait as friends and lovers do,
Each reading true heart through and through,
Until that parting come.

Then if you speak I shall not hear,
I shall not feel your presence near,
Nor answer. Death is dumb.

You may bring pansies, too, that day,
To spread above the senseless clay,

But none so sweet as this:
And never one like that dear flower,
You gave me in love's dawning hour
With your shy clinging kiss.

I may not give you courage strong,
And help and counsel all life long,
As once I hoped to do.

But, love, be fearless, faithful, brave;
The pansies on my quiet grave
May bring heart's-ease for you.

REMARKABLE ADVENTURERS.
CASANOVA.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER III. OUT IN THE
WORLD.

SORADACI, the new comer, imposed as a comrade upon Casanova by the relentless Seigniory, is a paltry scoundrel, much despised by that eminent personage, whose own villainies are of the heroic type, and who looks disdainfully on the wretch who

asks if he is sure to be allowed ten sous a day for his maintenance. Scornfully he tells the shabby rascal to eat, drink, and be as merry as his inferior nature will admit of. Meanwhile the sordid creature's life hangs upon a thread. All is ready and ripe for flight, and this worm alone is in the way. Casanova reflects. There is the "short way" certainly, but the Signor Casanova—no bad hand at the rapier—has no stomach for deliberate murder. One must draw a line somewhere. Faro, cabala, and other trifles he is ever ready to indulge in; but at murder he stops short. He tests Soradaci, to find if he can trust him, and is betrayed in a small matter; but this reveals the pitiful subject of the experiment as an abject coward and superstitious slave. Astute Casanova nearly frightens him to death, and, confiding in his terror, sets his accomplices to work, predicting their appearance in his cell as a vision. Soradaci, submitted to frightful oaths and vows, sinks to the ground in a paroxysm of fear, dreading instant death. On the 31st of October the gaoler Lawrence comes to the cell and carries back a book to Balbi with a concealed message, telling him to crash through the ceiling at about mid-day. At the appointed hour a few strokes demolish the slight impediment remaining, and Father Balbi sees his colleague for the first time. Soradaci, who is, among other things, a barber, is compelled to shave the accomplices, and Casanova, mounting through the aperture made with so much trouble, finds the fat count, and despairs of getting him over the leads and out of trouble. The author of the scheme now inspects the roof, and, thinking himself sure to force his way through, cuts the bedclothes into strips and makes a rope a hundred feet long, taking immense care to secure every knot. By nightfall the hole in the roof is made. The woodwork has been split and splintered away, but the lifting of the riveted sheet of lead is a serious affair. Balbi and Casanova combining their strength, succeed in pushing the spoutoon between the gutter and the sheet above it, and putting their shoulders to it, double up the sheet lead to make a sufficient opening, but find the light of the crescent moon a terrible impediment. On a night like this everybody will be abroad on the square of St. Mark, and the shadows of escaping prisoners will hardly fail to be seen, and remarked. There is nothing for it but to wait till the

moon is down. The fat count, meanwhile, preaches ineffectually, and endeavours to dissuade his friends from their rash adventure. He points out the angle of the roof, the risk of the descent, the chances of being shot by the sentinels, and the agreeable prospect of being dashed to pieces. Inwardly cursing his cowardly companions, Casanova yet conceals his fury and persuades the fat count to part with his last gold pieces—the whole capital of the enterprise. This achieved, he waits patiently till the moon is down, and then quickly passes out on to the roof, followed by the monk—the count being given up as a bad job. The leaden sheets which cover the roof are slippery with dew, and afford not the slightest foothold on the terrible slope. Casanova, feeling that the slightest mishap will precipitate him into the canal, which he knows to be too shallow to save him from being dashed to pieces, is yet undaunted, and leads the way in the painful and dangerous ascent. With their packs on their backs, Casanova and Balbi attain the summit of the ducal palace and sit astride upon it. The outlook is bad. There seems to be nothing for it but to drop into the canal, till quick-eyed Casanova espies a skylight. Like a ready tactician, he instantly grasps the situation. The skylight probably opens into some garret of the ducal palace, whence a descent into the deserted official chambers of the Republican government would be easy. If the ascent of the slippery roof were gruesome work in the darkness, the descent is ten times more awful. If the Signor Casanova miss his mark and fail to “bring up” against the skylight, he may commend himself to Paralis, his familiar demon; for the force of gravity, unless interfered with, will take him to the bottom of the shallow canal already spoken of. A moment’s hesitation, and his mind is made up. It is now or never; do or die. Slipping down the dangerous leads, he finds himself—in a space of time short enough, but which feels like an age—astride upon the skylight. The window and its bars are soon forced, and after having lowered his companion, Casanova finds nothing to which to fasten the rope to enable him to follow. Casting about, he finds a small cupola under repair, and near it a ladder, to which he attaches his rope and prepares to descend; but, in mortal terror that the ladder, when released, will fall into the canal and make a splash, he climbs down to the gutter,

and, at imminent risk of his life, forces up one end of the ladder under the skylight till it sticks fast for a moment and ultimately descends into the garret, where its end is received by Balbi. Casanova now descends and finds himself, with his companion, in a loft some thirty paces long by twenty broad. Feeling the effect of his tremendous exertions, he falls flat on the ground, and actually sleeps soundly for three hours and a half, until the monk Balbi shakes him again into life. It is now late—about five o’clock in the morning. A glance around shows that this loft forms no part of the prison. There must be a way out. The lock is forced and entry made into a chamber where a key is on the table. Next, through the gallery of the archives, down a little stone staircase, and the whilome prisoners are in the ducal chancery. There is an open window by which descent were easy into the labyrinth of little courts which surrounds the church of St. Mark, but no such madness is to be thought of. On the bureau is an iron instrument for punching holes in parchment to attach the seals. Casanova thinks a little incidental burglary may not be amiss, and “prises” open a desk or two, in the hope of finding sequins. In vain. There is no money in the desk, and the chancery—after the manner of chanoeries—is difficult to get out of. The lock will not yield, so a panel of the door must be broken away. This occupies half an hour, and Casanova, after pushing his friend through, is dragged through by him, the ragged wood scarifying him not a little. With clothes torn to rags, the confederates slip down two pairs of stairs, and find themselves stopped by a massive door, impregnable except by artillery. There is nothing to do now but to sit down and wait till the porter or the sweepers come to open the door. Meanwhile there is no lack of occupation. Balbi has preserved a whole skin, but energetic Casanova is cruelly mangled. Blood streams from the terrible cuts inflicted by the leads of the gutter, and the lesser wounds incurred in being dragged through the hole in the door. With some difficulty the blood is stanchied, and the greater wounds bound up, and the hero of the adventure, who no longer doubts its perfect success, dons once more the famous taffety coat with silver lace, adjusts his hose over his bandaged limbs, puts on three shirts, gorgeously trimmed with point lace, and then laughs heartily at the figure he cuts in

a summer ball dress on the morning of the 1st of November. The grand mantle of poul-de-soie he throws over Balbi, telling him that he looks as if he had stolen it. Putting on the gold-laced hat with the white plume, Casanova then looks out of the window, an imprudence which might have spoiled all, but really helped him onwards. Some early idlers observe the apparition of the gold-laced hat, and fetch the porter, under the impression that somebody had been locked in the ducal palace by mistake over night. Casanova hears the rattle of keys, and looking through a crack in the door spies a man, alone, mounting the staircase, with a huge bunch of keys in his hand. Weapon in hand, he awaits the guardian; but there is no occasion for violence. The door opens widely, the sleepy fellow opens his eyes and mouth in astonishment—little wotting what a narrow escape he has had for his life—as the companions, not appearing in too great a hurry, but moving quickly down the Giant's Staircase, pass through the grand entrance of the palace, cross the little square, and step into a gondola. "I want to go to Fucino; call another gondolier," cries Casanova. Away they go, the custom-house is soon left behind, and the gondoliers are clearing with vigorous strokes the canal of the Giudecca. Half-way along this canal, Casanova asks innocently:

"Shall we be soon at Mestri?"

"But, signor, you told me to go to Fucino."

"You are mad. I told you Mestri."

Thesecond barcarol backs up his "mate," and, to the rage of Casanova, stupid Balbi sides with the men. Casanova, feeling as if he would like to massacre his companion, then bursts into a fit of hilarity, and says perhaps he did say Fucino, but must go to Mestri all the same. The gondoliers offer to row him to England if he wishes it. Enjoying the morning air with a zest he has never hitherto experienced, Casanova speeds on to Mestri, lands quickly, catches a vetturino, and gets to Treviso without mishap. Here commence the difficulties of passing the frontier, and escaping from the dominion of the most Serene of all Republics. Further progress by post is out of the question. Firstly, it would be dangerous; secondly, there is no money left except a few francs. The shortest way is by Bassano, but Casanova prefers the longer route, by Feltri, as being a safer line to the territory

of the bishop of Trent. Along unfrequented paths, and across fields, the associates make straight towards the frontier, and soon put four and twenty miles between them and Treviso. They now part company, agreeing to meet at Borgo di Valsugano, the first town over the border. Leaving the monk to creep along the valleys, Casanova pushes over the hills, and after extracting six sequins from an unwilling acquaintance, not without threatening his life, buys a riding-coat and boots, and mounted on a hired ass, arrives at La Scala, passes the guard, and drives behind a pair of horses into Valsugano, free again at last.

At Botzen, Casanova receives funds from his old patron, Bragadino, and passing through Munich and Strasbourg, fetches up in Paris on the 3rd of January, 1757. He is well received by his old friend Baletti, and is on his way to Versailles in quest of the Abbé de Bernis, Minister of Foreign Affairs, when he finds the whole town upset by the attempt of Damien to assassinate the king. Casanova becomes the fashion—after a fashion. De Bernis introduces him to the Duke de Choiseul, who, inclined enough to listen to him, is crushed by the Italian's would-be verbosity. Like everybody else, the Duke de Choiseul is anxious to hear the story of the flight from the Piombi. Injudicious Casanova says that the narrative will occupy two hours.

"Give me an abridgment," saith the duke.

"Brief as I may be, I shall want two hours." Pitiless raconteur!

"Reserve the details for another day."

"In this story there is nothing of interest but the details."

"So, so, but you can cut them down," a remark which gives a high idea of the duke's editorial power.

"Very well," says Casanova, and gives the duke a dry story in a few words, wears him, and is dismissed with a few kindly words, the duke rejoicing in his departure.

This interview with the Prime Minister of France is hardly so disastrous as it deserves to be. Casanova is sent to Dunkirk on a mission which looks very much like "secret service," and by the help of De Bernis, makes the acquaintance of the famous financiers Paris-Duvernay, and also that of the Count de Boulogne. The Duvernays want to raise twenty millions of francs, to establish a military school; and M. de Boulogne is burning to bring

the French navy into such perfect condition, as to make a descent upon England. De Bernis, wishing to serve his scampish but interesting friend, has introduced him to these people as a financier of rare ability. Casanova knows no more of finance to-day than he did of cabala a few years ago, when old Bragadino insisted on believing him a conjuror; but he is equal to the occasion, saying to himself, "They think I am a financier, therefore I have the reputation of one; therefore I am one." The gambler's brain soon produces a dainty dish to set before a king. The nature of the dish may easily be guessed—a voluntary contribution of the nation towards the royal exchequer, costing but little to collect. Casanova states this without mentioning what his plan really is, when Duvernay cuts him short by handing him a portfolio, with the words:

"Monsieur Casanova, here is your project."

Alas! he is forestalled: his projected plan for a royal lottery has already been proposed by one Calsabigi, a famous manager of lotteries. The bold Casanova is not dashed at this, "not a jot," but throws in his lot with his rival, backing up the scheme very cleverly and boldly. The timid financiers object that "there is no capital."

"A mere matter of detail. Royal treasury—decree of council—and the thing's done. All that is required is that the nation shall suppose the king in a condition to pay a hundred millions."

"But how pay this sum if lost?"

"By the time it is lost there will be a hundred and fifty millions to pay it with."

"But yet the king may lose an exorbitant sum at the first drawing."

"All the better for the popularity of the lottery. The king has for himself one chance out of five, and must infallibly make his twenty millions."

The Brothers Calsabigi have been at work for two long years, have every detail of their lottery scheme cut and dried, but have not made as much way in all that time, as Casanova has in a few minutes by his happy audacity, and blissful ignorance of the difficulties of the enterprise. An alliance is soon made, and the young partner elected spokesman. The decree is issued, and Casanova gets a pension of four thousand francs and the control of six bureaux, the Calsabigi still retaining the direction of the affair. Casanova now

sells five of his allotted bureaux for ten thousand francs, and puts his servant in the sixth, situated in the Rue St. Denis. His next plan is to draw custom to his own bureau, and to do this he announces that every winning ticket signed by him will be paid at the said bureau twenty-four hours, instead of a week, after the drawing. This skilful move draws the great crowd of gamblers to the Rue St. Denis, to the great profit of the Venetian, who gets six per cent. on the receipts. All the other holders of bureaux are furious and raise a terrible howl, but the only answer they get is a recommendation to follow the lead of Casanova, if they have the money to do it with. The late prisoner "under the leads" is now making money quickly. The lottery is a complete success, and, as he predicted, the great financiers are the first to complain that the profit to the exchequer of six hundred thousand francs on the first drawing, on a receipt of two millions, is "too great" to inspire hope in the people; but, luckily, Paris wins heavily, and the success of the capital is sufficient to insure the success of the scheme. By the simple "gift of the gab" Casanova has secured an income of a hundred thousand francs a year—a considerable revenue in the middle of the eighteenth century. It becomes the fashion to play at the lottery. Our adventurer rolls in his carriage, overdresses himself after the manner of his kind, and has his pockets stuffed with lottery tickets, which he sells everywhere and at all times, in season and out of season; persons of quality surround him at the opera and at the theatres, investing heavily, and the fortunate youth returns home nightly with pockets laden with gold.

Behold Casanova then a man of fashion—in his own opinion at least. The present historian indeed has grave doubts whether the wonderful Venetian adventurer ever really advanced much beyond the Bohemian fringe of good society. It is not difficult to picture in the mind's eye the ineffable sneer with which the Rohans and Richelieus welcome the ill-mannered foreigner who dresses like a mountebank, talks loudly and tediously, plays heavily, and sells lottery tickets between the acts of the opera. He himself, lucky fellow, is snugly encased in the triple armour of vanity. He is not, physically speaking, a bad specimen of a man, but his peculiar monomania is Admirable Crichtonism. He is an elegant poet, a profound scholar, an excellent wit, an accomplished sword-

man, a superb dancer, makes the best bow in Europe, deals at faro with elegance and good fortune, is a perfect ladies' man, wears the biggest diamonds, the finest watches, snuffboxes, and clothes in Paris. It never occurs to the self-satisfied creature that the narrative—taking two hours to get through—of his escape from the Piombi tries the patience of his hearers, and that his excessively dignified airs are heartily enjoyed and laughed at by his Parisian friends. Nevertheless, it must be candidly admitted that Casanova possesses one great element of success—he never shirks a quarrel. The slightest hint as to his style of dealing at faro, the faintest disinclination to believe his often astounding narratives, and he is ready, sword in hand. He believes firmly in a certain "botte secrète"—a cunning thrust which never fails him. Moreover, he wears a sword of the utmost length permitted in polite society, and when he has "cleaned out" his pigeon, is ready to truss him. On a memorable occasion he has the honour of fighting a member of the house of La Tour d'Auvergne, whom he wounds slightly, and then attends upon as doctor and hospital nurse.

This memorable encounter procures him the friendship of his late adversary, a gallant unsuspecting gentleman, who introduces him to his aunt, the Marchioness d'Urfé, a lady of illustrious lineage, but mad as a March hare, with brain bemuddled with Rosicrucian dreams, a firm believer in cabala and spells—the ready prey of a charlatan. This old lady has heard of Casanova and of his reputation as a magician, and is delighted to know him. His knowledge of the recondite mysteries of Paracelsus is very "general," but, by listening adroitly, he soon finds out what he is supposed to know. Concealing his astonishment, he hears the great lady discourse learnedly on the philosopher's stone, and is admitted to her library, which had once belonged to the great d'Urfé and Renée de Savoie his wife. She possesses a commentary of Raymond Lully explaining the mysteries of Roger Bacon and Heber, and the Tree of Diana constructed by the famous Taliamed (De Maillet), whom she believes to be still living, and from whom she receives imaginary letters. From this wonderful library they pass into a not less marvellous laboratory—rather alchemical than chemical—and finally sit down cozily together to construct the pentacle of Polyphilus. Casanova's early reading in

conjuring and his wonderful memory now stand him in good stead. He boldly compares notes, and comes out of the trial gloriously; and really knowing something of astronomy as well as of astrology, mixes up the planets so skillfully with the pentacle of Solomon, that the old lady is fairly bewitched by her new friend. They discourse concerning their familiar spirits. Casanova "rings in" his old friend Paralis, and pretends to teach his patroness how to make the magic pile, and get cabalistically at the Unknown. Lest all this should seem pure romance, let us recollect that at this moment Saint-Germain is in Paris, and enjoys the reputation of being at least three hundred years old. Credulity reigns in every salon, and Casanova reigns in that of the Marchioness d'Urfé. It is difficult to say what influence his fine dark eyes may have produced on the possibly still impressionable marchioness; but her intense devotion to the abstract sciences favours the conclusion that in Casanova she only sees the "adept"—the deft wielder of cabala, the depository of the Rosicrucian secrets of spiritual and physical regeneration, the mortal recipient of the wisdom of Paralis and other familiar spirits. Casanova himself is at times overpowered by her redundant faith. She believes him to be possessed of the philosopher's stone, and to be in familiar converse with the elementary spirits.

Astute Giacomo dines daily with the great lady, and is much exercised in his mind how best to disabuse her, if at all, and concludes that the best thing he can do is to let things alone. His occasional colloquies with the very tough and well-seasoned organ which, in his case, supplies the place of a conscience, are amusing enough, and it is curious to see how his scruples yield before a superb rent-roll. The great dame herself is a singular creature. Her Rosicrucian and alchemic mania apart, she is stingy enough and shrewd withal, speculating freely with her immense revenues and making great profits. So they go on dining together and spending long, and, to Casanova, inexpressibly dull evenings over abracadabra and other magical mysteries.

During this specially successful period of his career the Venetian establishes a slight foothold in really good society—thanks to Madame d'Urfé and De Bernis. Royal "France"—Louis the Well-beloved—is poorer than ever, and certain Dutch merchants hint to the successful

adventurer that a loan might be made on a portion of the crown jewels. Lucky in some negotiations for Madame d'Urfé, who presents him with a handsome "brokerage," Casanova is hardly so fortunate at first in the affair of the great loan, which falls through for a while. Pending these weighty affairs, he works his cabalistic pyramid for the benefit of his host, a Dutch banker, and by extraordinarily lucky blunders wins him a fortune. By sheer good fortune he makes three hundred thousand florins for himself, and has an offer of the hand of a banker's daughter and a partnership in the firm. As if good luck were completely on his side, he also, at last, completes the arrangement for the French loan, and is triumphant "all round."

Were our adventurer a reasonable being, his story should finish here; but an existence in Holland—wife, money, and iceboats into the bargain—does not commend itself to the genius of Casanova. He burns to revisit Paris and cut a dash there, the vulgar love of show and expense triumphing over every other consideration. Like many more of his kind, he "leaves his luck" in Holland, and, moreover, runs up a score of forty thousand florins for diamonds.

Returned to Paris, he sets up a magnificent establishment in the Rue Montorgueil, launches a couple of carriages, a magnificent coachman, five horses, grooms, and lackeys; invites Madame d'Urfé and other members of the fashionable world to dinner, and secures the friendship of another great lady, Madame de Rumain. The contact of all this good society and the possession of capital inspire him with the wish to make a fortune honestly, and he becomes a manufacturer, thereby getting completely out of his depth. His speculation is to produce upon silk, by printing, similar effects to those produced at Lyons by weaving. He secures an expert to do the work and court patronage to help him on, engages immense works, buys hundreds of pieces of costly goods, hires a crowd of workpeople, and puts three hundred thousand francs into the speculation at once, risking besides his entire fortune. Paralysis, or some other protecting genius of Casanova, is apparently displeased at this performance, for trouble arises immediately. His intrigues involve him in a criminal prosecution. Getting out of this difficulty, he stumbles on another, for the war reducing business to a low ebb, he finds himself under the necessity of taking a partner, who puts

fifty thousand francs into the concern. Three days after payment his treasurer "bolts" with the money, and the new partner insists on restitution. Casanova is arrested, but is released by Madame d'Urfé. Ill-treated and cheated out of his "dues" on the first government loan, he is yet courageous enough to undertake the negotiation of a second, and settling his affairs in Paris, departs once more for Holland, furnished with a hundred thousand francs in money and an equivalent capital in jewels.

THE GUNS OF BURRISAU.

STRANGE noises have always played their part in the mysteries which surround us. Visitants from the unseen world are not more distinguished by their almost universal fancy for white clothing, than by a habit of indulging in, or causing, sounds which have, apparently, no purpose; or, at any rate, lead to no obviously useful end. Objections to sleeping in the wainscoted chambers of old manor-houses, or of lonely moated granges, are generally based on the impossibility of repose, where such odd noises are heard at unearthly hours. The ghost that so long troubled the Wesley family was never, we believe, seen, but confined its demonstrations to interrupting family prayers, knocking against the wall, and so on. In later days, the spirits that have come to us from the world beyond the grave, via the United States, have adopted rapping as their especial form of conversation. There have been other more august mysteries of sound too; some, perhaps, entirely suggested by the imagination or the associations of a locality; others, not authenticated, but referrible probably to some physical cause not clearly ascertained. Among the first may be classed the strange noises as of conflict—clashing of shields, snorting of horses, and the like—heard by unwilling listeners near the plains of Marathon, a legend effectively introduced by Ugo Foscolo in his poem of *I Sepulcri*; among the latter, the sudden strains, as of an unearthly music, which have swept over ships as they entered, unwittingly, the fated circle of a Mozambique cyclone. The phenomenon of which we propose to give a very brief notice certainly claims to rank in the first class of mysterious noises, for due as it undoubtedly is to natural causes, those causes have never

been explained with anything approaching a really satisfactory result.

The Delta of the Ganges, within the extent where the influence of the tides is felt, is covered with a dense jungle of such trees as are peculiar to salt marshes, and is called the Sunderbunds, which name is a corruption of vernacular words, meaning the Beautiful Forest. Beautiful, indeed, it can only be called in virtue of the luxuriance of the vegetation, for the trees are stunted and comparatively insignificant, consisting of such growths as the mangrove, standing, as it were, on stilts in the mud; the *sonneratia*, akin to the purple loosestrife of our ditches, too big, however, to be called even a shrub; the *segiara*, *heritiera*, &c. But the swamp is fertile in giant grasses and reed-maces, and the water-courses are fringed with the curious screw-pine, *Nipa fruticans*; whilst large tracts are covered with the marsh phoenix, an elegant dwarf palm, some six or eight feet high. Such regions, it may be supposed, are not healthy, but the vegetation in a large measure depends on the character of the tides, and therefore it is in the western parts of the Delta, where the rise and fall are not great, and the influx of fresh water inconsiderable, that the jungle is thickest. It decreases to the eastward, and near the mouth of the *Magna*, where the bay is nearly fresh, the muddy shores are, for the most part, devoid of vegetation. One of the stations in the Sunderbunds is called Burrisaul, and this place has given its name to certain singular sounds which are heard in that region in the rainy season, and are called the "Guns of Burrisaul." There is no especial propriety in the phenomenon being connected with Burrisaul, for the noise is heard at Backergunj and surrounding places, and even at *Dacca*. It is described as being like "the loud, sudden boom of a heavy gun." The discharges vary in frequency and are heard generally at night, or, it may be, are more noticed at night, and there are the following peculiarities about them:

1. They are only heard in the rainy season.
2. They proceed from the south, and are heard one hundred miles inland.
3. They seem to come still from the south, even on the sea-coast, and are not materially louder there than at *Dacca*.

It may be supposed that, by imaginative Eastern races, these strange sounds are associated with their superstitions, and in-

terpreted by such an hypothesis as their different faiths would be likely to suggest. Now it is well known that, with Mohammedans, the second coming of the Imam Mahdee, who mysteriously disappeared in the third century of the Hegira, is looked upon in the same light in which some amongst us regard the so-called Millennium; there is to be a personal reign of the Imam, and the saints are to triumph over all infidels. So in the mysterious night-guns, the rude Mussulman of the Sunderbunds hears the last great battle already begun, and imagines that the Imam is in full conflict with his enemies. But the discharges have continued from generation to generation, and all things continue as at the first, and still the Coming lingers!

The Hindoo, on the other hand, who associates the idea of the south with the exploits of the hero Ram, conceives the sound to proceed from the island of *Lunka* or *Ceylon*, and to be caused by the grating hinges of the palace-gate of *Ravun*.

The Mugs, a quiet race living along the coast, are disposed to believe that there is a large rocky island in the Bay of Bengal, hollowed out with caves and caverns, into which the waves of the sea are constantly tumbling. But this conjecture, like some other scientific conjectures of the day, postulates that which stands most in need of proof—the existence of the island. It is rather singular that, with a government which has never shown itself indifferent to cognate inquiries, this curious phenomenon has not as yet received adequate attention. The theories which have been broached on the subject by Europeans are scarcely more tenable than the explanations offered by native credulity. One idea is that the sound is caused by the falling of river-banks under the constant wash of water. This can only have been suggested by the fact that the slipping of banks does make a noise like the boom of a gun; such explosions may often be heard in the neighbourhood of the Ganges or *Jumna* up country, during the rains.

But the simple circumstance that no such breaking up of banks occurs in the Sunderbunds, and that, if it did, the noise caused by it could not always proceed from one direction, and be heard at such a distance, disposes of that hypothesis. Nor is the explanation more happy that refers the sound to the breaking of waves on the coast; first, because the sound is not that of waves; next, because on the

coast the sound still proceeds from the south; lastly, because no waves could be heard at a distance of a hundred miles.

The facts of the case seem to point to an atmospheric origin of the phenomenon, and that is about as far, in the present knowledge of details, as theory can go. Those who have heard it say the noise would certainly be put down as thunder, if the boom were not so sharply and definitely given, and if the absence of a subsequent roll were not so marked. And even on this point an acute ear has its own account to give; for the Commissioner of Dacca, writing only last year, says: "It happened to me to be awake the greater part of a night lately, when the reports were unusually frequent, and after very attentive listening for a long time, I could sometimes catch the faintest sound of a rumble succeeding the shot, which induced me to conclude that the reports are caused by the meeting of thunder-clouds at a high elevation from the earth's surface."

We have made use of a report by Mr. Knox Wigat, which, if a little wild when regarded from a scientific point of view, is still able and interesting. This gentleman was commissioned to examine sea-coast localities, with the object of selecting a site for a marine sanitarium in connection with Burrisaul, and in his report he has given many particulars of the local phenomenon. Perhaps, if he were associated with a person of scientific training, between them they might arrive at a satisfactory solution of the mystery.

But, explained or unexplained, so surely as July comes round, far out in the tropic Sunderbunds, through the long darkness, in hushes of the plashing rain, and amidst the hum of myriads of insects, to wakeful and feverish ears throb the strange discharges of this mysterious artillery; or startled sleepers sink back relieved, exclaiming, "'Tis but the guns of Burrisaul!"

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXIII.

TIME passed, or seemed to pass, with unusual gentleness over Whitford. If some of our acquaintances there had suddenly been called upon to mention the changes that had taken place within two years, they would perhaps have said at first that

there had been none. But changes there had been, nevertheless; and by a few dwellers in the little town they had been keenly felt.

The second summer vacation after that happy holiday time which Rhoda had passed with the Erringtons at Llanryddan arrived. A hot July, winged with thunder-clouds, brooded over the meadows by the Whit. The shadow of Pudcombe Woods was pleasant in the sultry afternoons, and the cattle stood for hours knee-deep in dark pools, overhung by drooping boughs. The great school-room at the Grammar School resounded no more with the tread of young feet, or the murmur of young voices. It was empty, and silent, and dusty; and an overgrown spider had thrown his grey tapestry right across the oriel window, so that it was painted, warp and woof, with brave purple and ruby blazonries from the old stained glass.

Doctor Bodkin and his family were away at a seaside place in the South of England. Mr. Diamond had gone on a solitary excursion afoot. Even Pudcombe Hall was deserted; although young Pawkins was expected to return thither, later in the season, for the shooting. Rhoda Maxfield had been sent to her half-brother Seth, at Duckwell Farm, to get strong and sunburned; and as she was allowed to be by herself almost as much as she wished—Mrs. Seth Maxfield being a bustling, active woman, who would not have thought of suspending or modifying her daily avocations for the sake of entertaining any visitor whatever—Rhoda spent her time, not unhappily, in a sort of continuous day-dream, sitting with a book of poetry under a hedge in the hayfield, or wandering with her little nephew, Seth Maxfield the younger, in Pudcombe Woods, which were near her brother's farm. She liked looking back better than looking forward, perhaps; and enacted in her imagination many a scene that had occurred at dear Llanryddan over and over again. But still there were many times when she indulged in hopeful anticipations as to Algy's return. He had come back to London after his foreign travel, and had spent another brilliant season under the patronage of his great relations. And then a rumour had reached Whitford that Lord Seely had at length obtained the promise of a good post for him, and that he might be expected to revisit Whitford in the autumn at latest. Mrs. Errington had been invited to a country house of

Lord Seely's, in Westmoreland, to meet her son, and had set out on her visit in high spirits. Rhoda was thus cut off from hearing frequently of Algernon, through his mother, but she looked forward to seeing them together in September. Rhoda missed her friend and patroness; but she missed her less at Duckwell than she would have done in the dull house in the High-street.

On the whole, she was not unhappy during those sultry summer weeks. Modest and humble-minded as she was, she had come to understand that she was considered pretty and pleasing by the ladies and gentlemen whose acquaintance she had made. No caressing words, no flattering epithets, no pet names, had been bestowed upon her by her father's old friends and companions. She was just simply Rhoda Maxfield to them; never "Primrose," or "Pretty one," or "Rhoda dear;" and the Methodists, however blind to her attractive qualities, had displayed considerable vigilance in pointing out her backsliding, and exhorting her to make every effort to become convinced of sin. Certainly the society of ladies and gentlemen was infinitely more agreeable.

Then, too, there had dawned on her some idea that Mr. Diamond felt a warm admiration for her—perhaps something even warmer than admiration. Miss Chubb (who delighted to foster any amatory sentiments which she might observe in the young persons around her, and was fond of saying, with a languishing droop of her plump, rubicund, good-humoured countenance, that she would not for the world see other young hearts blighted by early disappointment, as hers had been) had dropped several hints to that effect sufficiently broad to be understood even by the bashful Rhoda. And, a little to her own surprise, Rhoda had felt something like gratification, in consequence; Mr. Diamond was such a very clever gentleman. Although he wasn't rich, yet everybody thought a great deal of him. Even Dr. Bodkin (decidedly the most awful embodiment of authority whom Rhoda had ever yet known) treated Mr. Diamond with consideration. And Miss Minnie was his intimate friend. Rhoda had not the least idea of ever reciprocating Mr. Diamond's sentiments. But she could not help feeling that the existence of those sentiments increased her own importance in the world. And she had a lurking idea that it might, if known to Algy, increase her importance in his eyes also.

As to Mr. Diamond's part in the matter, Rhoda, to say truth, concerned herself very little with that. Partly from a humble estimate of herself, and partly from that maiden incapacity for conceiving the fire and force of a masculine passion, which often makes girls pass for cruel who are only childish, she never had thought of Mr. Diamond as seriously suffering for her sake. But yet she was less cold and repellent to him than she had once been. It is difficult not to thaw somewhat in the presence of one whose words and looks make a genial atmosphere for that sensitive plant—youthful vanity.

Rhoda's wardrobe, which by this time had become considerable in quantity and tasteful in quality, was a great source of amusement to her. She delighted to trim, and stitch, and alter, and busy her fingers with the manufacture of bright-coloured bows of ribbon and dainty muslin frills. Mrs. Seth looked contemptuous at what she called "Rhoda's finery," and told her she would never do for a farmer's wife if she spent so much time over a parcel of frippery. Seth Maxfield shook his head gravely, and hoped that Rhoda was not given up utterly to worldliness and vanity; but feared that she had learned no good at St. Chad's church, but had greatly backslided since the days of her attendance at chapel.

For the Seth Maxfields still belonged to the Wesleyan connexion, and disapproved of the change that had taken place among the family at Whitford. Not that Seth was a deeply religious man. But his father's desertion of the Wesleys appeared to him in the light of a party defection. It was "ratting;" and ratting, as Seth thought, without the excuse of a bribe. "Look how well father has prospered!" he would say to his wife. "He's as warm a man, is father, as 'ere a one in Whitford. And the Church folks bought their tea and sugar of him all the same when he belonged to the Society. But I don't believe the Society will spend their money with him now as they did. So that's so much clean lost. I'm not so strict as some, myself; nor I don't see the use of it. But I do think a man ought to stick to what he's been brought up to. 'Specially when it's had the manifest blessing of Providence! If the Lord was so well satisfied with father's being a Wesleyan, I think father might ha' been satisfied too."

Still there had been no quarrel between the Whitford Maxfields and those of Duck-

well. They came together so seldom that opportunities for quarrelling were rare. And Seth had too great a respect for such manifestations of Providential approbation as had been vouchsafed to his father, to be willing to break entirely with the old man. So, when old Max proposed to send Rhoda to the farm for a few weeks, he paying a weekly stipend for her board, his son and his son's wife had at once agreed to the proposition. And as they were not persons who brought their religious theories into the practical service of daily life, Rhoda's conscience was not disturbed by having a high and stern standard of duty held up for her attainment at every moment.

The Wesleyan preacher at that time in the district was a frequent guest at Duckwell Farm. And in the long summer evenings one or two neighbours would occasionally drop in to the cool stone-flagged parlour, where brother Jackson would read a chapter and offer up a prayer. And afterwards there would be smoking of pipes and drinking of home-brewed by the men; while Mrs. Seth and Rhoda would sit on a bench in the apple-orchard, near to the open window of the parlour, and sew, and talk, or listen to the conversation from within, as they pleased.

Rhoda perceived quickly enough that the Duckwell Farm species of Methodism was very different from the Methodism of David Powell. Mr. Jackson never said anything to frighten her. He talked, indeed, of sin, and of the dangers that beset sinners; but he never spoke as if they were real to him—as if he heard and saw all the terrible things he discoursed of so glibly. Then Mr. Jackson was, Rhoda thought, a somewhat greedy eater. He did not smoke, it was true; but he took a good share of Seth's strong ale, and was not above indulging in gossip—perhaps to please himself, perhaps to please Mrs. Seth Maxfield.

Rhoda drew a comparison in her own mind between brother Jackson and the stately rector of St. Chad's, and felt much satisfaction at the contrast between them. How much nicer it was to be a member of a Church of England congregation; where one heard Dr. Bodkin or Mr. Warlock speak a not too long discourse in correct English, and with that refined accent which Rhoda's ear had learned to prize, and where the mellow old organ made a quivering atmosphere of music that seemed to mingle with the light from the painted windows; than to sit on a deal bench in a white-washed chapel, and

painfully keep oneself broad awake whilst brother Jackson or brother Hinks bawled out a series of disjointed sentences, beginning with "Oh!" and displaying a plentiful lack of aspirates!

On the whole, perhaps, her stay at Duckwell Farm was a potent agent in confirming Rhoda in orthodox views of religion.

Generally, as she sat beside Mrs. Seth in the parlour, or on the bench outside the window, Rhoda withdrew her attention from the talk of brother Jackson and the others. She could think her own thoughts, and dream her own dreams, whilst she was knitting a stocking or hemming a pinafore for little Seth. But sometimes a name was mentioned at these meetings that she could not hear with indifference. It was the name of David Powell.

The tone in which he was spoken of now was very opposite to the chorus of praise, which had accompanied every mention of him among the Whitford Methodists, two years ago. There were rumours that he had defied the authority of Conference, and intended to secede from the Society. He was said to have been preaching strange doctrine in the remote parts of Wales, and to have caused and encouraged extravagant manifestations, such as were known to have prevailed at the preachings of Berridge and Hickeys, seventy or eighty years ago; and earlier still, at the first open-air sermons of John Wesley himself, at Bristol. Brother Jackson shook his head, and pursed up his lips at the rumours. He had never much approved of Powell; and Seth Maxfield had distinctly disapproved of him. Seth had been brought up in the old sleepy days, when members of the Society in Whitford were comfortably undisturbed by the voice of an "awakening" preacher. He had resented the fuss that had been made about David Powell. He had been still more annoyed by his father's secession, which he attributed to Powell's over zeal and presumption. And he, by his own example, encouraged a hostile and critical tone in speaking of the preacher.

There was, indeed, but one voice raised in his defence in the parlour at Duckwell Farm. This was the voice of Richard Gibbs, the head-groom at Pudcombe Hall, who sometimes came over to Duckwell to join in the prayer-meetings there. Although Richard Gibbs was but a servant, he was a trusted and valued one; and he was received by the farmer and his wife with considerable civility. Richard "knew his place," as Mrs. Seth said, and was not

"one of them as if you give 'em an inch they'll take an ell." And then he had a considerable knowledge of farriery, and had more than once given good advice to Farmer Maxfield respecting the treatment of sick horses and cattle. Seth was fond of repeating that he himself was "not so strict as some," finding, indeed, that a reputation for strictness, in a Methodistical sense, put him at a disadvantage with his fellow farmers on market-days. But whenever Richard Gibbs was spoken of, he would add to this general disclaimer of peculiar piety on his own part, "Not, mind you, but what there's some as conversion does a wonderful deal for, to this day, thanks be! Why, there's Dicky Gibbs, head-groom at Pudcombe Hall. Talk of blasphemers—well Dicky was a blasphemer! And now his lips are as pure from evil speaking as my little maid's there. And he's the only man I ever knew as had to do with horses that wouldn't tell you a lie. At first, I believe there was some at the Hall—I name no names—didn't like Dicky's plain truths. There was a carriage horse to be sold, and Dicky spoke out and told this and that, and young master couldn't get his price. But in the long run it answers. Oh! I'm not against a fervent conversion, nor yet against conviction of sin—for some."

So Richard Gibbs sat many a summer evening in the flagged parlour at Duckwell Farm, and his melancholy, clean-shaven, lantern-jawed face was a familiar spectacle at prayer-meetings there.

"I have been much grieved and exercised in spirit on behalf of brother Powell," said Mr. Jackson, in his thick voice.

The expounding and the prayers were over. Seth had lighted his pipe; so had Roger Heath, the baker, from Pudcombe village. A great cool jug of ale stood on the table, and the setting sun sent his rays into the room, tempered by a screen of jessamine and vine leaves that hung down outside the window.

"Ah! And reason too!" said Seth gruffly. "He's been getting further and further out of the right furrow this many a day."

"They do say," observed sour-faced Roger Heath, "that there's dreadful scenes with them poor Welsh at his field-preachings. Men and women stricken down like bullocks, and screechings and convulsions, like as if they was all possessed with the devil."

"Lauk!" cried Mrs. Seth eagerly. "Why, how is that, then?"

screen of vine leaves at the open window, could not repress a shudder at the thought that, had David Powell shown this new power of his a year or two ago, she herself might have been among the convulsed who bore testimony to his terrible influence.

"How is that, Mrs. Maxfield?" returned Richard Gibbs. "Why, how can it be except by abounding grace?"

"Nay, Mr. Gibbs, but how dreadful it seems, don't it? Just think of falling down in a fit in the open field!"

"Just think of living and dying unawakened to sin! Is not that a hundred thousand times more dreadful?"

"I hope it don't need to roll about like Bedlamites to be awakened to a sense of sin, Mr. Gibbs!" cried Seth Maxfield.

"The Lord forbid!" ejaculated brother Jackson.

"A likely tale!" added Mrs. Seth, cheerfully.

"I'm against all such doings," said Roger Heath, shaking his head.

"But, if it be the Lord's doing, sir?" remonstrated Richard Gibbs, speaking slowly and with an anxious lack-lustre gaze at the white-washed ceiling, as though counsel might be read there. "And I've heard tall, that John Wealey did the same at his field-preachings."

Brother Jackson hastily wiped his mouth, after a deep draught of ale, before replying, "That was in the beginning, when such things may have been needful. But now, I fear they only bring scandal upon us, and strengthen scoffers."

"I tell you what it is," said Seth, taking the pipe from his mouth, and waving it up and down to emphasise his words, "it's my opinion as David Powell's not quite—not quite right in his head."

"Taint the first time that thought has crossed my mind," said the baker, who had once upon a time been uneasy under the yoke of Powell's stern views as to weights and measures.

"Of course," pursued Seth, argumentatively, "we've got to draw a line. Religion is one thing, and rampaging is another. From the first, when Powell began rampaging, I mistrusted what it would come to."

"The human brain is a very delicate and mysterious organ," said brother Jackson.

"Ah!" ejaculated Heath, with an air of profundity, as of one the extent of whose acquaintance with the human brain was not easily to be set forth in words, "you may well say so, sir. There you're right,

"Why, there it is!" cried Seth. "And Powell, he overtaxed the human brain. It's like flying in the face of Providence almost, to want to go so much beyond your neighbours. Why, he'd fast till he well-nigh starved himself."

"But he gave all he spared from his own stomach to the poor," put in Gibbs, looking sad and perplexed.

"I call all that rampaging," returned Seth, with a touch of his father's obstinacy.

"Dr. Evans read out an account of these doings in Wales from a newspaper in Mr. Barker the chemist's shop in Whitford last Saturday," said Heath. "I heard it. And Dr. Evans said it was catching, and that such like excitement was dangerous, for you never knew where it might end. And Dr. Evans is of a Welsh family himself," he added, bringing out this clause, as though it strikingly illustrated or elucidated the topic under discussion.

Mrs. Seth drew her little boy close to her, and covered his curly poll with her large maternal hand, as though to protect the little "human brain" within from all danger. "Mercy me!" she said, "I hope Powell won't come into these parts any more! I should be frightened to go to chapel, or to let the children go either."

"Oh, you need not be alarmed, Mrs. Maxfield," said brother Jackson, with a superior smile.

"Nay, but if it is catching, Mr. Jackson!" persisted the anxious mother.

"Tut, lass! It isn't like measles!" said her husband.

The ale being by this time exhausted and the pipes smoked out, brother Jackson rose to depart, and the baker went away with him. Seth Maxfield detained Gibbs for a few minutes to ask his advice about a favourite cart-horse.

"Well, Mr. Gibbs," said the housewife, when the conference being over, he bade her good evening, "and when are your folks coming back to the Hall?"

"Not just yet, ma'am. Young master is gone to Westmoreland, I hear, to a wedding at some nobleman's house there. He'll be back at Pudcombe for the shooting."

"A wedding, eh?" said Mrs. Seth, with eager feminine interest in the topic. "Not his own wedding, I suppose?"

"Oh no, ma'am. 'Tis some friend of his, I believe, that he knew at Whitford; Erringham, I think the name is—a young

gentleman that's going to marry the nobleman's niece. The housekeeper at the Hall was telling some of my fellow-servants about it the other day. But I'm ill at remembering the chat I hear. And 'tis unprofitable work too. Good evening, ma'am. Farewell, Seth," stooping down to pat the little one's curly head. "May the Lord bless and keep you!"

Mrs. Seth stood out in the apple-orchard, with two of her children clinging to her skirts, and held up her hand to shade her eyes as she watched the departing figure of Richard Gibbs moving across the meadow, in the rosy evening light. Then she turned to the wooden bench where Rhoda was sitting, huddled together, with her work lying in her lap. "You didn't come in to prayers, Rhoda," said her sister-in-law. "But, however, you can hear it all just as well outside, as in. If it wasn't for civility to Mr. Jackson, I'd liefer stay out here these fine summer evenings, myself. And I was thinking—why, child, what a white face you've got! Like a sheet of white paper, for all the world! And your hands are quite cold, though it's been downright sultry! Mercy me, don't go and get sick on our hands, Rhoda!—What will your father say? Come, you'd best get to bed, and I'll make you a hot posset myself."

Rhoda passively followed her sister-in-law to the fresh lavender-scented chamber which she occupied; and she consented to go to bed at once. Her head ached, she said, but she declined the hot posset, and only asked to be left quiet.

"There's always some bother with girls of that delicate sort," said Mrs. Seth to her husband, when she went downstairs again. "Rhoda's mother was just such another; looked as if you might blow her away. I can't think whatever made your father marry her! Not but Rhoda's a nice-tempered girl enough, and very patient with the children. But, do you know, Seth, I'm afraid she's got a chill or something, sitting out in the orchard so late."

"What makes you think so?"

"Well, she had a queer, scared kind of look on her face."

"Nonsense! Catching cold don't make people look scared."

"Something makes her look scared, I tell you. It's either she's sickening for some fever, or else she's seen a ghost!"

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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HALVES.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGER," "A PERFECT TREASURE," "AT HER MERCY," &c. &c.

CHAPTER VII. A NIGHT ALARM.

THERE was nothing at this time of my life, save, now and then, some blissful castle-building in relation to Gertrude, which ever robbed me of my sleep, and yet, on the night which followed "Brother Alec's" arrival at the Priory, I scarcely closed my eyes. That far-travelled man, with his strange equipment and weird belongings, interested me beyond measure; and I found myself endeavouring to picture him when he was a lad of my own age—sanguine and impulsive—and then to follow him through the various phases of his character, as experience evolved or moulded them, until I arrived at what he had eventually become. In this last attempt, however, I felt myself baffled. That he was as simple and sensitive as a child, was clear enough; but I was not so sure that his wild career had not left its mark upon his character. Patient and conciliatory as he had shown himself to Mrs. Raeburn, it had seemed to me, who had watched him narrowly, that his forbearance had cost him a severe effort. He appeared to me to have comprehended the whole situation, so far as his sister-in-law was concerned; how that she was the ruling power in the house, and the one to whom he must look for aid—if aid he needed—since his brother, with all the goodwill in the world to help him, could only do so by her permission; and knowing this, I fancied he resented it. If poor, her treatment of him, though intended to be prudently polite, must have been

sufficiently galling; if rich, he probably regarded her—except upon his brother's account, to whom it was certain he was tenderly attached at present, however future experience might dispel his illusions—with contemptuous indifference. I would have given much to know in which of these two characters Alec Raeburn had returned to his native land; whether as an expectant sharer of his brother's bounty, or as the intending donor of half a splendid fortune.

It never crossed my mind that he had forgotten the agreement of thirty years ago, or would ignore it, or would look upon it as having anything less than the full force of law; and this certainty I gathered, not alone from his own tone and manner—which, though he had made not the faintest allusion to such an arrangement, seemed to me to take it for granted—but from the behaviour of the attorney himself. In Mark Raeburn all the tender feeling which years and the practice of his profession had left in him, had been stirred, it was easy to see, to the very depths by the arrival of his once-beloved brother; and yet it was as evident that it had overwhelmed him with apprehension and dismay. I could not help calling to mind the state of things mirrored by the poet:

That could the dead, whose dying eyes
Were closed with wail, resume their life,
They would but find in child and wife
An iron welcome when they rise.

For was not this man risen, as it were, from the dead—from a grave of thirty years—and vainly looking for the affection which had been lavished on him at the moment of his departure? To expect the chain of Love to hold when so many links were missing was to be over sanguine, but

to look for it to run on as before, without even showing where the break had been, was to cast anchor in the sand. A few days, or weeks at farthest, must needs show the futility of such a hope, unless, indeed, Interest should step in and forge such links as might be mistaken by a fond and willing mind for the true metal. Perchance it would do so; perhaps in one of those uncouth portmanteaus might be scrip and share enough—or even bullion; for here was just the man to carry wealth about with him in the most tangible form—to make brother Alec welcome to live on at the Priory; and, still more, to die there, leaving his wealth behind him.

Here, picturing bars of gold and rouleaux of dollars, I dozed off, to be awakened by a series of such hideous screams as had never before saluted my ear. They were inarticulate, yet seemed to appeal to Heaven and earth against murder “most foul and most unnatural.” They came from the “spare room” next to mine, and in which “Brother Alec” had been put. “Was it possible,” thought I, still half asleep, “that on the very first night beneath his kinsman’s roof this trustful guest should have his throat cut for his gold?” Leaping from my bed, I rushed into the passage only to rush back again for my dressing-gown, for around my neighbour’s door there was already a little crowd collected, including Mrs. Ræburn herself. I remember well, in that moment of horror, that it was quite a comfort to me to reflect that she, at all events, could not have committed the crime which seemed even now in course of accomplishment.

“What is the matter?” cried the attorney, beating frantically at his brother’s door, which defied his attempts to open it, while the screams shrilled through our ears with the force and vehemence of a railway whistle.

“Eh, eh, hullo!” returned a voice, much dulled with slumber. There was a yawn, and a stumble on the floor, and then the door was opened, revealing the figure of our visitor in a sort of West Indian costume, in which it appeared he slept, and vigorously rubbing his eyes. “What is it, Mark?”

“My dear Alec, that is what we ask of you? Are you ill? Are you mad? What nightmare can have made you yell like that?”

“I had no nightmare; I never opened my mouth, that I am aware of.”

“Time to get up! time to get up! time

to get up!” ejaculated a discordant voice behind him; and on the mantelpiece, perched on the clock, which pointed to a little past three o’clock, stood the scarlet parrot.

“Oh, it’s only Chico!” observed brother Alec, mildly. “He never disturbs me; but when the clock strikes during the small hours, he often indulges himself in a ‘View-halloo.’ That is why he is called the Night Talker. They didn’t like it on board the ship at first, but they soon got used to it.”

“Used to it!” exclaimed Mrs. Ræburn, indignantly. “Why, who could get used to it? It is lucky we don’t live in the town, or that bird would have called the police.”

“He does that sometimes, madam,” answered our imperturbable visitor. “Call the police, Chico.”

“Po—leese! po—leese! po—leese!” cried the parrot, thus invited, and shrieking at the full pitch of his voice. Then, very rapidly, “P’leese! p’leese! p’leese! p’leese! p’leese!” with which, as though to signify that the performance was quite concluded, he fluttered down upon the hearth-rug and placed his head underneath his wing.

“Now he will be quiet for the rest of the night,” observed his master, confidently, “unless,” added he, “by any accident, one of the snakes should crawl over him. The naughty bird shall apologise in the morning for having disturbed you all.”

“One moment!” exclaimed Mrs. Ræburn, with lifted finger—tall and gaunt, and wrapped up in her chintz dressing-gown, she might easily have been taken for a Wizard, though certainly not for an Enchantress—“this untimely disturbance may, after all, have been sent for our good, Mark. I smell fire!”

The attorney sniffed, as in duty bound.

“My dear,” said he, “I only smell smoke.”

“Smoke and fire are much the same things, I believe,” replied she sternly. “If this sort of thing is to be permitted, we shall all be burned in our beds.”

“Is it possible you allude to my tobacco, dear madam?” inquired brother Alec, innocently. “It is true that, for many years, it has been my custom to smoke in bed; but, if you are nervous about the consequences, I promise you it shall not occur again. I will in future always take my pipe by the fireplace. I shall get used to all your English ways in time, no doubt, and become perfectly civilised.”

Here he nodded pleasantly to us, and closed the door, so that the expression of disgust and incredulity which Mrs. Raeburn's countenance displayed was, unhappily, lost upon him.

"This is positively unbearable," cried she, "to know that he will continue to smoke in his bedroom——"

"Hush, hush!" said the attorney, softly; "we must allow for foreign habits."

Mrs. Raeburn's countenance was by no means expressive of charity either to natives or foreigners; but, nevertheless, she suffered herself to be led back to her room.

No sooner had she disappeared than her hopeful son, who, in an airy costume at his own door, had been manifesting, by pantomimic action, his extreme delight at the whole proceedings, executed a noiseless harlequinade which landed him in my apartment.

"Did you ever see such a jolly go?" cried he, in a hushed rapture. "Did you ever hear such a love of a bird?"

"I must say," assented I, "that the whole affair is exceedingly comical."

"Comical! my dear fellow. If you only knew what I know, you would say it was excruciatingly funny. I have had to stuff my handkerchief in my mouth for the last two hours, even before that bird began, lest I should explode with laughter. It would be very wrong to talk of such matters, if my father had not himself let out the secret over your uncle's port wine the other night; but as it is, there can be no great harm in telling you how my estimable parents are nonplussed by the new arrival. I can't keep it to myself," he added, apologetically; "I can't, indeed. Is Uncle Alec a Croesus, or is he a Lazarus, is the question upon which a family conclave has been sitting for half the night.

"If he is not rich, Mark" (and here Mr. John Raeburn imitated the air and tone of his maternal parent to the life), "it is not possible that he would have dared to come here uninvited, with dogs, and birds, and serpents. That would be beyond the utmost stretch of human impudence."

"Then my father" (though it was quite unnecessary for the histrionic John to say that): "'Well, I'm sure I don't know, my dear Matilda. Alec was always a very cool hand—very.'"

"Cool, Mark! If that man is poor, he ought to be hung. Beefsteaks for his bulldog, oranges for his parrot, bread-and-milk

for his serpents—no, no; he must be very, very rich, that's certain."

"Let us hope so, my dear."

"And I can see this, Mark, that he takes a great interest in the family: the likeness of our John to himself, which—except for that ridiculous beard, which makes him look like a savage—is most remarkable, and cannot but be very gratifying to him. Yes; he must dismiss his menagerie, and dress and shave himself like a Christian. It is your duty, as his brother, to tell him that; and then I am sure I shall grudge no pains nor trouble to make him comfortable. His ideas, indeed, are shocking, and subversive of all authority; but he has hitherto been exposed to no religious influences; as how should he be, living in such uncivilised parts? But we must not forget that he is your own flesh and blood. I think you were quite right not to ask him point-blank whether he had made his fortune. He will, doubtless, himself, acquaint us with that fact, and then it will be time enough to recall to his mind the little agreement which you made with him at parting. When a man comes from Peru, he is not likely to have merely secured a competence. We must give a dinner-party or two, to introduce him to our neighbours, and it will be quite as well to let them know what a millionaire he is."

"When we know it ourselves, my dear, by all means: but I don't think we should be too precipitate. Alec always held that there could be no obligation on either side between him and me; and it is just possible—mind, I do not say it is so—but it is just possible, that he may have come home here, without a penny in his pocket, counting upon the hospitality which, were our cases reversed, he would certainly not refuse to me."

"To see my maternal parent's face, Sheddon, when my father delivered himself of that suspicion, was many degrees better than a play."

"Mark," says she, "I sometimes think that it is possible for a man to be a very clever attorney, and yet to be a fool." But still it was plain that my mother could not dismiss the notion from her mind, that the governor might be right; and when that parrot broke out just now, and Uncle Alec confessed to smoking in bed, the thought that he was right brought, I could see, matters to within that much" (here John portioned off the extreme tip of his finger-nail) "of a

Tremendous Explosion; and to see poor Uncle Alec, so unconscious, and so polite, in his Peruvian uniform, too, and with that awful dog blinking round the corner, and all at three o'clock in the morning—oh dear! oh dear! oh dear!”

So hearty was my companion's burst of merriment, that I could not, for the life of me, help joining in it, though I felt how wrong it was in him to make a jest of the family anxieties, and especially of his mother. To remonstrate, however, with a born joker, such as John, and one, too, so absolutely devoid of delicacy of feeling, would have been mere waste of breath; moreover, I was young myself, and to a joke at Mrs. Raeburn's expense I could be hardly expected to refuse a welcome.

At the same time (so convenient are the arguments of self-interest) I reflected that this was but another proof, if one were needed, of the vulgarity of John's character, and of his total unfitness to aspire to the hand of Gertrude Floyd.

CHAPTER VIII. IN THE GARDEN.

WHEN Uncle Alec came down to breakfast next morning, in company with his dog, the storm had blown over from Mrs. Raeburn's brow, and she received him with urbanity. The table at the Priory was not well provided at any meal, and especially at the earliest one; but what delicacies there were—some rashers of bacon, a cold cutlet, which advanced age had tinged with gray, and a magnificent pot of home-made marmalade—were pressed upon him; and he was even asked if he would like to have an egg. These proffers of hospitality he received so much as a matter of course, that a triumphant glance shot more than once from our hostess to her husband; “it is impossible (it seemed to say) that my conviction should not be correct; this man has all the ease in accepting favours which belongs to one who has the power of returning them.”

When Mrs. Raeburn suggested that he might find the anacondas an incumbrance, and even suggested his offering them to the Zoological Society in London, he did not take the hint with precipitation.

“Well, I'll think about that, my dear madam; the pretty creatures and myself have a great attachment to one another, and we should be loath to part. If you had little children in the house, I am sure I should have their voices in favour of retaining them, for gentler playmates it is impossible to imagine. To see them swarm

up the banisters of a staircase—like the living tendrils of a vine—is one of the prettiest sights in nature; the elder one follows me like a dog.”

“Are you going to take him with you into Kirkdale this morning, Uncle Alec?” inquired John, demurely.

“No, my boy, no. The fact is, it would be a dangerous thing to do in England.”

“I should think it would,” ejaculated Mrs. Raeburn.

“Yes, madam, on account of the pigs,” continued Uncle Alec, imperturbably. “Though men and boys would think twice before interfering with my spotted favourites, a pig would snap them up, and destroy them in an instant.”

“You don't say so,” said Mrs. Raeburn, with an air of much relief. It was evident that the question as to whether it is better to grow one's own pork, or to buy it, was settled from that moment in her own mind. She had resolved to keep a pig.

“After all,” pursued brother Alec, “anacondas, though not indeed such docile specimens as I have above stairs, are common enough. The Zoological Society have plenty of them, and can easily procure them; whereas for my sweet Chico they would give his weight in gold.”

“His weight in gold,” reiterated Mrs. Raeburn, playing with her teaspoon; “think of that, Mark!”

“If that is the case, I should fatten him up well,” observed the attorney, “and then sell him.”

“Nay, but you would not, Mark,” answered brother Alec, quickly. “If I know your nature, it is to prefer affection and old associations to all the gold in the world. That poor bird has been my companion when I had no other, and has spoken my own tongue—you may laugh, but even his queer way of speaking it was better than nothing—when none could do the like within a thousand miles of me. There have been times when I have thought, ‘When Chico dies, I shall lose my last friend.’ I would not part with him for a hundred pounds.”

“I wish you'd take something more, Mr. Alexander; you are eating nothing!” exclaimed Mrs. Raeburn, persuasively. “Do try that cutlet.”

“I have quite done, thank you, dear madam; but, if nobody is really going to take it—”

“I am quite sure nobody is,” answered the hostess.

"So am I," remarked John, with confidence; "quite sure."

"Well, in that case, I'll give it to dear old Fury here," said brother Alec, and in an instant the dainty morsel had disappeared from human ken. There was no process of mastication nor of deglutition; the dog's enormous mouth opened and closed like that of an automaton, and precisely the same result would probably have taken place if he had been offered a baby.

"Well, I call that sinful," ejaculated Mrs. Raeburn, "to give good food to a dog. His way of taking it," added she more graciously, "shows, I fear, how dreadfully he has been spoiled, and also—does it not?—by what a wealthy master he must have been brought up."

This was what in the law courts is called "a leading question," but, unfortunately, it failed of its effect.

"Well, I don't know as to that, dear madam," was the quiet reply. "I only saw his master for a few hours, and I never thought of asking him whether he had a balance at his bankers or not."

Mrs. Raeburn looked confused and disappointed. Forgetting that her brother-in-law had only purchased the dog two days ago, she had hazarded a vital question, which, while it might reveal her own curiosity, could not possibly elicit any satisfactory reply. The tone, too, of "Mr. Alexander," as she called him—and against the formality of which address he made no protest, as he had done in Gertrude's case—had been almost one of reproof.

If it had been Mark Raeburn's intention, on having obtained me for his articled clerk, to get as much work out of me as possible, he certainly showed no haste in exacting my services. "You are free of the office, Sheddon, now, you know, and can take possession of your high stool whenever you like," was the not very pressing invitation that he gave me, after breakfast, to commence my legal studies; "or, perhaps, since it is a fine morning," added he, "you would prefer a stroll in the garden."

I thanked him, and chose the latter alternative; the more so, as I had from my bedroom window seen Miss Floyd watering the flowers, and noticed that the breakfast-bell had called her away from an unfinished task. I found her, as I had expected, still among the lingering autumn roses, with a bewitching little apron on to shield her gown, and a pair of gardening gloves (probably Mrs. Raeburn's) much

too large for her fairy fingers, and which dropped from them, now and then, as though faint with the ecstasy of inclosing such dainties. When I ventured upon a high-flown compliment to this effect, however, Miss Floyd only laughed derisively, and presently observed, when one of them fell into the water-pot, that, supposing my view to be a correct one, it must have committed suicide. Though Gertrude had an appreciation of poetry, very rare in Kirkdale folks, she had also a keen sense of the ridiculous, which just then I felt inclined to resent; for as a chance expression, a glance, a gesture even, will sometimes in one however dear to us, remind us of another, with whom we are far from sympathetic, so her jesting seemed to me to reflect the very man of whom I felt most jealous—namely, John Raeburn; and the idea at once suggested itself of hearing there and then what the actual relations between her and her young cousin really were. The opportunity, however, was not easily found; or, perhaps, unwilling to exchange a state which, though of suspense, had still much eager hope in it, for one of blank disappointment, I was slow to press the matter. At all events, the water-pot was filled and emptied many times before I ventured to approach the subject. It came at last out of our talk about the new arrival, "Brother Alec," whom Gertrude pronounced to be a charming creature, simple and kind, and, for all his outlandish ways, a thorough gentleman.

"I am sure," said I, "the admiration is reciprocal; that is not surprising, of course, Miss Floyd?"

"Thank you, sir," interrupted she, with a delicious little courtesy. It was very provoking of her that she would not be serious.

"I say," continued I, "it is enough to make anybody jealous—that is, it would be so, if any one had a right to be jealous—to see how affectionately the old gentleman regards you."

"Unhappily I cannot attribute that to my own merits, Mr. Sheddon," answered she gravely. "It is the result of tender association. My mother, as I have heard, was at one time engaged to Mr. Alexander Raeburn."

"Indeed," replied I; "then he must have been a very young lover, and your mother, I suppose, even younger."

"That was so," answered Gertrude, pensively.

"The custom seems to be hereditary in your family, Miss Floyd."

"What custom?"

The abruptness of the question startled me. I had flattered myself I had taken advantage of her confession to conduct my approaches very skilfully, and now it began to strike me that I had only been impertinent. However, it was too late to beat a retreat.

"I referred to the custom of early engagements."

"Even now, Mr. Sheddon," answered she, with a slight blush on her cheek, and continuing to douché a flower that had had already much more than its share of water, "I am at a loss to understand your meaning."

Her manifest embarrassment confirmed my suspicions, and gave me the courage of despair.

"I have been given to understand, Miss Floyd, though only yesterday" (and I laid a pathetic stress upon those last two words), "that you are yourself engaged to be married."

She put down the water-pot, and confronted me with a steady look.

"Who told you that, Mr. Sheddon?"

I hesitated, doubting whether the question could have been justifiable which had evidently given so keen an annoyance.

"I must insist upon a reply," continued she, "or, if I may not insist, I implore you, as a gentleman, to answer me. Remember, sir, it is an orphaned girl who is appealing to you."

"Indeed, my dear Miss Floyd," protested I, "I had no idea of hurting your feelings. The information—which gave me great surprise, I own—came to me from a quarter that I could not doubt; your guardian, Mr. Mark Raeburn, told me so with his own lips."

"Mark Raeburn told you that I was engaged to be married! And pray, sir, to whom?"

"Well, unless I dreamt it, to his son John."

"That was false!" replied my companion, blushing to her very forehead. "False, and cowardly, and cruel."

She moved as though she would have returned within doors, and taxed at once the attorney with his baseness.

"One moment," said I, "dear Miss Floyd"—the thought that any such rash action might cause an immediate, and perhaps eternal, separation between us flashing upon me like the lightning that

shows the darkness of the night—"I may have been mistaken as to his positively stating the fact in question, though I have not a shadow of doubt that he purposely led me to conclude it. It was an infamous deception, and my own heart" (here I dropped my voice, so that she might easily pretend not to hear me, for it was far from my wish now to precipitate matters) "reveals the motive of it but too plainly. Still, it would only bring confusion on my head to reproach him with it. He would certainly pretend that I must have misunderstood him; while your own position in this house, after such an explanation, would be rendered to the last degree embarrassing."

The tears of mortification stood in my fair companion's eyes, the blush of undeserved shame dyed her modest cheeks; it went to my heart to see her irresolution and distress; and the emergency made me wise beyond my years. "You are motherless, dear Miss Floyd," continued I, reading her bitter thoughts, "and without a friend under this roof, of your own sex, to advise or comfort you; but my Aunt Hastings has a kindly heart, and would, I know, be a true friend to you if you would permit her. Should you be persecuted by the attentions of your cousin—"

"Forbear, sir, I entreat!" exclaimed Miss Floyd, earnestly. "You mean me well, I have no doubt, Mr. Sheddon, but it is not for you to offer me counsel. I do not yet know how I shall act with respect to what you have told me; but it is only fair to my cousin John to say, that neither directly nor indirectly has he lent himself, so far as I know, to the scheme—whether it be serious or pretended—at which you hint."

"Indeed," said I, with a sudden revulsion of feeling in favour of the family joker, "I can easily believe it: John would never play so impudent a part. The utter absence of any outward pretension on his part to be the object of your choice would have made Mr. Raeburn's communication surprising to me, even if I myself had not ventured to hope that—"

"Hullo, hullo, hullo!" screamed a very high voice, proceeding from a very low level, and the ubiquitous Chico stood before us. He had waddled along the gravel walk that led from the house door, without attracting our attention. "This 'll never do, you know, this 'll never do," repeated he, shaking his scarlet head with portentous gravity. "Hullo, hullo, hullo!"

"I think you had better take Chico in,

Mr. Sheddon, lest the cat should get at him," said Miss Floyd.

I at once understood from this—since Chico was obviously a match for any grimalkin at the Priory, and would have picked out its eyes with gusto—that she wished our conversation to terminate for the present, which I was very willing it should do. If I had received no encouragement from her in that little fragment of a suit on which I had ventured, I had, at all events, met with no rebuff; while I had established a confidential relation between us which I felt to be eminently satisfactory. Above all, I had good cause to be content with the assurance I had had from her own lips, that no engagement existed between her and her cousin; nor did I, by any means, share her feelings of indignation against the attorney, whose unscrupulous assertion had had an effect exactly the reverse of what had been intended. So far from making me give up all hope of winning Gertrude, it had made me speak to her more plainly than, without it, I should have dared to do; while the object of his behaviour, which must needs now be as clear to her as it had been to me, might almost suffice, on my part, for a positive declaration of love.

I placed Chico, therefore, upon my wrist, as if he had been a love-bird, and having restored him to his master, betook myself to my desk in the office, not "to pen stanzas, when I should engross," but to hold a session of sweet thoughts, more engrossing far than the occupation which employed my fingers.

THE ARMY AT ALDERSHOT.

THE celebrated question, "What is truth?" put eighteen hundred and odd years ago, by Pontius Pilate, to the audience round his seat of judgment, might with great propriety be asked at the present day by those who read newspaper statements and statistics concerning our army. I take up one journal and peruse its comments upon the speech of a general officer, or the letter of its special correspondent who has assisted at a review at Aldershot. Unless the gentlemen employed on the staff of that paper are either utterly ignorant of military matters; or—which is still more unlikely—they wilfully misrepresent what they have heard or seen, there can be no doubt but that we have at the present moment the best of all possible armies, and that, like the Duke of

Wellington's force in the Peninsula, our troops are ready "to go anywhere and do anything." Being—for reasons which need not be specified—obliged in the course of each day to read, not one, but many newspapers, I take up another journal, hoping to find the optimist opinions of the first sheet confirmed in the columns of the second. But the exact reverse is the case. The writers in journal number two are—so far, at any rate, as the army is concerned—pessimists of the most lugubrious kind. According to them, the service never was so badly or so inefficiently recruited. The men are too young as to age; mere weeds as to stamina; and unfit for even a tolerably long march on the high roads. When one really wants to get at the truth of anything, there is nothing like hearing and seeing for yourself; and this is why I went to Aldershot, the head-quarters of soldiering in England, where warriors of the "horse, foot, and dragoons" may be seen in plenty; where an introduction to any staff or regimental officer will enable the visitor to see the army in shirt-sleeves as well as in full dress; and to form his own opinion as to whether there are many drawbacks to efficiency in the service, and if so, what these latter really are.

To anyone who is not obliged to live there, Aldershot is one of the pleasantest places that can be imagined. I can fancy that military men may have too much of the camp, just as barristers have too much of Westminster Hall, or gentlemen in the Civil Service too much of Somerset House. But to the casual visitor—to him who has a friend or two quartered there, and runs down for a day or two to get free of the wear and tear of London life and London work, there can hardly be a more agreeable temporary sojourn than this mixture of Chalons camp and the clubs of Pall Mall. My business, however, does not lay in mess-rooms, nor in the officers' huts. I had come down to ferret out what—or rather where—is truth, as regards our army—our artillery, cavalry, line, and militia; and to decide whether the optimists or the pessimists of the press speak the truth—or which of them are nearest to the truth—with regard to this all-important question.

And, first, as regards the artillery. By a friend, who belongs to a line regiment, I was introduced to an officer of the "gunners," and by him taken round the batteries, stables, and barracks of his corps. With respect to all I saw of this

magnificent arm of the service, I should say that, save in two important particulars, nothing could by any possibility be finer, or more serviceable in every way, than our artillery. The men are clean—clean in that sense of the word which is only seen amongst English soldiers—well set up, well-grown, powerful fellows, and admirably dressed. The horses, the harness, the saddles, the guns, the tumbrels, and all the belongings of the batteries or troops, are all that can be desired. The driving and the grooming of the horses are such as can only be seen in a country where every man knows something of, and every man loves, a horse. The officers, too, are not mere scientific prigs, like too many artillery officers of other armies, who think it derogatory to look after the horses by which their guns are drawn. From the grey-headed field-officers down to the junior subalterns, every one seems to take a pride in the condition of the horses he has under his charge. What a difference between our artillery horses, and men, and discipline, to that presented in the French army just before it marched out of Strasbourg in 1870! The best turned-out teams of the Coaching or Four-in-Hand Clubs are not better groomed or cared for than are our gun horses. But in one very essential respect this arm of the service falls greatly short of what it ought to be. Although from time to time I have seen the matter noticed in the House of Commons, I had no idea that for our field-guns we still stuck to the muzzle-loaders. It seemed incredible that we should be so far behind other nations in this respect. The artillery officers who accompanied us over the batteries said that all kinds of experiments had been tried with the breech-loading guns, and that, after long deliberations, it was determined to revert to the old muzzle-loader. In other words, whenever, or if ever, our artillery meets that of any other European army in the field, we shall be able to fire one shot for about three of those fired by the enemy. Surely the authorities, whoever they may be, ought, whilst there is yet time, to take warning from the results of the late Franco-German war? If ever there was a campaign of which the artillery settled the fate, it was that which commenced at Wissembourg and ended at Sedan. As correspondent of a London paper, the present writer was all through that campaign, and was present at every engagement, including the surprise of

General Froissard at Beaumont, and the previous hard-fought and most bloody battle of Woerth. He can safely say that, although better discipline and overpowering numbers did very much for the German army, a superior and a much quicker-served artillery did more. The French field-guns in those days were muzzle-loaders, those of the Germans were breech-loaders; and the result was very much the same as would be the case at a battue, where one sportsman had three guns and the other only a single fowling-piece. In every case, or every engagement, the Germans were able, by their vastly greater quickness of fire, not only to prevent the French doing anything, but also to silence their batteries whenever brought into action. I confess to have been fairly astounded the other day, when, on visiting Aldershot, I found our field and horse batteries to be armed with muzzle-loaders!

My next visit was to the cavalry barracks and stables, which are situated close to those of the Royal Artillery. The quarters of these troops are excellent; the barrack-rooms all that can be desired in the way of cleanliness and healthy comfort of the men. The two regiments quartered in these buildings were the Twentieth and Twenty-first Hussars, two corps which returned not very long ago from India. The stables, the horses, the manner in which the latter are looked after and groomed; the men, their dress, arms, riding, and horse-gear, are all so excellent, that it seems difficult to imagine they could in any way be better. Later in the day I saw these regiments, together with a lancer corps, out for brigade exercise, and remembering what I had seen of the much-praised Uhlans during the late war, I feel perfectly certain that any one of the three regiments now at Aldershot would ride down any German light cavalry, even at the odds of three men and horses to one. I do not assert this as a mere idle boast; I am convinced of the truth of what I say. The only drawback to the efficiency of our cavalry is its weakness in point of numbers. The regiments at Aldershot do not, so I am told, muster on parade more than three hundred to three hundred and twenty mounted men respectively, all told—barely the strength of one and a half squadron of cavalry in any other European army; and yet our regiments are supposed to consist of four squadrons each! The officer who showed me over the cavalry barracks at Aldershot informed me that there were

at this moment quartered in Great Britain and Ireland the following mounted corps :

	Regiments.	Effective sabres.	Total.
Household Brigade . . .	3	250	750
Dragoon Guards . . .	7	300	2,100
Dragoons and Hussars . .	12	300	3,600
Total . . .	22	—	6,450

This is, of course, exclusive of the cavalry regiments doing duty in India, of which there are nine. These figures may look formidable to Englishmen who regard with great admiration the strength of a volunteer corps of four or five hundred strong when marching to exercise; but they dwindle down to a mere nothing when compared with the ninety-seven thousand three hundred and seventy-nine men and horses of Germany; the eighty-eight thousand of France; or the one hundred and seventy-two thousand of Russia; these figures representing the peace establishments of cavalry in the three countries.

But, however interesting it may be to see and inquire into cavalry statistics, the infantry of an army is the branch of the service upon which the others must, more or less, depend. I was, therefore, anxious to see the line and militia regiments now quartered and encamped at Aldershot; and was taken through the various lines, barracks, and huts by a very old friend, himself a field-officer of infantry, who had served long and honourably in India.

It cannot be denied that, of late years, everything the soldier wears, eats, lives in, sleeps upon, or amuses himself with, has been vastly changed for the better. He is better treated, better cared for, and better educated than he was. Going through the huts—I am speaking here of the line corps, not of the militia—I was greatly struck with the cleanliness, the order, the handiness, and the general neatness of everything I saw. It seemed more like the berth-deck of a man-o'-war than anything I had ever seen on land. The arms, too, are of an exceedingly improved quality. The shooting of the men—I was present for some time at the target practice of recruits—is excellent as a whole. But by one most essential, although greatly controverted fact, I could not help being struck. The men themselves, with some few exceptions, seemed to be too young, and not sufficiently formed to bear the fatigues of a march, far less of a campaign. In the language of horsey men, the greater, by far the greater, number of men I saw in the infantry barracks were mere "weeds." It is true that some three

or four years of good feeding, and being well looked after, might improve the stamina of many of these lads; but, again, by far too great a number of them give one the idea of having been stunted and enfeebled in their youth by bad food, bad air, and premature vice. Another thing struck me very forcibly—namely, that not one, but every line regiment I saw, including two of Highlanders, seemed greatly below its strength. On inquiry, I found this to be but too true. A line battalion at the present day ought to muster seven hundred rank and file; but many of those I saw on parade could show little more than one-half of that number. It would be invidious to particularise any one or two regiments, nor do I think there was much difference in the corps I saw that day. There were two Highland regiments—the Seventy-eighth and Seventy-ninth, besides the Fourteenth, Eighteenth, Twenty-first, Eighty-fourth, and Eighty-eighth. From what I heard and learnt in the course of the day, it is more than doubtful whether these five corps, taken together, could muster on parade, if called upon to take the field, more than two thousand effective men, or an average of four hundred rank and file each, all told. Now, as in the German army the average strength of a regiment is three thousand rank and file, it follows that five English regiments, taken together, are about one-third fewer in strength than a single German regiment.

On inquiry, I found that the desertions from the regiments stationed at Aldershot were exceedingly numerous; but as to the causes thereof, my informants were of so many different opinions that it would be useless to quote them. So far as the casual visit I paid to that camp could show, I am bound to say that the men appeared happy and cheerful; but the high rates of wages which are everywhere prevalent at the present day must be a sore temptation to them. Whether they really can better themselves by deserting, is another question. It is true that the soldier has but little ready money in his pocket, and is oftentimes altogether without that very needful help to comfort. But in other matters he is certainly better off, and very much better cared for, than even the richest class of artisans; whilst as to his accommodation, clothing, and feeding, his condition is as superior as it is possible to imagine to that of an agricultural labourer. Nor should it be forgotten that

a large number of our recruits come from amongst the waifs and strays of society, the chronic casuals of our large towns, as they may be called—men who, when they rise up in the morning, have no idea where they may lay their head at night, and who live literally, not from day to day, but from hour to hour, upon what they can pick up in the way of odd jobs and irregular work. And yet, from what I gathered when at Aldershot, the greatest number of deserters have belonged, before they enlisted, to the very class of men that have most bettered themselves by becoming soldiers.

Taken as a whole, the infantry regiments of the line, and more particularly the two Highland corps, looked well on parade. They were, as English soldiers always are, clean and neat, with their arms, belts, and accoutrements all in apple-pie order. But their weakness in numbers; the few files of men with each company; their great want of stamina; and the almost boyish appearance of the men when seen with their jackets off, in or about the huts, certainly astonished me. That there is the germ of a good and efficient army to be found at Aldershot, no one can deny; but then it is only the germ. It would seem as if we were still discussing what kind of seed we ought to sow for our military crop, whilst other nations were already gathering in their harvest.

From the huts and barracks of the line troops my conductor took me to see some of the militia regiments, of which four or five are encamped in the immediate neighbourhood. The new system of bringing the militia from their native towns or counties to what may be called the headquarters of our British military world, is one which cannot be too highly praised; and it would be money well expended if the Scotch and Irish militia corps were from time to time, or even every year, also brought here for their month's training. That our militia regiments have improved immensely of late years there cannot be the least doubt. The men are better set up, more soldierlike in their bearing, and work better at their drill, than used formerly to be the case. But they have the same defect as our line soldiers; they are nothing like efficient in numbers, although, as a rule, their ranks are better filled, and desertions from them are fewer, than amongst the regulars. But a soldier—by that I mean a man who would be really of use on a campaign—is not made in a day, nor a week, nor a month. How-

ever willing he may be to learn, the militiaman cannot be expected to master in thirty days what it has taken his comrade in the line years to acquire. Going through the camps of the militia, although it was certainly surprising to see how much they had picked up in the way of their military duties, it was also impossible not to feel convinced that they had still a great deal to learn; and that at the present day, when armies numbering their hundreds of thousands are called forth in a week, and campaigns, upon which the fate of nations depend, are begun, fought, and ended in a month, our militia institution would be of little or no use in the event of a great crisis. Give them a month or two to get into order, with an equally long time to prepare for a campaign, and our militia troops might do great things. As it is, the pluck and the willing hearts would, no doubt, be present; but, beyond forming a reserve, which, in the event of a prolonged war, might be called out, it is impossible to see of what use they could be.* That, however, is not the fault of the men, but of the system. The militiamen themselves appear willing enough to learn all they are taught, and to do all they are told. They are well and ably commanded, nearly all their officers having formerly served in the line; but, although their regiments are stronger than those of the line, they are very weak in number as compared with foreign regiments, and their want of regular habitual discipline in a body, except for one month of the year, would make them but a feeble defence against even a smaller number of German or other troops. The militia was, no doubt, an admirable institution twenty or thirty years ago; but in these days of very short, excessively sharp, and decidedly decisive wars, it can be of little or no use, either as a means of national defence or of offensive operations.

In a word, the truth about the British army system seems to be, that what men we have got are, so far as they go, excellent, but that their numbers are ridiculously inadequate, and that it is by no means easy even to get and keep together the few men we are able to put in line. As to the causes which make the recruiting question so difficult, I hope to say something in a future paper.

* A special correspondent of a daily paper lately compared our English militia regiments to the German Landsturm. I wonder if the writer ever saw the latter on service?

AN HYSTERICAL FAIR.

THAT hysteria plays a more important part in many demonstrations—physical, mental, and spiritual—than is generally supposed, will not be denied, at any rate, by medical men. Those indefinite distresses to which human nature, and especially female human nature, is more or less subjected, and which have borne at different times different names, such as the vapours, the spleen, the megrims, the nerves—and *ennui* should, perhaps, be added to the list—are nothing but varied forms of hysteria. So, again, great emotional excitements, whether produced by alarm, eagerness, or even religion, may be often traced to the same source. The wild frenzies of Bacchantes on Theban mountains; the restless dancing of Italian girls, said to have been bitten by the tarantula; the fervent jumping of some orders of Methodists; the weeping and contrition at Revivals—though we do not deny for a moment that other better or worse causes may be at work simultaneously—have all a physical element of hysteria in them. Hysteria is decidedly common in India; not unfrequently amongst men, and very frequently amongst women. With the latter sex, the wearing climate may be accredited with part of the mischief, but other causes doubtless exist in early marriage, early child-bearing, seclusion, and want of air and exercise; or, in the case of women in the humblest walks of life, opposite evils may operate towards the same results—over-work, insufficient nutriment, exposure to heat, &c. The somewhat violent measures occasionally resorted to may not do much harm in simply hysterical cases; but it is painful to think that, with a wholly imperfect diagnosis, remedies may be applied to actual insanity which can only tend to greatly aggravate the disease. The belief that persons in a hysterical condition are possessed by evil spirits is universal, and superstitious cures are sought after, though in different ways, by professors of both the great religions of the land—many of the lower Hindoos resorting to magic, which may be considered as applying to the devil, while the Mussulman would seek by charms and sacred exorcisms to drive out the evil spirit.

Generations ago, two fakirs of the Mohammedan order of Kadiree started on a pilgrimage to Baghdad from their own village in North-west India, situated in the district of Junpore, which lies between

Benares and the territory of Oudh. The founder of their sect, Abdul Kadir, is buried at Baghdad, and around his mausoleum the tombs of so many mystical sheikhs have been placed, that Baghdad itself has sometimes being called the "City of the Saints." On their return journey from the shrine, which they are said to have performed backwards, the fakirs brought with them two bricks which had formed part of it, as sacred memorials, and perhaps also as testimony that they had reached the place of their destination. There was a propriety in bringing bricks, because they are associated with Abdul Kadir's fame as a saint; for on one occasion, when he was praying, the Devil appeared to him disguised as an angel of light, and told him that, on account of his great piety, God would henceforth absolve him from the necessity of prayer; but Abdul Kadir was not to be deceived, and without hesitation began hurling bricks at the deceitful visitant, under which treatment he presently disappeared, and the temptation was thus got rid of.

The fakirs deposited the bricks near their own village, and built a cupola over them. The shrine is called Ghouspore, and the bricks are shown to this day, and are objects of veneration.

An annual fair is held at the place, on the day of the death of Abdul Kadir, but as it is fixed by the Mohammedan calendar, and the Mohammedan year is a lunar one, the commemoration goes round through all the seasons. A large concourse of people always assembles, and the speciality of the occasion is the exorcism of evil spirits; in other words, the empirical cure of hysterical persons. Sacrifices are performed before the shrine by Mohammedans; and the Hindoos, who have an Athenian catholicity in their respect for all gods, known or unknown, cast flowers there or offer sweetmeats and fruits. A recent visitor relates as follows: "Around the tomb I saw some hundred women, and perhaps thirty men, with a few children, sitting on the ground, wagging their heads, shivering, weeping, and screaming. Their relatives were waiting on them. Some women had thrown off their ornaments, or had broken them. The friends of other of the women held them by the hair of their head, and called upon them to disclose the name of the demon who possessed them. The afflicted themselves would shout out as if address-

ing their tormentors, and would ask for what sacrificial inducement, or at what price, they would depart. It was a very wild scene. The custodians of the shrine, who may rightly be called priests, though they do not represent any distinct sacerdotal order, moved about, fuming and accompanied by musicians beating loudly on drums. Sacred exorcisms were pronounced, papers with efficacious formulæ written on them were burnt under the noses of the afflicted, their hair was pulled, or, in obstinate cases, their bodies were well belaboured with drumsticks. The fervour with which one man assisted the exorcists with his private cane, in their endeavours to relieve a female, seemed to indicate the concealed payment of an old domestic score. Such virtue as belonged to the locality itself was said to extend as far as the point to which the beating of the drums could be heard."

A girl named Dulhir, who had recovered from her affection, thus related her experience. "Her demon," she said, "came from a lake named Dal, in Kashmeer, and was travelling southward when he was unlucky enough to meet a person wearing an armlet, on which was inscribed the Holy Name. Fire issued out of the centre, and would have consumed the evil spirit, but he adroitly jumped down a well. The unfortunate girl Dulhir happened to be drawing water at the very time: the demon saw her, and remaining quiet all the day, tracked her home at night. From that moment she was possessed. Her visit to the shrine was, however, quite successful. It was lighted at the time, and the effulgence gradually overcame her tyrannical incumbent, and in the end he left her perfectly free from ailment and distress. Whilst he was departing, however, she lay on the ground, writhing her body, and striking the dusty road with her hands."

A story was told at the place of a woman who had been brought there, whose malady was displayed by her reading Arabic. Even as she sat at the tomb, she contrived to recite, as she perused, passages in a celebrated poem attributed to the pen of Abdul Kadir himself. A sudden voice from within the shrine commanded her to desist, and she returned to her home, cured and illiterate.

It would be a comical sight in this London of ours, if we could have a pen at one of the Fancy Fairs filled with all the hysterical people: the old ladies who shriek if their parrot has a fit, or their

lap-dog is threatened with asthma; the gushing spinsters whose eyes brim with delicious brine, and whose noses instinctively flutter towards the smelling-bottle when their popular preacher dilates on the transcendental poetry of the unseen; the habitual invalids who have their sinkings and their sighings, their nerves and their nips; the hypochondriacs who weigh themselves after eating, analyse their drinking-water, and go to bed when the wind is in the east; the young gentlemen who languish through their lyric verse, drink in the moonlight, talk æsthetical criticism, and go into ecstasies over "the sustained treble of a Limoges plate," or the delicate harmony of "a serenade in blues." Really, perhaps, the drumsticks might be found a salutary remedy for each and all!

MIGNONETTE.

WITHIN the sense of touch and sight,
They lie before me as I write,
These subtle-scented flowers;
Their little tufts of golden green,
With flecks of ruddy brown between,
All wet with summer showers.

I saw them but an hour ago,
With sister bunches all a-row,
And rose-buds white and red;
And dark carnations, spicy sweet,
Borne westward thro' the busy street,
Upon a flower-girl's head.

The sudden summer shower drew forth
From my one simple pennyworth,
The half-erished bloom;
The fading tufts grew green again,
And breathed, in answer to the rain,
A beautiful perfume.

How well their silent beauties grace
The dulness of this dingy place,
My lonely working-room;
I drop my pen this summer day,
And fancy bears me far away,
Where other posies bloom.

To garden borders thickly set
With pansy, lily, mignonette,
And all sweet flowers that blow;
Where we two in the sunshine sit,
While butterflies around us flit,
And brown bees come and go.

The lark sings high, in Heaven above,
Its thrilling strain of happy love,
While we sit still below;
Each heart can feel the other beat,
But neither breaks the silence sweet,
With whispered "Yes" or "No."

Ah, me! since then what months of pain;
Ah, me! what months of sun and rain
Must run, ere I can see
Another of those sunshine hours,
And hear among the summer flowers
How one remembers me.

But love is mine, how strong and true,
And hope springs green, dear flowers, as you,
I murmur not at fate;
While for the greatest good of all,
For years, though shine or shadow fall,
I am content to wait.

REMARKABLE ADVENTURERS.

CASANOVA.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER IV. LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

ARRIVING in Holland to negotiate the famous loan, Casanova found another famous adventurer, Count Saint-Germain, engaged upon the same enterprise. They both came to grief—the attempted operation being an utter failure. There is little doubt that the loan was merely a pretext, on the part of Casanova, to get clear of Paris, as we find him collecting in Holland the whole of his funds—amounting to one hundred thousand guilders, besides jewels—dismissing servants, and preparing for a gambling campaign in Germany. Omitting again to marry the banker's daughter, he pushed on by Utrecht to Cologne, then the court of a prince-bishop, the head-quarters of the Austrians, and one of the gayest spots in Europe. This prince-bishop, an elector of the German empire, was a curious kind of ecclesiastic, a grand master of the Teutonic order, a lover of dinners, balls, masquerades, and fairs. After a dissipated time in congenial company, our wanderer moved to Stuttgart. Here Casanova got into a terrible scrape, and was obliged to beat a sudden retreat to save his money and jewels. There is a French saying, "À pirate, pirate et demi," and Casanova found that the sharpers of Stuttgart could "give him points." Under the influence of drugged wine he lost four thousand louis d'or on credit, and after many endeavours to escape paying up he was obliged to fly from the city. Dreading assassination, he thought it well to put some considerable distance between his enemies and himself, and remained for a while in Switzerland, where "almost" he was persuaded to turn monk. In Switzerland he met the celebrated physiologist, Haller, "a handsome man, six feet high, and stout in proportion—a colossus, physically and intellectually," and at Geneva he made the acquaintance of Voltaire, and for a while remained on very friendly terms with that great but irascible Frenchman. At this time Casanova saw a great deal of pleasant company, played heavily with several Englishmen—notably Fox—and discoursed at great length with Voltaire and the famous physician Tronchin, then in attendance on the Duc de Villars, a superannuated petit-maitre. "His face and figure con-

veyed the idea of a woman seventy years old dressed in man's clothes, lean and haggard, and incapable of forgetting that she had been handsome in her youth. His pimply cheeks were plastered with paint, his dry cracked lips smeared with carmine, his eyebrows carefully blackened, his teeth false. This odd figure was crowned with an enormous wig, exhaling a stifling odour of amber, counteracted by that of a huge bouquet in his button-hole."

Nothing throws a more amusing light on the ridiculous vanity and heroic impudence of our hero than his conversations with the old man of Ferney. To Voltaire, the Venetian was evidently a curious specimen—a state prisoner escaped from the most famous dungeons in Europe—and therefore interesting to him. For a while he seems to have been inclined to pat him on the back, but the Italian's pomposity and absurd affectation of scholarship finally stirred up the Frenchman's bile. He must have been a dreadful bore, this tall Moorish-looking man, who could not, and would not, tell how he escaped from the Piombi, his conversational "cheval de bataille," unless the audience agreed to listen to him for two mortal hours. But this was not all. If it be possible to imagine a more loathsome creature than a teller of long stories, it is the eternal quoter of Horace. Everybody is sick and tired of Horatian maxims now, and the Prince de Ligne tells us that eighty years ago opinion on this subject was identical with that of to-day. Casanova ignored this truth, and seriously marred his own career, while embittering the lives of others, by this mania of his for exhibiting what he imagined to be erudition. Voltaire, however, was not a man to be bored with impunity. If Casanova spouted his translation of Crébillon's Rhadamiste into Italian alexandrines, Voltaire revenged himself by flinging at him huge slabs out of Tancrède. So far as can be ascertained, other people were present at these famous interviews. What they must have endured no tongue can tell. Let us draw a veil over their sufferings.

Overweighted among the savants, of whom he persisted in thinking himself one, Casanova shone more brilliantly among the minor adventurers—like a paste diamond among mere cut glass. We find him, a few days after his last interview with Voltaire, at the Baths of Aix, in Savoy, then a famous resort of those whose potential fortunes were in the pockets

of others. At the table d'hôte there is a mongrel but joyous company—pretty women, dashing men, well dressed in gay raiment, with swords perhaps rather too long, and with lace ruffles of great depth and richness—very useful in dealing the cards. Here is the famous Parcalier, recently come into the marquisate of Priè, the excellent Abbé Gilbert, the amiable Chevalier Zeroli, the Viscount Desarmoises, and the like. They are playing for small stakes, these clever gentlemen, for they are playing among themselves, and dog eating dog is dull work. Casanova sees that there is nothing to be got in this company; but being well supplied with money, plays away, and after losing a few small sums, breaks the little bank of the marquis. Unable to keep quiet within hail of a pack of cards, he is next persuaded to make a bank himself, and behold the magnificent chevalier installed at faro, behind four hundred louis d'or, without counting smaller money! A score of professional gamblers are playing against his bank, and the eyes of Casanova are wide open. Nevertheless he is going rapidly to the bad, when a carriage rolls up to the door of the inn, and three Englishmen come in—Fox and a couple of friends. Fox recognises Casanova, and the three Britons sit down and begin playing for “runs,” on a card threatening to break the bank, with the usual result, for at the third deal the English are “cleaned out,” and Casanova is joyous. While this has been doing, fresh horses have been put to, and the English are prepared to start again, when the youngest of them takes out of his portfolio a bill of exchange, and says:

“Will you let me stake this bill of exchange on any one card without knowing its value?”

“Yes,” replies Casanova, rising to the level of the occasion; “provided you tell me on whom it is drawn, and the value does not exceed my bank.”

The Briton looks at the heap of gold, and confesses that the bank is equal to meeting the note, which is drawn upon Zappata, of Turin. Agreed: the Englishman cuts the cards, puts his bill of exchange on the ace, and loses it. The banker puts it in his pocket without looking at it, and the loser shakes hands and bids him good-bye, laughing. A minute later Fox comes back, and begs Casanova to lend him fifty louis—a sum repaid in London, three years later.

Skirmishing over the Continent, leading a life of gaming and intrigue, Casanova felt the immense inconvenience of his want of birth and title. He made the most of his ribbon of the Roman Order of the Golden Spur, and was laughed at consumedly for wearing a decoration that no person of consideration could have been hired to put on at any price, so contemptuously was the papal ribbon regarded by people really in society. In fact, the Order of the Spur was easily obtained from the Pope, who scattered it broadcast over the shoulders of some of the greatest scamps in Europe. Still the ribbon looked well, thought Casanova—far better than nothing—but yet the name, simple M. Casanova, was too bourgeois to suit our dashing Venetian, who sighed for the noble prefix “de” to his name. Of course he could not call himself de Casanova without being laughed at, so he sat down and did, perhaps, the most original act of his very original life. Anybody else would have thought of stealing a name from some obscure person or place, but Casanova rose superior to this shabby device. He invented a name for himself—new, original, and entirely his own. Whether he consulted his familiar genius, or made abracadabric pyramid, or produced the name in a moment of inspiration, it matters little, for the name reads well enough. The illustrious Chevalier de Seingalt hath surely a better ring than plain Signor Casanova—Mr. Newhouse. His new name, however, caused him some little trouble at first. On one occasion he was questioned by the local authority:

“Why do you travel under a false name?”

“I do nothing of the kind?”

“You are Giacomo Casanova of Venice.”

“The same.”

“By what right then do you call yourself Seingalt?”

“By the right of authorship and the common property of mankind in the alphabet. The name is mine, for I made it myself.”

-Exit Seingalt, leaving local authority confounded.

For awhile the extraordinary luck of Casanova preserved him from the consequences of his various misdeeds; but Fortune at last began to show signs of getting tired of her favourite. A fatal duel at the conclusion of an orgie compelled him to fly suddenly from Paris, whither he had again betaken himself, and

his retreat was so rapid that he was obliged to leave his secretary to bring away his effects, worth some fifty thousand crowns. The secretary packed everything up very carefully, and then disappeared with it from the ken of his master, whose streak of bad luck followed him to Augsburg, where he lost all the rest of his money, pawned his jewels, and was just trembling on the brink of misery, when the extraordinary old woman, over whom he exercised an unspeakable fascination, sent him fifty thousand francs. Allowing fully for the credulity of the time, it is yet impossible to doubt that Madame d'Urfé was mad. She was thoroughly convinced that, by undergoing a lengthened period of probation—not unlike that prescribed at a later date by Cagliostro—she could, by Casanova's assistance, transfer her life to a male infant born under certain planetary influences, and lead a new existence as a man, without losing cognisance of her identity. The credit of inventing all this nonsense, in which the fabled cauldron of Medea and the story of Tiresias are curiously jumbled together, is clearly not due to Casanova, whose difficulty was to control and regulate the extravagant conduct of the great lady, and to fill his own pockets meanwhile. From time to time he extracted enormous sums of money from her, and, although betrayed and denounced as an impostor by the confederates whom he was compelled to employ, he never lost his empire over her until her death deprived him, not only of a large revenue, but of that protection which her position in the world enabled her to extend to him. Indeed, the loss of his protectress was felt immediately and severely by our adventurer, whose efforts to obtain employment in foreign courts were invariably frustrated by the Venetian ambassadors, who, however well they might be disposed towards him personally, stood in too great awe of the terrible Council of Three to afford him the slightest public recognition.

In London his career was unfortunate in the extreme. Casanova was charged with a mission to a certain Theresa Imer, well known in London as the Madame Cornelis whose balls in Soho-square were resorted to by the most fashionable people in London, at two guineas per head. Here he made, thanks to the French ambassador, the acquaintance of Lord Hervey, the husband of Miss Chudleigh, and other persons of quality; but suffered agonies from the vile cookery

which prevailed at that time. To him it appeared that the English ate neither bread nor soup, never touched dessert, and, in short, devoured meals without either beginning or end. Beer, excepting porter, "a species of nectar," he could not drink, and he was disgusted with port wine. Hence our chevalier was obliged to furnish himself with a French cook and French wines regardless of expense. This style of living, and an awkward business about a bill of exchange, brought Casanova at last to grief. He fled suddenly from England and hid him to the court of Frederick the Great, thinking to make his way easily at the court of the Protestant hero.

On the road he received a remittance from his old friend Bragadino, which enabled him to make a handsome appearance at Berlin, where he found another old friend, one of the Calsabigi, with whom he had started the lottery of the Military School, which became, on the death of Pâris-Duvernay, the Royal Lottery. Calsabigi had left France for Belgium, where his lottery had proved a failure, and had since been managing a similar enterprise for the King of Prussia, who, although fortunate up to that time, had decided on giving it up. Casanova undertook to talk the king over, but found Frederick made of very different material from that of Bragadino and poor Madame d'Urfé. He found the king at Sans Souci in an undress uniform, booted as usual, and after a long argument with his majesty he made a half-success of his mission, as all that he could obtain from the king was authority to re-open the lottery, but not on his royal account. What the king thought of the Venetian popinjay, who presented himself in a brand-new costume of puce-coloured silk, with rings on all his fingers, a watch in each fob, his cordon and cross of the Order of the Golden Spur, is not known, but he evidently took a certain fancy to his powerful build, which would have qualified him even for a Prussian grenadier; but Casanova spoilt all by his trenchant manner and unhappy mania for speaking ill of others. He took it into his head to tell the king that Maupertuis was not much of a physicist; D'Alembert not much of a geometrician; Voltaire a mediocre poet; d'Argens a mediocre philosopher; Lamettrie a miserable doctor; La-beaumelle a bad critic; Diderot a bad writer; and Kœnig a pedant. The king saw that Casanova was not the man he wanted, but nevertheless tried to employ

him if possible, sent for him again, and commenced :

"Have you patience and the spirit of order?"

"Not much, sire."

"And money?"

"None at all."

"All the better. You will be content with a small salary."

"I must be, for I have spent more than a million."

"How did you get it?"

"By cabala."

"What's that?"

"I have known the past and predicted the future."

"You are then an adventurer?"

"True, sire, and if ever I catch Fortune by the hair I will never let go again."

"It is not here that you will find her, I can tell you. Follow me to the Cadet's college. I have there a considerable quantity of wretches, pigs, and fools, for governors, preceptors, or teachers; I don't know how to call them. I should like something better; come."

Casanova accompanies the king, and is horrified to see the king flourishing his cane about among the professors, and still more to hear that the salary of a professor is only three hundred crowns. He makes his escape at once.

Having failed to fix himself at Berlin, he next determined to try his luck in Russia, at the court of the great Catharine, and succeeded in obtaining an interview with the empress in the summer garden of the palace; but, while waiting the arrival of her majesty, amused himself by roaring with laughter at the wretched collection of statuary, and at the absurd manner in which the figures were labelled with the wrong names. Hump-backed Apollos stood side by side with scraggy Venuses and Cupids modelled from grenadiers. A little laughing figure was dubbed *Heraclitus*; another weeping one, *Democritus*; a long-bearded philosopher was labelled *Sappho*; an old woman, *Avicenna*; and a brace of youths, *Philemon and Baucis*. While Casanova was shaking his sides, the empress appeared suddenly on the scene, and asked him what he thought of the decorations of the garden. Supple-witted when he liked, the Italian got out of his false position very well; but subsequently lost the good graces of the empress by his insane love of argument. Still he did not actually get into disgrace until the truth came out that he had been keeping a faro-

bank in a café. This discovery destroyed all his prospects of advancement, and the unquiet spirit determined to try his luck in Poland.

Warsaw at this time was a gay capital, the seat of a giddy court. Casanova immediately found himself at home among the Italian singers and dancers attached to the opera, but without dallying too long with these, he presented the letters of recommendation he had been clever enough to obtain at St. Petersburg. Prince Adam Czartoriski received him admirably, and presented him to the king and the most important people about the court. King Stanislaus Augustus, whose tastes were of a literary cast, "took up" the Chevalier de Seingalt at once, patronised him, spent much time in his company, and gave him, moreover, a present in hard cash—very acceptable just then. The Prince Palatine of Russia also befriended him—possibly from interested motives, as heavy gambling went on at the palace, and the prince and the adventurer were suspected of being confederates. Be this as it may, we find Casanova once more well in funds and playing the grand seigneur after his fashion—that is to say, putting on mighty airs, contradicting and criticising right and left. He deigned to patronise the opera, and as faction ran high concerning the merits of two rival singers, he immediately ranged himself on one side as a violent partisan. The house was divided between the admirers of "the Catai" and "the Binetti," both Italians, hating each other with feminine and artistic hatred. Prince Lubomirski, very friendly towards Casanova, headed the Catai faction, and Count Xavier Branicki, the lord chamberlain, and a distinguished cavalry officer, that of Binetti. Poor Tomatis, the manager of the opera, was driven nearly mad by the applause and hissing, which turned the house into a perfect Babel, and, falling into a dispute with Branicki, had the ill-luck to have his ears boxed by that nobleman's hussar-orderly. Apparently Casanova took the part of Tomatis, for Branicki took the first opportunity of insulting him openly. For a wonder, Casanova kept his temper; but the fiery Pole was not to be appeased, and, calling the unlucky adventurer a "cowardly Venetian," provoked an immediate challenge. This the chamberlain professed to treat with contempt; but the Venetian, who, far from being cowardly, was as brave as a lion, stuck to him pertinaciously, writing letter after

letter, first asking politely for the honour of a meeting, and then demanding reparation as a right. Branicki, who preferred fighting to writing, sent him word to come to the theatre and talk it over. With many profound bows Casanova stated his demand formally, and was met thus:

"Well! with pleasure; but are you a gentleman?"

"Better than that, my lord; I am acquainted with you."

"I will wager that you have never been out in your life!"

"Never, your excellency."

"Then why the devil begin with me?"

"Because nobody ever insulted me before."

"Can't the matter be settled?"

"With anybody else but your excellency I would arrange it with pleasure."

"It is not my custom to shirk a duel, Monsieur Casanova, but I confess that with you . . ."

"I understand. The meeting will honour me more than it will your lordship. That is why I demand it."

"Very well, you must be obeyed. But how, when, and where?"

"Your excellency will arrange all that."

It was finally settled that the duel should be fought with pistols, and that the chamberlain should convey his opponent to a convenient spot in his carriage. It is a significant fact that Casanova had no second, but was courageous enough to trust himself entirely to the loyalty of his adversary. Like Don Matthis de Silva, Count Branicki objected to fight too early, and Casanova took advantage of this to eat an excellent dinner, on the philosophic principle that it might be his last. At three o'clock Branicki came to fetch him in his travelling carriage, drawn by six horses and escorted by a couple of hussars. Branicki was also accompanied by his aides-de-camp and a general in full uniform as his second. A quarter of an hour brings them to a little wood, the combatants get out, and one of the hussars loads the pistols. Branicki offers the choice of them to his adversary, who seizes his weapon.

"You have chosen a good pistol."

"I shall try it on your skull," replies Casanova.

Putting a dozen paces between them, they fire simultaneously; Branicki staggers and falls, and Casanova runs to raise him up, when, to his amazement, he sees the

hussars coming down upon him sabre in hand. Luckily their master is strong enough to shout, "Stop, rascals, and respect Monsieur Seingalt!" Casanova now helps to raise the count, being shot himself in the left hand. Branicki's wound is far more serious—clean through the body, and apparently mortal. They carry the count to an inn, where he says, like a gallant fellow as he is:

"You have killed me. Save your head. You are in the starosty, and I am a grand officer of the crown. Here is my ribbon of the White Eagle as a safeguard and my purse. Make off."

Arriving at Warsaw on a peasant's sledge, the victor was lucky enough to find friends to protect him against the partisans of Branicki, hunting high and low to sacrifice him to their vengeance. The whole affair was a great success for Casanova, who recovered the use of his hand, and speedily had the pleasure of visiting his convalescent adversary. They became excellent friends, and Casanova remained in high favour at court until, in an evil hour, he went away for a few weeks to Kiew, on a visit to the waiwode. On his return he was coldly received everywhere, thanks to his Polish friends having become "posted" concerning his previous exploits in France, England, and Italy. Fain would he have departed, shaking the Polish dust from off his feet, but, alas! he was in debt. At last his departure became no longer optional. One fine morning he received a call from the same general officer who had "assisted" at the duel. This gentleman brought him an order, "in the king's name," to quit Warsaw within eight days. Utterly disgusted at this affront, he told the general to represent to the king that he was not in a condition to obey, and that, if force were employed, he would protest against it in the face of the civilised world. This was all very well, but the civilised world had had nearly enough of the Chevalier de Seingalt. The general replied, quietly, "Sir, I am not commanded to carry back your reply, but simply to give you the king's orders. Therefore, you may do what you please." A long letter to the king produced a better effect. The amiable monarch expressed his regret at being compelled to forego the further society of the Chevalier de Seingalt, but thought he had better go for his own good, as Warsaw was too hot to hold him. This friendly message was

accompanied by the solid solatium of a thousand ducats. Stanislaus Augustus let our friend down easily, but was determined to get rid of him at any price.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELIZABETH TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MARCEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXIV.

(From Mrs. Errington to Mrs. Bodkin.)

"Long Fells, Westmoreland, July 26th, 18—.

"DEAR MRS. BODKIN,—Amid the tumult of feelings which have recently agitated me, I yet cannot neglect to write to my good friends in Whitford, and participate my emotions with those who have ever valued and appreciated my darling boy, at this most important moment of his life. It may perhaps surprise, but will, I am sure, gratify you to learn that Algernon is to be married on this day week to the Honourable Castalia Caroline Kilfinane, only daughter of the late Baron Kauldkail, of Kauldkail, who is, though not a relation, yet a connection of our own, being the niece of our dear cousin-in-law, Lord Seely. To say that all my proudest maternal aspirations are gratified by such a match is feebly to express what I feel. Birth (with me the first consideration, dear Mrs. Bodkin, for I make no pretences with you, and confess that I should have deplored Algernon's mating below himself in that respect), elegance, accomplishments, and a devoted attachment to my son—these are Castalia's merits in my eyes. You will forgive me for having said nothing of this projected alliance until the last moment. The young people did not wish it to be talked about. They had a romantic fancy to have the wedding as quiet as possible, amid the rural beauties of this most lovely scenery, and thus escape the necessity for inviting the crowds of distinguished friends and connections on both sides of the house, who would have had to be present had the marriage taken place in London. That would have made it too pompous an affair to satisfy the taste of our Castalia, who is sensitive refinement itself. The dear Seelys are only too indulgent to the least wish of Algernon's, and they at once agreed to keep the secret. What poor Lord and Lady Seely will do when Algy leaves them, I assure you I cannot imagine. It really grieves me to contemplate how they will miss him. But, of course, I cannot but rejoice selfishly to know that I shall have my dear children so near me. For (you

may, perhaps, have heard the news) Lord Seely has, by his immense influence in the highest quarters, procured dear Algy an appointment. And, as good fortune will have it, the appointment brings him back to Whitford, among his dear and early friends. He is to be appointed to the very arduous and responsible position of postmaster there. But, important as this situation is, it is yet only to be considered a stepping-stone to further advancement. Lord Seely wants Algy in town, which is indeed his proper sphere. And the result of some new ministerial combinations which are expected in certain quarters will, there is no doubt, put him in the very foremost rank of rising young diplomatists. But I must not say more even to you, dear Mrs. Bodkin, for these are State secrets, which should be sacredly respected.

"This is a most lovely spot, and the house combines the simple elegance of a cottage ornée with the luxurious refinement that befits the residence of a peer like Lord Seely. It is not, of course, fitted up with the same magnificence as his town mansion, or even as his ancestral place in Rutlandshire, but it is full of charms to the cultivated spirit, and our dear young people are revelling in its romantic quietude. There are very few guests in the house. By a kind thought of Algy's, which I am sure you will appreciate, Orlando Pawkins is to be best man at the wedding. The young man is naturally gratified by the distinction, and our noble relatives have received him with that affability which marks the truly high bred. There is also an Irish gentleman, the Honourable John Patrick Price, who arrived last evening in order to be present at the ceremony. He is one of the most celebrated wits in town, and belongs to an Irish family of immense antiquity. Castalia will have none of her own intimate young friends for bridesmaids. To make a choice of one or two might have seemed invidious, and to have eight or ten bridesmaids would have made the wedding too ostentatious for her taste. Therefore she will be attended at the altar by the two daughters of the village clergyman—simple, modest girls, who adore her. The bride and bridegroom will leave us after the breakfast to pass their honeymoon at the Lakes. I shall return forthwith to Whitford, in order to make preparations for their reception. Lady Seely presses me to remain with her for a time after the wedding, but I am impatient to return to my dear Whitford friends, and share my happiness with them.

"Farewell, dear Mrs. Bodkin. Give my love to Minnie, who, I hope, has benefited by the sea-breezes; and best regards to the doctor. Believe me your very attached friend,
SOPHIA AUGUSTA ERRINGTON.

"P.S. Do you happen to know whether Barker, the chemist, has that cottage in the Bristol-road still to let? It might suit my dear children, at least for a while."

(From Miss Kilfinane to her cousin, Lady Louisa Marston.)

"Long Fells, 29th July.

"MY DEAR LOUISA,—I answer your last letter at once, for, if I delay writing, I may not have time to do so at all. There are still a thousand things to be thought of, and my maid and I have to do it all, for you know what Aunt Seely is. She won't stir a finger to help anybody. Uncle Seely is very kind, but he has no say in the matter, nor, as far as that goes, in any matter in his own house.

"You ask about the wedding. It will be very scrubby, thanks to my lady's stinginess. She would have it take place in this out-of-the-way country house, which they scarcely ever come to, in order to save the expense of a handsome breakfast. There will be nobody invited but the parson and the apothecary, I suppose. I hate Long Fells. It is the most inconvenient house in the world, I do believe; and so out of repair that my maid declares the rain comes through the roof on to her bed.

"Ancram's mother arrived last week. She was half inclined to be huffy at first, when we told her our news, because she had been kept in the dark till the last moment. But she has got over her sulks now, and makes the best of it. I can see now that Ancram was right in keeping our engagement secret from her as long as possible. She would have been a dreadful worry, and told everybody. She is wonderfully like Lady Seely in the face, only much better looking, and has a fine natural colour that makes my lady's cheeks look as if they had been done by a house painter.

"Ancram has invited an old Whitford acquaintance of his to be his best man at the wedding. He says that as we are going to live there for a time at least, it would never do to offend all the people of the place by taking no notice of them. It would be like going into a hornet's nest. And the young man in question has been civil to Ancram in his school-boy days. He is a certain Mr. Pawkins, who lives at a place with the delightful name of Pudcombe Hall. He is not so bad as I expected, and is quiet and good-natured.

If all the Whitfordians turn out as well as he, I shall be agreeably surprised. But I fear they are a strange set of provincial bumpkins. However, we shall not have to remain amongst them long, for Uncle Val has privately promised to move heaven and earth to get Ancram a better position. You know he is to be postmaster at Whitford. Only think of it! It would be absurd, if it were not such a downright shame. And I more than suspect my lady of having hurried Uncle Val into accepting it for Ancram. I suppose she thinks anything is good enough for us.

"I wish you could see Ancram! He is very handsome, and even more elegant than handsome. And his manners are admitted on all hands to be charming. It is monstrous to think of burying his talents in a poky little hole like Whitford. But there is this to be said; if he hadn't got this postmastership we could not have been married at all. For he is poor. And you know what my great fortune is! I do think it is too bad that people of our condition should ever be allowed to be so horribly poor. The government ought to do something for us.

"Uncle Val has made me a handsome present of money to help to furnish our house. I'm sure this is quite unknown to my lady. So don't say anything about it among your people at home, or it may come round to Lady S.'s ears, and poor Uncle Val would get scolded. Give my love to Aunt Julia and my cousins. I hope to see you all next season in town, for Ancram and I have quite made up our minds not to stick in that nasty little provincial hole all the year round. Mrs. Errington is to go back there directly after the wedding, to see about a house for us, and get things ready. Of course, if there's anything that I don't like, I can alter it myself when I arrive.

"Good-bye, dear Louisa. Don't forget your affectionate cousin, who signs herself (perhaps for the last time),

"C. C. KILFINANE."

(From Orlando Pawkins to his sister, Mrs. Machyn-Stubbs.)

"Long Fells, Westmoreland. Monday evening.

"MY DEAR JEMIMA,—I am sorry that you and Humphrey should have felt hurt and thought I was making mysteries. But I assure you I was quite taken by surprise when I got Errington's letter, telling me about his wedding, and inclosing Lord Seely's invitation to me to come here. I knew nothing about it before, I give you my word.

"You ask me to write you full details of the affair, and I am sure I would if I could. But I don't know any more than the rest of the world. I don't think much of Long Fells. The land is poor, and the house almost tumbling to pieces. Lord Seely is uncommonly polite, but I don't much like my lady. And she has a beast of a lap-dog that snaps at everybody. Errington is the same as ever, only he looks so much older in these two years. Any one would take him to be five or six and twenty, at least. As to the bride, she don't take much notice of me, so I haven't got very well acquainted with her. I ride about the country nearly all day long. Lord Seely has provided me with a pretty decent mount. I shall be glad when the wedding is over, and I can get away, for it's precious dull here. Even your friend Jack Price seems moped and out of sorts, and goes about singing, 'The heart that once truly loves never forgets,' or something like that, enough to give a fellow the blue devils.

"I asked about what you wanted to know about the wedding-dresses, but I couldn't make out much from the answers I got. Miss Kilfinane is to wear a white silk gown, trimmed with something or other that has a French name. Perhaps you can guess what it is. The bridesmaids are fat, freckled girls, the daughters of the parson. I think I have now given you all the particulars I can.

"I wish you and Humphrey would come down to Pudcombe in September. Tell him I can give him some fairish shooting, and will do all I can to make you both comfortable. Believe me,

"Your affectionate brother, O. P."

CHAPTER XXV.

It was the evening before the wedding. In a low long room that was dark with black oak panelling, and gloomy, moreover, by reason of the smallness of the ivy-framed casement at one end, which alone admitted the daylight into it, Lord Seely sat before the hearth.

Although it was August, there was a fire. There were few evenings of the year when a fire was not agreeable at Long Fells; and one was certainly agreeable on this especial evening. The day had been rainy. The whole house seemed dark and damp. A few logs that had been laid on the top of the coal fire sputtered and smoked drearily. My lord sat in a large high-backed chair, which nearly hid his diminutive figure from view, ex-

cept on the side of the fireplace. His head was sunk on his breast; his hands were plunged deep into his pockets; his legs were stretched out towards the hearth; his whole attitude was undignified. It was such an attitude as few of his friends or acquaintances had ever seen him in, for it was nearly impossible for Lord Seely to be unconscious or careless of the effect he was producing in the presence of an observer.

He was now absorbed in thought, and was allowing his outer man to express the nature of his musings. They were not pleasant musings, as any spectator would at once have pronounced who should have seen his posture, and his pursed mouth, and his eyebrows knitted anxiously under the bald yellow forehead. The entrance even of a footman into the room would have produced an instant change in Lord Seely's demeanour. But no footman was there to see his lordship sunk in a brown study.

At length he raised his head, and glanced out of the window. It had ceased to rain, but the drops were still trickling down the window-panes from the points of the ivy leaves; and it was already so dark that the firelight began to throw fantastic shadows from the quaint old furniture, and to shine with a dull red glow on the polished oak panels. Lord Seely rang the bell.

"Has Mr. Errington returned?" he asked of the servant who appeared in answer to the summons.

"Not yet, my lord."

"Tell them to beg Mr. Errington, with my compliments, to do me the favour to step here before he dresses for dinner."

"Yes, my lord."

"Don't light that lamp! or, stay; yes, you may light it. Put the shade over it, and place it behind me. Draw the curtains across the window. Take care that my message is given to Mr. Errington directly he comes home."

The servant withdrew. And Lord Seely, when he was left alone, began to walk up and down the room with his hands behind him. Thus Algernon found him when, in about ten minutes, he appeared, rosy and fresh from his ride.

"I must apologise for my muddy condition," he cried gaily. "Pawkins and I rode over to Appletwhaita to get something for Castalia that was found wanting at the last moment. And I am splashed to the eyebrows. But I thought it best to come just as I was, as your lordship's message was pressing."

"Thank you. I am much obliged to you,

Ancram. It is not, in truth, that there is any such immediate hurry for what I have to say, that it might not have waited an hour or so; but I thought it likely that we might not have so good an opportunity of speaking alone together."

Lord Seely seated himself once more in the high-backed chair, but in a very different attitude from his former one. He was upright, majestic, with one hand in his breast, and the other reclining on the arm of his chair. But on his face might be read, by one who knew it well, traces of trouble and of being ill at ease. Algernon read my lord's countenance well enough. He stood leaning easily on the mantel-shelf, tapping his splashed boot with his riding-whip, and looking down on Lord Seely with an air of quiet expectation.

"I have been having a serious conversation with Castalia," said my lord, after a preliminary clearing of his throat.

Algernon said, smilingly, "I hope you have not found it necessary to scold her, my lord? The phrase, 'Having a serious conversation' with any one, always suggests to my mind the administering of a reprimand."

"No, Ancram. No; I have not found it necessary to scold Castalia. I am very much attached to her, and very anxious for her happiness. She is the child of my favourite sister."

The old man's voice was not so firm as usual when he said this; and he looked up at Algernon with an appealing look.

Algernon could be pleasant, genial, even affectionate in his manner—but never tender. That was more than he could compass by any movement of imitative sympathy. He had never even been able so to simulate tenderness as to succeed in singing a pathetic song. Perhaps he had learned that it was useless to make the attempt. At all events, he did not now attempt to exhibit any answering tenderness to Lord Seely's look and tone of unwonted feeling, in speaking of his dead sister's child. His reply was hard, clear, and cheerful, as the chirp of a canary bird.

"I know you have always been extremely good to Castalia, my lord. We are both of us very sensible of your kindness, and very much obliged by it."

"No, no," said my lord, waving his hand. "No, no, no. Castalia owes me nothing. She has been to me almost as my own daughter. There can be no talk of obligations between her and me."

Then he paused, for what appeared to be a long time. In the silence of the room the damp logs hissed like whispering voices.

"Ancram," Lord Seely said at length, "Castalia is very much attached to you."

"I assure you, my lord, I am very grateful to her."

"Ahem! Castalia's is not an expansive nature. She was, perhaps, too much repressed and chilled in childhood, by living with uncongenial persons. But she is responsive to kindness, and it develops her best qualities. I will frankly own, that I am very anxious about her future. You will not owe me a grudge for saying that much, Ancram?"

"I never owe grudges, my lord. But I trust you have no doubt of my behaving with kindness to Castalia?"

"No, Ancram. No; I hope not. I believe not."

"I am glad of that; because—the doubt would come rather too late to be of much use, would it not?"

Algernon spoke with his old bright smile; but two things were observable throughout this interview. Firstly, that Algernon, though still perfectly respectful, no longer addressed his senior with the winning, cordial deference of manner which had so captivated Lord Seely in the beginning of their acquaintance. Secondly, that Lord Seely appeared conscious of some reason in the young man's mind for dissatisfaction, and to be desirous of deprecating that dissatisfaction.

At the same time, there seemed to be in Lord Seely an under-current of feeling struggling for expression. He had the air of a man who, knowing himself to have right and reason on his side in the main, yet is aware of a tender point in his case which an unscrupulous adversary will not hesitate to touch, and which he nervously shrinks from having touched. He winced at Algernon's last words, and answered rather hotly, "It would be too late. Your insinuation is a just one. If I had any misgivings I ought to have expressed them, and acted on them before. But the fact is that this—the final arrangement of this marriage—took me in a great measure by surprise."

"So it did me, my lord!"

Lord Seely had been gazing moodily at the fire. He now suddenly raised his eyes and looked searchingly at Algernon. The young man's face wore an expression of candid amusement. His arched eyebrows were lifted, and he was smiling as unconcernedly as if the subject in hand touched himself no jot.

"I give you my word," he continued lightly, "that when Lady Seely first spoke

instead of being easily tolerant of such follies as zeal, enthusiasm, or fervent reverence, he was now apt to speak of them with a disdainful superiority. And he had, too, an air of having washed his hands of any concern with his own career; of laying the responsibility on Destiny, or whomsoever it might concern; of awaiting, with sarcastic patience, the next turn of the wheel—as if life were neither a battle nor a march, but a gigantic game of rouge-et-noir, with terrible odds in favour of the bank.

Lord Seely was no match for this youth of two-and-twenty. Lord Seely had intended to impress him deeply; to read him a lecture, in which Olympian severity should be tempered by mercy; to convince him, by dignified and condescending methods, of his great good fortune in having secured the hand of Castalia Kilfane of Kauldkail; and of his great unreasonableness (not to say presumption) in not accepting that boon on bended knee, instead of grumbling at being made post-master of Whitford. But in order to make an impression, it does not suffice to have tools only; the surface to be impressed must also exist and be adapted to the operation. How impress the bright, cool, shining liquid bosom of a lake, for instance? Oar and keel, pebble and arrow, wind and current, are alike powerless to make a furrow that shall last.

Lord Seely laboured under the disadvantage, in this crisis, of feeling for other persons with some keenness; a circumstance which frittered away his power considerably, and made him vacillating. Algernon's capacities for feeling were, on this occasion, steadily concentrated on himself, and this gave his behaviour a solid consistency, which was felt even beneath the surface-lightness of his manner.

"I hope," said Lord Seely, rather sadly than solemnly—"I do most earnestly hope, Ancram, that you will be happy in this marriage!"

"Your lordship is very good. I assure you, I feel your goodness."

He said it as if he had been accepting an invitation to dinner.

"And—and that you will do your best to make Castalia happy?"

"You may rely on my doing my best."

"There are discrepancies, perhaps—disparities—but those marriages are not

always the happiest in which the external circumstances on both sides seem to be best matched. You are young. You are untrammelled. You have no irrevocable past behind you to regret. I do not see—no, I do not see why, with mutual regard and respect, you should not make a good life of it."

"These are the most lugubrious nuptial felicitations that ever were offered to a bridegroom, I should fancy!" thought Algernon. And he had some difficulty in keeping his countenance, so vividly did he feel the ludicrous aspect of his lordship's well-meant effort at "impressing" him.

"I should feel some sense of responsibility if—if things were not to turn out as brightly as we hope—and believe—and believe they will turn out."

"Oh, don't distress yourself about that, my lord!" cried Algernon. (He had very nearly said "don't apologise!") "There is the dressing-bell," he added, with alacrity, taking his hat up from the table. "If your lordship has no further commands, I think I——"

"Yes; go, Ancram. I will not detain you longer. Remember," said Lord Seely, taking the young man's hand between both his own, and speaking in a tremulous voice, "remember, Ancram, that I wish to serve you. My intention all along has been to do my best for you. You have been a very pleasant inmate in my home. Ancram, be good to Castalia. For good or for evil, you are her fate now. No one can come between you. Be good to her."

"My dear lord, I beg you to believe that I will make Castalia's happiness the study of my life. And—oh, I have no doubt we shall get on capitally. With your interest, it can't be long before we get into a better berth. I know you'll do your best for us, for Castalia's sake; oh, and mine too, I am happy to believe. Yes, certainly. I really am in such a state of mud that I believe my very hair is splashed. It will take me all the time there remains for dressing, to get myself presentably clean, positively. Au revoir, my lord. And thank you very, very much."

With his jauntiest step, and brightest smile, Algernon left the room.

Lord Seely returned to his chair before the hearth, resumed his moody, musing attitude, and sat there, alone, with his head sunk on his breast until they called him to dinner.

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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HALVES.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGERD," "A PERFECT TREASURE," "AT HER MERCY," &c. &c.

CHAPTER IX. THE STORY OF UNCLE ALEC.

WHEN, after dinner that evening, we were all assembled in the drawing-room, Mrs. Raeburn, adopting the style of the sister to Scheherazadé in the Arabian Nights, thus addressed her guest and brother-in-law:

"Mr. Alexander, if you have nothing better to do to-night, I hope you will not refuse to relate what happened to you after quitting Richmond."

"By all means, my dear madam," returned he, good-naturedly, "and the more readily since it will give me the opportunity to relate the history of a little present or two, which I have brought with me for the acceptance of my dear friends here, and which would have but little value save for the story which attaches to them."

Mrs. Raeburn's countenance, which had risen at the word "present," here fell again, for "association" was not so attractive to her practical mind as intrinsic worth; yet she contrived to say, in her highly principled way, that nothing had been farther from her mind than the personal advantage of herself or of those belonging to her, in making her request, and that it had been suggested to her solely by the natural interest which she felt in Mr. Alexander's wanderings.

"You are very good to say so, madam," returned the old man, with a bow, "and I will not so ill repay you as to linger over that part which, whatever its attractions

for myself, may easily seem tedious to those who listen to me. My patron at Richmond, then, finding that I could reside no longer under his roof with any pleasure to myself, by reason of the public dislike with which I was regarded, and at the same time filled with personal gratitude towards me for having rid him of so dangerous a neighbour as Redman, procured me employment elsewhere. A cousin of his had emigrated to Peru, where, in the neighbourhood of Cuzco, he had a large grazing farm, where herds of cattle were reared, chiefly for the supply of bulls for the Lima bull-ring, and this gentleman being in need of an English steward, Mr. Pittsburg recommended me for the situation. I gladly accepted his offer, and taking my credentials with me, I travelled by way of Panama to Lima, and thence on mule-back, the only means of transit across the Cordillera of the Andes. In that district inns are (or were at that period) utterly unknown, but the most unbounded hospitality is on every hand to be met with. If each householder had been my brother, like yourself, Mark, I could not have been received with greater kindness. The magnificence of the mountain scenery, the glorious climate, the richness of the pasture lands, the fertility of the ravines and valleys, and, above all—though my then ignorance of Spanish placed me at a great disadvantage in this respect—the legends of past greatness and splendour that environ almost every locality in the country of the Incas, gave to every day of my journey the aspect of a gorgeous dream. In the recesses of that Sierra, as doubtless you all have heard, lay concealed the inexhaustible and far-famed treasures of Peru."

"And has nobody found them yet?" inquired Mrs. Raeburn, pertinently.

"Some have been found, madam, but most of them will doubtless remain undiscovered for all time. The fact of their existence was in each case intrusted to as few persons as possible, and those persons being poor Indians, whose lives—entirely at the mercy of their Spanish masters—have too often been sacrificed, when their secret perished with them."

"What on earth did they go burying their money for, instead of putting it in the bank?" inquired the attorney, whose historical knowledge was by no means on a par with his commercial experience.

"Well, Mark, there were two reasons. In the first place, the Indian belief in a place of future rewards and punishments, combined with their loyalty, led to the burial of vast treasures along with their dead princes. Moreover, the vast wealth of the temples had been in many cases hidden in a similar manner, in order to escape the cupidity of the Spaniards. Even the mouths of silver mines were stopped up, and all traces of their existence done away with, so that the hated conquerors should reap no advantage from them; nor could the pain of torture nor the fear of death wring the secret from those who held it. The Spanish yoke had not been thrown off at the time of my arrival, and I could tell you tales, dear madam," said brother Alec, addressing Mrs. Raeburn, gravely, "of such fiendish cruelty and oppression inflicted by these foreign conquerors, as would cause you not only to abhor them as the fiend himself, but to regard the system under which alone such deeds were possible—that of slavery—as hateful in the sight of God and man."

It was evident enough that "Uncle Alec" was greatly moved, so Mrs. Raeburn, instead of debating the matter, which she doubtless felt much impelled to do, framed what she conceived to be a conciliatory reply, as follows:

"Well, well, Mr. Alexander, I have no doubt there is something to be said on both sides of the question."

"I can tell you what is to be said on one side, madam," continued Uncle Alec, sternly; "that between the time of the Incas and the year of Liberty in 1828—that is, in three hundred years—the native population of Peru was reduced by five millions of souls, in consequence of their compulsory mine service and its hideous conditions of starvation, stripes, and

darkness. Nay, I can tell you one crime of my own knowledge, which was committed upon a man, himself a Spaniard, and from the lips of whose son I myself heard it. There was a certain poor man, named Don Pedro Giron, who was a physician, and who, quite contrary to the usual habit of his countrymen, had endeared himself to the Indians by acts of benevolence and the gratuitous practice of his art; and having by his skill saved a young Indian boy from death, the grateful father disclosed to his benefactor the existence of a certain mine in Pinco. The Spanish viceroy envying him his newly-acquired wealth, cast him into prison, upon some groundless charge of fomenting rebellion among the natives, and refused to forward his appeal to the Spanish king, even though he offered to give him a bar of pure silver daily while the ship went from Callao to Europe and back, a voyage that lasted at that time six months. The tyrant, however, overreached himself by his own cruelty, since Don Pedro died under the sufferings inflicted on him, and never disclosed the whereabouts of the source of his wealth."

"And what became of it eventually? I mean the mine," inquired Mrs. Raeburn. "Was it ever discovered?"

"It was never publicly made known, madam," answered brother Alec, drily, "though I have seen it with these eyes."

A total silence followed upon this statement; even volatile John Raeburn appeared fascinated by the attraction of his uncle's words and manner; while the rapt attention which his hostess bestowed upon them would have been a compliment to the best talker in Europe.

"There is more than one curious story connected with that Pinco mine," continued brother Alec, as though in acknowledgment of our interest in the topic, "less widely known than that connected with poor Pedro Giron. A certain Franciscan monk, who was a gambler, had done some good service to a native, who, in return, presented him with a large bag of silver ore. His cupidity was at once excited, and taxing the Indian with the knowledge of a concealed mine, he besought him to let him behold it, promising the most solemn secrecy, and that he would never revisit it upon his own account. The Indian assented, and accompanied by two others, blindfolded the monk, and carried him up by night into the mountains, where he eventually showed him a

subterranean gallery sparkling with silver ore. On his return the cunning monk loosened his beads one by one, and dropped them on the road, with the intention of retracing it by means of them; but in the morning the Indian returned with a whole handful of them, and the significant remark, 'Good father, you have dropped your breviary;' so that he had to keep his word in spite of himself."

"And may I ask, dear Mr. Alexander," observed our hostess, in her most conciliatory manner, "how it was that you yourself contrived to gain admission to this wondrous mine?"

Brother Alec here grew very grave.

"Indeed, madam, I fear I must keep that secret, as poor Don Pedro kept his, inviolable. The circumstances, too, were, after all, of a private nature, and had no such striking features about them as belonged to the cases I have mentioned."

"There was a woman at the bottom of it, I'll lay ten pounds!" cried the attorney, boisterously. The presence of his brother at the dinner-table had enabled him to make more free with the sherry than was usually possible; though, on the other hand—perhaps out of the fear of losing that relative's good opinion—the brandy bottle had not made its appearance at dessert. "Come, Alec, I can see by your face that I have hit the blot."

In Peru backgammon was probably unknown, and the metaphor thus drawn from that amusement may therefore have been unintelligible to one from whose memory the fireside games of his own country must long ago have faded out. Over Alec's brow passed the first cloud that I had seen shadow it, as he replied: "There was no blot in the case, Mark, I am thankful to say; though you are right in so far that a woman was concerned in it—the brightest and loveliest creature that ever blessed earth with her presence, and who, having departed from it, has robbed life, for me, of all its charms."

His voice had such an exquisite pathos in it, infinitely more touching from its welling through those white-bearded lips, that I heard John Raeburn mutter pitifully, "Poor old buffer!" and saw the tears rise in Gertrude's eyes. Alec, whose glance had turned towards her while he spoke the last sentence, as though to a quarter where he could count on sympathy, saw them also. "I had loved before, it is true," continued he, addressing her in a

gentle apologetic tone, "but Fate had long separated me from the object of my boyish passion. I felt no sting of conscience, cousin Gertrude, when I married my Indian bride."

"Indian bride!" ejaculated Mrs. Raeburn, like an echo, shocked. "Were such matches usual in Peru, Mr. Alexander?"

"Unhappily, madam, they were not. This girl, who had the blood of the greatest of the Incas in her veins, would not by some have been deemed worthy to be allied to a penniless adventurer like myself, who chanced to be of European descent."

"Then this young woman was not penniless?" remarked Mrs. Raeburn simply; "that, of course, made the match much less unequal."

"Yes, madam; it made it a still greater condescension on her side. I was but a rich man's steward, well-to-do indeed by that time, but whose means, beside those which Inez Nusta could command, were contemptible indeed. When I married her, however, I am thankful to say, I knew not of their existence. I had heard that she was descended from the noblest family in Peru, and one which had at one time been its rulers, but I little suspected that she was their heiress. Her father saw me woo and win her, like a man of honour, though I was of the white-skinned race, and when I married her, he, out of gratitude, disclosed to me that he owned the silver mine in Pinco, and had inherited those buried treasures of the Huatanay, the knowledge of whose hiding-place had entailed death and torture on so many of his race."

"Would it be a breach of confidence, Alec, to tell us what was the Huatanay?" inquired the attorney, his native humour, which still occasionally manifested itself in spite of his wife's depressing sway, being doubtless stimulated by these disclosures of his brother's prosperity.

"The Huatanay is a river, beneath whose channel, it had always been whispered, lay somewhere hidden the golden fittings of the Temple of the Sun at Cuzco, which the Spaniards had found stripped of its splendours. They had plundered the shrine of Pachacamac, in the neighbourhood of Lima, of its enormous riches, the contributions of ten generations of worshippers; they had stripped its doors of their golden plates, and its ceilings of their precious stones, and out of its silver ornaments had even paved a road for

miles for the triumphant passage of their viceroy; but with the temple at Cuzco the natives had been beforehand with them. Its central door and massive cornice were said to have been of virgin gold; the Sacred Sun, in whose honour the edifice had been reared, was made of the same metal, studded with emeralds and turquoises, and shone like its namesake in the firmament; its vases of gold, supposed to represent the tears shed by that luminary, stood filled with sacrificial first-fruits on its costly floor; but none of these ever gladdened the greedy eyes of Pizarro or De Castro."

To behold Mrs. Raeburn at that moment was a commentary on the speaker's words such as is rarely indeed supplied to text. I had somewhere read of a miser, whose pulse would rise to fever quickness at the mention of any large sum of money; and it really seemed, to judge by the eager and hungry looks of our hostess, that he had found his parallel in her. At the mention of the silver mines her countenance had exhibited a force of expression of which I should have deemed it utterly incapable, but while she listened to the catalogue of these golden splendours, it had become positively eloquent with raptivity and greed. Uncle Alec, however, saw nothing of this; his thoughts were rapt in the topics on which he was discoursing, and his eyes, fixed straight before him, were evidently regarding a far other scene than that around him. He looked up, like one aroused from a dream, when Mrs. Raeburn inquired, with earnest vehemence:

"And do you mean to say, dear Mr. Alexander, that you yourself beheld these wondrous treasures, and handled all those precious things with your own fingers?"

"I handled some, madam, and saw them all," replied he, quietly. "If proofs be needed of what indeed may easily seem to be a gorgeous romance, I possess them here." He took from his pocket a leather bag, and out of it some articles carefully wrapped up in leather. "Here are three images of various size," said he, "yet very literally worth their weight in gold, since they are gold. Their workmanship is not such as we are accustomed to admire in Europe; yet I doubt not, independent of their intrinsic worth, these weird fantastic figures, so many ages old, would have a value in the eyes of antiquarians equal to the best products of Grecian or Italian art."

"Are you sure it is really gold?" asked Mrs. Raeburn, with a voice that fairly trembled with emotion, as she took the largest of the images into her hand.

"I am quite sure, madam," answered brother Alec, smiling. "If it were counterfeit, I should not venture, as I do, to beg your acceptance of it."

"Why, this must be worth a matter of a hundred pounds!" ejaculated Mrs. Raeburn, forgetting, in her intense appreciation of its value, to acknowledge the gift itself.

"I don't know as to that, madam," returned he. "I only know that you are very welcome to it. Brother Mark, here is one for you, which I am sure you will value for my sake, even if you have no love for antiquities. Cousin Gertrude, this is but a little one, but its size does not typify the affection with which I regard you for your dear mother's sake. I only wish I had brought more, that no one here should have been empty-handed," and the old man looked at John and me with quite a distressed air.

"I am sure you have been more than generous enough already," observed our hostess, regarding her costly present much as some devotee might have done, in whose eyes it had been a genuine divinity. "It is not to be expected that you should have burthened your personal luggage with many such articles. You turned most of the property of this kind into a more portable form, doubtless, before you left the land of the Incas?"

"Indeed I did not, madam; long before I quitted Cuzco there was happily no occasion for any man to conceal the wealth which he had honestly come by. The bulk of what I possessed was in bars of silver, for which, as I was told, I could get a larger sum at the Mint in London than from the bankers in Lima."

"And what an enormous weight it must have been, Mr. Alexander!"

"It was certainly very heavy, madam; indeed, my chief difficulty lay in getting a strong-box to carry it, and sufficiently powerful tackle to convey it on board; the ship was in deep water, and if a handle had broken away, or a chain snapped, I must have wished 'good-bye' to what, even in Peru, was considered a considerable fortune."

"But the handles stood fast, and the chains held, I trust, Mr. Alexander?"

"They did so, madam; and the box lies at my agents' in London."

Not another question did Mrs. Raeburn put to her brother-in-law, after this interesting point had been so satisfactorily settled; but Gertrude, who sat beside him, had much to ask concerning his Peruvian life, to which he very willingly replied. His description of the country with its splendid scenery, its thickets of mollé trees, its noble fuschias covered with crimson flowers, its roadways carpeted with heliotropes and blue and scarlet salvias, had a peculiar charm for her, to whom the pleasures of the garden were an unfailling delight; nor did her interest fail when he spoke of his duties at the cattle farm, and of his gradual acquisition of an independence. Presently he dropped his voice, so that Gertrude alone could hear him, but in the gentle and sympathising expression of her face, it was easy for me at least to read that he was discoursing of his Indian bride, whom he had wooed in his far-back youth, and won to find her a richer prize than all her unlooked-for wealth, only to lose her at last for ever.

ENGLISH CATHEDRALS.

ELY.

THE old etymologists, who were easily satisfied, decided that the name of this island in the Cambridgeshire Fens was derived from the number of eels in which that damp corner of England abounded; but later and riper scholars have traced the word to the Saxon Hely (willow), the indigenous tree of the last home of Hereward the Wake and Saxon freedom.

The first monastery at Ely was founded by that illustrious Saxon princess and saint, Etheldreda, daughter of a king of the West Angles, who married a Saxon nobleman, and had the Isle of Ely settled on her in dower. On his death Etheldreda married Prince Egfried, son of Oswig, King of Northumberland. After a year at court the princess resolved to abandon the world and her husband, and entered the monastery of Coldingham. Importuned and pursued by her royal husband, the queen took refuge on a cliff, and, as Bede says, was preserved from her pursuers by a sudden inundation of the sea. It is also said that one day, as she slept in a by-road, her pilgrim staff, stuck in the ground beside her, took root and budded. Once established at Ely, the princess resolved to rebuild an old church of King Ethelbert's foundation at Crathdune, but finding a convenient eminence

nearer the river, she began the monastery there, Bishop Wilfrid, her great adviser, furnishing the plan. Three princesses were among her nuns, and Bede tells us she wore only woollen, ate only once a day, except on the great festivals, and never returned to bed after the matins at midnight. She died praying for the sisters of her order. Sixteen years after her death her body was disinterred, placed in an old Roman marble coffin found at Cambridge, and removed to Ely, where it wrought many miracles.

In 870, Hubba, the Dane, enraged at the death of his brother Tulba at the sack of Peterborough, broke into the Etheldred's monastery, slew all the monks and nuns, stripped and burnt the church, and plundered the town. When King Edgar restored peace and united England, he bestowed lands and a charter on the monks who restored Ely. He also gave them three villages and an annual donation of "ten thousand eel fishes." It was in the reign of Brithnoth, the first abbot of Ely, that he and his monks carried off by stratagem from Durham church the incorrupt body of St. Withburga, a younger sister of St. Etheldreda, and reinterred it at Ely. This abbot was at last murdered by order of King Edgar's cruel widow, Elfrida, who also assassinated her son-in-law Edward, at Corfe Castle, to make way for her own son, Ethelred.

In the reign of Elsin, the second abbot, the church at Ely was largely enriched by the great gifts of an unhappy Saxon nobleman named Leofwin, who, in a fit of passion, had beaten his mother to death. His eldest son, by the Pope's advice, became a monk at Ely; and at the south side of the church, which he enlarged, he built an altar to the Virgin, with a jewelled throne and altar, and an image as large as life. It was in this abbot's time that Duke Brithnoth, son of King Edgar's bravest chieftain, slain by the Danes after some very hard fighting at Maldon, in Essex, was buried at Ely. On his way to give battle to "the proud invader," Brithnoth had halted at Ramsey Abbey, in Huntingdonshire, with his army, and expressed his readiness to dine. The abbot sent to say that dinner would be laid for the duke and seven friends.

"Tell my lord abbot," said the duke, pithily, "that I can't dine without my men, any more than I can fight without them." And, waving his hand to the drums, he marched on to Ely, where he was stumped

tionally and ungrudgingly feasted, and elected an honorary member of the chapter. The duke, generous as he was brave, gave the abbey on leaving fifteen manors, thirty marks of gold, and twenty pounds of silver, on condition that if he fell against the Danes they should bring off his body and bury it at Ely. Then, granting the hospitable church investiture of the lands, by the gift of two gold crosses, two slips of his jewelled robe, and a pair of finely-wrought gloves, he commended himself to their prayers and pushed on his banners for the coast. The Danes carrying off his head in triumph before they retired to their ships, the monks who came for the body modelled a head of wax. The duke's bones were found by Mr. Bentham, the historian of Ely, in 1769, in the north wall of the choir, but the head, as he predicted, was missing. The large bones proved the old Saxon historian to be right, who described Brithnoth of Northumberland as "Viribus robustus, corpore maximus." He must have measured six feet six; and his collar-bone was found to have been cloven by a Danish sword or axe. The duke's widow, the Lady Elfreda, also gave a manor and lands to Ely church, together with a gold chain and a curtain, worked with the most memorable acts of her stalwart husband's life.

At the fatal battle of Assendun, in Essex, where the Danes decimated the army of Edmund Ironside, several of the Ely monks, who had come to pray for the king's army, perished, and the relics of St. Wendreda, which they had carried with them, fell into the hands of Canute.

Of Abbot Leofric, who succeeded Leofwin, a curious legend is related. Archbishop Wulstan, the favoured minister of Kings Ethelred, Edmund, and Canute, coming one day to Ely to pray to the saints, was received in solemn procession, and was standing at the head of the monks, leaning on his pastoral staff, when it suddenly sank several feet in the ground. Struck with the omen, the good prelate pronounced it to be the evident will of heaven that his body should eventually rest in that very spot, and exclaimed, in the words of David: "This shall be my rest for ever; here will I dwell." And in that very spot he was buried in June, 1023. In 1102, when the east end of the cathedral was rebuilt, his body was removed and the coffin opened. The saint himself had decayed, but the cassock, with the archiepiscopal pall fastened to it with

gilded pins, the stole, and the maniple were perfect and entire, to the wonder of the always wondering monks.

Leofsin, the fifth abbot of Ely, made a rule to admit no monks who were not men of family and learning, so that the monastery of the Fens soon became very refined and exclusive. The abbot of Ely was at this time one of the three great abbots who held the office of chancellor for four alternate months every year. It was usual with King Canute to celebrate here the annual feast of the Purification of the Virgin. In his first passage hither by water, attended by Emma, his queen, and his nobles, the king was standing up in the boat, watching the church which they were approaching, when, from a great distance across the mere, they heard the voices of the choir singing their canonical Hours and praising God with one accord. The king, enchanted with the harmony, instantly broke into extempore Saxon song, calling on his nobles to join chorus. The monks of Ely long preserved this song, of which the first stanza alone has been preserved:

*Dulce contraverunt, monachi in Ely,
Dum Canutus Rex, navigaret prope ibi,
Nunc, milite, navigate proprius ad terram,
Et simul audiamus monachorum harmonium.*

It was on this occasion that the poetical king renewed the charter of Edgar before the high altar and the tomb of Etheldreda.

On another visit the king found the river frozen and the way to Ely dangerous. Canute, wilful as kings generally are, declared he would cross in a sledge by Soham mere, if any one would lead the way. Brithmer, a sturdy fat native of the Isle, at once harnessed his sledge and set off, followed promptly by the king, who laughingly told his somewhat alarmed courtiers that a slight, active fellow like himself could surely go wherever such a fat carl could lead.

Emma, Canute's queen, who frequently accompanied her husband to this winter feast among the Fens, was fond of Ely, and gave the abbey many costly presents. Among others are especially mentioned a purple cloth, worked with gold and set in jewels, for St. Etheldreda; silken coverings for the other saints; a green pall, adorned with gold plates, for the altar on chief festivals; and a pall bordered with fine red linen, edged with gold fringe. On Canute's death, Earl Godwin, eager for Harold and the Danish succession, seized Prince Alfred, the son of King Ethelred,

who had a claim to the succession through the Saxon line, put out his eyes, and sent the poor lad to the monastery at Ely, where he soon after died, and was buried with due honours at the west end of the south aisle. Alfred's brother, the saintly Confessor, was educated at Ely, where his parents had offered him to God at the high altar, and it was a tradition with the monks that the royal boy used to delight to sing the psalms and godly hymns among the children in the cloister, and always held the abbey in high regard.

Abbot Wilfric, a kinsman of Edward the Confessor, disgraced himself by conveying to his brother Guthmund six estates belonging to the abbey, in order to qualify him for marriage with a lady of rank who had rejected him as too poor and not worth forty hides of land. Overwhelmed with shame at the reproaches of his monks, Wilfric left the abbey and died broken-hearted.

After the Conqueror's defeat of Hereward the Wake and the subjugation of the Isle of Ely by the Normans, a fine of one thousand marks was levied on the Ely monks, their treasure soon after confiscated, a Norman abbot appointed, and eighty knights' fees required from the abbey. Abbot Richard, the tenth abbot, who fell into disgrace at court for thrusting an impudent jester of the king's out of doors, completed the east end of Ely cathedral, and removed the bodies of the Saints Etheldreda, Sexburga, Ermenilda, and Withburga into the new church. Richard was the last abbot of Ely.

In the reign of Henry the First, Hervey, Bishop of Bangor, was appointed first Bishop of Ely, and obtained many privileges for his diocese. His successor, Nigellus, got into trouble with King Stephen, and had to pay a fine of three hundred marks by stripping the shrine of St. Etheldreda. This shrine was very palatial, and plated with silver gilt. It was covered with pearls and crystals, and was bossed with emeralds, beryls, and topazes. On one side of the shrine alone there were sixteen figures in relief, and more than two hundred precious stones. Yet Nigellus was generous to the church when better days came, and gave to Ely an alb, richly adorned with gold embroidered figures of birds and beasts; an amice, set with jewels; his court collar; and a cope, which bore the proud appellation of "Gloria Mundi." On Henry's accession, Nigellus became one

of the barons of the Exchequer, and his son Richard treasurer. This same bishop founded a hospital in Cambridge, which eventually became St. John's College.

Geoffrey Rodel, a friend of Becket's, and afterwards one of his persecutors, was the unworthy Bishop of Ely in the reign of Henry the Second. He repaired the Etheldreda shrine, and built part of the cathedral tower. His successor, William Longchamp, was the prelate who acted as regent for Richard the First during the Crusades. He was finally driven to France by John and the barons, and died at Poitiers, but his heart was brought to Ely.

Bishop Northwold, a good and charitable man, who was also a judge in Eyre and an ambassador, built the presbytery at Ely at an expense of five thousand three hundred and fifty pounds, added a spire to the great western tower, and rebuilt the episcopal palace. He was buried at the feet of Etheldreda, and, when that shrine was demolished, his effigy, being laid on Bishop Burnet's tomb, passed in time for the effigy of that bishop.

Hugh de Balsham, a bishop elected in the very teeth of Henry the Third, brought an action against the Master of the Temple in London for use of rooms in the Temple, and recovered his rights with two hundred pounds costs.

The next bishop, John de Kirkely, treasurer to King Edward the First, left his church at Ely the Bell Inn in London and nine cottages in Holborn, which afterwards became the town mansion of the bishops of Ely. The terms of his will were that one thousand marks should be paid to his executors for this bequest. Robert de Orford, a subsequent bishop, spent fifteen thousand pounds at Rome in securing his election, and at his death the Archbishop of Canterbury claimed his episcopal ring as due to him on the death of any of his successors. In the bishopric of John Hotham, the central tower of Ely fell at night, crushing the choirs; and the sacrist designed a new octagonal tower with dome and lantern, which was completed in twenty years, and cost two thousand four hundred and six pounds; the bishop completing the presbytery. He purchased for the see a vineyard, orchard, and several additional houses in Holborn.

A curious quarrel ensued between Thomas L'Isle, Bishop of Ely, in 1340, and Lady Blanch Wake, of Huntingdonshire. It was a dispute about boundaries, and ended in a farmhouse of the lady's being

burnt down, and one of her servants murdered, by a retainer of the bishop's. The king seizing the bishop's temporalities, the bishop fled to Avignon, where he got his enemies excommunicated, and soon after died. The bishops of Ely at this time held ten castles or manor-houses. Bishop Alcock, in 1486, finding the nunnery of St. Aldagund, in Cambridge, breaking every rule, dissolved it and turned it into Jesus College.

Bishop Redman, who died at Ely House, Holborn, in the reign of Henry the Seventh, rebuilt St. Asaph cathedral, which had been burnt down by Owen Glendower. It was the somewhat ostentatious custom of this prelate in his journeys at every town, if he halted even for an hour, to have a bell rung to summon the poor to partake of his charity. What a sure path to power the church was in the old times is strikingly proved by the career of Bishop West, the son of a Putney baker. He was chaplain to Henry the Seventh, and was employed by Henry the Eighth in numberless embassies and negotiations, including the marriage of the Princess Mary to old Lewis XII., and the great celebration of the Field of the Cloth of Gold. This bishop kept one hundred retainers, and relieved two hundred poor daily at his gate. He is buried at Ely, in a beautiful chapel near the presbytery built by himself. His motto, "Gratia Dei sum quod sum," is carved on a moulding running round the whole chapel. Bishop Thirlby, in Queen Mary's reign, must have been a gentle-hearted man, since he shed tears when he was compelled to publicly degrade Archbishop Cranmer before he went to the stake; however, he grew harder as the persecution went on, and sent three Protestants to the flames. Queen Elizabeth sent him to the Tower for refusing to take the oath of supremacy. He was a pleasant man, and when the lieutenant of the Tower, to his surprise, found five hundred French crowns stuffed in his purse and doublet, and asked him why he carried so much gold about with him, he replied, "I always love to have my friends about me." He was afterwards released, and sent with Boxall, his archdeacon, and Tunstal, the ex-bishop of Durham, to live in honourable durance with good Archbishop Parker at Lambeth, where they were kindly treated. He lived in that calm imprisonment ten years, and was then decently buried in Lambeth parish church.

In Elizabeth's time the bishops of Ely were cruelly robbed by the court. The queen actually kept the see vacant eighteen years, devoting some of the revenues, all of which she received, to relieve the distresses of the King of Portugal. She also, by an Act enabling her to alienate episcopal lands, seized manors and estates of the value of one thousand one hundred and thirty-two pounds, paying for them by probably nominal gifts of parsonages inappropriate to the value of one thousand one hundred and forty-four pounds, and she compelled Bishop Heton to lease Ely House in Holborn to Sir Christopher Hatton. The queen's imperious letter, threatening to unfrock the bishop if he refused the lease, is not of altogether certain authenticity. James the First said of Heton that most fat men, he noticed, preached lean sermons, but Heton larded his with learning. This good man is buried at Ely, and Mr. Gough observes that his effigy presents the only instance of a cope, ornamented with figures of the saints, on an episcopal tomb later than the Reformation. After Heton came that learned and good man, Bishop Andrews, a great favourite both of Elizabeth and James. His epitaph at St. Saviour's, Southwark, in which he is called "the universal bishop," begins:

Great Andrews, who the whole vast sea did drain
Of learning, and distilled it in his brain;
These pious drops are of the purest kind
Which trickled from the limbeck of his mind.

This worthy bishop was one of the principal translators of the Bible. He once entertained King James for three days at an expense of three thousand pounds, and Milton wrote a Latin elegy on his death. In this bishop's Articles of Inquiry (1611) he is anxious to know whether the ministers referred to wear ~~white~~ night-caps abroad and cut or pink apparel, and whether they renounce coat and cassock to ~~wear~~ in doublet and hose and light-coloured stockings.

Christopher Wren's uncle, Matthew Wren, was Bishop of Ely; he attended Prince Charles to Spain as chaplain, and was high in the confidence of that weak monarch, who, it is said, always sent him all anonymous letters written to Whitehall reflecting on his conduct. For protesting against his expulsion from the House of Lords, Wren was imprisoned fourteen years in the Tower, scorning all Cromwell's offers to release him. Lord Clarendon speaks of his great learning.

The texts of his sermons seem to have been often eccentric. When it was proposed to drain the Fens, a plan which it was thought would be injurious to Cambridge, he preached on the text, "Let judgment run down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream." And on his return from the marriage trip to Spain he took a line from the Psalms, "Abyssus Abyssum vocat" ("One deep calleth another"). This bishop generously built a chapel for Pembroke Hall at his own charge, endowed it with a Cambridgeshire manor, and left it all his gilt plate. During his dreary confinement in the Tower this true Cavalier regularly instituted and collated to all preferences in his diocese, though of course without the power to complete the gift by the somewhat essential fact of possession. Bishop Gunning was an equally stout loyalist, and preached at Tunbridge, urging the congregation to contribute to the king's army. He wrote against the Covenant, and read the English liturgy all through the Commonwealth at Exeter House Chapel. He threatened to rebuild the choir at Ely, and left money to repave it. Francis Turner, the next bishop, one of the bishops who opposed James the Second, and yet refused to take the oaths to William and Mary, was turned off his episcopal throne in consequence. His successor, the good and learned Bishop Patrick, ended the long controversy about the Hatton usurpation of Ely House and the London property of the see, which had been built over during the Commonwealth, by accepting a fee farm-rent of one hundred pounds a year. The library of Moore, the next bishop, was purchased by George the First for six thousand guineas and given to the University of Cambridge. Bishop Fleetwood is chiefly known for having one of his Whig sermons burnt by the House of Commons in Queen Anne's reign, for which George the First afterwards rewarded him with the see of Ely. Bishop Butts, who had been chaplain to George the Second, was a descendant of the well-known physician of King Henry the Eighth. To Bishop Mawson, who encouraged the draining of Ely, which had been neglected, the cathedral owes the transfer of the choir to the presbytery at the east end. He also paved the new choir with black and white marble, and gave several stained-glass windows. So much for the bishops.

One of the most beautiful spots in Ely cathedral is the Lady chapel, a master-

piece of Gothic architecture, considered by many judges to be almost unrivalled. It was begun in Bishop Hotham's time (1321), a monk being overseer of the works, and the sub-prior the architect. It was completed in 1349. It is a tradition at Ely that John de Wisbech, the overseer, when digging the foundation with his own hands, discovered a brass pot full of money, which he devoted to the workmen's wages. It took twenty-eight years and thirteen weeks in building, and is thought to have been taken as a pattern for King's College chapel at Cambridge; though, as Fuller says, if that be so, the child hath outgrown the father. If this chapel had been placed at the east end, Ely cathedral would have been the largest in England. The chapel is a hundred feet in length, forty-six in breadth, and sixty feet high in the inside. It has neither pillars nor arches, and depends for its support entirely upon four single buttresses at each side, and the double buttresses at the corners. There were originally, inside and outside this chapel, one hundred and forty-seven images, besides small ones above the altar. Of the thirty-two figures formerly niched in the corner buttresses, not one is now left, so ruthless were the image-breakers of the Reformation and Commonwealth. The Duke of Lancaster gave one of the windows of this chapel; and from the table of accounts we discover that the glass painters received sevenpence a day, the gold leaf costing eightpence the hundred. Several bishops were buried in this chapel, and also John de Wisbech, the designer.

Bishop Alcock's chapel is disappointing, considering the bishop was the comptroller of the royal buildings to Henry the Seventh. It is what architects call overcharged with open-work pinnacles, canopies, and heavy pendants, that distract the eye from the general effect. There are a few niches, but the statues are all gone, and the effigy of the bishop has not escaped the destroyer. The tomb is adorned with vine-leaves; and the bishop's funny emblem, two cocks supporting a mitre, is still preserved. A little statue of Henry the Seventh was discovered by Mr. Bentham behind one of the pinnacles.

Bishop West's chapel, at the east end of the south aisle of the choir, is as beautiful as Alcock's is tasteless. It is a little grotto of sculpture, and crowded with niches. Fuller, in his *Worthies*, tells us that the master masons of James the First pronounced the work of this chapel to surpass

that of Henry the Seventh's chapel in elegance and finish. Every inch of the wall is covered with alto-rilievo, pedestals, niches, or canopies, as if Piety and Wealth had joined together to heap money on this memorial of the dead. There are upwards of two hundred niches, the canopies of which are carved into a lace-work of geometric ornament. The pendants of the ceiling are ingeniously formed by angels holding the arms of the see and those of Henry the Eighth. The bishop's humble motto, "*Gratia Dei, sum quod sum*," referring to some outbreaks of his at the university, and of which he repented, is conspicuously displayed over the entrance of the chapel and in several parts of the interior. The bosses of the roof are ornamented with the arms of the see and the founder, masks of cherubs, and grotesque designs, executed in white upon green and blue grounds. Many of the medallions are Raphaellesque and Holbeinesque; and the acanthus and the honeysuckle are frequently employed.

In Cromwell's time it was half resolved to pull down the cathedral, and sell the materials for the relief of sick and wounded soldiers and their widows and orphans. The oldest part of Ely cathedral is, unfortunately, the part most injured. Part of the Rufus and Henry the First work still stands in the eastern transept, but the north-west angle of the north arm of this transept fell in 1699, and was ruthlessly rebuilt by Wren, who inserted a Tuscan doorway, when, close by, the entrance of the Lady's chapel was there to guide him to a fitting model. The side aisle to the transept are peculiar to Ely, St. Mary's, Redcliffe, and Westminster Abbey.

The domed octagon, which is a triumph of Gothic genius, and is known to be the work of Alan Walsingham, the sacristan, in 1322, is as remarkable for its strength as for its daring originality and magnificence. The light clustered pillars which support the eight arches and the lofty and massive timber roof, have wreaths of flowers and foliage for capitals, and there are mutilated sitting figures over the keystones of the arches. The heads, upon which the canopies rest, represent Edward the Third and his queen, Bishop Hotham, Prior Cranden, the young priestly architect, and the long-haired master mason. On two capitals which support niches, the principal events of St. Etheldreda's life are represented in alto-rilievo. There is an open carved balcony below the lantern,

and outside a beautiful open stone balustrade, with light turrets, from whence the roof rises. The whole was erected, with prayer and praise, in twenty years of the glorious and warlike reign of Edward the Third.

In this English cathedral alone the bishop occupies the old abbot's seat, and the dean the prior's, Ely being the only abbey converted into a see. Mr. Bentham, when the new choir was built under his superintendence, proved that the original east end of the cathedral, at the presbytery, was circular, after the old Byzantine type.

The first great alteration in the plan of the cathedral, with its three rows of pillars and arches one over the other, was first modified by Bishop Northwold, who added six arches to the building in the light pointed style of Henry the Third. The choir roof is formed of chalk, about five inches thick, between fan-like ribs of freestone.

Ely Porta, as the west gate of the cathedral-close is called, was built by Prior Buckton in the reign of Richard the Second, and therefore bears on its front the arms of the Confessor, who was Richard's patron saint. The prior held a monthly court here, and it was also the court of the abbey manors. The abbey, in the middle ages, boasted a prison, a court, a vineyard, an orchard, and a windmill. The vineyard, as the old monkish *distich* ran—

*Hæc sunt Elysæ, Lanterna, Capella Mariæ,
Ast molendinum, multum dans vinea vinum.*

The schoolmaster of the monastery kept a grammar school for five charity boys; he celebrated divine service three days a week in the chapel of the almonry, and three days in the chapel of the Virgin; and also taught the junior brethren every day for an hour and a half. He was boarded and fed, and had an annual gown and seventeen shillings and fourpence in silver; for performing service, twenty-six shillings and eightpence, seven monks' loaves, and seven gallons of the best ale without froth. One chamber in the Ely infirmary was known as Hell, and was probably a place of confinement for the refractory or the insane. Monastic rooms were sometimes called Heaven and Paradise. The number of monks at Ely was fixed by Bishop Northwold at seventy, but it seems seldom to have exceeded fifty.

At the Dissolution, the possessions of the monastery were estimated, according

to Speed, at one thousand three hundred and one pound eight shillings and two pence. Nasmith, in his admirable edition of Bishop Tanner's "Notitia Monastica," thus sums up the spoil heaped together by Henry the Eighth in his profitable quarrel with the Pope: "By the suppression of the greater houses and three hundred and eighty others, Henry raised a revenue of two hundred thousand pounds a year, besides sacking one hundred thousand pounds in plate and jewels. By the one Act of 1548. he destroyed, at one stroke of the pen, ninety colleges, one hundred and ten hospitals, and two thousand three hundred and seventy-four chantries and free chapels. On the other hand, he turned thirteen droning and mischievous monasteries into cathedrals, viz.: Canterbury, Winchester, Durham, Worcester, Rochester, Norwich, Ely, and Carlisle." Mr. Nasmith decides that the religious houses, before this fatal blow, held about a tenth part of the landed property of England, and that their two hundred thousand pounds annual revenue, taking the rise and value of land, represented two millions of our present money.

Ely, like Durham, has a Galilee, or porch, which Eustace, the fifth bishop, rebuilt. It is one of the earliest specimens of the pointed style, and consists of two stories without windows, and on the outside it is adorned with four rows of arches and small marble pillars one above another. The traces of a roof on the north face of Ely tower prove the former existence of a transept on that side; and it is a singular and unaccountable fact in the history of Ely cathedral, that no information exists as to the fall or destruction of this transept, although, as Mr. Bentham supposes with reason, it could not have disappeared earlier than the reign of Henry the Fifth or Sixth, and the foundation of what we now see remaining was laid as late as the reign of Henry the Eighth.

THE FISHERMAN'S FUNERAL.

Up on the breezy headland the fisherman's grave they made,
Where, over the daisies and clover bells, the birchen
branches swayed;
Above us the lark was singing in the cloudless skies
of June,
And under the cliffs the billows were chanting their
ceaseless tune:
For the creamy line was curving along the hollow
shore,
Where the dear old tides were flowing that he would
ride no more.

The dirge of the wave, the note of the bird, and the
priest's low tone were blent
In the breeze that blew from the moorland, all laden
with country scent;
But never a thought of the new-mown hay tossing
on sunny plains,
Or of lilies deep in the wild wood, or roses gemming
the lanes,
Woke in the hearts of the stern bronzed men who
gathered around the grave,
Where lay the mate who had fought with them the
battle of wind and wave.

How boldly he steered the coble across the foaming
bar,
When the sky was black to the eastward and the
breakers white on the Scar!
How his keen eye caught the squall ahead, how his
strong hand furled the sail,
As we drove o'er the angry waters before the raging
gale!
How cheery he kept all the long dark night; and
never a parson spoke
Good words, like those he said to us, when at last
the morning broke!

So thought the dead man's comrades, as silent and
sad they stood,
While the prayer was prayed, the blessing said, and
the dull earth struck the wood;
And the widow's sob, and the orphan's wail, jarred
through the joyous air;
How could the light wind o'er the sea, blow on so
fresh and fair?
How could the gay waves laugh and leap, landward
o'er sand and stone,
While he, who knew and loved them all, lay lapped
in clay alone?

But for long, when to the beetling heights the snow-
tipped billows roll,
When the cod, and skate, and dogfish dart around
the herring shoal;
When gear is sorted, and sails are set, and the merry
breeces blow,
And away to the deep sea-harvest the stalwart
reapers go,
A kindly sigh, and a hearty word, they will give to
him who lies
Where the clover springs, and the heather blooms,
beneath the northern skies.

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF ART-NEEDLEWORK.

In these schools an art is taught to poor
gentlewomen that would almost make its
visitors wish to be poor gentlewomen, so
that they might be taught it, and get it
done. There are beautiful colours, there
are beautiful shades of colours, there are
beautiful fabrics, beautiful designs, beau-
tiful modes, and treatments, and tex-
tures, and appliances; the gentlewomen
approach their workroom through an en-
trance railed off from the beautiful Hor-
ticultural Gardens at South Kensington;
they pass by beautiful ferns, and mosses,
and grasses, as they descend an easy flight
of stairs; and if perfection, together with
the delight of it, can come from example,
from tone, or intangible atmosphere, into
these schools perfection ought always
to find its way. As terms of the highest

praise are the only fit terms in which to speak of the decorative needlework the pupils have exhibited, it may be at once set down that perfection is what the managers have aimed at; and that, in providing a thoroughly fresh and feminine field for the paid labours of gentlewomen, these managers have answered a loudly-reiterated question, and have resolved that a most excellent and desirable work shall resolutely be carried out.

Now, on the face of it, at the outset, the needlework announced to be taught in these new schools is decorative. That makes it costly; that makes it a luxury; that makes it available, at any rate on a large scale, only for the rich. All this must be clearly understood. A very much more complex matter is it to understand what decorative needlework of this sort is; to understand, that is, how crewels and floss silks, cleverly manipulated, can become high-art upholstery and furniture; can afford an infinity of various and ever-varying forms, for taste, and talent, and ingenuity; for these same royal schools, in short, to find expression in, and place, and motive, or *raison d'être*. The best way, broadly, to get an idea of this is to remember, also broadly, what it is to decorate a house, and what is the ordinary function of a decorator. A curtain, for example, is a curtain; so can any cloth, or hanging, or covering, be bought at a higher or lower price, as cloth, or hanging, or covering, and be nailed up, simple, and remain so. That is one plan of hiding away plain walls, and planks, and chair seats; of saving the rush of air from passages and doorways, from minuter cracks and crannies. But let this material be subjected to the skilful treatment practised in these schools, and it can be made into a work of art, into a genuine thing of beauty, by patience, industry, and the dexterous passage of the needle. Its value is enhanced a hundredfold, too; it is rendered an heirloom; certain to have centuries of life to it, a possession insuring care and veneration. A large folding-screen shall be cited as an instance. A large folding-screen, let it be pressed upon the attention; not an elegant plaything for the hand; not a hanging fire-shade, called, in a feudal way, a "banner," but a real piece of furniture, solid enough to stand in a vast reception-room, and part off into privacy a good-sized corner of it. Such a screen, being of simple stretched black satin, has so delicious a group of leaves and birds

worked upon each panel, that it is made as rare as the apparel *Petruchio* said he would go to Venice for, to do due honour to his *Katharine's* wedding-day. The leaves are broad and bold; life-size; two hands long, possibly, and as wide as the palm; the birds are storks, opening their grey wings, standing on their slim rose-pink legs, whilst they nestle against the plants, and preen their feathers with their slender bills. Beautiful effect is gained by these plants and birds being of velvet "appliqué," sewn on to the satin by some edge or cord. Another screen, lent by the Duchess of Newcastle, is quite as chaste, and costly, and artistic. The groundwork of the panels of this appears to be a diaper of gold. It is really amber-coloured manufactured silk, with a tiny diamond pattern woven into it; and on this fabric the pupils have embroidered (in silk) a delicate trail of autumn leaves, bearing russet berries, and being relieved, at intervals, by scarlet and orange butterflies. A third screen, with a background only of Bath-rubber, or a kind of woolly Russian "crash," would take a great many less bank-notes to pay for it, and yet by the grace of its embroidery (each panel has a trail of flame-coloured nasturtiums, worked in crewel) it could find fit place in the apartments of a queen. Hangings, too, both for curtains and portières, are excellent examples of how richness can have richness added to it by the beautiful workmanship executed in these schools. The Duke of Westminster lends a set of curtains, to which the eye is at once attracted. The material is drab, or fawn, silk; and it is enriched, all over, by great iris flowers, by splendid roses and convolvuluses, all in "proper" colours and in silk, and kept together by a tracery of stalk or stem, and a charming variety of naturally-formed leaves. Some hangings of crimson satin, lent by Countess Cowper, are of similar design and magnificence, and not less noticeable. Others are of brown velvet, embroidered in coloured wool; of cream-coloured silk (worked for Lady Musgrave), also in wool; and there is a set, of velvet, the property of Lord Wharnccliffe, remarkable for having the embroidery confined to the border, which is, however, of bold conception, a foot wide, perhaps, and consisting of massive sunflowers, each head as vigorous and life-full as if it were rearing itself against a sunny wall. But perhaps the most superb curtains exhibited are a pair of costly crimson velvet, worked with a deep margin, and a monogram for the

centre-piece, in gold. These are regal. They are no "unreverent robes." They remind of Gremio's "basins and ewers to lave her dainty hands;" of his

Hangings all of Tyrian tapestry;
His arras, counterpoints;
Costly apparel, tents, and canopies;
Fine linen; Turkey cushions boss'd with pearl;
Valance of Venice gold in needlework.

Certainly, for no homely house, to use Richard Plantagenet's words, are these rich hangings. And yet, on close examination, the gold that edges them, as in the case of the gold in her Grace of Newcastle's folding-screen, is not gold at all, but manufactured silk. This is laid on the velvet (appliqué), kept within the artist's limits by a sewn cord; another example of which appliqué-work is given in some crimson damask-satin hangings belonging to the Duchess of Buccleuch. These have a border of "patines of bright gold," laid on white satin, relieved by massive sprays of leaves and flowers in crimson velvet; and they, as well as the other examples enumerated, give excellent testimony to the value of design, and contrast, and appliance; to the beauty, too, of the feminine art this Royal School of Art-Needlework, with so much taste and wise benevolence, is established to teach and to revive.

In the matter of superb coverings for tables, also, the school is strong. Lord Calthorpe lends one of dark blue velvet, embroidered in amber and blue, and deeply fringed. There are some of various-coloured satins; and there are many specimens of borders, already worked, to be sewn round any velvet or satin to be desired. One of these, lent by Lady Marion Alford, is of velvet laid on to satin, and embroidered in floss silk; others are of fine white linen, cut to a delicate tracery, like Spanish lace, and bound round every edge with gold thread. Nothing could well be more elegant or expensive than these—a background of red silk, or amber silk, showing up the pattern most effectively. They are all, however, of immense price; suitable only for a home whose mistress

Sweeps it through the court with troops of ladies,

Bearing a duke's revenues on her back.

The very train of her worst wearing gown
Better worth than all my father's lands.

And they must not be mentioned without a companion statement that there are other materials and other styles of work that can be supplied at much less cost. There are

white serge, or camlet; table-cloths (to mention a few) with a margin only, of embroidery, worked in coloured wool; there is a cloth of *feuille-morte*, or sage, edged with a band of white cloth, and that embroidered with bold yellow flowers; another of these has a band of darker velvet, lightened by a wreath of great white daisies conventionally treated; and there are cloths of serge, banded with other serge, of deeper or paler tone; there are white "huckabacks" bordered with crimson twill, bearing scarcely any embroidery at all. Indeed, to beautify for the mere sake of beauty, and to take ordinary materials to work this magic upon, are the legitimate labours of decoration; are, most especially, the legitimate labours of the thousands of unemployed and cultivated Englishwomen, anxious to decorate their own or other people's homes; and these have not been overlooked by the patronesses and council of the South Kensington School. One way in which this is shown is on a small piece of drugget lying on their exhibition floor. It is just a foot-stand on coming out of the bath, perhaps; an oblong piece, twelve inches by eighteen, of the common "duffel" grey; its cost, a few pence. A gentlewoman's hand has taken this uninviting material (which would lie about an unthrifty house, to get "dog's-eared" or kicked heedlessly away), a gentlewoman's sense of beauty has been applied to it, and it has a "button-hole" edge of rich claret worsted, a worked band an inch or two within this, and a centre-piece of thick leaves and flowers. Similar treatment has given value to a bath blanket, which is prettily, but very easily, embroidered all round with scarlet wool; and has "repair'd with double riches" some common drugget used to keep draughts from open doorways, and called, technically, *portières*. The worsted used to embellish these is coarse and cheap; the patterns are wide apart and bold; but there is the material improved, by many times, in price, and forming an object that the eye is glad to see. Strips of embroidered linen, to be sewn round washing-dresses, are shown in the school, too, a hand wide, and as many yards long as may be required. The embroidery is in colours; it can be seen at once to be a work of art by hand, not machine-facture; and from having a ground of linen, not cotton, it would remain a work of art after even half a century of laundresses' wear and tear. Cushion-covers approach, again, more nearly to the ordinary "fancy-work" En-

glish women are apt to do. There are plenty at South Kensington; yet, such as there are, resemble in no way the "boarding-school" work that is prevalent, and that requires no particular art-sense from its workers, and no marked cultivation of brain. The covers exhibited are, some of them, of white satin, with a delicious gathering of blue forget-me-nots; others, of olive satin, with bouquets in "proper" colours, harmoniously treated, though not confined to one sort of flower. There is art in these designs, too, it must be remembered. They are not blotches of colour, unnaturally "shaded," growing out of nowhere, printed and stamped, to be reproduced by the score. They proclaim the same tender perceptions in the designer as are known to be in the mind of the painter of a delicate picture; of the composer of an ennobling and graceful melody. And, though the designer is not the worker (for art-masters of well-proved skill give their aid to the essential particular of design), the gentlewomen who wield the needle bear the same relation to the designers as the engraver does to the painter, the player to the creative musician; and, unless the art-sense of an interpreter be in sympathy with the originator, unless the finger have a dainty touch, it is well known that the best creation suffers, and has a very bare result.

Notice of these Royal Schools would not be complete without a word about some chair-covers worked for the Empress of Russia. They are of satin, a very dark green; and each one bears a bouquet of floss-silk flowers. In a case near to these is a design for a folding-screen, for the Princess of Wales; in course of execution, it may be presumed, or in that completer condition, "sent home," since only the artist's drawing is shown, with the colours he recommends. A design, from the hand of Princess Louise, has an interest of its own. It is a large white lily and lily leaves, arranged for repetition and as a border, some nine or ten inches wide, for hangings, it may be, and table-coverings, en suite. Princess Helena goes farther still in practical co-operation with the aims of the school. Her Royal Highness, being the president, and taking a prominent part in Council and Committee, shows a piece of her own embroidery. It is a geometric pattern, worked on black satin, in scarlet and amber silk.

O that thou knew'st

The royal occupation! Thou should'st see
A workman in 't!

comes into the mind² naturally, in contemplating this. And her Majesty the Queen, it must be added, is not unrepresented. In another case there is a robe, or jupe, exhibited, which is being prepared for her Majesty's own wear. The material is black satin; it is cut "rasé," the queen's lady-subjects will be interested to hear (which means it is to shave the ground, in pretty French descriptiveness, not to sweep it); it is quilted and wadded; with a running pattern, floriated, covering it entirely, and making it of consistent elegance and price. "The king's daughter . . . shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework. . . . Thy raiment was of silk and brodered work." It is all good; it is all queenly, and, what is more to the purpose, womanly; and it reopens, under most favourable conditions, a large field in which women's labour can never have masculine competition, and which woman has always had entirely for her own. Much to be congratulated, also, are poor gentlewomen at having royal ladies over them who know their wants, and their sensibilities, and cultivation; who have, too, thus allied themselves to bring a beautiful art into new prominence and demand, for the very wise and benevolent reason that it is entirely within gentlewomen's compass, and must, for its own sake, be thoroughly congenial to them. England has, whether happily or unhappily, women who must work; England has women who will work; women who have culture, and courage, and the resolution to overcome the disagreeablenesses of work, the physical fatigue of it, its mental annoyance and ignoble strain; it only remained, therefore, to find the right work fitted for these women, to give it dignity, to create a taste for it, to bring it to the market, and offer it at a price. And, since the Royal School of Art-Needlework has stepped in precisely to effect all this, and seems to have discovered a right royal road (at last) in which it may all be effected, nothing has to be said beyond a good hope that it will have strength, and health, and a long prosperity.

In these columns,* the idea of the women of the present day reverting to the art-needlework of their ancestresses has been advocated before. It is true such advocacy was to the point of the beautiful and durable industry being cultivated as a pleasure, not as a means of bread; but

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, August 16th, 1873, "Ancient Needlework."

the fact of its being cultivated as a means of earning money does not touch the beauty, and the womanliness, and the desirability, however; and, in fact, gives every argument used then the same force now, and more. An immense opening exists in art-needlework, too, leading the women of the present day leagues and leagues beyond their ancestresses. Everything that civilisation lacked centuries ago, civilisation glories in now; and this must bring as new an aspect to this art as it has brought to other arts elsewhere. The mere action of mind upon mind, by people getting quickly to each other owing to convenience of locomotion; by people seeing what other people have done; the bold eye learning from the quaint; the pale treatment blossoming from admixture with the rich; the too-hard hand recognising the beauty and the bounty of the free; the mere fact of people being brought acquainted with other uses, with other fabrics and materials, with other forms, must have an immense effect, in the end, on the art-needlework of to-day, as compared with the art-needlework of centuries bygone; and it will be well that this should be actively borne in recollection by the council of the Royal Schools. One curious fact about this inevitable growth and alteration is, that the precise way of it cannot be foretold. Like other growths, it is growth, not fabrication, and it must be left to the development of time. Let the council, being sure it will come, be on the watch for it, that is all; and let them go on all the more hopefully with their labours, knowing that, though they plant for only one sort of fruit, others will come, no less necessary and nourishing; and that these fruits will be their fruits, and should not be looked upon as unexpected or alien.

One result from the establishment of schools for art-needlework is perhaps so manifest, it may as well at once be pointed out. If the art be good for gentlewomen, it will be good for other women, not born gentle, but perhaps as cultivated, as full of patience and art-feeling, as necessitous. Needlework is classic. Josiah brake down the houses near by the house where the women wove hangings; Solomon decked a bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved work, with fine linen of Egypt; set a woman far above rubies who laid her hands to the spindle, who made herself and her household coverings of tapestry, and silk, and scarlet; Moses wished for hangings of fine twined linen, wrought

with needlework; Valeria found Volumnia and Virgilia "manifest housekeepers," and did what she could to make them "play the idle housewife" with her for an afternoon. "What, are you sewing here? Come, lay aside your stitchery! I would your cambric were as sensible as your finger, that you might leave pricking it for pity!" Anne Hathaway must have used her needle resolutely; with, possibly, somewhat too persistent and too flippant will; how otherwise could Shakespeare have written so humorously:

What is this? A sleeve?
What! up and down, carv'd like an apple tart,
With snip, and nip, and cut, and alish, and slash!

And with all this evidence of the adherence of women to ornamentation by the needle, let the council of the Royal School of Art-Needlework congratulate themselves heartily if they are the means of the art being cultivated much more largely than it could be within their walls, and if it reaches all over the country, and is practised by women of all grades. Some comic satisfaction may come to the council, too, anent a new species of what may be called Benefit of Clergy. Nineteenth-century young ladies have been in the habit of inundating bachelor and favourite curates with braces and slippers, worked on canvas, in "lovely" Berlin wool. If, after this loan exhibition, young ladies (without the prospect of immediate recompense for it) will embroider bath foot-stands, bath blankets, borders for table-covers and hangings, and panels for folding-screens, they may be quite sure their presents will be very much more useful and acceptable than they are now, and the Royal School of Art-Needlework may be thanked for having brought about a very practical, albeit it may be an utterly unintended, revolution.

REMARKABLE ADVENTURERS.

CASANOVA.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER V. OUT OF THE WORLD.

THE fatal command, "Up and be gone!" softened by a donation of a thousand ducats from the king of Poland, proved but the first of a long series of similar affronts—minus the ducats. Even the warmest admirers of adventurous life, and the most able professors of the noble art of living on one's wits, must confess that, unless lead, steel, or hemp intervene, a time must come when the best artist

will find that he has pretty well covered the map of this world with the fame of his deeds, and, like a Newgate Alexander, must sigh for new worlds to swindle. Now fame is all very well in its way, but this particular kind of fame is more likely than any other to leave its possessor without a shoe to his foot. No sooner does a too celebrated adventurer arrive in a town than a disposition is shown to kick him out of it, and the slightest pretext suffices for an order to quit, then and there. The ghosts of his misdeeds confront him at every turn. Happy hunting-grounds, once filled with ready dupes, are drawn in vain. The hunter is, alas for him! all too celebrated. The twang of his longbow is a too familiar sound. Impertinent people tell him with a sneer that he is "known." Let him but clap his hand on his sword, it is enough. Down come the police with the usual chorus, "Up and begone!" and all the work has to be begun over again.

In the smaller German towns Casanova fared not badly after his expulsion from Poland. At Leipzig, Dresden, and Schwerin he came to no particular grief, and found time to cane an editor at Cologne; but a slight scrape at Vienna was quite enough to bring the Austrian police down upon him.

Count Schrotzbach sends a messenger to bring the Venetian before him. They jump into Casanova's carriage—he still keeps his carriage—and soon arrive at the governor's office. This gentleman "of remarkable obesity" calls Casanova to him, and showing him a watch, says:

"You see what o'clock it is. Well, if you are inside Vienna at the same hour to-morrow, I will have you flung out of it by my agents."

"What have I done, sir, to bring upon me so severe an order?"

"To begin with, you have no right to ask questions, and I owe you no account of my actions. Nevertheless, I may tell you that you would have been left in peace if you had not infringed the laws of the empire, which forbid games of hazard and send swindlers to the galleys. Do you know this purse?"

Casanova explains that his purse has been stolen from him. Count Schrotzbach merely laughs and continues:

"I know your inventive genius, and why and how you left Warsaw, so prepare to leave Vienna."

Casanova blusters in vain, and invoking

his familiar genius—not Paralia, but Impudence—writes to Prince Kannitz, solicits an interview, and is recommended to petition the empress. The Venetian ambassador, of course, will say nothing for an escaped state prisoner. Nevertheless he "falls on his feet" and secures the protection of Count Witzthum, the Saxon envoy, who tells him to write his petition at once. In an ill-inspired moment he pens the following remarkable document:—

"TO HER MAJESTY THE EMPRESS-QUEEN.

"MADAM,—If an insect, about to be crushed by your imperial and royal foot, implored your mercy, I am convinced that your majesty would spare the poor creature. I am that insect, and I intreat you, madam, to order the governor, the Count Schrotzbach, to wait but one week before crushing me with your majesty's slipper. At the expiration of that time it is probable that the count would be unable to do me any injury; it is possible even that at that time your majesty may have withdrawn from him the redoubtable slipper that you have intrusted to him to crush evil-doers, and not an honest and peaceable Venetian, who, notwithstanding his flight from the Piombi, has always respected the laws.

"21st Jan., 1767.

CASANOVA."

This extraordinary mixture of impertinence and servility produces the effect which might have been anticipated. Count Witzthum advising, the Venetian makes off to Angsburg, swearing vengeance against Austria, and resolving to hang one Porchini—to whom he owed the entire "trouble"—with his own hands. Pushing on to Paris, the same "fatality" pursues him. Behold him walking peaceably enough in a concert-room, near the orangery of the Tuileries. He is quite alone, looking somewhat middle-aged, but dressed as gaily as ever, in all the colours of the rainbow. Suddenly he hears his own name, and forgetting the proverb, listens to the conversation between a very young man and a party of ladies. The youth is telling how Casanova has cost him a million, by robbing the late Madame d'Urfé of it—no very great exaggeration if the young gentleman were the heir of that infatuated lady. Casanova goes up to the "calumniator," threatens to kick him, and makes a scene. Next morning a chevalier of St. Louis waits upon him with an order, "in the king's name," to quit Paris in twenty-four hours. The reason assigned is simply

the "will and pleasure" of his majesty, and the document concludes with the words, "wherefore, I pray God that he may have you in his holy keeping." Furious Casanova obtains a delay of a few days, and then sets off for Spain, well supplied with money, and furnished, moreover, with a letter from the Princess Lubomirska, a friend of Madame de Romain, to Count Aranda, president of the Council of Castile, and "more of a king than the king himself." To this famous statesman—the expeller of the Jesuits from Spanish soil—a man of the highest capacity, and, moreover, a man of pleasure, but of an exterior absolutely hideous, not to say disgusting. Casanova presents his letter, finding the count at his toilet. Aranda "looks him over" from head to foot, and commences ominously.

"Why have you come to Spain?"

"To acquire information, my lord."

"You have no other object?"

"None—save to put my humble talents at the service of your highness."

"You do not need my protection to live in peace. Attend to the police regulations and nobody will interfere with you. As for employment, apply to your ambassador. It is his business to present you, for we do not know you."

Unfortunate Casanova is driven to explain that he and the Grand Signiory are not on the best of terms, and hears that, in that case, nothing can be done for him. Nothing abashed, he tries the Neapolitan ambassador, the Duke Lassada, favourite of the king, but without avail. They all refer him to the Venetian ambassador. Writing to his friend Dandolo at Venice, for a few lines of recommendation to Mocenigo, he presents himself in due course, and is received by Gaspardo Soderini, "a man of wit and talent," who at once remarks on the "great liberty" Casanova has taken in appearing before him.

"Don't you know, signor, that you are forbidden to set foot on Venetian territory? Now this embassy is Venetian territory!"

Mocenigo, in fact, is very glad to know him as a private acquaintance, but cannot be brought to recognise him publicly. As usual, Casanova gets into trouble before long, is locked up at Buen Retiro, but contrives to get out of prison quickly, only to undergo incarceration in the citadel of Barcelona. Shaking Spanish dust off

his feet, he again visits Rome, Bologna, and Ancona, but finds that good fortune has left him with his youth. His position in the world is no longer pleasant. Money is getting scarce. His allies and protectors are dead. He is getting old, and finds himself almost at the end of his tether, without profession, position, or capital. The great cities of Europe are closed to him, and the police everywhere on the alert. The great adventurer sees at last the evil of his ways, and determines to strain what little influence he has left to him, to get himself restored to his rights as a Venetian citizen. To this end he fixes his head-quarters at Trieste, and by rendering service to his government, earns various subsidies, in hard cash, and a small pension. At last his efforts are crowned with success, and in 1775, at the age of fifty, he is permitted to return to Venice.

The life of this extraordinary man now becomes for several years a complete blank. What he did during the eight years between 1775 and 1783, when he again quitted his "ungrateful country," is unknown, save that he wrote a book on the Polish question, then occupying a large space in public opinion. For some unexplained reason he again left Venice, never to return, and as the renown of his exploits had died out or been effaced by those of Cagliostro, he again visited Paris, only to find his former friends dead or poor. Nevertheless, we find him on excellent terms with his countrymen abroad. At dinner one day at the ambassador's he meets a certain Count Waldstein, nephew of the Prince de Ligne, and greatly interested in the magical nonsense, which, thanks to Cagliostro and others, is a common topic of conversation in learned society. Waldstein talks of divination, the key of Solomon Agrippa, and so forth. Casanova bursts out with "Cospetto! to whom do you speak of these matters? To me, Casanova, it is an old story. I know all about it."

Waldstein is delighted to find an adept, and cries, "Come and live with me in Bohemia. I start to-morrow."

At the end of his resources, old, poor, weary of going up and down in the earth, and to and fro in it, the way-worn, battered adventurer jumps at the offer, and is installed as librarian to Count Waldstein at the castle of Dux, near Teplitz, there to pass, on the modest income of a thousand florins per annum, the last fourteen years of a stormy life. "During six summers,"

writes the Prince de Ligne, "he made me happy by his wonderful imagination—as lively as if he were but twenty years of age—by his enthusiasm for me, and his agreeable instruction."

It must not be imagined, however, that in the quiet retreat which the kindness of Count Waldstein provided for him the fiery old Italian could not succeed in raising a storm. On the contrary, his vivid imagination and equally lively temper made the castle of Dux almost uninhabitable. To begin with, he could not speak either German or Bohemian, and never wearied of cursing the natives for ignorant barbarians, incapable of appreciating a savant of his rank. Hardly a day passed without an altercation between the steward or some of the servants and the learned librarian. The cook had spoiled his "polenta," or ruined the dish of macaroni he always insisted upon, or burnt his coffee; the chief coachman had given him a rash and careless driver to take him to visit the Prince de Ligne; the dogs had barked during the night and disturbed his excellency the librarian; unexpected guests had arrived at the castle, and Casanova had been obliged to dine at a side table; the hunting-horns had played out of tune; the parson had tried to convert him; the count had not met him cordially; the soup had been served too hot; the footman had passed him over in serving the wine; he had not been presented to a person of quality who had come to see the lance which pierced the great Waldstein; the key of the arsenal had been not lost but hidden, out of pure spite; the count had lent a book without notifying him; a groom had forgotten to touch his hat to him. The guests, too, were nearly as bad as the servants, and were ill-mannered enough to laugh at the poor old broken-down adventurer, who fancied himself the possessor of the true "grand manner." He tried to speak German rather than remain silent; but his smooth Venetian tongue floundered over Teutonic gutturals and aspirates. The guests could not understand him; he got into a passion, and they laughed consumedly. He spouted his French verses—poor old man—and they laughed still more. He gesticulated wildly while declaiming his Italian verses, and they laughed again. On entering a room he made his best bow, still in the grand manner taught him by Marcel, the famous dancing-master, sixty years before, and they laughed still more.

He walked through a minuet according to tradition, and laughter broke out again. He put his white plume in his hat, donned his gold embroidered coat, his ample velvet waistcoat, his garters with paste buckles over his silk stockings, and the rude guests held their sides. "Cospetto!" he roared, "you are all 'cansaille;' you are all Jacobins. You insult the count, and the count insults me by not resenting your infamous behaviour." Then he attacked the count himself. "Sir, I have fought and wounded the grand general of Poland. I was not born a gentleman, but I have made myself one." The count laughed—another injury. One fine morning the count enters his room with two pairs of pistols, uttering never a word, and dying to laugh outright. Casanova weeps, embraces him, and cries, "Shall I kill my benefactor? Oh! che bella cosa!" He checks his tears, fancying the count may think he is frightened, accepts the pistols, hands them back, striking an attitude like a dancing-master, weeps again, and talks magic, cabala, and macaroni. Complaints pour in from villagers that the old man is too fond of gossiping with their daughters. The villagers are probably in the right, for we know the customs, not to say manners, of the Signor Casanova, and can picture the wicked old roué tottering about on his high red heels and leering at the country girls with his rheumy eyes, like a superannuated satyr. Bohemian parents understand him not, abhor the outlandish old rascal, and "cry haro" upon him. He says they are detestable democrats. He gives a nickname to the neighbouring abbey of Osseg, gets into trouble with the monks, and drags the count into the quarrel. He gives himself indigestion, and complains that he is poisoned. He is "spilt" out of a carriage, and says it is the work of Jacobins. He gets materials on credit at the count's cloth factory, and says the people are disrespectful when they call for the money.

His deadliest enemy at Dux was a certain Faulkinher, steward of Count Waldstein. This personage, whose name reads like Faulconer badly spelt, used every possible device to get Casanova out of the castle, and led the peppery old fellow a terrible life. The count himself stood by Casanova, so far as reason and common sense would permit, but in his absence his steward "persecuted" the librarian, who was, no doubt, a disagreeable tenant enough.

So long as Casanova drew his salary regularly, he kept his own private table in the count's absence, and paid his way, but a terrible disaster at Leipzig, in which Casanova was concerned, with his publishers, to the extent of four thousand florins, having compelled him to renounce half of his little income, he found it impossible to eat alone in solitary grandeur, and was fain to share the table of the count's upper servants. This was a terrible blow, the more especially as a stud-groom was admitted to sit near Casanova. This fellow appears to have been of a humorous turn. Stealing a book of Casanova's, he abstracted the portrait frontispiece, enriched it with opprobrious epithets, and stuck it up in the marketplace. The storm was tremendous, but the bitterest sarcasms fell blunted from the thick hides of Casanova's tormenters. At last these persecutions wear out his patience. Adopting his usual expression, "It is the will of God," or "God wills it," he declares himself about to quit Dux. He asks the Prince de Ligne for letters of recommendation to the Grand Duke of Weimar, his particular friend; for the Grand Duchess of Saxe-Gotha, whom he does not know; and for the Berlin Jews. He sets out on the sly, leaving a farewell letter for Waldstein—tender, proud, candid, and irritated. Waldstein only laughs, and says he will be sure to come back. Forgetting his nearly seventy years, the veteran sets out with all the hopefulness of youth, but is doomed to have his spirits speedily and cruelly dashed. He is kept kicking his heels in ante-chambers. Nobody will give him a place, either as tutor, librarian, or chamberlain; he says, everywhere in season, and out of season, that the Germans are a stupid people. The excellent and amiable Grand Duke of Weimar receives him cordially enough, but he immediately becomes jealous of Goethe and Wieland, the famous protégés of the grand duke, and declaims against them and the literature of the country. At Berlin he thunders against the ignorance, the superstition, and the rascality of the Jews, to whom he is recommended; but, nevertheless, borrows money of them, and draws bills of exchange on his long-suffering patron, Count Waldstein, who only laughs, pays the money, and embraces the ancient prodigal, when, after six weeks' absence, he comes back to Dux, penitent and proud, laughing and weeping by turns, equally amusing when

seriously complaining of his "humiliation," as when pouring out torrents of lively sarcasms on the Tedeschi. Poor old boy! He is only too glad to bring back his Herculean frame, his ever-youthful vivacity, his Homeric appetite, and a stock of good stories to tell his friends Waldstein and De Ligne. On their side they are charmed with him, and like him better than ever after that last bath in the rushing tide of the outer world, which has brightened him into a semblance of his former self. All goes smoothly for a week, but, alas! at the expiration of that period misfortunes and vexations recommence. At dessert there are strawberries. The villanous lackeys, out of spite, hand them to everybody before Casanova, and when the dish reaches him it is empty. Worse than this; he one morning misses his portrait out of his room, and imagining it to have been carried off by one of his admirers, is in a delightful frame of mind till he finds it nailed up behind a stable-door.

Thus drag on the dreary years which precede dissolution. In a strange land, far from fallen Venice, her wayward son sinks slowly into the grave, bitterly regretting his once superb physical strength, and occasionally admitting to himself that his life has been made up of splendid opportunities recklessly flung away. About the commencement of the present century he fades out altogether. It is gratifying to find that he made an edifying end.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCIS ELIZABETH TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXVI.

IN the first week of August Mrs. Errington returned to Whitford. She had got over her annoyance at not having been intrusted sooner with the news of Algernon's engagement to Miss Kilfinane. By dint of telling her friends so, she had at last persuaded herself that she had been in the secret all along; and, if she felt any other mortifications and disappointments connected with her son's marriage, she kept them to herself. But it is probable that she did not keenly feel any such. She was not sensitive; and she did believe that, by connecting himself so nearly with Lord Seely's family, Algernon was advancing his prospects of success in the world. These sources

of comfort, combined with an excellent digestion, and the perennial gratification of contemplating her own claims to distinction as contrasted with those of her neighbours, kept the worthy lady in good spirits, and she returned to Whitford in a kind of full blow of cheerfulness and importance.

Her reception there, at the outset, was, however, far from being what she had looked forward to. She had written to Rhoda, announcing the day and hour of her arrival, and requesting that James Maxfield should meet her at the Blue Bell Inn, where the coach stopped, with a fly for the conveyance of herself and her luggage to her old quarters. Mrs. Errington had not previously written to Rhoda from Westmoreland, but she had forwarded to her, at different times, two copies of the *Appplethwaite Advertiser*. In one of these journals a preliminary announcement of Algernon's marriage had appeared, under the heading of "Alliance in High Life." In the second, there was an account of the wedding, and the breakfast, and the rejoicings in the village of Long Fells, which did much credit to the imaginative powers of the writer. According to the *Appplethwaite Advertiser*, the ceremony had been imposing, the breakfast sumptuous, and the village demonstrations enthusiastic.

Mrs. Errington had bought twenty copies of the newspaper for distribution among her friends; and she pleased herself with thinking how grateful the Maxfields would be to her for sending them the papers with the interesting paragraphs marked in red ink. She also looked forward with much complacency to having Rhoda for a listener to all her narrations about the wedding and life at Long Fells, and the great people whom she had met there. Rhoda was such a capital listener! And then, besides and beyond all that, Mrs. Errington was fond of Rhoda, and had more motherly warmth of feeling for her than she had as yet attained to for her new daughter-in-law.

Mrs. Errington's head was stretched out of the coach-window as the vehicle clattered up the archway of the Blue Bell Inn. It was about seven o'clock on a fine August evening, and there was ample light enough for the traveller to distinguish all the familiar features of the streets through which she passed. "James will be standing in the inn-yard ready to receive me," she thought; "and I suppose the fly will

be waiting at the corner by the booking-office. I wonder whether the driver will be the lame old man or young Simmons?" She was still debating this question when the coach turned sharply round under the archway, and stopped in the great rambling yard of the old-fashioned Blue Bell Inn.

Mrs. Errington got down unassisted, James Maxfield was not there. She looked round in bewilderment, standing hot, dusty, and tired in the yard, where, after a bustling waiter had tripped up to her to ask if she wanted a room, and tripped away again, no one took any heed of her.

A fly was not to be had in Whitford at a moment's notice. After waiting for some ten minutes, Mrs. Errington found there was nothing for it but to walk to her lodgings. She left her luggage in the coach-office to be called for, and set out carrying a rather heavy hand-bag, and hurrying through the streets at a pace much quicker than her usual dignified rate of moving. She wished not to be seen and recognised by any passing acquaintance under circumstances so unfavourable to an impressive or triumphant demeanour.

Arrived at Jonathan Maxfield's house, the aspect of things was not much improved. Betty Grimshaw opened the door, and stared in surprise on seeing Mrs. Errington. She had not been expected. Mr. Maxfield was over at Duckwell at his son's farm. James was busy in the storehouse. And as for Rhoda, she was away on a visit to Miss Bodkin, at the seaside, and had been for some weeks. A letter? Oh, if a letter had come for Rhoda, her father would have sent it on to her. It was a two days' post from where she was to Whitford. And the newspapers? Betty did not know. She had not seen them. Her brother-in-law had had them, she supposed. Yes; she had heard that Mr. Algernon was married, or going to be married. The servants from Pudcombe Hall had spoken of it when they came into the shop. Jonathan had not said anything on the subject, as far as she knew. Mrs. Errington knew what Jonathan was. He never was given to much conversation. And it was Betty's opinion, delivered very frankly, that Jonathan grew crustier and closer as he got older. But wouldn't Mrs. Errington like a cup of tea? Betty would have the kettle boiling in a few minutes.

Mrs. Errington felt rather forlorn, as she entered her old sitting-room and looked around her. It was trim and neat indeed, and spotlessly clean; but it had the chill, repellent look of an uninhabited apartment. The corner cupboard was locked, and its treasure of old china hidden from view. Algernon's books were gone from the shelf above the piano. A white cloth was spread over the sofa, and the hearth-rug was turned upside down, displaying a grey lining, instead of the gay-coloured scraps of cloth.

She missed Rhoda. She had become accustomed to Algernon's absence from the familiar room; but Rhoda's absence made a blank in it, that was depressing. And perhaps Mrs. Errington herself was surprised to find how dreary the place looked, without the girl's gentle face and modest figure. She gladly accepted Betty Grimshaw's invitation to take her tea downstairs in the comfortable, bright kitchen, instead of alone in the melancholy gentility of her own sitting-room. Betty was as wooden-faced, and grim, and rigid in her aspect as ever. But she was not unfriendly towards her old lodger. And, moreover, she was entirely respectful in her manner, holding it as a fixed article of her faith that "gentlefolks born" were intended by Providence to be treated with deference, and desiring to show that she herself had been trained to becoming behaviour under the roof of a person of quality.

It was little more than nine o'clock when Mrs. Errington rose to go to bed, being tired with her journey. As she did so, she said, "Mrs. Grimshaw, will you get James to send a hand-cart for my luggage in good time to-morrow?"

"Oh, your luggage?" returned Betty. "Well, do you think it is worth while to send for it, if you're not going to stay?"

Mrs. Errington was so much astonished by this speech, that she sat down again on the chair she had just quitted. Then, after a minute's pause, her mind, which did not move very rapidly, arrived at what she supposed to be the explanation of Betty's words. "Oh, I see," she said; "you took it for granted that, on my son's marriage, I should leave you and join him. But it is not so, my good soul. My daughter-in-law has implored me to live with them, but I have refused. It is better for the young people to be by themselves; and I prefer my own inde-

pendence also. No, my good Mrs. Grimshaw, I shall remain in my old quarters until Mr. Algernon leaves Whitford for good. And perhaps, even then, I may not give you up altogether, who knows?"

Betty hesitated for an instant before replying. "Then Jonathan has not said anything to you about giving up the rooms?"

"Good gracious, no! I have not heard from Mr. Maxfield at all!"

"I suppose he didn't expect you back quite so soon. And—there, I'm sure I won't take upon myself to speak for him. I shouldn't have got on with my brother-in-law all these years if I hadn't made it a rule to try for peace and quietness, and never interfere."

But Mrs. Errington persisting in her demand that Betty should explain herself more fully, the latter at length confessed that, during the past two or three weeks, Jonathan Maxfield had declared his intention of getting rid of his lodger, and of not letting the first floor of his house again. "Your sitting-room is to be kept as a kind of a drawing-room for Rhoda, as I understand Jonathan," said she.

A drawing-room for Rhoda! Mrs. Errington could not believe her senses. "Why, what is Mr. Maxfield thinking of?" she exclaimed.

"Oh, you don't know what a fuss Jonathan has been making lately about Rhoda! Before you went away, you know, ma'am, as he had begun to spend a deal of money on her clothes. And since then, more and more; it's been all his talk as Rhoda was to be a lady. The notion has got stuck fast in his head, and wild horses wouldn't drag it out."

Mrs. Errington rose very majestically. "I fear," she said, "I much fear, that I am responsible for this delusion of your brother-in-law. I have a little spoiled the girl, and taken too much notice of her. I regret it now. But, really, Rhoda is such a sweet creature that I don't know that I have been so very much to blame, either. It is true I have introduced her to my friends, and brought her forward a little beyond her station; but I little thought a man of Mr. Maxfield's common sense would have been so utterly led away by kindly-meant patronage."

"Well, I don't know as it's so much that, ma'am," returned Betty, in a matter-of-fact tone, "as it is that Jonathan has latterly been thinking a deal about his

money. And he knows money will do great things——”

“Money can never confer gentle birth, my good creature!”

“No, for sure, ma'am. That's what I say myself. I know my catechism, and I was brought up to respect my superiors. But, you see, Jonathan's heart is greatly set on his riches. He's a well-off man, is my brother-in-law; more so than many folks think. He's been a close man all his life. And, for that matter, he's close enough now in some things, and screws me down in the housekeeping pretty tight. But for Rhoda he seems to grudge nothing, and wants her to make a show and a splash, almost—if you can fancy such a thing of Jonathan! But there's no saying how men will turn out; not even the old ones. I'm sure I often and often thank my stars I've kept single—no offence to you, ma'am.”

Mrs. Errington went to bed in a bewildered frame of mind. Tired as she was, the news she had heard kept her awake for some time. Leave her lodgings! Leave old Max's house, which had been her home for so many years! It was incredible. And, indeed, before long she had made up her mind to resist old Max's intention of turning her out. “I shall give him a good talking to, to-morrow,” she said to herself. “Stupid old man! He really must not be allowed to make himself so absurd.” And then Mrs. Errington fell asleep.

But the next day old Max did not return to be talked to; nor the day after that. James Maxfield went over to Duckwell, and came back bringing a formal notice to Mrs. Errington to quit the lodgings, signed by his father.

“What does this mean, James?” asked Mrs. Errington, with much emphasis, and wide-open eyes. James did not know what it meant. He did not apparently much care, either. He had never been on very friendly terms with the Erringtons (having, indeed, come but seldom in contact with them during all the time they had lived under the same roof with him), and had, perhaps, been a little jealous in his sullen, silent way, of their petting of Rhoda. At all events, on the present occasion, he was not communicative nor very civil. He had performed his father's behests, and he knew nothing more. His father was not coming back home just yet. And James volunteered the opinion that he didn't mean to come back until Mrs. Errington should be gone.

All this was strange and disagreeable. But Mrs. Errington was not of an irritable or anxious temperament. And her self-complacency was of too solid a kind to be much affected even by ruder rubs than any which could be given by James Maxfield's uncouth bluntness. “I shall take no notice whatever of this,” she said, with serene dignity. “When your father comes back, I shall talk to him. Meanwhile, I have a great many important things to do.”

The good lady did in truth begin at once to busy herself in seeking a house for Algernon, and getting it furnished. There was but a month to make all arrangements in, and all Mrs. Errington's friends who could by any possibility be pressed into the service were required to assist her. The Docketts; Rose and Violet McDougall; Mrs. Smith, the surgeon's wife; and even Miss Chubb, were sent hither and thither, asked to write notes, to make inquiries, to have interviews with landlords, and to take as much trouble, and make as much fuss, as possible, in the task of getting ready an abode for Mr. and the Honourable Mrs. Algernon Errington.

A house was found without much difficulty. It was a small isolated cottage on the outskirts of the town, with a garden behind it which ran down to the meadows bordering the Whit; and was the very house, belonging to Barker the chemist, of which Mrs. Errington had written to her friend Mrs. Bodkin.

It was really a very humble dwelling. But the rent of it was quite as large as Algernon would be able to afford. Mrs. Errington said, “I prefer a small place for them. If they took a more pretentious house, they would be expected to entertain. And you know, my dear sir,” (or “madam,” as the case might be) “that there is a great mixture in Whitford society; and that would not suit my daughter-in-law, of course. You perceive that, don't you?” And then the person so addressed might flatter him or her self with the idea of belonging to the unmixed portion of society.

Indeed, this terrible accusation of being “mixed” was one which Mrs. Errington was rather fond of bringing against the social gatherings in Whitford. And she had once been greatly offended, and a good deal puzzled, by Mr. Diamond's asking her what objection there could be to that; and challenging her to point out

any good thing on earth, from a bowl of punch upwards, which was not "mixed!" But however this might be, no one believed at all that the mixture in Whitford society was the real reason for young Errington's inhabiting so small a house. They knew perfectly well that if Algernon's means had been larger, his house would have been larger also.

And yet, Mrs. Errington's flourish was not without its effect on some persons. They in their turn repeated her lamentations on the "mixture" to such of their acquaintances as did not happen to be also her acquaintances. And as there were very few individuals in Whitford either so eccentric, or so courageous, as Mr. Diamond, this mysterious mixture was generally acknowledged, with shrugs and head-shakings, to be a very great evil indeed.

At the end of about a fortnight, old Max one day reappeared in his own house, and marched upstairs to Mrs. Errington's sitting-room.

"Well, ma'am," said he, without any preliminary greeting whatsoever, "I suppose you understood the written notice to quit, that I sent you? But as my son James informs me that you don't seem to be taking any steps in consequence of it, I've come to say that you will have to remove out of my abode on the twenty-seventh of this month, and not a day later. So you can act according to your judgment in finding another place to dwell in."

Mrs. Errington was inspecting the contents of a packing-case which had been sent from London by Lady Seely. It contained, as her ladyship said, "some odds and ends that would be useful to the young couple." The only article of any value in the whole collection was a porcelain vase, which had long stood in obscurity on a side-table in Lord Seely's study, and would not be missed thence. Lady Seely, at all events, would not miss it, as she seldom entered the room; and therefore she had generously added it to the "odds and ends!"

Mrs. Errington looked up, a little flushed with the exertion of stooping over the packing-case, and confronted Mr. Maxfield. Her round, red full-moon face contrasted in a lively manner with the old man's grey, lank, harsh visage. The years, as they passed, did not improve old Max's appearance. And as soon as she beheld him, Mrs. Errington was convinced of

the justice of Betty Grimshaw's remark, that her brother-in-law seemed to have grown closer and crustier than ever of late.

"Why, Mr. Maxfield," said the lady, condescendingly, "how do you do? I have been wanting to see you. Come, sit down, and let us talk matters over."

Old Max stood in the doorway glaring at her. "I don't know, ma'am, as there's any matters I want to talk over with you," he returned. "You had better understand that I mean what I say. You'll find it more convenient to believe me at once, and to act accordin'."

"Do you mean to say that you intend to turn me out, Mr. Maxfield?"

"I have given you a legal notice to quit, ma'am. You needn't call it turning you out, unless you like."

He had begun to move away, when Mrs. Errington exclaimed, "But I really don't comprehend this at all! What will Rhoda think of it?"

Maxfield stopped, hesitatingly, with his hand on the banisters at the top of the landing. "Rhoda?" said he gruffly. "Oh, Rhoda has nothing to say to it, one way or t'other."

"But I want to have something to say to her! I assure you it was a great disappointment to me not to find Rhoda here on my return. I'm very fond of her; and shall continue to be so, as long as she merits it. It is not her fault, poor girl, if—other people forget themselves."

Maxfield took his hand off the banisters and turned round. "Since you're so fond of Rhoda," he said, with a queer expression on his sour old face, "you'll be glad to know where she is, and the company she's in."

"I know that she is at the seaside with my friends, Mrs. and Miss Bodkin."

"She is at the seaside with *her* friends, Mrs. and Miss Bodkin. Miss Minnie is a real lady, and she understands how to treat Rhoda, and knows that the Lord has made a lady of Rhoda by natur'."

Mrs. Errington stared in utter astonishment. The suspicion began to form and strengthen itself in her mind that the old man was positively out of his senses. If so, his insanity had taken an extremely unpleasant turn for her.

"I really was not prepared for being turned out of my lodgings after all these years," she said, reverting to the point that most nearly touched herself.

"I've not been prepared for a many

things as have happened after all these years. But I'm ready to meet 'em when they come."

"Well, but now, Mr. Maxfield, let us see if we cannot make an arrangement. If you have any different views about the rent, I——"

"The rent! What do you think your bit of a rent matters to me? I want the rooms for the use of my daughter, Miss Maxfield, and there's an end of it."

"Oh, he certainly cannot be in his right senses to address me in this manner!" thought Mrs. Errington.

Maxfield went on, "I see you've got a box of rubbish there, littering about the place. I give you warning not to unpack any more here, for out everything 'll have to go on the twenty-seventh of this month, as sure as my name's Jonathan Maxfield!"

"Mr. Maxfield! You are certainly forgetting yourself. Rubbish, indeed! These are a few—a very few—of the valuable wedding presents sent to my son and daughter by Lady Seely."

Old Max made a grating sound which was intended for a laugh, although his bushy grey eyebrows were drawn together in a heavy frown the while. Then he suddenly burst out in a kind of cold fury. "Pooh!" he cried. "Presents! Valuable presents! You don't deceive anybody by that! Look here—if the old carpet or any of the furniture in this room would be of any assistance to you, you can take it! I'll give it to you—a free gift! The place is going to be done up and new furnished for Miss Maxfield. Furnished handsome, fit for a young lady of property. Fit for a young lady that will have a sum o' money on the day she marries—if I'm pleased with her choice—as 'll make some folks' mouths water. It won't be reckoned by twenties, nor yet by hundreds, won't Miss Maxfield's fortin! You can take the old carpet, and mahogany table, and the high-backed chairs, and put 'em among your valuable presents. They're too old-fashioned for Miss Maxfield's drawing-room!" And with a repetition of the grating laugh, old Max tramped heavily downstairs, and was heard to bang the door of his own parlour.

Mrs. Errington sat motionless for nearly

a quarter of an hour, staring at the open door. "Mad!" she exclaimed at length, drawing a long breath. "Quite mad! But I wonder if there is any truth in what he says about Rhoda's money? Dear me, why she'll be quite a catch!"

MANY ARROWS IN THE QUIVER.

(POSTSCRIPT.)

Two correspondents have favoured us with hypothetical explanations of a puzzle connected with a passage in the first of the two articles bearing the above title. The passage (page 332) runs thus:—"In what sense are we to interpret an entry in the Gentleman's Magazine, to the effect that Mrs. Lilly, of Grantham, 'was twice mother of twenty-two children?' Either that there were forty-four babies at two births; or that she was twice married, and had in all twenty-two children. We prefer to believe the latter, although the words seem to imply the former." Our correspondents suggest a third explanation. One of them writes: "A similar saying is current here about the landlady of one of our inns. She had, at one time (not at one birth), nineteen children living. Two of them died, and, after their death, two more were born. She had thus, twice, nineteen children. When it is given as an unpunctuated sentence, it sounds as if she had given birth to thirty-eight." In a like sense our other correspondent writes: "I think the correct idea is the same as the following: On my father's farm in Wiltshire, the standing joke with one of the labourers was, that his wife had had fourteen children twice over. But it turned out that she had fourteen, one of whom died, making thirteen, and she then had another, thus making a total of fourteen twice."

It is very probable that the true solution of the Lilly mystery is here given.

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AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGBERD," "A PERFECT TREASURE," "AT HER MERCY," &c. &c.

CHAPTER X. ALEC'S CONFESSION.

I HAVE said that Mrs. Raeburn no longer thought it necessary to put her brother-in-law through any cross-examination as to his affairs; but from the hour of the discovery of his being a wealthy man, she plied him with endless questions concerning his personal comforts. He had only to express a wish respecting the arrangement of his room, the time at which he preferred to take his meals, and his preference to a particular dish at any one of them, to have it gratified. She well reconsidered within herself that question of his smoking in bed, and on her reflecting that the house and furniture were insured to their full value, and that if any accident did occur, he would surely see the propriety of handsomely recompensing the family for the inconvenience, she withdrew her objection to that custom. On the very next morning after that narration of his adventures, the fatted calf—in the mitigated form of a couple of kidneys—was served up for the breakfast of this honoured guest, and great was the chagrin of his hostess when he only took a fourth of that costly dish, as being, when the two ladies had declined to partake of it, neither more nor less than his proper share. In vain did she wink hard at her husband and her son; they were neither of them inclined to deny themselves so unusual a dainty, while, as for myself, I considered it as included in my one hundred and fifty pounds per annum, and would probably

have done so (as Mrs. Raeburn afterwards observed in confidence to John, who, as a matter of course, retailed it to me) "had it been nightingales' tongues."

In consequence of this generous forbearance on the part of brother Alec, the general supply of these extras was largely increased, so that we all benefited from his sister-in-law's desire to please him. There was really no limit to her endeavours to gratify his tastes, his palate, and even those inconvenient fancies, from which no man, who has sojourned long in foreign climes, is wholly free. The serpents had their bread and milk, and performed their evolutions as they pleased, the only stipulation being that they should remain in Mr. Alexander's apartment, except when he occasionally played Laocoon with them in the drawing-room, for the public amusement; the bull-dog eat his weight in beefsteaks twice a day; and the parrot was allowed to indulge in a vocabulary that was more extensive than select, at any hour of the day or night, not even excepting Sundays. Every doubt of her brother-in-law's being a wealthy man had been swept away from her mind, if not from the moment when he had presented her with that precious example of Peruvian handiwork, at all events from that in which the Kirkdale jeweller, whom she consulted on the subject without delay, assured her that it was genuine gold. The reflection that she had judged rightly in this matter, while her husband had doubted, was also a source of intense satisfaction to her, and although Mrs. Raeburn was scarcely one of those persons who are said to be "very agreeable when pleased," her manners were modified by the circumstance, and at least presented a

pleasing contrast to what they had been before her guest's arrival.

Another source of congratulation with her was the importance that the family acquired in the neighbourhood from their possession of brother Alec, the report of whose untold wealth spread far and wide, enriching the social soil as such news is wont to do, so that acquaintanceships sprang up where none had hitherto existed, and in some cases even yielded welcome fruit in the form of "an increased legal connection." Mr. and Mrs. Raeburn had more invitations to dinner during the next five months—thanks to the companion they took with them—than they had received during the same number of years. This new-born popularity, however, had its drawbacks, in the necessity it entailed of a reciprocity of hospitality; and many a feast had the reluctant mistress of the Priory to provide in which her ginger-wine could not play its thrifty part, and the feathered grasses that had been wont to furnish forth her frugal table were compelled to give way to the foaming wine, for which brother Alec had expressed his decided preference. His natural and matter-of-course acceptance of all the favours which she lavished on him would have been intolerable to her, did she not count it as so much corroboration of his possession of those ample means with which he was on all hands credited; but with other persons his simple, unaffected manners were highly popular. My Uncle Ralph, in particular, who was among the first to congratulate him on his return to England, delighted in his company; while my aunt was reported to have expressed a suspicion that brother Alec was an impostor, who, from some masked ambition, had essayed to play the part of a Raeburn, but who was, in reality, much too "nice" to be related to the family. He was certainly very nice. Tender, gentle, and generous, with such a genial air as charmed his hearers, and a graphic power of describing what he had seen that evinced no common intellectual powers; but he was also very eccentric. He had a habit of twitching so violently when suffering under long bucolic stories from the country gentlemen, or protracted discourses from the Kirkdale pulpit, that you might have judged him to be afflicted by St. Vitus's dance; while, when moved to indignation by some after-dinner antagonist—this was especially the case when any tyrannical or oppressive system was being apologised for or defended—he was

accustomed, before his turn came to reply, to emit gattural noises expressive of dissatisfaction and disgust, of the utterance of which he was wholly unconscious.

It is needless to say that these salient points, as also many other peculiarities of tone and manner, were seized upon by John Raeburn, and imitated to perfection. The family likeness, of which his mother had spoken, between the uncle and nephew was quite strong enough, to begin with, to utterly demolish my Aunt Hastings's theory. Then John was thin and spare, and had an old face; so that, but for the white hair and beard, you might easily have imagined, when this undutiful lad was giving his imitations, that his Uncle Alec was addressing you in person. The best of it was, that nobody appreciated this performance better than the individual who was thus travestied; and many a hearty laugh did he enjoy at his own expense while John twitched and grunted at an imaginary antagonist, or lavished on Chico the absurdly-endearing epithets that were wont to be applied to him by his devoted master. The dismal Priory was, in fact, transformed by Uncle Alec's genial presence, and by the fun that grew out of it, into quite an agreeable place of residence; and, as the attorney by no means overtaken me with legal duties, and the relations between myself and Gertrude, though tacit, grew every day more tender and confidential, I, for my part, had no cause to complain of my lot. If it were my purpose, indeed, to be my own biographer, I should here, though but for a brief space, be narrating how the course of true love did run smooth, and everything bade fair to make two lovers happy; but this story has not myself, but others, for its theme, though I and she, who was dearer than myself, chanced to have the thread of our lives mingled with theirs.

There was one thing only that disturbed Mrs. Raeburn's complacent satisfaction with the position of affairs—namely, that up to this date not a word had passed her brother-in-law's lips respecting the agreement made between him and Mark in their far-back youth, which, for all her husband's confidence in brother Alec's sense of its moral obligation, she was very desirous to hear him acknowledge. Had he been the one likely to be advantaged by a division of profits, he would have been eager enough, she reasoned, to advert to the subject; and so far his silence was not displeasing to her; but there were

other matters which made her impatient for what my uncle Hastings called Alec's Declaration of Independence. The rector, it will be remembered, had been admitted to the secret on the same occasion with myself, when the attorney, warmed with wine, and confident that he would never set eyes on his long-lost relative again, had beguiled our after-dinner time with its relation; but a sense of delicacy had not only restrained him from communicating it to others, but had caused him to enjoin on me a similar reticence. No one, therefore, beyond the family circle at the Priory, was aware of the peculiar position in which the two brothers stood; folks looked upon the wanderer's return as a piece of probable good fortune for the Raeburns in the future indeed (provided the new-comer continued to find his relatives to his satisfaction), but of no immediate pecuniary advantage to them, save what might arise from the general belief in their great expectations. This, as I have said, was already considerable; but it was counterbalanced by a singular circumstance. Brother Alec was for ever applying to the attorney for small sums of money, which, as it happened, it was not very convenient for him to lend. The fact that the former had not paid a single bill, except his washing bill, since his arrival; and that the tailor and the bootmaker in Kirkdale had sent in their little accounts without effect for rigging him out in the European style, excited no suspicion of his schemes in Mrs. Raeburn's mind; her own feelings upon money matters made her well understand that the richer a man is the more unwilling he often is to part with coin, even to pay his just debts; but the borrowing of those small sums from her husband—or, rather, from herself, since she held the purse-strings—did trouble her very much. Brother Alec's enormous wealth could not surely consist so exclusively in bars of silver and golden images that he did not know where to find a five-pound note, or even a sovereign; and the parting with these little sums was, to her, like bleeding slowly to death. She grew faint with the hideous apprehension, fanciful though she knew it was, that she might possibly never get them back again.

She was well aware of the risk that lay in pressing the great question, "And now, Mr. Alexander, rich as you are, are you prepared to carry out the solemn covenant made with my husband more than a generation ago, to halve the goods with

which Fortune has dowered you?" It was likely enough he would at once suspect her interested designs, and put down all the favours he had received from her to their true account; but, still, her patience was almost worn out, and his trespasses upon her purse—and not the less because they were generally made to purchase some present, or provide some treat, for the young folks in the neighbourhood, of whom brother Alec was the idol—were getting well-nigh intolerable.

An application of her brother-in-law for a five-pound note, to be spent in fireworks on Gertrude's birthday, at Easter time, was the last drop that caused Mrs. Raeburn's cup of bitterness to overflow, which it did in the drawing-room amongst us all, with an effect that I shall never forget to my dying day, and with such consequential results as, could I have foreseen them, would have impressed me even more.

"Five pounds for fireworks!" remonstrated she; "that is throwing money into the fire indeed, Mr. Alexander. Of course, I cannot tell how rich you are; you are so very reticent about your own affairs; but, unless you are a millionaire, I must confess that to spend such a sum in squibs and crackers seems abominable!"

"A millionaire!" exclaimed brother Alec. "You must be laughing at me, my dear madam."

"Well, I mean you ought to have hundreds of thousands of pounds to make so light of five-pound notes as you do."

"Hundreds of thousands of pounds!" repeated brother Alec, vacantly; while Chico on his shoulder, catching his tone as usual, cried "Oh dear! oh dear! oh dear! oh dear! only think of that."

"My dear madam, I have scarce a hundred thousand pence!"

"Why, that's only four hundred and sixteen pounds thirteen shillings and fourpence!" shrieked Mrs. Raeburn, who was "a ready reckoner" and "a save-all" in one. "You are joking, Mr. Alexander, I know," added she, with a ghastly smile; "but I am not fond of joking upon these important matters."

"I never was more serious in my life, madam," answered brother Alec, and indeed he looked not only serious, but exceedingly distressed. "You talk of my reticence concerning my own affairs, but Mark can explain how that was, if he will. It was for him to speak, not for me. I confess I understood from your manner, madam, that you yourself—nay, I may add

that all present here, were aware of the agreement that existed between him and me, of which I am certain"—here he looked tenderly towards his brother—"Mark will never question the validity; but if that is not so, I must at once tell you that your husband and I made a solemn compact when we parted in our youth, that when we met again each should give the other the one half of whatever property he might then be possessed of, so that God should bless us both alike. Was it for me, an unsuccessful adventurer, to remind Mark of it, or to wait his own good time to advert to it?"

"An unsuccessful adventurer!" gasped Mrs. Raeburn, while her husband's face turned from red to white, and his eyes seemed about to start from their sockets. "Why, how much was in that iron box that you told us was at your agents, in London?"

"When it left shore, madam, about twelve thousand pounds' worth of silver metal; which, unfortunately, lies sixty fathoms deep in Lima harbour. The handles and chains held well enough, as I told you, but, unhappily, the bottom of the box came out as it was being swung on board."

"Then you purposely led us to believe that you were a wealthy man, when, in fact, you had lost your all, sir," said Mrs. Raeburn with slow distinctness, and a certain terrible expression in her pale face which I can only describe as the white heat of hatred.

"If it be an offence, madam, not to anticipate a question, I own I am so far guilty," returned the other, with dignity. "To all your very pertinent inquiries I gave you a truthful answer; but I confess they jarred upon my feelings, since their mercenary object was only too obvious to me. It wounded me to the core to find my brother's wife concerned herself in no wise in my affairs, but only as to the amount of property that I might have brought home for her behoof. Had Mark asked me for my confidence, it would have been given to him unreservedly and at once. I should have said, as I still say to him, notwithstanding your cruel words, 'I have returned a poor man, but I will never make you poor, Mark. You are a family man, and I will not exact from you the conditions of our agreement. Keep your wealth, undivided; only give me a home in your own house, and a comfortable subsistence there—I happen to know,

brother, that I shall not be long a tax upon its hospitality—until I die."

These words were addressed so directly to the attorney that he could no longer delegate the task of reply to his Matilda. He looked up hurriedly from the floor, on which his gaze had been fixed, and with an abashed, uneasy air, observed, "I really think you are greatly to blame, Alec, in this matter. You had no right to deceive us as to the state of your affairs. Your welcome would have been just as hearty had you made a clean breast of it; though you would not, perhaps, have been entertained in so lavish a manner. There is little, indeed, on the score of loss with which to reproach you." (Here he looked at his wife and held his hand up, seeing that she was about to burst into a furious denial.) "The golden images which you gave to Matilda and myself will doubtless repay any cost to which we may have been put upon your account; but of course things must now be placed on quite another footing. The entertainment of your animal friends is, to begin with, a serious item in our domestic expenditure."

"Do you hear that, my darling?" murmured brother Alec, pathetically, to his feathered favourite; "they grudge you your nuts and oranges."

"Oh dear! oh dear! oh dear!" answered the parrot.

"Yes, Alec," said the attorney, whose voice was growing more confident with every word, since he found himself uninterrupted by his wife, and perceived his brother submissive; "such things are very dear, when given to birds. Of course your home is here, so long as you choose to live with us, but these extra expenses must be cut off: it has long distressed Mrs. Raeburn to see so much good food thrown away on dogs and reptiles. I am afraid she will insist—and I cannot blame her for it—upon a change being made, at once, in this respect. Is it not so, Matilda?"

"So absurd a question requires no answer, Mr. Raeburn," was that lady's grim reply; "but when you have quite done, I have a few words to say."

"Do not speak them, I pray you do not speak them, madam," cried brother Alec, in a low beseeching voice. "No words that you can utter can do more than has been already done. I have been told by poor tortured creatures in Peru, that when their bodies have been beaten with great severity, blows hurt them no more,

since the bruised flesh becomes deadened to the pain; and so it is now, madam, with my heart. I acknowledge that I was wrong to intrude my presence here——”

“Upon false pretences,” put in Mr. Raeburn, mildly.

“Upon the misunderstanding rather that I was a wealthy man, Mark,” continued the other; “whereas I had no claim on your hospitality, save that I was your brother, returned, as it must have seemed to you, out of the mouth of the grave.”

“That claim I allow,” answered the attorney, with unaccustomed firmness, and striking his hand upon the table. “I will not have you turned out of house and home, though you should not possess a penny piece.”

Mrs. Raeburn gave a contemptuous snort.

“Yes, I swear it,” continued Mark; “but, at the same time, we cannot afford to minister to your luxurious habits. Moreover, it was highly reprehensible in you to borrow money of Mrs. Raeburn, which, it seems, you are hardly in a position to repay. You owe bills, too, Alec, as I understand, in the town?”

“A few pounds, Mark, yes; and as much again, perhaps, I have borrowed of your wife,” returned the other, quietly. “Still, what were they when, by our solemn compact—which, I protest to Heaven, I believe you have acknowledged all along, and would have gladly put into effect if I had been the rich man you supposed me to be—the one-half of all you had was mine. Do you ignore that compact? Do you deny that obligation?”

“The man is mad!” exclaimed Mrs. Raeburn, scornfully.

“Mark, it is to you I speak,” cried brother Alec, stretching out his hand with earnest dignity. “In the presence of your own flesh and blood, here, who will take his lesson of justice from your lips—and before these young folks, who know, because truth is in them, what your answer ought to be—I ask you, once for all, do you admit the fact of the agreement to which I have referred, and do you hold it binding on you?”

“My dear Alec,” returned the attorney, fixing his eyes on a corner of the drawing-room table-cloth, and taking its tassel in his hand, “I do not deny that, when we were boys——”

“Not boys, Mark.”

“Well, very young men then; of age, it is true, but not of that mature age which

alone is adapted—and—and—suitable for arrangements involving the interests of a lifetime, we did make the romantic compact to which you refer; but as to its being binding, my dear Alec, in the sense that we lawyers are accustomed to attach to that word, you must forgive me if I say that your long absence from England, and your residence in a semi-barbarous country, can alone account for your entertaining such a preposterous idea.”

“I see,” said brother Alec, in a low and broken voice; “I see. Do not pain yourself and me by saying more. No, madam—for Mrs. Raeburn here began with her ‘Mr. Alexander’—‘I cannot hear you either. I have heard enough. If it is not too expensive a luxury, I wish to go to bed.’”

This brief return of the old greybeard’s humour was even more sad than his pathos had been: his mouth, which tried to force a smile, twitched and quivered so, that I half feared it was the prelude to a stroke of paralysis. He got up feebly from his chair, and moved slowly across the room, like one who travels in the dark.

Gertrude followed him swiftly, and gave him her arm so far as the drawing-room door.

“Thanks, Gerty,” said he; “thanks, my darling, your poor relation will not trouble you for long. Will he, Chico?”

“Dead! dead! dead!” answered the parrot.

THE RECRUITING QUESTION.

COMING up from Portsmouth the other day in a third-class carriage, I happened to sit opposite to a middle-aged man, who evidently belonged to the better class of working mechanics, and whom I at once set down in my own mind as having served in the army. Upon getting into conversation with him, I found that my surmise was correct. By trade he was a working locksmith, and he had formerly served fourteen years in a regiment which had for some time been in garrison with a corps in which I had long ago borne a commission. The offer of a cigar, and the information that I also had worn a red coat in my youth, made my companion very communicative. Our conversation not unnaturally turned upon the much-vexed question as to why the government cannot get recruits for the army; what are the reasons which prevent so many men from enlisting, and cause so many desertions after they

have joined their regiments. This old soldier's opinions upon one of the "burning questions" of the day I will give as nearly as possible in his own words, merely using my own phraseology when his was more idiomatic than clear.

"Why don't we get recruits?" said the old soldier, repeating the words of a question I had put to him. "The reason is, sir, because we go the very best way possible to work to disgust men with the army. I live in a garrison town, and see a very great deal of soldiers, both old and young. Besides that, I often go on business to Aldershot, where in turns I see the men of nearly every regiment in the service. They'll tell one tale; and I am bound to say that, if the masters and foremen of workshops or factories in civil life were half as inconsiderate about their hands as the military authorities are about recruits, the whole trade of the country would be at a standstill.

"Now, look here, sir," he continued, "what does a man expect—what is he old he may expect—when he enlists? He believes that he will be clothed, well fed, and receive one shilling a day clear of all expenses. What does he really get? Why, he finds that, though his clothing is certainly sufficient and good, he has in a great measure to pay for it. He gets good food, but not enough to satisfy the cravings of a rowing lad, which at least half of our recruits are. And as for his shilling a day, it is cut into for this thing, cut into for the other; deductions are always being made for kit, or for food, or for barrack damages; so that he rarely sees more than fourpence a day, and often not more than a penny or two. To this add the fact, that it seems to be one of the unwritten laws of the service for every one, who has authority over the recruit, to speak to him as if he were something less than a dog. I don't say this so much of the officers as of the non-commissioned officers. The younger officers certainly seem to think it very fine to snap and snarl at recruits, as if the latter had not the feelings of men. The seniors, as a rule, however, are kind enough in their manner towards them. But the sergeants and corporals, the drill instructors, riding-master's assistants, and the like, appear to believe it their duty never to say a kind word, or never to attempt to conciliate these young lads, to whom the details of military life, and the duty of keeping

themselves clean, are something altogether new. What are the consequences? Why, that at least a fourth of the recruits determine to desert as soon as they can, and at least an eighth manage to carry out their plans. Mind you, I don't believe these non-commissioned officers mean any harm. It is a way they have got. In fact, so much has this useless, harsh, and even brutal manner of speaking to recruits become a custom of the service, that the sergeant or corporal who did otherwise—who spoke with kindness to the recruit when he was in fault—would run the risk of being looked upon as a milk-sop, and never be promoted. For, mind you, sir," my travelling companion continued, "these recruits are, with rare exceptions, mere savages when they enlist. They don't mean any harm—at least not at first—by their disobedience. They don't know what to do when they are taken into a barrack-room, and given a clean bed, a clean shirt, a good coat, a whole pair of boots, and are told they must keep all these in order. I once heard a Roman Catholic priest tell a story about one of the saints of his church. I remember the name, for the tale made an impression upon me. The saint was called Francis of Salis, and his business was to convert the wild Indians. He was asked why he did not preach to these heathens about the terrors of hell. But he replied that many more flies were caught with a spoonful of honey than with a barrel of vinegar. I often think of that story with regard to the recruits. The country would save a good deal, sir, if we used more honey and less vinegar in the barrack-rooms. And, after all, the one is not dearer than the other.

"Has this system of speaking roughly and brutally to the recruits increased of late years? I am quite sure it has. It was not half so common nor half so rough when I was a soldier. And they do say in the barrack-rooms, that it has become very much more common since the war between Germany and France. You tell me, sir, that you were in the army during the Crimea? Well, you must recollect how, in those days, everything French was admired, and how many French customs were adopted in the service? Some colonels of cavalry went in for leather overalls. The infantry never ceased agitating till they got leave to wear the moustache. In some regiments the forage-caps of the officers were fashioned so as to

look as much like the French kepi as possible. The Zouave dress was copied and adopted in our West India regiments. Nearly all the younger officers shaved off their whiskers as soon as the campaign was over, and, Frenchmen like, wore the moustache only. In short, the army got for a considerable period the complaint of 'France on the brain,' and suffered more or less from it until 1870. During and after the German-French war many scores of our officers visited the Prussian armies and head-quarters, and the form of professional illness was changed. They caught 'Germany on the brain,' they brought it home with them, imparted it to others, and it is at present very prevalent indeed. Now one of the most decided symptoms of the illness is that of speaking roughly, and even brutally, to those of an inferior rank. I have heard tell that in the Prussian service, when an officer is inspecting his men before parade, or when about to mount guard, it is by no means uncommon to see a captain or subaltern slap a private soldier on the face, for not being up to the mark in cleanliness of himself or his arms. Now an English officer never has gone, and never will go so far as this. It would not be allowed for a moment in the service, nor would our men put up with such treatment. But there can be no doubt of the fact that, in a milder degree, this symptom of 'Germany on the brain' has seized many who bear commissions in the army, and the disease has spread to the non-commissioned officers.

"Do I know any men personally who have deserted? Of course I do. I know scores. I could put my hand upon a couple of dozen of them at this moment, if I liked to turn informer. I know one lad well, who is a deserter from a regiment in the North of England. Would I peach upon him? Not for ten thousand pounds in gold. Why would I not? Because I cannot bring myself to think but what the boy was hardly used; although not more so than are thousands of others. When I was a soldier we were often flogged; we were not provided with so many kinds of amusement; we were not cared for as much; but we had more money in our pockets, and we liked the service better. Will I tell you the particulars of that lad's desertion? Of course I will; here it is:

"He was left an orphan quite young. An aunt, the widow of a working bell-

hanger, took him home, sent him to school, and, had she lived, would have apprenticed him to a trade of some sort. But she died when he was only fourteen, and he had to go to the workhouse. At sixteen he took service with a farmer down in Norfolk, and gained his bread as a farm-labourer for pretty well four years. But his master did not treat him well; and, when nearly twenty, he met with a recruiting-sergeant one market-day, and enlisted. He was taken to the dépôt of his regiment at Colchester, and soon found out that he was worse off by far than he had been as a farm-servant. His old master used to give him bad language now and again, but in the barracks it seemed as if he could never do right. If his captain so much as looked at him, it was for the purpose of blowing him up for doing something that he did not know was wrong. When the captain did not scold him, the lieutenant of the company, or the colour-sergeant, or the sergeant of his squad, or the corporal of his room, did so. He was never told what he had to do, but was for ever being nagged for not doing what he did not know he ought to do, or for doing what he had no idea he ought not to do. And when he went to drill it was just the same. It was nag, nag, nag all day long. The lad was not half a bad one, but he could not learn without being told. And even after he was shown how to do a thing, a little patience in correcting him would not have been misplaced. Then as to his food. What he had was certainly excellent in quality, but not sufficient in quantity for a growing boy, who was up early and out in the open air so many hours a day. As to his pay, it was a complete myth. When he enlisted, he believed—as ninety-nine out of every hundred recruits do—that he would have a shilling a day clear to spend as he liked. But there were stoppages for this, stoppages for that, deductions here and deductions there; so much so that for days together he had often but threepence, and sometimes less even than that, to receive. He was growing and filling out, and being at drill four hours every day of course made his trousers and fatigue-jacket soon look shabby. This was not his fault; but he had to pay for it all the same. His captain ordered him to get new things, and for these he was, according to the rules of the service, put under stoppages. He soon found himself in debt to the

captain, and made a rough calculation in his own mind that it would be pretty well-nigh to three months before he could get clear, even receiving, as he did, only twopence a day for pocket-money; and by the time the three months were over, if not before, he would need fresh things, and would be under fresh stoppages. Now I ask you, sir, what can a lad do with twopence or threepence a day in the way of getting anything like food, and he hungry as a wolf, except for a couple or three hours after dinner? The young fellow I speak of began as hundreds begin. He wanted to do well. He could read and write, and in time would have made a good soldier. One day, when he was so hungry that he could bear it no longer, he followed the example set him by some of his comrades, and sold a part of his kit. At the inspection on the following Saturday he managed to borrow from a companion what made up the deficiency in his own things. But this could not go on for ever. He was found out, punished with a week's confinement in the cells and a month's confinement to barracks. He became desperate, and deserted. A week after he was caught by the rural police, tried by court-martial, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour. When he rejoined his regiment he found himself more scolded and worse off for stoppages of his pay than ever. He took better precautions this time. He managed to get clear away to London, and lived as a vagabond for some time, picking up what he could by odd jobs here and there. A market-gardener gave him some work, was pleased with the lad's intelligence, and he is now doing well in a large market-garden near London. As soon as he can scrape together a little money he intends going to New Zealand.

"It was a singular case? Not a bit of it. There are hundreds like him all over the country. For one deserter that is caught, a dozen get clear away. Now, sir, if the Secretary of War, or the Commander-in-Chief, or whoever manages these matters, would listen to me for a while, they would spend less money, have the recruits—or, at any rate, such as were worth keeping—happy and comfortable, and the army would lose the bad name it has acquired of late years amongst the working classes. What would I do? Why just this. I would give all soldiers two meat meals a day. A bit of cold meat

with their breakfast or with their supper would not ruin the country, and would be cheaper far in the end than keeping some hundreds of prisoners doing nothing in the military gaols. Then I would make a rule that, come what may—except for gross misconduct—every soldier should have a clear shilling a day in his pocket to do what he likes with. As to his clothes, I would let his captain have the power to renew them at the expense of the government, whenever they are worn out by fair wear and tear. If a man wilfully destroys his things, he ought to pay for them. But I have known again and again a soldier have to be furnished with a new pair of trousers, and to be put under stoppages until they were paid for, because on a field-day he cut the knee of that garment on a stone when kneeling to fire.

"These are the petty grievances that sound as nothing to a man who has only to order a coat or trousers at his tailor, and has plenty of money wherewith to pay for them. But in the army, to the poor soldier, to make him pay for what is really not his fault, is like robbing him. Boots, jackets, tunics, trousers, and caps, when shabby, or worn out by fair wear and tear, ought to be paid for by the country. Let the soldier, from the day he joins, have—except, as I have said, when he gravely misbehaves—his shilling a day to spend as he likes, and in twelve months you will have twelve thousand men more than you have to-day ready to enlist, and some three or four thousand fewer deserters to support in prison.

"Do any men join the army with the intention of deserting as soon as they can? I don't believe they do. I believe every man who becomes a deserter does so on account of the petty troubles he has got into—troubles which would be as nothing to an educated man of sense, but which are great and heart-breaking to a raw lad who knows no more of the world than a child. You may rely upon it, sir, that the causes of our not getting recruits, and the reason so many men desert, are one and the same. Once a man has deserted, he often enlists again to avoid actual starvation; and, after a time, deserts a second, nay, a third and a fourth time. But these are exceptions to the rule.

"What would I do about treating, and speaking to, the recruits in a kinder manner? That is a question which I feel unequal to handle. I have heard it said,

that in some of the foreign armies there are told off in each regiment officers and non-commissioned officers, whose special duty it is to look after and teach the recruits when they first join. These persons are chosen for their even tempers and patience, and are specially enjoined not to disgust young men with harsh conduct. And a rule of this sort would be a good one in our service. The men—the raw recruits—don't, as I said before, mean harm at first. But they are ignorant, dirty in their habits, and often half savage in their manners. If only broken in gently, just as you do young horses, they would seldom turn out badly. But what should we say of a horse-breaker who, from the first, began to hammer the head of a colt with a thick stick? These young soldiers are—morally—treated in this way. They are beaten with harsh words; abused for doing what they don't know to be wrong; and hit, as it were, over the head if they dare to say a word in self-defence. Now it is impossible that any man, taken, as our recruits are, in most cases, from the very dregs of society, should be able to know by intuition what is military discipline. I have often thought that it would seem almost as if most of our non-commissioned officers, and too many of our officers, tried their very utmost to make recruits hate the service from the very outset. And, let military gentlemen in and out of Parliament say what they like, this harsh, hard, almost brutal, manner of speaking to the men has increased of late years. But, believe me, sir, it will never do with English soldiers; and until a different system is followed, desertions from the army will increase every year.

"But here we are at Waterloo Station, and so I bid you good-day."

IN CHASE OF THE MAJOR.

A TALE OF THE CAPE FRONTIER.

AT the Café Riche the other night a man leant towards me from the next table, and said: "I think you're the gentleman who put me in a book awhile ago?"

An uncomfortable address this from a stalwart young American, bronzed, bearded, large of hand, and bold of eye.

"Not to my recollection!" I replied.

"Oh, never mind!" he said laughing. "There's no harm done. But as you've printed the beginning, wouldn't you like

to hear the end of that adventure in Jacobsdaal three or four years ago?

"I see you mind me now," he continued, drawing nearer on the divan. "Lord! wasn't that a happy family we dined with at Widow Hutton's in Jacobsdaal? At the top of the table sat Ackworth, whose tent we'd burnt down three weeks before for receiving stolen diamonds. I saw your face when he affably asked you to mutton, and I saw his too when you paid no attention. I'd not walk in front of Ackworth on a lonely road by night if I were you. Then half-way down the table sat Halloran, poor fellow, and the kindest word to plead for him would be lunacy. Opposite was my own friend the Major, a sample for rogues, another man-slaughterer farther down, and another thief at the bottom. Jehoram! What fun that was!"

Well, I remembered it all as he spoke—the quaint little hostelry at Jacobsdaal, and the strange companions of our table d'hôte. Lying, as does this South African village, just within the border of the Free State, it of course became the refuge of all those for whom our diamond-fields had grown too hot. In many odd societies of many lands I have mixed, but never before or since did I sit at meat with men accused and self-convicted of petty larceny. Very well also I recollected the grave and morose Yankee, Major Burton. At the same level, on my side, sat the gentleman now finishing his tale, a brisk young fellow, clad in cords and spurred knee-boots, looking ready and eager to take the veldt at a minute's notice. He watched every movement of the major like a cat at a mouse-hole. But the major never once glanced across, keeping his eyes upon his plate. They rose together, and young topboots followed his prey at six inches' distance. Having watched him settle to a game of écarté with a friendly man-slaughterer, in the canvas annexe of the hotel, he sat down with Jacklin and myself close by, and told us the secret of his vigilance. Major Burton, this gentleman, and two partners owned a claim at New Rush, which had proved fortunate. The grave and respectable American appointed himself receiver of the "finds." Something agitated his confiding partners with suspicion, and they summoned him to yield up the joint possessions. This he gravely and respectfully declined to do. Appeal being made to Judge Giddy, the treasurer vanished. The most active of the partners was hastily furnished with a

warrant, but he could not overtake the major on the right side of Jacobsdaal. Not the least idea had he of giving up the hard-earned diamonds for all that, and he declared himself ready to pursue even to Delagoa Bay, one thousand five hundred miles as the crow flies.

"Major Burton gave you the slip next morning," I said, laughingly.

"That's as far as you got with the tale," he replied. "I don't mind if I tell you the rest.—Here, boy! garçon!" cried he to the stately *maitre d'hôtel*, whom I always address as Monsieur Louis. That refined and courteous gentleman came up affably. "Cigars!" ordered the irreverent youth. "Los mejores, you know." I translated, and the cigars came.

"Yes," he went on, after lighting up, and stretching himself. "Burton gave me the slip. He'd got a bed in the old stable, and I slept in the canvas shed that stood crosswise to it. Half a dozen times I got up in the night and looked through the open door. There lay my man, fast asleep in the white bar of moonshine streaming in, his black portmanteau at his foot. It made me mad, I tell you, to see him snoring there, when I'd a warrant for felony in my pocket against him. At last I fell sleepy, and seeing the end of that portmanteau through the doors each time I opened an eye, I thought all was right."

"And so he slipped off before daylight," I said. "You had just time to tell us before galloping away."

"I remember that. I galloped something that day. Burton was no traveller, and I knew he wouldn't dare leave the track on such a lonely veldt. But he was no horseman neither; and when evening came on, and all the boers I asked said the same thing—how some such a man had passed two or three hours before—a sort of voice in me began to talk loud. I'd heard him within an hour of the start, but towards sundown he set to shouting. At last the thing put itself into words, and 'Think of Seth Peagrim's nugget,' it said.

"You've never heard of Seth Peagrim's nugget, likely? It's a story of some years ago; but it runs for a proverb in Nevada, where I come from. Seth came from the mountain one day, and it was soon told about that he'd found a nugget so big he couldn't carry it. Thereon, three loafers of Polt's-dam took up his trail and lifted it back. Seth saw 'em go, and he laughed. 'You'll find my shanty up yonder,' shouts

he. 'Make yerselves at home, but don't spile my furniture!' Three weeks they hung around the clearing, half-starved, prying into every hole on the mountain-side; while Seth, he drunk here and there, troubling himself nary mite about 'em. When they came back, you never heard a man make better laughing than did Seth Peagrim out of them loafers. He fell rough on them, I tell you. A month after—not more hurried than that—he went up the mountain with his brother-in-law and another honest man, and they brought down the nugget in three lumps. Where d'you think it had lain? Why, in the shanty, covered with baked clay; and those three fools had used it as a fire-stone! D'you see how the tale works in?"

"Can't say I do, off-hand," I answered. "Ah! you didn't cut your teeth on the mountains! I began to think our diamonds might, as like as not, be hidden as was Seth Peagrim's nugget. Once that idea in my skull, I began to consider. If the man ahead was not Burton, the sooner I got back, the brighter I should look. Spying about, I saw a farmhouse some mile off the track, and I said, 'If the compadre is not there, it's there he's changed horses.' So it was: he'd swopped Burton's nag against a pard, and set off again. I did ditto, and set back; for the decoy was just one of our Jacobsdaal manslaughterers. I cursed him pretty long and various on the back track, but perhaps he hadn't the best of the joke; for, at the pace that hombre went, he seemed set on reaching Bloemfontein without cooling saddle. There was a splendid moon, as you remember; and, vexed as I was, I laughed to think of him titapping over the veldt in front of me, who laid my back to him. Towards dawn I reached Jacobsdaal again, got into the canvas shed, and took two hours' snooze. It was when I woke that the puzzle began."

"So I should think," said I.

"Yes! It's one thing to chase your fox over the level, and another to sort him out amongst a flock of sheep. But Jacobsdaal is only a little camp, if one don't heed its chatter. I'd soon discovered where my man took his cart and whither he was bound. There was a good Samaritan in the place; I'd like to name him, for such aren't numbersome. He took my word for fifty pounds, and if I'd had time and a looking-glass I'd have shown myself round awhile in town, so

spry that circumstance did make me feel. He arranged too about the horses, found me a cart, and the best pards in Jacobsdaal. By noon I was off again, bound for the colony. But Burton had a mortal long start.

"I went right through Hopetown before night. Lord! how the springbok scurried from our track. At Belmont there was bad news. The passenger waggon had left Hopetown that same morning, and it travels night and day, as you know. My only chance was to take the post-cart, which should leave at midnight. Soon as I got to Hopetown I drove to the office, and found all the three seats engaged. I guessed I should have a fit."

"You must have been very tired," I said.

"One would have thought I was, but it's only the doctor can say what a healthy man will go through if he's put to it. You must have found that out, I should guess."

"Yes," I said, remembering. "I've marched nine miles through West African jungle, fought half the day, and marched back, upon a cup of coffee and six captain's biscuits. Twenty hours, eighteen miles, and a running fight, on that provender!"

"Well," resumed the American, "I'd food in plenty. For five pounds down one of the passengers gave me his seat. I slept till midnight at the inn, and it was Heaven's mercy I woke then, for the post-cart was starting as I ran up. You know what sort of trap it is? Just an open body, piled with mail-bags, a mad black biped to drive, and four mad quadrupeds in front of him. One of the passengers didn't turn up, and, 'Sold for five pounds!' cried I. He tore up shouting as we plunged off, but the Hottentot only grinned and never minded. For the matter of that, six of him couldn't have pulled up them four-legged devils. With nose and heels in the air by turn, plunge, buck, snort and jib, they raced away—now in a heap, now over the road, biting, whinnying, kicking. Lord! but that was windy travelling. We two tossed up and down and against each other on the mail-bags, holding to the sides, or we'd have been pitched out like peas. I thought such a pace couldn't last, for it was my first journey on a mail-cart. But it did! Lasted a day and a half. When his over-fed horses began to tire of their pranks, the driver screamed at them, and when he got hoarse he cracked his long

whip like a pistol. Every three hours we picked up a relay of fresh devils, two-legged and four-legged. Morning came and then evening again, always heaving and pitching, always choked with dust and the fiery wind. I'm tough, but when I tell you I didn't know my fellow passenger from Adam after travelling thirty hours with him, you'll judge the case was bad. Reaching Victoria, I guess we were as near dead as might be. But the first thing that caught my eye, as we galloped up the street, horses stretched out and foaming, Hottentot a-tivying on his horn, and all the village dogs about our heels, was that transport waggon at the inn-door, harnessed up, and the passengers clambering to their seats. I just got out on the step and jumped. 'Hebben niet langer dan een kivatier!' screamed the Totty. Much I cared how long he had to wait. I'd hurt myself a bit in falling, but I limped down to the inn, as cheerful as a boy to his bird-trap.

"The guard was just crying, 'All aboard!' as well as he could speak with his mouth full. Those who weren't mounted came running out. I stood aside, mighty polite, to let them pass. First came a fat man, all whiskers and paunch, rigged like a Dutch Falstaff, in straw hat and veldt schoen. 'Goede morgen, baas,' I said, and 'Goede morgen,' he muttered. Another and another followed. 'All aboard?' cried the conductor. 'All aboard, and be hanged to you,' grumbled the passengers.

"'Stop!' I cried. 'There's another! Don't be in such a darned hurry.'

"'Another?' shouted guard, and 'Another!' screamed passengers.

"'Yes,' says I. 'Where's your Major Burton?'

"'None of them digger larks with me,' howls the guard. 'We know you chaps, and some of you gets your blessed heads punched in the colony. All right there? Off you go, leader!' And off the waggon went, full swing, guard with his fingers to his nose, and all the passengers across the taffrail, chaffing at me. In a minute they was hidden in a whirl of dust, and I just sot down on the stoop, feeling mighty perplexed and fit to cry.

"The landlord comes up to me:—'Seem kinder dull, you do!' says he. 'Have a pickaxe, and tell a friend about it!' I didn't seem to mind, and I followed him. 'What's the rumpas?' says he. And I told him.

"A man who wasn't born far from the grind-wheel is that landlord of Victoria. I'd as soon hear him talk as any man I know. He listened to me, sucking his pipe, and says he: 'Did you ever come across a man as kept the fat of his cheeks in his waistcoat pocket at meal times?'"

"What d'ye mean?' I asked, skeary.

"Or did ye ever see a fine complexion stain a table napkin? Because there's the napkin on that chair, and what's left of the complexion is travelling over the veldt at this moment as fast as eight horses can gallop. That's all."

"I ran out bareheaded, just in time to see the post-cart vanish in a whirlwind, like a machine bewitched. Too late I was. The landlord had followed me—it's a sweet place, Victoria, and I've none but good words to say of it, but it's bound on me to state that that Samaritan had probably naught else to do. What with fatigue, and disappointment, and fury, I was like to go mad. The landlord took me by the arm—he was a big man—and dragged me into a bedroom. 'Go to sleep!' says he, and after a spell I went to sleep for twenty hours.

"He woke me then. 'The next post-cart will be by shortly,' he says. 'Come and have dinner.'

"Dinner I had, and in due time I was sitting again on a heap of mail-bags, with a fresh assortment of devils in the front of me. The last words that good fellow spoke was: 'Don't be took in again by a fat man like Johnny at the fair!' I laughed, thinking there was no fear of that.

"Across the everlasting veldt we galloped and galloped till I thought the end of all things was at hand for this digger. According to time, we were bound to pass the waggon on Great Karroo desert, and I held on. But leaving Beaufort, after ninety hours' race and scrimmage, the horses upset us, against an ant-hill. It was night, but we weren't hurt, only we had to cut the brutes loose. Mounted on one of them, the driver raced back to Beaufort, leaving me in mid track with all her blessed Majesty's mail-bags, under guard of the stars of Heaven. Without a word he vanished in the darkness, like a black ghost, if ever there was one. I thought of friends at old De Beer's, whose plunder of diamonds lay unprotected in the veldt at midnight, and I kept guard faithfully, rubbing my bruises. Maybe I sat on one

hundred thousand pounds' worth of stones, as you know, if not double of that. And Burton all the while was rolling farther and farther away with our share. Madness kept me awake a time, and when I slept, I dreamt I was choking that wretch.

"It was morning when the Hottentot came back with a new cart and four fresh prancers. We loaded up the bags anyhow—it made me shudder to see how they pitched our diamonds about, but no one is responsible for mails outyonder. Lord, how we did swim along to pick up lost time! Another day and another night through the desert, through the two kloofs, brought me to Wellington, as much as was left of me. I wanted a coffin or a bed, and I didn't greatly care which. But the sight of that village, and the transport horses coming back all asteam from the railway, brightened me up. I was to time; the train didn't start for ten minutes! Telling the station-master my business, we stood at the wicket and waited. Passengers came running in, but my man not amongst them. We waited, waited till the whistle blew. No fat man, nothing like him!

"Seems Major Burton has given you the slip!' said the station-master. What with the worry of it, and the fever, I was half mad. 'He must be here! Stop the train!' I shouted. The station-master looked at me, and lifted his hand. I'd but just time to clamber into a carriage, and off we were. Like a heap I fell on the seat! There wasn't a soul to talk to, and I dropped off to sleep in five minutes. There was no helping it! And I slept till the guard lifted me out and stood me against a post in Capetown station, five minutes after every passenger had left. And there I was—"

"Sold!" said I, for the American stopped, looking hard at me.

"Sold! If there wasn't a Providence for honest diggers, I wouldn't be here now taking my ease in Babylon. All I could do, and all the police could do, didn't fetch the major. They found me six suspicious characters a day; but he was no suspicious character, bless you! An archbishop would have asked him to dinner at first sight. For my own part, I searched the clubs and the best hotels, but nowhere was the major to be found, fat or thin. And the steamer was due! Well! I take no credit for it. The thing had gone beyond me. It was a woman spotted him at a glance. The major had carried on pretty far with a

half-caste girl in times back. She met him on the beach one day, where he used to walk under our very noses, and asked him for a trifle of money. Burton refused; they got to words; police came up. In his passion that lunatic gave the girl in charge. She called him by his name, and he found himself in the tronk before he could 'explain,' as the beggar said. Then they came and told me. Just as I passed the lock-up door the English steamer hove in sight. Well, and—that's all!"

"You got back your diamonds?"

"The most of them, or money equivalent."

"Major Burton was the fat man, I suppose?"

"Fat man at Victoria, and black fellow sitting on a truck at Wellington. D'you know—he was an awful scoundrel, but—p'raps I'm only half-ashamed, after all, to remember he was a fellow-countryman. It was a fine burst, wasn't it?"

GILLYFLOWERS.

OLD-FASHIONED, yes, I know they are,
Long exiled from the gay parterre,
And banished from the bowers;
But not the fairest foreign bloom
Can match in beauty or perfume
These bonny English flowers.

Their velvet petals, fold on fold,
In every shade of flaming gold,
And richest, deepest brown,
Lie close with little leaves between,
Of slender shape and tender green,
And soft as softest down.

On Sabbath mornings long ago,
When melody began to flow
From out the belfry tower,
I used to break from childish talk,
To pluck beside the garden walk
My mother's Sunday flower.

In spring she loved the snow-drop white,
In summer-time carnations bright,
Or roses newly blown;
But this the flower she cherished most,
And from the goodly garden host
She chose it for her own.

Ah, mother dear! the brown flowers wave
In sunshine o'er thy quiet grave,
This morning, far away;
And I sit lonely here the while,
Scarce knowing if to sigh or smile
Upon their sister spray.

I well could sigh, for grief is strong,
I well could smile, for love lives long,
And conquers even death;
But if I smile, or if I sigh,
God knoweth well the reason why,
And gives me broader faith.

Firm faith to feel all good is meant,
Sure hope to fill with deep content
My most despairing hours;
And oftentimes He deigns to shed
Sweet sunshine o'er the path I tread,
As on to-day, these flowers.

And chose He not a bearer meet,
To bring for me these blossoms sweet,
A loving little child?
And child and bonny blossoms come,
Like messages of love and home,
O'er waters waste and wild.

DELVILLE.

IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

THERE is a very unfashionable suburb of Dublin, quite unfrequented by the pleasure-seekers of the present day, and thought of only in connection with that "City of the Dead," whose white towers and carven stones lie among terrace walks and gardens on one side of the village of Glasnevin. The Tolka river flows through the village under a bridge pleasantly shaded by trees, the clean white street climbs a hill, there is an air of antiquity and repose about the old dwellings of the better sort, which retire a little here and there behind a bush of jasmine or roses, and a few green railings, leaving the smaller houses to stand forward by the roadside path. Around lie green lanes, embowered in trees, and, as you climb the street of the trim old-world village, you reach a large wooden gate, set in a high wall to your right, with trees and chimneys peeping above it. That is the gate of Delville, taking you by surprise on the slope of the hill, and when, long ago, many carriages poured in at its hospitable opening, there was always a little danger of an upset, so steep is the shelving road. The English tourist who stays a night at the Shelbourne, and rushes off to Killarney, will never set eye on this quiet spot; yet, through these wooden gates came the genius and wit of a bygone day, to sparkle over Dr. Delany's dinner-table, and ramble and philosophise in Dr. Delany's gardens; and here are the "peaceful bowers" which Mary Pendarves so dearly preferred to the gay world which she left to become the wife of the Irish dean. We confess to having felt some curiosity when, on one warm bright day in the month of roses, the portress opened for us a little side door of the Delville gates and we stepped into a wide gravelled space bordered with flowers, out of which rose up suddenly the old house with its flight of steps, and half-quaint, half formal-looking front. Away to the left lay the hills and dales, trees and river, which were the delight of the genial Englishwoman's heart. Delville is said by Cowper Walker to have been "the first

demesne in which the obdurate and straight line of the Dutch was softened into a curve, the terrace melted into a swelling bank, and the walks opened to catch the vicinal country." The house was built and the grounds arranged by Dr. Delany and his friend Dr. Helsham, and was originally named by them Hel-Delville, after the first syllables of their respective names; though later the awkward prefix was dropped. The pleasure-grounds, if not extensive, are beautifully designed; the fast running river diving in under the old wall and winding at the foot of the hill, the irregular slopes and little dells and vales, with their rich grass and straggling hawthorn, and barberry bushes make one think that Nature within this charmed inclosure has simply been left to have her way; but the long walks and terraces, with their unexpected peeps and vistas, with their stately rows of trees, divided by here and there a trellised wall covered with roses and brilliant creepers, these show the work of the thoughtful artist. A rugged and sombre row of yew-trees, very ancient, standing at intervals against the old wall near the entrance, have an air of staid and dignified grandeur, looking like creatures of long memory, wrapped in broodings over the past. The arbutus and ilex trees are magnificent, the luxuriant oaks have lovely tinges of colour, the elms tower to the clouds and spread shimmering shadows far over the grass. On the height near the boundary wall stands an ivied ruin looking down into a graveyard which adjoins the place, and within the quiet precincts of this God's acre lies the good old dean, the husband of Mary Delany, while close by is the grey stone church where he used to officiate. A door in the wall admitted the doctor and his family and servants out of the walks of Delville among the tombstones which they threaded on their way to prayer; and here, it may be mentioned in passing (we are told by the author of "The Sham Squire"), just within this postern was buried in secret, at dead of night, the unfortunate young patriot Emmet, in a green and nameless grave where truly "the night dew weeps on the grass o'er his head." Farther on, at the end of the long and stately walk which is partly travelled to reach the churchyard postern, stands the portico decorated with faded paintings by the hand of Mary Delany, a full-length portrait of St. Paul in fresco, and a medallion of a female bust, said to be Stella,

and taken from life. We can hardly believe in the tradition of the latter, as Stella died in 1727, and Mrs. Delany was not mistress of Delville till 1744. Were the profile face on the wall not so very unlike the description of Swift's hapless wife, we might suppose it painted from memory, for though nowhere is Stella mentioned in the famous letters, yet Scott, in his life of Swift, tells us that Mrs. Delany saw Stella once and was greatly struck with her beauty, "particularly her fine dark eyes. She was very pale and pensive, but not melancholy, and had hair as black as a raven." However, it is possible that in the course of years the medallion has been retouched many times and the original features lost. On the opposite wall is a corresponding medallion portrait of a head which is said to have been intended for Vanessa. This temple seems indeed specially devoted to the memory of Swift. We are told that it was he who wrote the inscription on the frieze in front; and some time ago an ancient printing-press was discovered under rubbish in an underground chamber beneath, leading to the surmise that here were printed in secrecy those wonderful papers which the redoubtable Dean of St. Patrick's gave forth so mysteriously to the world.

Gazing down the pleasant valley, peering through the sunshine and flickering shadows of moving trees, our ears filled with the hum of bees and murmur of running water, it is easy to conjure up the image of the good and charming woman who loved this spot so well; and her portrait, as painted by her husband's words, comes readily into our minds. "With a person finely proportioned, she had a most lovely face of great sweetness, set off with a head of fair hair, shining and naturally curled; with a complexion which nothing could outdo or equal, in which, to speak in the language of poets, 'the lilies and roses contended for the mastery.' Her eyes were bright—indeed, I never could tell what colour they were of, but to the best of my judgment, they were what Solomon called 'dove's eyes;' and she is almost the only woman I ever saw whose lips were scarlet, and her bloom beyond expression. The sweetness arising from united graces was guarded by a dignity which kept admirers in awe, in-somuch that she was the woman in the world to whom that fine description of Solomon could best be applied, 'fair as the moon, clear as the sun, but terrible as

an army with banners." We can clothe this fair soul and body in the pink damask and white-and-gold handkerchief which she innocently describes to her sister, and place her as a Watteau figure under the nut-trees, where she loved to spread her breakfast-table for favoured friends; we see her standing by the yellow cocks, encouraging the haymakers, or meet her descending the steps of the old-fashioned garden, laden with its spoils, before sitting down to write, "I have just been gleaning my autumn fruits, melons, figs, beurré pears, grapes, filberts, walnuts. I loaded my basket and filled my hands with honeysuckles, jessamines, July-flowers, and pippins," &c.

The story of Mary Delany's earlier years is sad; everyone remembers the touching picture, as sketched almost a century after by an aged woman, of the poor little bride of sixteen, startled out of her half-childish, half-girlish dreams, led weeping to the altar, and taken thence to the gloomy Cornish castle, whose dungeon-like windows were quite out of reach of her youthful head; everyone has followed with interest the trembling steps of the noble and spirited girl who was transformed by seven years of companionship with a brutal old man, not into a reckless worldling, but into a chastened woman, who looked out with the tender and compassionate eyes of blameless experience on all the sins and sorrows of life. There are few who have not felt a pang at finding that upon "Gromio's" horrible death, and after the poor young widow of twenty-three had recovered a little from the crushing effects of the shocking past, there was yet another, and even a harder trial lying in wait for her. One who had all the youth, fascinations, and (seemingly) the virtues which the jealous old Pendarves had lacked, was at hand to win her love, and frankly and gladly she seems to have given it, though observing in her conduct all that caution and reserve to which seven years of anxious slavery had habituated her. The nobleman whom she calls Herminius, unlike the other "gentlemen" by whom she was surrounded, had treated her with respect during the lifetime of her husband; and this delicacy, at a time when she was cruelly forlorn and unprotected, had won her admiration and regard. For many years "Herminius" sought her, as a man seeks the woman he would make his wife, and there seems little doubt that he really loved her; but the

widow of "Gromio" was in reality left but scantily provided for, and "Herminius," in his more prudent moments, probably wished to wed a wealthier woman. However that may be, after torturing her long by the uncertainty of his conduct, he cruelly led her to the point of acknowledging her willingness to marry him, and then, feigning to make a quarrel, left her suddenly with scorn upon his tongue. We cannot wonder that for long, long after this, Mary Pendarves shrank from the thought of marriage, and held no lofty opinion of men. The union of "Herminius" with a woman of fortune was needed to convince her of the falsehood of this lover, whom she had trusted; and then her health broke down, and she fell ill of a heavy fever, from the pain of a wounded heart.

Arisen out of her sickness, Mary Pendarves, true to her nature, cast about for the best means of healing mind and body, and recovering that serenity without which she could not live. Change of air and scene were the helps she procured for herself, and in 1731 she set out for Ireland in company with her friend (Philomela) Mrs. Donnellan. Arrived there, she threw herself into all the amusements of society, and in her lively letters to her sister, we find that from the very first she opened her heart to this country of her adoption. Mrs. Donnellan's house was in Stephen's Green, and thither came wits, and beaux and belles of the day.

"Lord Charles Hay," she writes, "has made acquaintance with me, as 'a thing whose face he was used to in London.' I am jeered about it, and so I am upon some other things of that kind." And of another gentleman she says, "He thinks to recommend himself to me by rallying Ireland, and all its diversions. I have too much gratitude to find fault with anything that treats me kindly, were there room for it, but I protest I never was in a place that more deservedly claims my good word than this I am now in."

In such kindly spirit she went amongst her new friends, and with the sunshine of such goodwill on her charming face, she first walked through these old gates of Delville, little thinking that here actually was her home, her harbour of rest, her "own peaceful bowers," where, later on, after all the heats of the day had been suffered, she was destined to find her joyful rest. The key-note of pure happiness, silent till now, had indeed been sounded

in her life when she wrote the following to her sister :—

“On Thursday Phill and I dined at Dr. Delany’s; there we met Miss Kelly and Lord Orrery, the Dean of St. Patrick’s, Mr. Kit Donnellan, and Dr. Helsham, a very ingenious, entertaining man. In such company you may believe the time passed away very pleasantly. Swift is a very odd companion (if that expression is not too familiar for so extraordinary a genius); he talks a great deal and does not require many answers; he has infinite spirits, and says abundance of good things in his common way of discourse. Miss Kelly’s beauty and good-humour have gained an entire conquest over him, and I come in only a little by-the-by.”

Some time afterwards she writes, “We are initiated of that witty club, and Thursday is the day of meeting,” and in this way she made the intimate acquaintance of Dr. Delany and his remarkable friends. How much she enjoyed such intercourse can be gathered from her letters. “Next Thursday we are to dine at Dr. Delany’s,” she says, and complains of people getting unlucky colds which prevent the usual meetings. She desires to make the most of her time of enjoyment, declaring that this is not a journey often to be taken in one’s life, little dreaming of how often and how gladly she was to make that journey in the future. “You will say again,” she writes, “that I never speak of any people of this country except with encomiums; why there may be worthless people here as well as in other countries, but they have not yet come within my knowledge.” Her pleasure in all she meets grows as the months fly away; she praises everything, the decoration of her friend’s house, her daily walk round Stephen’s Green, which she compares with London squares to the disadvantage of the latter; the beauty of the women she sees. “Yesterday Mrs. Clayton had an assembly,” she writes, “and I had a commerce-table of absolute beauties.”

At this time Dr. Delany was an important member of a circle of witty men who met to dine together at his table every Thursday. His town house was in Stafford Street, and Delville was then only his summer villa. In both of these dwellings the club had often met for years, Swift and Dr. Thomas Sheridan being invariably of the party, while Stella, we are told by Scott, “was active in their poetical strife.” She, however, was dead, and Swift’s brightest

days were past when Mrs. Pendarves first took her seat amongst this company, which she found so fascinating. Scott tells us that Dr. Delany had “risen from a low origin by the distinction due to his learning and genius.” He was the son of a small farmer, who had formerly been servant to an Irish judge. Admitted to Trinity College as a sizar, he had gradually worked his way upward, and it is curious to notice that he was remarkable among his illustrious contemporaries of higher birth, as the most thorough gentleman of the group.

“Prouder,” says Scott, “more cautious or more interested than Sheridan, he kept aloof from that horse-play of railery which passed between the latter and the Dean, and which unavoidably lowers in a certain degree the man whose good-humour is contented to submit to it. He made court to the Dean by verses less humorous but more elegant than those of Sheridan, and he also had his answer in the style he used. The distinction which the Dean made between them is obvious from his exhorting Delany to impress on Sheridan the sense of propriety and self-respect in which he thought him deficient. “He (Delany) is one of those very few within my knowledge,” writes Swift, “on whom an access of fortune hath made no manner of change,” and we are also told that “his simplicity of character was as remarkable as his generosity.”

Dr. Delany married his first wife, Mrs. Tennison, who was very wealthy, in the same year which brought Mary Pendarves to Ireland. Mrs. Delany in her old age wrote “he was at that time married to his first wife,” though the editor of her autobiography curiously enough questions the accuracy of her memory in this particular. It is true that in her letters there is no mention of a mistress at Delville, yet as she spent two years in the country she must certainly have met the lady.

After her return to England, Mrs. Pendarves did not forget her Irish friends. “The cold weather, I suppose,” she writes to Swift, “has gathered together Dr. Delany’s set. I recollect no entertainment with so much pleasure as that I received from that company. It has made me very sincerely regret the many hours of my life I have lost in insignificant conversation;” and again, “I have not an acquaintance of any worth that I have not told how happy I have been in your company.” “I assure you,” she says to her sister, “I

wish you and I could be transported there (to Ireland) for one year, no place could suit your taste so well; the good-humour and conversableness of the people would please you extremely," and describes "Northend, Sir John Stanley's place," as "the Delville of this part of the world."

After becoming Dean of Down in 1735, Dr. Delany secluded himself much from the world, his wife's health requiring that he should live entirely in the country. Swift writes to Mrs. Pendarves, "Dr. Delany hath long ago given up his house in town. His Dublin friends seldom visit him till the swallows come in. He is too far from town for a winter visit, and too near for staying a night in the country manner." And Mrs. Pendarves replies, "I cannot help lamenting Dr. Delany's retirement. I expected his benevolent disposition would not have suffered him to rob his friends of the pleasure and advantage of his company. If you have not the power to draw him from his solitude, no other person can pretend to do it."

For ten years after her first visit to Ireland, Mrs. Pendarves lived among the gay circles where birth and fortune had placed her, "but with a mind so pure and uncontaminated by the world that it was matter of astonishment how she could have lived in its more splendid scenes without being tainted with one single atom of its folly or indiscretion." In her house in Little Brook Street she had "a garden as big as your parlour at Gloucester," in which she had roses, stocks, pinks, honeysuckles. Here came many noble, wealthy, or illustrious suitors, as it would seem that never was a creature more beloved by both men and women; yet one after another was gently but firmly refused, while none were offended and all remained her friends. She would hear of no change in her life until, in 1743, Dr. Delany (then two years a widower) came to London and wrote her a proposal of marriage. She had passed by many more brilliant offers: the Dean possessed only "a good clear income for life, a good house, as houses go in this part of the world, moderately furnished, a good many books, a pleasant garden;" but with these he offered "the tenderness of affection, the faith of friendship." He assured her that "perfect friendship is nowhere to be found but in marriage;" and for the sake of this friendship the daughter of the Granvilles set at naught the haughty displeasure of her

brother, who could not brook that an Irishman of low birth, however noble and distinguished in himself, should carry off the treasure which so many mightier ones had coveted. "Where you owe duty, pay it," wrote the Dean; "but let not your decision depend on the fickle, the uncertain, the selfish. You have noble sentiments, good understanding, a generous heart; and these, under God, are your best governors. Leave me not to the caprice of your friends." And Mary Pendarves obeyed him and became his wife, having obtained the consent of her mother, and so far satisfied her beloved younger sister that by-and-by we find the latter writing to the Dean at Delville that she "never thought her sister could meet with anybody sensible enough of those delicacies in her disposition that complete the most amiable part of a woman's character. But now," writes Mrs. Dewes, "I believe she has, since you make her happy."

Then the tide of joy and peace rose to its full in the woman's life; and following her story we come to the second period of the history of Delville; one in which many noteworthy people came in and out of its gates to have their little sayings and doings unwittingly handed down to posterity by its mistress.

WATERSPOUTS.

THE Storm Laws, founded on observation and experience, assume that cyclones, typhoons, and hurricanes, however vast and wide their sweep may be, are all, in point of fact, whirlwinds—that is, circular rotatory movements of the atmosphere around a common small central area, in which a comparative calm exists.

In a previous paper,* based on M. Faye's "Notices Scientifiques," it was stated that, from the vastest cyclone and waterspout, down to the tiniest dust-whirl of our roads or dimple of our streams, the differences in origin and formation were only a question of duration and size. But however well the circular theory may have established itself in the case of wide-spread storms, other notions still retain their hold of the popular mind in respect to waterspouts. And yet some of the old voyagers were very near hitting on the actual truth. Thus, from

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 14, p. 246, "Storm Laws."

Dampier we learn, of Celebes Island, that "There Spouts are often seen. It is a Cloud hanging down, and sloping or bending, never perpendicular. The Sea foams and moves round it, increasing by degrees. After some time it flies upwards, being about one hundred Paces in Circumference; but lessening gradually to a smallness like a Spout, through which the Sea-Water is drawn up to the Clouds, as is manifested by their Increase and Blackness. Then you see the Cloud drive along, which before was immoveable; the Spout keeping the same Course till the sucking is over, and then breaking off, all the Water below the Cloud falls into the Sea with a terrible Noise."

The deep-rooted errors prevalent respecting waterspouts are shown by M. Faye to be the result of an illusion conveyed through the sense of sight. In the midst of the deep calm which often precedes a tempest, while not the slightest breath of air is perceptible in the lower strata of the atmosphere, heavy clouds, arriving at full speed, obscure the sky, proving that the upper strata are traversed by powerful currents whose influence does not extend to the level of the soil. From one of these clouds there hangs a sort of pocket or broken tube, resembling an immense stalactite minus its solidity, which gradually lengthens in a downward direction. It appears to be formed of the same materials as the cloud; and, in fact, it is true mist which forms its sheath and renders it visible to our eyes.

Meanwhile, inside the tube there occurs a violent whirling, a very correct idea of which is given by the little eddies of dust and straw which are sometimes raised on our highway roads. When the tube reaches the ground and meets obstacles projecting or standing out from the level, it acts upon them precisely like a tool turning very rapidly at the end of a vertical axis. It raises a cloud of dust round its lower extremity, upsets trees or snaps them off at the root, throws down walls, and strips off roofs. If the tube meets with water instead of earth, it treats it exactly as would a Dutch scoop horizontally fixed at the end of a vertical axis. The little hand-machine for frothing chocolate gives a feeble notion of the action. The water, beaten circularly, is projected to a distance in the shape of foam; if a pond be thus attacked, it is emptied in an instant; if a lake or a sea, the water springs or dashes up round the foot of the

tube in the shape of water-dust, if such a term be allowed. In the desert, clouds of whirling sand are raised or scattered, which, when they fall, or during their passage, bury whole caravans beneath their heated and stifling mass.

We can easily picture to our mind's eye a vapoury sheath stretching from the clouds to the earth, fifteen or eighteen thousand feet long or more, flexible, undulating; the least breath agitates and twists it; which does not prevent the propagation down to the ground of the fearful whirling which pervades it. If it assumes still larger dimensions, it is no longer a water or landspout, but a tornado. Such was the one of January 20th, 1854, in Knox County, Ohio, which in half an hour threw down fifty thousand trees. In traversing a forest it cleared an alley a quarter of a mile broad, which would have taken a whole army of woodcutters several weeks to open.

This sheath, shaped like a funnel, an elephant's tusk, or an inverted column, often ends by being itself slightly broken up below by the violent gyration which it envelops. On the other hand, the nebulosity which forms it rises slowly in the air, and the combination of these two movements produces externally a sort of ascensional whirl which bears no proportion to the violence of the internal gyration. The phenomenon becomes still more striking if a few fleecy patches of mist are detached and gradually mount round the waterspout. All this takes place on the outside; but it produces a very natural illusion. You fancy you see something mount inside the spout; a scrap of cloud will produce the effect of a bird drawn into the spout and compelled to whirl round as it is driven upwards. If this vermicular motion is continued and affects the whole sheath, you ask yourself what it can be that rises thus, in the long tube whose extremity dips into the sea and disturbs its surface. Immediately, without further examination, the logic of imagination interferes in the matter. "Evidently," says this untrusty counsellor, "it is water which rises inside; it is the water of the sea which the spout has stretched itself down to obtain; it pumps it up, and decants it into the clouds; you can see it go round and round as it rises." Nobody asks how a tube of vapour can hold and contain torrents of water. The fact is visible, and that suffices. Besides, you see the clouds swelling and bulging out

with the water pumped up and distributed amongst them.

There is no reasoning with eye-witnesses who are under the influence of such an impression, especially if they have escaped all contact with and material proof of what they supposed they saw. Thus we read, "Along the coast of Bata, an island near Sumatra, an English ship had like to have been overwhelmed by one of the waterspouts, which poured down near the ship. It was almost like a river poured out of the clouds, and put the ocean into such a violent ferment as astonished the people. They are sometimes a quarter of an hour in falling, and would infallibly sink a ship should they fall upon it. But," says the author, "we happily escaped this wash, and proceeded on our voyage to Achen." A miss was as good as a mile, both in respect to escaping the danger, and to ascertaining the real nature of the spectacle.

Even modern and serious writers indulge in figurative language as one way of accounting for physical phenomena. Jansen, quoted by Maury, says that in the Java Sea, when the change of the monsoon commences, "Day and night we have thunderstorms. The clouds are in continual movement, and the darkened air, laden with vapour, flies in all directions through the skies. The combat which the clouds seem to court and to dread appears to make them more thirsty than ever. They resort to extraordinary means to refresh themselves; in tunnel form, when time and opportunity fail to allow them to quench their thirst from the surrounding atmosphere in the usual manner, they descend near the surface of the sea, and appear to lap the water directly up with their black mouths. Waterspouts thus created are often seen in the changing season, especially among small groups of islands, which appear to facilitate their formation." The description may be poetical, but is hardly philosophical.

These eye-witnesses should have gone a little farther in their investigation, while still in the presence of waterspouts. Since it is water from the sea, they say, which finally falls as a cataract, or more frequently as heavy rain, such water assuredly ought to be salt. But how often have mariners collected and stored this water, quite recently pumped by the spout from the sea, and found to their great astonishment that it was fresh! Nor can it be said that the water so pumped up, and then fallen in the shape of rain, was too small in quantity, compared with

the entire contents of the cloud, to communicate by its admixture an appreciable brackishness. No; cases have been reported of sailors being suddenly inundated by the breaking of a waterspout, and forced in their surprise to swallow water proceeding from the tube itself: still they failed to perceive the slightest taste of salt. One would suppose that these facts awakened doubts. Nothing of the kind; it was concluded thence that waterspouts rendered sea-water fresh. The notion is preserved in the Fifth Canto of Camoens's *Lusiad*. "Suddenly," he says, "the devouring waterspout detaches itself from the waves and then falls back upon the liquid plain in torrents of rain. It restores to the ocean the waters it had taken from it, but it restores them pure and deprived of saline savour. Ye grand interpreters of Nature, explain, if you can, the cause of this imposing phenomenon." In the sixteenth century, the inference of that transformation was not so absurd as it appears at present. The belief then was prevalent that agitation sweetens the water of the sea, and that within a reef on which the waves break, the water is less salt than in the offing. In the volume in which Descartes published both his celebrated "*Discours sur la Méthode*" and his reflections on meteors, there is a figure representing the rigid and pointed atoms of salt detaching themselves, during the shock, from the flexible atoms of water which are rolled and twisted round them like corkscrews.

In the seventeenth century, waterspouts of aspiration, or suckers-up, continue the accepted theory. In his *Voyage Round the World*, Dampier, already quoted, says, "When the surface of the water begins to work, you see it foaming within a circumference of a hundred paces and spinning round gently until the movement increases. It then rises and forms a sort of column, which gradually diminishes as it mounts, till it reaches the small part of the waterspout, which seems to be the channel through which the water is transported to the cloud. This is visibly the case, through the clouds becoming bigger and blacker. The movement of the cloud is seen immediately afterwards, although none was previously perceptible. The spout follows the cloud, and draws up water as it goes; and it is this movement which makes the wind"—which last idea is one of the confusions, so common, of cause and effect.

In the eighteenth century, the aspiration

belief is more and more firmly rooted in the minds of mariners, in defiance of the evidence of the simplest laws of Physics and Mechanics. Our illustrious Cook met with waterspouts. Some of the crew said they saw in one of those spouts, quite close to them, a bird drawn up and forcibly whirled round and round, like the fly-wheel regulator of a roasting-jack. From the ascensional movement of the bird and several other circumstances, it was clear to them that those spouts were produced by whirlwinds—a good guess in the right direction—and that water was violently carried within them up aloft.

At the present epoch, the tradition of the sucking power of waterspouts is to be found in almost all our contemporaries, as tenacious of life as ever. For, the moment you hint a doubt of the pretended fact, half a score of eye-witnesses, sailors or landmen, will insist that they have seen—actually seen—the water of the sea, or of rivers, or of ponds, mount, spinning round, till it reached the clouds. In 1838, Dr. Bonnafont, while holding high medical rank in the French army, saw a spout near Philippeville, in which the rapid upward spiral movement of the water was distinctly visible. The spiral followed the dimensions of the spout, which, very narrow at its lower portion, increased as it neared the cloud, to which it transmitted the water drawn from the sea. The gyratory and sucking movement was so powerful, that he could distinctly hear the noise made by the water rushing to the orifice of the tube. When the mass of water had reached the upper portion of the spiral, it seemed to become rarefied, in order to be incorporated with the cloud, which could be seen at a glance to be swelled by the fluid so transfused.

After all this, who can doubt that waterspouts, together with tornados and typhoons, are simple phenomena of aspiration or suction? Nevertheless, although rarefied air is common enough, rarefied water (except as steam or vapour) is the rarest of rarities; and we may agree with M. Faye that, in the present instance, observers have not proceeded with scientific prudence. To accept with closed eyes the most astounding assertions, without inquiry or verification; to believe that any spout can suck the water of the sea up to an elevation of eighteen or twenty thousand feet, when the most powerful pump cannot make it rise more than thirty-two feet; to admit that a channel formed of

light vapours constitutes a tube capable of resisting enormous pressure; to fill the clouds with torrents of salt-water, and make them sustain it afterwards, when clouds cannot hold a single drop of rain, scarcely accords with scientific habit, and can only be explained by the force of old prejudices constantly renewed by the persistent evidence of prejudiced witnesses.

Another reason not less important is, that of all the questions relating to the constitution of the Universe, those which fall under the head of Mechanics are the most difficult; they cannot be settled by imagination or guesswork. When logical mechanics are silent and cease to guide us, inconsistencies of all sorts are sure to creep in: witness the wonderful astronomical notions current in the seventeenth century. Now, the branch of mechanics which ought to treat of the gyratory movements of liquids and gases, and on which the atmospheric phenomena we are considering depend, did not, until recently, exist, and is as yet only in the state of a rough outline. Consequently, modern meteorology has been obliged to suppress some of its most glaring absurdities. Instead of making waterspouts pump up ordinary water, it has admitted that the water, exposed to the conflicting currents of air rushing to the foot of the spout, might be beaten into fine spray and absorbed in this lighter form. A curious experiment was even made at Washington, in 1852, with considerable formality, in order to prove that such must be the case. Air was made to rush forcibly up a vertical tube several feet long and five inches in diameter. By placing a basin of water at the foot of the tube, the pulverised liquid rose in the shape of an inverted cone, forming an artificial waterspout. But none of the spectators pointed out the difference between a glass or metal tube and an almost ideal channel whose walls are no firmer than a mist! All the experiment proves is, the prevailing belief in the suction action of waterspouts.

On close examination, it will be found that, at the bottom of all these attempts at explaining waterspouts, there lurks the leading idea which Pliny expressed in the words, "*Quam spissatus humor rigens ipse sustinet*," equivalent to meaning that a liquid can, under given circumstances, stiffen itself so as to stand upright. It is tacitly implied that the tube of the waterspout or the tornado has something of the rigidity of a material

tube which can be shifted in a piece by pushing it at the bottom. But even the force which is to push it below is wanting.

Very remarkable, too, is the fact that never has navigator ascertained in a cyclone the slightest indication of the powerful upward movement which is assumed to be the essential cause of the phenomenon. No one has ever verified the existence of these supposed hurricanes of aspiration, simply because everybody, through preconceived ideas, has accepted them as a matter of course. As to waterspouts, not the shadow of a doubt is entertained; water can be seen spinning in them upwards until it reaches the sky. But according to this account, spouts and hurricanes ought also to carry off to the clouds the thousands of trees that they pull up. A little while afterwards, there should be the spectacle of a forest falling from the skies. This is no exaggeration; thousands of trees would be easier to transport to the clouds, than thousands of tons of sea-water to be lifted and kept there. Besides, witnesses have already seen branches of trees flying over the clouds; and the proof is, that they were found at a distance, lying on the ground, covered with hoar-frost, in the middle of summer. The theory of hurricanes of centripetal aspiration must therefore be regarded as on its last legs. It springs from a prejudice, sacrifices on its way the most elementary notions of mechanics, and completely fails to reproduce a single characteristic feature of the phenomenon.

A general law, previously stated, comprises all these cases, great and small. When there exist, in a current of water, differences of velocity between two adjacent threads of fluid, a regular gyratory movement around a vertical axis—in other words, a whirlpool—is the consequence. The spirals described by each molecule of fluid are virtually circular with the axis for their centre. More exactly, they are the spirals of a slightly conical and descending screw, so that, in following the course of any one molecule, you find that it rapidly revolves in a circle round an axis which it insensibly approaches, descending all the while with a velocity very much inferior to its velocity of rotation.

The same thing occurs in gaseous masses that are traversed by horizontal currents, unequal velocities in which will engender whirling movements with vertical axes, whose figure is an inverted cone, which

becomes visible if anything troubles the transparency of the air. Exactly as in water, the revolution of a molecule will be all the more rapid as it is nearer the centre. Need it be said that waterspouts, by their very aspect, range themselves in this category? The mechanical identity of whirlpools and whirlwinds, in liquids or in gases, is manifested by such details as the descending movement of waterspouts, whose point gradually approaches the soil, and by the ravages they cause on reaching it by throwing down whatever obstructs their rotatory motion. The trade-winds and their return currents are a proof that we have veritable rivers of air above our heads. When a waterspout appears, we have only to look at the clouds to perceive that, in spite of the calm below, there are powerful horizontal currents aloft, blowing at different rates, and therefore causing rotatory motions in the atmosphere. In a stream of water, the temperature is nearly the same from the surface to the bottom; in the atmosphere, the upper strata are notably colder. Carried downwards by the spiral revolution, they condense the moisture in the lower strata and render the spout visible by casing its exterior with a sheath of mist.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MEANWHILE Rhoda, at Duckwell Farm, supposed herself to be too unhappy to care much for anything. She did not have a fever, nor fall into a consumption, nor waste away visibly; but she passed hours crying alone in her own room, or sitting idle-handed, whilst her thoughts languidly retraced the past, or strove to picture what sort of a lady Algernon's wife might be. Headaches, pallid cheeks, and red eyes resulted from these solitary hours. Mrs. Seth Maxfield wondered what had come to the girl, having no suspicion that young Errington's marriage could be more to Rhoda than an interesting subject for gossip.

Old Jonathan went over to Duckwell immediately after receiving the first newspaper, sent by Mrs. Errington, from Westmoreland.

The announcement of the intended wedding had taken him wholly by sur-

prise. It would be hard to say whether wrath or amazement predominated in his mind, on first reading the paragraph which Mrs. Errington had so complacently marked with red ink. But it is not at all hard to say which feeling predominated within an hour after having read it.

According to old Max's judgment, there was not one extenuating circumstance in Algernon's behaviour; not one plea to be urged on his behalf. Utter vindictive anger filled the old man's soul as he read. He had been deceived, played upon, laughed at by this boy! That was the first, and, perhaps, the most venomous of his mortifications. But many other stinging thoughts rankled in his mind. David Powell had been right! That was almost unendurable. As to Rhoda, old Max could not, in the mood he was then in, contemplate her being bowed down by grief and disappointment. He would have her raise her head, and revenge herself on her faithless lover. He would have her successful, admired, and prosperous. He would have her trample on Algernon's pride and poverty with all the insolence of wealth. Even his beloved money, so hardly earned, so eagerly hoarded, seemed to him, for the first time in his life, to be of small account in comparison with a sentiment.

He took his Bible, and gloated over menaces of vengeance and threats of destruction. Future condemnation was, no doubt, in store for Algernon Errington. But that was too vague and too distant a prospect to appease old Max's stomach for revenge. He wanted to see his enemy in the dust, and that his enemy should be seen there by others. In the midst of his reading, he suddenly recollected the acknowledgment he held of Algernon's debt to him, and jumped up and ran to his strong-box to feast his eyes on it. It seemed almost like a clear leading from on High that the I.O.U. should come into his head just then, old Max thought. He was not the first, nor the worst man who has wrested Scripture into the service of his own angry passions.

Then he sent to order a gig from the Blue Bell, and set out for Duckwell Farm.

"I hope your father isn't sickening for any disease, or going to get a stroke, or something," said Betty Grimshaw to her nephew James. "But I never see anybody's face such a colour out of their coffin. It's a greeny grey, that's what it is. And he was frowning like thunder."

But Jonathan Maxfield's disorder was not of the body. He arrived at Duckwell unexpectedly, but his arrival did not cause any particular surprise. He had business transactions to discuss with his son Seth, to whom he had advanced money on mortgage. And then there was Rhoda staying at the farm, and, of course, her father would like to see Rhoda.

Rhoda was called from her own room, and came down, pale and nervous. She dreaded meeting her father. Did he, or did he not, know the news from Westmoreland? It had only come to Duckwell Farm by means of Mr. Pawkins's servants. It might possibly not yet have reached Whitford.

On his side, old Max took care to say nothing about the Applethwaite Advertiser. He had destroyed that journal before leaving home, placing it in the heart of the kitchen fire, and holding it there with the poker, until the remains of it fluttered up the chimney in black, impalpable fragments.

But old Max had brought another document in his pocket, which had been placed in his hand just as he was starting in the gig. It was a letter directed to Miss Rhoda Maxfield, High-street, Whitford. And this he pulled out almost immediately on seeing Rhoda. A glance at her face sufficed to show him that she was unhappy and dispirited. "She has heard it!" he thought. And something like an anathema upon Algernon followed the thought in his mind.

The old man's countenance was not so clearly read by his daughter; indeed, she hardly raised her eyes to his, but received his kiss in silence.

"I'm afraid, father, you'll not find Rhoda's looks doing us credit," said Mrs. Seth. "Why or wherefore I don't know, but these last days she has been as peaky as can be."

"It's the heat, maybe," said old Max shortly, and withdrew his own and Mrs. Seth's attention from the girl, as she read the letter he handed to her. Rhoda was grateful for this forbearance on her father's part, although it fluttered her, too, a little, as proving that he was aware of the cause of her dejection, and anxious to shield it from observation.

The letter was from Minnie Bodkin. She had written it almost immediately on hearing of Algernon's intended marriage. It invited Rhoda, if her father would consent, to visit the Bodkins during the

remainder of their stay at the seaside. There was no word of allusion to the Erringtons in the letter. Minnie only said, "Mamma and I remember that your cheeks had lost their roses, somewhat, when we left Whitford. And we think that a breath of sea-breeze may blow them back again. It is some time since you had complete change of air. Tell Mr. Maxfield we will take good care of you." And in a postscript Mrs. Bodkin had added, in her small running hand, "Do come, my dear. We shall be very glad to have you. Dr. Bodkin bids me send you his love."

It had been no slight effort of self-conquest which had made Minnie Bodkin send for Rhoda, to stay with her at the seaside, and had enabled her to endure the girl's daily presence, and to stand her friend in word and deed, throughout the weeks which succeeded the announcement of Algernon's marriage.

To be kind to Rhoda at a distance, would have been pleasant enough. Minnie would willingly, nay, gladly, have served the girl in any way which should not have necessitated frequent personal communion with her. But she told herself unflinchingly, that if she really meant to keep her promise to David Powell, she must do so at some cost of self-sacrifice. The only efficacious thing she could do for Rhoda, was to take her away from Whitford scenes and Whitford people for a time; to take her out of the reach of gossiping tongues and unsympathising eyes, and to give her the support of a friendly presence when she should be obliged to face Whitford once more. This would be efficacious help to Rhoda; and Minnie resolved to give it to her. But it was a task to which she felt considerable repugnance. There was an invisible barrier between herself and pretty, gentle, winning Rhoda Maxfield.

It is curious to consider of how small importance to most of us actions are, as compared with motives. And perhaps nothing contributes more to hasty accusations of ingratitude than forgetfulness of this truth. We are more affected by what people mean than by what they say, and by what they feel than by what they do. Only when meaning and feeling harmoniously inform the dry husk of words and deeds, can we bring our hearts to receive the latter thankfully, however kind they may sound or seem, to uninterested spectators. The egotism of most of us is too

exactng to permit of our judging our friends' behaviour from any abstract point of view; and to be done good to for somebody else's sake, or even for the sake of a lofty principle, seldom excites very lively satisfaction.

Thus Rhoda reproached herself for the unaccountable coldness with which she received Miss Bodkin's kindness; having only a dim consciousness that Miss Bodkin's kindness was prompted by motives excellent indeed, but which had little to do with personal sympathy with herself.

She silently handed the letter to her father, and turned away to the window. Mrs. Seth bustled out of the room, saying that she must get ready "a snack of something" for Mr. Maxfield after his drive, and the father and daughter were left alone together.

Jonathan Maxfield's face brightened wonderfully as he read Minnie's gracious words. A glow of pleasure came over his hard features. But it was not a very agreeable sort of pleasure to behold, being considerably mingled with malicious triumph. Here was a well-timed circumstance indeed! What could Powell, or such as Powell, say now? Let the Erringtons behave as they might, it was clear henceforward that Rhoda had not been received amongst gentlefolks solely on their account. His girl was liked and made much of for her own sake.

"Well," said he, "this is a very pretty letter of Miss Minnie's; very pretty indeed." He did not allow his voice to express his exultation, but spoke in his usual harsh, grumbling tones.

"Yes," answered Rhoda, tremulously, "it is very kind of Miss Minnie, and of dear Mrs. Bodkin; wonderfully kind! But I—I don't think I want to go, father."

"Not want to go? Nonsense! That's mere idle nonsense. Of course you will go. I shall take you down by the coach, myself."

"Oh thank you, father, but—I really don't want change. I don't care about going to the seaside."

The old man turned upon her almost savagely. "I say you shall go. You must go. Are you to creep into a hole like a sick beast of the field, and hide yourself from all eyes? There, there," he added in a gentler tone, drawing her towards him, as he saw the tears begin to gather in her eyes, "I am not chiding you, Rhoda. But it will be good for you

to accept this call from your kind friends. It will be good for mind and body. You will be quiet there, among fresh scenes and fresh faces. And you will return to Whitford in the company of these gentlefolks, who, it is clear, are minded to stand your friends under all circumstances. Seth's wife is a worthy woman, but she is not a companion for you, Rhoda."

One phrase of this speech did seem to offer a glimpse of consolation to Rhoda; the promise, namely, of quiet and fresh scenes, where she and her belongings were utterly unknown. But her father did not know that Minnie Bodkin understood her little love-story from first to last; and that Minnie Bodkin's presence and companionship might not be calculated to pour the waters of oblivion into her heart. Still, she reflected, a day must come when she would have to face Miss Minnie, and all the other Whitford people who knew her. There was no chance of her dying at once and being taken away from it all! And Rhoda's teaching had made her shrink from the thought of desiring death, as from something vaguely wicked. On the whole, it might be the best thing for her to go to the Bodkins. She would better have liked to continue her solitary rambles in Pudcombe Woods or the meadows at Duckwell; only that now the pain awaited her, every evening, at the farm of hearing Algernon's marriage discussed and speculated on. She could not shut out the topic. On the whole, then, it might be the best thing she could do, to get away from Whitford gossip for a time.

These considerations Rhoda brought before her own mind, not with any idea that they could avail to decide her line of conduct, but by way of reconciling herself to the line of conduct she should be compelled to take. It never entered her head that any resistance would be possible when once her father had said, "You must go."

"Very well, father," she answered meekly, after a short pause.

The Bodkins' invitation was duly communicated to Seth and his wife. And it was arranged that Rhoda should start from the farm without returning to Whitford at all, as a cross road could be reached from Duckwell, where the coach would stop to pick up passengers. "If there's any garments you require, beyond those you have here, your aunt Betty shall send

them over by the carrier, to-morrow," said Mr. Maxfield.

Mrs. Seth protested (not without a spice of malice) that Rhoda could not possibly want any more clothes, for that she was rigged out already fit for a princess. Nevertheless there did arrive from Whitford several fresh additions to Rhoda's wardrobe, inclosed in a brand-new black trunk studded with brass-headed nails, and with the initials R. M. traced out in the same shining materials on the lid.

"Your father's well-nigh soft-headed about that girl," said Mrs. Seth to her husband, as they stood watching the father and daughter drive away together.

"H'm!" grunted Seth.

His wife went on, "We may make up our minds as our little ones will never be a penny the better for your father's money. I'm as sure as sure, it'll all go to Rhoda."

"As to his will, you may be right," returned Seth. "But I have good hopes that father will cancel that mortgage he holds on the home farm. If he does that, we mustn't growl too much. 'Tis a good lump o' money. And it would come a deal handier to me if I could have the land free now, than if I waited for father's death. He's tough, is father. And the Lord knows I don't wish him dead, neither."

In this way Rhoda Maxfield went down to the seaside place where the Bodkins were staying, spent about three weeks with them there, and returned in their company to Whitford, to find Mrs. Errington no longer an inmate of her father's house, the old sitting-room decorated and refurnished very smartly, and all the circle with whom she had become acquainted at Dr. Bodkin's on the tiptoe of expectation to behold the Honourable Mrs. Algernon Errington, whose arrival was looked forward to with an amount of interest only to be fully understood by those who have ever lived an unoccupied life in a remote provincial town.

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HALVES.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGER," "A PERFECT TREASURE," "AT HER MERCY," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XI. MARK TAKES COURAGE.

WE five in the drawing-room stared at one another in silence, while the voice of the bird, repeating its cry of "Dead! dead! dead!" grew fainter and fainter, each filled with our own reflections upon the scene that had just occurred. I, for my part, was blaming myself for not having run forward, as Gertrude had done, to assist the old man, and also for not having expressed a syllable of the sympathy I felt for him in every throb of my pulses; though, after all, he might have taken any verbal interference on my part as an impertinence, since I was but a lad in years, no relation of the family, and not even in the independent position of a guest, since I was but his brother's articled clerk. Moreover, if I had spoken, I should certainly have expressed an indignation which would have done poor brother Alec no good service. Nevertheless, as I have said, I felt distressed and ashamed, and when presently Mrs. Raeburn broke the silence by thus addressing me, "And now, I suppose, Mr. Sheddon, you will be telling this discreditable story all over the town," I endeavoured to make up for my past cowardice.

"I am no tale-bearer, Mrs. Raeburn," answered I, "and shall always honourably keep secret such private matters as come to my knowledge in this house; but I must be permitted to say that the word 'discreditable' does not seem to me to apply to Mr. Alexander Raeburn's conduct in

this affair, however well it may describe that of others."

"You are very welcome to your opinion, young man," answered Mrs. Raeburn, contemptuously, "though your expression of it does not show much respect for your master yonder."

"Tush, tush!" exclaimed the attorney, pettishly, "the boy is quite right to stand up for his friend. There is, after all, something to be said upon poor Alec's side."

"Indeed, sir! Well, at all events, there is no necessity to argue the matter in public," observed Mrs. Raeburn, with a glance of wrath at her husband that said, "Silence, fool!" as plainly as any words.

"Yes, but this is not in public, Matilda," returned the attorney, who had his own reasons for making terms for his brother while he had a sympathising audience at his back, rather than in the unprotected atmosphere of the connubial chamber. "Mr. Sheddon here, who is a young gentleman of honour, has pledged himself to secrecy upon this matter, and for the rest we are all of one family. Gertrude is Alec's relative as well as my own, and it is but right that she should hear the end of this affair as well as the beginning. You and my brother never hit it off together from the first, and prejudice should not be allowed to interfere with judgment."

"Judgment!" echoed Mrs. Raeburn, with a shrill laugh. "Here is an impostor, who, by a false representation of his position, has caused us to turn our house out of doors to please him; to harbour wild beasts and reptiles; to lavish champagne like water; to lend him five-pound notes to make paper kites of—for he has spent most of it in toys; and I, forsooth, am to use judgment! It would be much more to

the purpose to send for a policeman, and I've half a mind to do it too."

A stifled cry of horror broke from Gertrude's lips.

"Well, it's only for your sake, my dear cousin, if I don't," added Mrs. Raeburn, clutching at this method of extricating herself from what she must have felt to be a ridiculous position.

As for John, he was breathing very hard, with his handkerchief stuffed into his mouth, and his eyes protruding like a lobster's. The notion of Uncle Alec in the custody of Sergeant Tims, of the county police—a figure familiar to him at quarter sessions—on the charge of obtaining champagne under false pretences, was evidently tickling his heart-strings.

"You are talking rubbish, Matilda!" exclaimed the attorney, angrily, "and what, if it was not rubbish, would be exceedingly disgraceful." His irritation was perhaps as much feigned as real, for it was only by getting into a passion, or pretending to be in one, that he could ever muster courage to oppose himself to his formidable spouse. "I say now, once for all, notwithstanding all that has come and gone, that I will not have my own brother turned out of my own house; so, if that is what you've got in your mind, Matilda, dismiss it."

"I was not thinking of turning your brother out of your own house, as you call it, Mark; though, in that matter, it is much less yours than mine."

"Be silent, woman!" exclaimed the attorney, menacingly, and rising hastily from his chair. "I spoke of what was in your mind, but it strikes me you are clean gone out of it."

There was a dreadful silence at these words, the vehemence and rage of which (by no means simulated this time) seemed to have its effect even on Mrs. Raeburn.

"I am quite sane, thank you, Mark," returned she, coldly.

"Then perhaps you will be good enough to state your plans," observed her husband. "Let us hear them once for all; I won't be worried about this matter all night, I promise you. I have done quite enough this evening out of deference to your opinion. There is going to be some compromise on your part too, I hope?"

"Our course seems to me quite obvious, Mr. Raeburn. As to turning Mr. Alexander out of doors, that is an idea which never occurred to me. He must, of course, stay on here for the present; he

has a claim upon you to that extent, I allow; but I suppose I shall be justified in treating him as one of the family—not as a prince of the blood royal? It is only reasonable to expect repayment of the sums I have advanced him; and of course I shall insist on the disposal of his horrible animals. For the rest, we must take our time to consider of it and talk the matter over. John, please to light my bed-candle."

The attorney turned pale and shivered. "John," said he, "bring me the brandy."

It was the first time that he had ever ventured to call for that liquor in his wife's presence. He did so now, I think, to give her notice that, on that night at least, a curtain-lecture would be thrown away upon him. He felt like a beaten general who has to fall back upon his reserves.

"My dear Gertrude," observed Mrs. Raeburn, significantly, "I think you had better retire also, since a brandy bottle is about to be brought into the drawing-room."

The two ladies withdrew together, and then the attorney rang for hot water and tumblers, and having brewed some punch, poured out a glass for each of us.

"This is a sad business, Sheddon," said he. "I own to you that, if I had not the utmost confidence in your honour, I should feel greatly disturbed about it. If the rumour got abroad that poor Alec was a pauper, it would be very grievous to me—I mean, of course," he added hastily, "in the way of social humiliation. Poor Mrs. Raeburn has gone about, as women will do, boasting of her rich brother-in-law, and she naturally feels bitter about it. It is, I own, a disappointment to myself—a great disappointment." Here he drained his glass, and poured himself out another. "I don't think my brother meant to deceive us, Sheddon; upon my life I don't. Money matters had never any attraction for him, and he imagines that that is the case with others. He thought that it could not much signify to us whether he was a rich man or a poor one; nor would it have done so in the sense of our affection for or behaviour towards him. Heaven forbid! but it caused us to entertain expectations. There has been no positive loss, as I told Mrs. Raeburn, for the golden image my dear brother gave her was a present fit for a king. But we have bowed down to the golden image; yes, by Jove! and now we are sorry for it. That's—just fill my glass again, John—that's the real fact of the matter,

Sheddon, and I am glad to think that you have been a spectator of all this, because it will be a lesson to you. The real fact of the matter is, that the whole thing has occurred through my poor brother's ignorance of the nature of a legal contract—contract. I am glad to think that under my tutelish—tutelage—you have already acquired sufficient knowledge of your future profession to avoid falling into his error. Suppose John here and yourself, who are very good friends I am pleased to see, were to make a contract"—the attorney paused as though he felt he had dropped something, then hurried on as though it was not worth while to pick it up—"the object of which was to divide your aggregate property at some specified future time; what would you do to make that arrangement binding? You would put it in writing to begin with, would you not? You would procure witnesses; you would purchase such a stamp as you found on inquiry would be suitable for your object. Well, my brother chose to dispense with all these necessary forms, and the consequence is, he has, metaphorically speaking, not a leg to stand on. I am, however, sorry for him. Morally, he may have some fanciful claim; but what have we to do with morals? "Fiat justitia, ruat cælum,"—the law must take its course, independently of religion and morals. But mind, Sheddon, short of that—short of giving him half my bed, and half my board, and cutting the horse exactly down the middle, Alec shall have his rightsh. He shall not be starved or snubbed; he shall have a little pocket-money of his own; and I tell you what"—here the attorney placed his mouth close to my ear—"he shall not be poisoned with that ginger wine. And now, young gentlemen, good night; you have had quite as much to drink as is good for you, and I wish to be left to meditation. It is my advice to you, ladsh," added he, with a flicker of a smile, "not to make any noise that may bring Mrs. Raeburn out to you to-night."

Of course we went upstairs at once, John on his hands and knees, not so much for silence' sake as in order grotesquely to typify enjoyment too excessive for the ordinary means of locomotion, and so to our own rooms. But I could not sleep for hours; I was haunted by brother Alec's pale despairing face as he uttered those parting words to Gertrude, "Your poor relation will not trouble you for long!"

He had indeed looked ten years nearer to the grave when he left the room than when he had entered it. Would his hen-pecked brother, still drinking below stairs to nerve himself for the combat that awaited him, have the courage to defend him not only then, but through the days to come? or would Mrs. Raeburn push him forth into the pitiless world by slights and insults, as cruel men have pricked their enemy with spear points, and forced him over some steep place to die?

CHAPTER XII. A CHANGE OF TREATMENT.

I SUPPOSE all of us looked for brother Alec's appearance, on the morning after that dreadful change in his position amongst us, with something of expectation. I, for my part, felt a profound pity for him; so, I am sure, did Gertrude, for her eyes filled with tears when he entered the breakfast-room—last of all, as it happened, with a certain gentle deprecating air (but very far from cringing), as though he felt that his existence was objected to, and would have been glad to oblige the world by leaving it.

"You are late, Mr. Alexander," said Mrs. Raeburn, severely, and looking up at the clock. "I hope this will not occur again."

"I am very sorry, madam," was the quiet reply. "For once in my life, I have a grudge against Chico." He had not brought the bird down with him as usual, lest, as I verily believe, it should receive any ill-treatment for its master's sake. "He is very restless, poor fellow, this morning, and hindered my toilette."

"That will not happen again, very often," was the cold rejoinder, "as I intend to take measures for the disposal of the bird."

Brother Alec looked up hastily, his pale face tinged with colour, and exclaimed, "I trust, madam, that whatever alteration you may think proper to make in the way of my—"

The old man hesitated, and looked confusedly at his plate, in which there was only bread and butter. The scanty dish of rashers, to which we had returned, was placed under Mrs. Raeburn's immediate superintendence.

"Nay," said she, curtly, "you can speak out. Of course there is, and will be, a change in your way of entertainment here. Your brother cannot afford extravagant dainties—which, after all, are very unwholesome—

unless, as in Mr. Sheddon's case, a particular arrangement is entered into."

I was tolerably used to Mrs. Raeburn's bluntness by this time, but this speech of hers thoroughly overwhelmed me. I suppose I must have looked excessively disgusted, since the attorney here ventured to put in his words.

"I really do not see the necessity, Matilda, for entering into these pecuniary details."

"Do you not, Mr. Raeburn? Well, I do," she replied. "We have had quite enough of misunderstanding and misrepresentations, and in future I intend to use plain words."

If the attorney had fortified himself against his wife's arguments the previous night, it was evident that it had been only to fall a prey to them in the morning. It was easy to see that there had been a battle royal over the body of his fallen relative, and that the lady had been the victor. Mark Raeburn had not once looked up from his plate since his brother had entered, except to greet him; while, on the other hand, Alec turned his gaze upon him with piteous persistence, as on the only quarter wherein lay his hope.

"I was about to say, brother Mark," faltered he, "that, whatever new arrangements Mrs. Raeburn may think proper to make, I trust it may not be deemed necessary that I should part with the bird. It may seem foolish, and perhaps it is so, to feel so strong an attachment for a feathered creature, as I do in this case, but there are associations—so tender, Mark, that I have not ventured to allude to them even to yourself—in connection with Chico—"

"My husband has nothing to do with our domestic arrangements, Mr. Alexander," broke in Mrs. Raeburn, imperiously. "If there is any business to transact connected with your property"—and it is impossible to convey in writing the cynical stress which she laid upon that last word—"your brother is the person to apply to: but the management of this household is in my hands. I object to this poll parrot being maintained at the Priory upon many grounds; but it is only necessary to mention one—that of expense. You have told me yourself that it would be worth a hundred guineas to the proprietors of the Zoological Gardens, and I intend to write to them to offer it for that sum. If you retained it, you would be expending no less than five pounds a year, interest of

money, in its maintenance—or rather we should be expending that sum—not to mention that it costs in nuts and oranges as much per week as, by the statistical accounts of missionary enterprise, would convert an African adult from darkness to spiritual light. No, Mr. Alexander, the bird will not remain in this house."

Brother Alec looked towards brother Mark, but looked in vain. The attorney was chasing a piece of bacon round his plate, as the Queen's Hunt chases a stag, not with the object of devouring it, but for the sake of the occupation; he did not dare to meet that piteous gaze.

"With your permission, Mrs. Raeburn," exclaimed Gertrude, hurriedly, "if cousin Alec must needs dispose of Chico, I will buy the bird myself and also maintain it at my own charge."

"Bravo, bravo!" cried John, pounding the table with the handle of his knife. "You're a brick, Gerty!"

John's expressions were certainly very vulgar, but the sentiment they conveyed was, in this case, irreproachable. I think I never liked him so well as I did at that moment.

"Be silent, sir," cried his mother, angrily. "Your manners are those of a—," she was obviously going to say "of a public-house," but reflecting that the metaphor was itself a little coarse, she corrected herself hastily, with "are not those of a private house. No one would think that your schooling had cost your parents eighty pounds per annum, exclusive of extras." Thus she continued to upbraid her hopeful son, not so much, I fancy, for his moral behoof, as to gain time in which to revolve Gertrude's proposition in her mind.

Brother Alec's eyes had flashed one grateful look at the young girl, then once more fixed themselves on his brother's face.

"No, Gertrude," said Mrs. Raeburn, suddenly breaking off in her lecture, "your proposal cannot be seriously entertained. My husband would not, I am sure, as your guardian, consent to the expenditure of so vast a sum upon a feathered fowl" (she laid a great stress on feathered, as though, if the bird had been an apteryx, he would have consented at once); "it is utterly out of the question."

"I have the money of my own," observed Gertrude, quietly, "and so need not trouble my cousin."

"How can you have the money?" in-

quired Mrs. Raeburn, always interested in the subject of the acquisition of property. "Where did you get it from?"

Gertrude blushed and hesitated. "I shall sell the golden image which cousin Alec was so good as to give me," said she; "with a little saving of my allowance added to what that will bring, I could easily get the hundred pounds. Then the bird, you know, cousin Alec," added she, softly, "would be as much your gift as the other."

But the old man only cast down his eyes upon his plate, and uttered not a word.

"My dear Gertrude, it is not a question of mere money," broke in Mrs. Raeburn, loftily, "it is one of principle."

"Then it's all up with Chico," murmured John, with sagacious intuition. It was always "all up" with everything that was pleasant (and not profitable) when his mother took high moral grounds.

"I would rather wring the neck of the bird with my own hands," she continued, "than abet such abominable extravagance. The parrot and the serpents will, of course, go together. As for the bull-dog, which has already consumed in this house sufficient food to keep a Christian family of six persons at the rate of a quarter of a pound of meat apiece per week (for I have calculated it), I shall send it to Mr. Welsh, the butcher's, with my compliments. I have heard him express admiration for it, and since I am certain he cheated us in his last joint, he quite deserves it. I shall get you, John, to take it round."

"I'm hanged if I do!" exclaimed John, resolutely. "Take it round, indeed! Do you mean, take it round the neck and pull it there? Why it would be as much as my life's worth. That beast always looks at me as though he was hungry."

"I will take Fury to the butcher's, if such is your wish, Mrs. Raeburn," observed brother Alec, quickly.

"Very good, Mr. Alexander; it is indifferent to me who takes him," was the ungracious rejoinder, "so long as he goes," and with that she rose from the table.

It was plain that his sister-in-law was unappeasable. Never had I beheld any woman so bitter.

In all that she did thenceforth she could scarcely have proceeded more openly to make her relative's life a burthen to him, if she had told him that such was

her intention in so many words. Only in the presence of strangers she still used to him a forced style of civility, since it was of importance to conceal the change in their relations. Of course there were no more dinner-parties at the Priory, but invitations came more than once for Mr. and Mrs. Raeburn, and Mr. Alexander Raeburn, which she strove hard to make her brother-in-law accept; but in this one respect he was firm in resisting her will.

"I would do anything in my power, madam, to please you, and make up for the disappointment of which I have been the involuntary cause; but to go out to dinner is not in my power. I could not for a moment play my part as you would have me play it."

To look at him, so old, and worn, and broken, and to hear his trembling voice, was to be convinced of this fact. Mrs. Raeburn forbore to insist upon a proceeding which would have certainly had the contrary effect to that she desired; he therefore wrote to decline all such hospitalities on the ground of physical indisposition—a very warrantable plea, though his disease was scarcely one to be remedied by the doctor, even in the unimaginable case of Mrs. Raeburn's invoking his aid. So she and the attorney went out to dine alone, much to the disgust of the inviters; while brother Alec stayed at home with us "young people." Gertrude and I were, of course, full of sympathy for him; and I am bound to say that John behaved with far better feeling than I had given him credit for. He ceased to mimic him, addressed him personally with great respect, and spoke of him in his absence with compassion, as "that unfortunate old buffer." But none of us could win poor brother Alec from his woe. So soon as he had dispatched his scanty meal—for when the heads of the family were out, the board at the Priory had even less cause to "groan" than usual—he would retire to his own room, where, far into the night, I could hear him talking in melancholy accents to Chico, and that sympathetic bird replying in the same key.

When "carriage people," as Mrs. Raeburn always described those of her acquaintances who possessed vehicles of their own, came to make kind inquiries after the invalid, he always denied himself to them; and to hear that lady make excuses for his non-appearance, if her son happened to be present, was always a situation of great embarrassment to me.

The effort it cost her to frame words of sympathy about her pauper-relative; the expression of her face, as she did so; the thanks she returned for the hopes expressed that he would soon "be himself again," were all reproduced, as in a mirror, for my benefit by the irrepressible John.

What heightened the attraction of this spectacle was the fact that—though, of course, quite ignorant of the true circumstances of the case—these sympathising callers, who were mostly of the fashionable sort, were themselves incredulous of Mrs. Raeburn's sincerity; they thought that she was counting upon brother Alec's illness terminating fatally, and in a magnificent legacy. One of these visitors, however, was very different from the rest, namely, my uncle Hastings. He had ridden over from the Rectory directly he heard of the old man's indisposition, partly out of his own regard for him, partly urged by my aunt's entreaties: "Pray do go and look after the poor man; it is my belief that those people are killing him amongst them for the sake of his money." And though the invalid had made no exceptions in the matter, the rector would not be denied. "I am a friend of thirty years' standing," said he, "and if Alec Raeburn is not well enough to come down and see me, I will go upstairs and see him." And he did so.

The interview between them was a long one, and when the rector returned to the drawing-room his face was very grave. Mrs. Raeburn's mind was evidently disturbed. She had a suspicion, I think, that he had been told everything, and assumed a somewhat defiant air.

"Well, Mr. Hastings, and what do you think of Mr. Alexander?"

"I think your brother-in-law seriously ill, madam. I do not hesitate to say that his appearance shocked me; so great a change within so short a time I never saw in any man."

Mrs. Raeburn sighed heavily, from sympathy, as the rector doubtless imagined, but, as I conjectured, from the relief his words had given her.

"Yes, indeed," said she; "but I trust he is not so bad as he looks. He has really no serious symptoms, except want of appetite. Nothing seems to tempt him." (Here John's face became a picture, which somehow reproduced "scrapie" and unattractive outlets.) "He has expressed no wish for medical advice."

"Perhaps not, but he surely ought to

have it; at least, if I were in your case, I should insist upon having a professional opinion. I would rather have such a responsibility upon the doctor's shoulders than on mine. Dr. Wilde, I hear," (this was our new practitioner at Kirkdale) "makes the diseases of old age quite a speciality, and he seems very clever."

"My brother-in-law has only to express the wish to have it gratified," returned Mrs. Raeburn, icily.

"Of course, of course, my dear madam; of that I am certain; but don't you think it should be suggested to him? I don't wish to frighten you, I'm sure; Alec's appearance, it is true, is peculiar, the white beard on his white face makes him look, doubtless, worse than he is; but my advice is, let him see the doctor."

My uncle's behaviour was, I thought, a little dictatorial, but he was a man accustomed to have his own way with everybody, except his wife; her means gave him importance, his personal popularity was great, and being at once squire and parson of his own parish, he was wont to give advice with authority. Mrs. Raeburn had reasons of her own, as I afterwards came to know, for not getting into a passion with the rector, and no glow from the fire that was doubtless burning within her was permitted to be seen without.

"It is like yourself, Mr. Hastings, to take so warm an interest in your old friend," answered she slowly; "but you must remember that he is Mark's own brother, and that my husband is not one to neglect his own flesh and blood."

"Indeed, indeed, Mrs. Raeburn, you mistake me," replied the rector. "I am quite aware of Mark's kindness of heart, and can easily imagine that Alec himself is the chief obstacle to the proposition I would suggest; but his objection to have medical advice should be overborne. It is for the very reason that he is so near of kin to you that I speak; since, if anything were to happen to him, and Mark were greatly benefited by it—and ordinary precautions had been neglected—Don't you see, my good woman?" explained my uncle, falling into his parochial visiting style.

"Dear me, I never thought of that," said Mrs. Raeburn, with innocent surprise.

"Of course not; your conscience would have nothing to reproach itself with, doubtless. I only wished to put you on your guard, that you should not give the world an opportunity of being censorious."

"You are most kind," answered Mrs. Raeburn. "I will speak to my brother-in-law at once. Good morning."

"Now, upon my word," said my uncle, as I dutifully accompanied him to the town where he had left his horse, "that woman is not so black as she is painted. Some people would have flown out in a rage, when I suggested that, if Alec died, folks would say she had killed her brother-in-law to get his money."

"I don't think you did quite say that, uncle."

"No; but she knew what I meant well enough. She's as sharp as a razor, and very reasonable too, that I must allow. When one comes to know people, and when anything of importance causes them to speak out to you, I have always found that there is some good in everybody."

It did not become me to dispute the dictum of so experienced an ecclesiastic; and as to the particular case of my hostess, perhaps my six months' acquaintance with her had been insufficient to develop her merits, so I said nothing on that point. My curiosity, on the other hand, was considerable as to whether the invalid had in any way made a confidant of the rector.

"And do you really think Mr. Alexander's indisposition is serious, uncle?"

"Well, yes, I do. He not only looks ill, but is utterly hipped. If one could see inside him, I expect you would find his liver about three times its proper size, or else gone altogether. If your aunt saw him she would say that 'those Raeburns were poisoning him.'"

"Did he say that he was not comfortable at the Priory?"

"Oh dear no! Indeed, our talk was almost exclusively of old times; his only complaint was, that he was afraid he was about to lose his parrot. I suppose it has got the pip or something, though it looked to me well enough."

"He didn't tell you about Mrs. Raeburn's sending away his dog?"

"Not a word. Why, the brute was in his room, large as life and larger."

"Yes; the butcher, to whom it was sent as a present, sent it back again. It frightened people from the shop, he said, and eat half a sheep or so a day."

"I don't wonder," laughed my uncle. "It was like giving a man a white elephant. It must be expensive as well as inconvenient to keep poor Alec's menagerie; but his relatives will be well paid for it some day, and I am afraid only too soon."

Dissimulation was an art unknown to my uncle, and I felt certain that he was concealing nothing from me; it was clear, therefore, that the invalid had kept his griefs locked up in his own bosom.

LEGS: WOODEN AND OTHERWISE.

WHEN Mrs. M'Gee, according to the Irish song, saw her son Teddy come home from the wars, stumping along on two wooden pegs, she bemoaned the absence of his own real beautiful legs. She asked him, "Och! was you lame or was you blind, that you left your two good-looking legs behind?" Or, as an alternative supposition, "Was it walking on the sea, that wore them down unto the knee?" Any way, the change was decidedly repugnant to her.

Nevertheless, there is much to be said in favour of the peg-leg, and there is a good deal of ingenuity shown by the wooden-leg makers. Sometimes—arising from any one among a multitude of causes—a man's leg has to be amputated just above the ankle, just below the knee, or just above the knee; while, in other instances, the amputation has to be effected high up the thigh. Every condition of this kind must be taken into account, for on it depends the mode of fastening the wooden substitute.

The commonest and simplest kind is known as the bucket-leg. A hollow bucket or cup is made to fit the lower end of the stump of the amputated leg; and to the bottom of this is affixed a wooden peg reaching thence to the ground. In order to make it look a little more shapely than a mere stick of firewood, the peg is contoured somewhat in rolling-pin fashion, with a knob at the lower end. If a little more money is spent upon it, the adjustment is more neatly managed; the top of the peg has a hollow trough to receive the knee-stump, and a shaft or upright of wood extends upwards from it outside the thigh, fastened by straps over and around the hips. This arrangement is only practicable, however, when amputation has taken place below the knee. A little more artistic construction is that in which the stump is encased in a hollow leather sheath, shaped to fit it as nearly as may be; this, which is called the socket-leg, preserves and utilises the action of the knee-joint. Sometimes, when adjusted in its place, it bears a little resemblance in shape to an inverted sugar-loaf, terminated by a short

peg. One indefatigable leg-maker (or rather peg-maker, for the legs are to be spoken of separately) contrives to make the peg a little less ungainly when the wearer sits down. As ordinarily made, the peg sticks out in front when the wearer sits on a chair or bench, as if to poke fun at the company. This artist, however, has so managed that the wearer, by touching or pressing a little on the peg, can make it bend down at right angles to the thigh, and reach the ground as an orthodox leg ought to do. This convenience, however, entails an additional cost, seeing that it requires the aid of a vertical spring-bolt, ratchet, and lever.

But what are wooden-pegs compared with artificial legs? No more than penny dolls compared with Mr. Cremer's walking and talking young ladies. We know that Vaucanson, the famous French mechanician, could imitate almost anything by means of automatic arrangements of wheels, axles, springs, ratchets, tubes, levers, screws, membranes, elastic cords, air-pipes, bellows, or air-compressors, and so forth—a flute-player, a tambourine-player, a duck that could quack and gobble almost like a liveduck, &c. Our nineteenth century artists have shown that, with much simpler means, they can produce, not merely a wooden-peg at the end of a sheath or socket, but a piece of mechanism admirably imitating the living leg, knee, ankle, instep, and foot. There is something more than mere trade competition here. Each artist takes an artist's pride in his best productions, and Mr. So-and-So's leg acquires a fame analogous in character (though, of course, humbler in degree) to that of the dainty works of a sculptor, painter, or engraver. The movements of a natural leg, especially of the ankle and foot, are beautifully adapted to the services required. Laudable attempts have been made to imitate these movements by mechanism, and the success of the attempts has been so great as to render most welcome aid to persons who have had the hard fate of being subjected to the amputation of a leg.

How the real artist studies a well-formed leg, a bandy-leg, a knock-kneed leg (if such vulgar terms are to be permitted) is very instructive. It would be bad architecture to produce a handsome straight leg as a companion to one that is irremediably crooked. The socket into which the amputated stump is to be fitted is an important part of the mechanism; seeing that, if this is not well adapted in

size and shape, all else will fail. We must not run away with the idea that this sheath is merely a leather case, something like the top of a military boot; the true artist would scorn such clumsiness. He first takes a cast of the stump in wax, much in the same manner as a dentist takes a cast of the gums for a brand-new set of teeth; and a wooden model is made from this cast in a singular way.

Mr. Gray, one of the leading artists in this line, being once in the studio of Mr. Noble, the sculptor, watched the action of the pointing machine—a contrivance which greatly facilitates the shaping of the rough block of marble from which a statue or bust is to emerge. The machine has the action of a pantograph—transferring from a clay model to a marble block the more prominent undulations, curvatures, protuberances, depressions, and irregularities. An assistant—an artist-workman—manipulates this apparatus, transferring, in a rough way, the features of a bust or figure to a block of marble; leaving to the master sculptor the finishing chiseling which gives expression to all. Well; the artificial leg-maker, watching the manner in which this machine works, conceived the idea of adapting a similar appliance for shaping his stump-sockets. He devised the means of copying, on the inside of a hollow block of wood, all the irregularities of the model, so as to produce a concave reflex of a convex object. Even the position of any prominent veins and leaders on the stump could be transferred by this means, and the patient be thus shielded from all undue pressure.

The Marquis of Anglesea's leg was for some years almost as famous as the chivalrous marquis himself, so far superior was it to anything that had previously been produced for a similar purpose. This gallant officer had a leg shattered by a cannon-ball at the battle of Waterloo; he underwent two amputations—one on the battlefield, by an army surgeon, the other by Mr. (afterwards Sir Everard) Home, after his return to England. Then Mr. Gray set to work. He took a cast in wax of the stump of the poor unfortunate leg, transferred the impression to tough and light dessicated willow, and ingeniously introduced strings of catgut to represent that (so-called) tendon of Achilles which gives elasticity and propelling power. It is a great thing to say that the leg retained its proud position for nearly forty years, until the marquis, as a venerable Field-Marshal,

closed his career at the age of eighty-five— not the same leg, of course; for an artificial leg, like a boot, will wear out in course of time. As experience grew, and further observations were made, the original Anglesea leg gradually made way for a better. The marquis looked so well on horseback, that the admiring public could scarcely believe one of his legs to be artificial. The string of catgut at the back of the heel extended the foot when straightened; a spring inserted in the instep lifted the toes from the ground when the leg bent in walking. Nevertheless, nature had not been sufficiently imitated in the first Anglesea leg; there was no lateral motion in the ankle-joint; the wearer could not walk on uneven ground without experiencing an unpleasant amount of jar and strain. Moreover, there was too much creak and rattle with the metal work, and the wearer had to keep near at hand a small oil-can, wherewith to lubricate his joints. These inconveniences were got rid of one by one—a great improvement being the introduction of a ball-and-socket ankle-joint, and another being the substitution of india-rubber for metal in some of the parts.

We used to hear a great deal about cork-legs. A favourite comic song recounted the wonders which a wearer achieved in the way of jumping and leaping, on account of the lightness of a cork-leg which he wore. A comic drama was written for Madame Vestris, in which a lady tantalised her lover by telling him she had a Cork-leg; an assertion which proved to be correct topographically, though not mechanically—she being a native of the chief city of Munster, in Ireland. We are told by the experts, however, that there is really no such thing as a cork-leg; that an acting joint made of this material would crumble to pieces with the slightest weight or irregularity of pressure. At a time when the less skilful artists were wont to make the legs of steel springs, covered with a leather sheath, one man of brains conceived the idea of employing cork for the external shaping, outside a light frame or skeleton of wood.

Sometimes the leg-makers have difficult cases to deal with. At the battle of Inkermann Sir Thomas Trowbridge lost both legs by a cannon-ball; he was afterwards admirably served with a pair of mechanical substitutes. In some instances the loss of the leg has been attended with curious circumstances. An officer, going out to the East, was wrecked on the African coast; with great presence of mind he succeeded

in getting on the back of a cow which had been thrown overboard, and got to shore; but his legs became so benumbed by long dangling in the water that amputation was necessary. In another case, an officer went out tiger-hunting in India. His elephant, alarmed at the roaring of the tiger, rushed beneath a tree; the officer, to avoid being crushed, caught hold of a branch, and hung suspended by the hands and arms, while the elephant ran off. The tiger, enraged by a rifle-ball, sprang to the tree, and seized the officer's ankle just as he had dropped through exhaustion. The officer—his ankle shattered—kicked off the animal with the other foot, dragged himself towards the tree, and attempted to climb it. The tiger rushed at him again, caught hold of the other leg with his claws, dragged him down, and again fastened on the shattered leg just below the knee. Assistance arrived just in time to save the poor officer from a worse fate. He was among the many who, afterwards, had cause to thank a leg-maker for a capital substitute for the mangled limb.

Let not riflemen, cricketers, yachtsmen, oarsmen, billiard-players, and chess-players imagine that international competing-matches are confined to them and the like of them. Artificial leg-makers are fired with a somewhat similar ambition, each man claiming to be the best man, and hoping that the best man will win. At one of the International Industrial Exhibitions in Paris, the leg-makers came out in pretty good force. One of them, from this hither side of the Channel, examined closely the exhibited productions of the other artists, English and foreign, and fancied he could at least equal them, if not beat them, in the three desirable qualities of lightness, durability, and simplicity of action. An international jury was appointed to inspect and report upon this class of exhibits. The English maker in question proposed to this jury that every exhibitor of artificial legs should bring before them, at Paris, on an appointed day, one of his own patients, wearing a leg of his make. The jury could watch each patient's movements in walking, running, sitting, &c. The legs would then be taken off; but we are not told whether any provision of small bed-rooms was to be made for the patients at this awkward stage of the proceedings. The jury would examine the construction of each leg, the mode of producing the action, the correctness of the movements, and the

weight; and would ascertain as much as they could concerning the price at which each leg could be bought, and its probable duration. The jury, having compared notes on all these particulars, would award a high-class medal to the leg (or its maker) possessing the greatest share of merit. In order to bring about a general improvement in the construction of artificial legs, it was proposed that each exhibitor in this class should be permitted to take plans and designs of the model leg, if he pleased, to avail himself of it in making similar legs in his own nation, but not to delegate this right to others. The proposal was fairly made, but the jury did not adopt it. We fancy that patients would not be altogether well pleased to make a show of themselves in this singular way.

On another occasion, however, in a different locality, there really was a show of competing artificial legs. The New York Institute held an exhibition of productions in the domain of manufacturing industry; during which a "cripples' race" took place to test the skill of a few limb-makers. The improvised racecourse was the centre aisle of the Exhibition building, and the match was a walk down the entire length. Three gentlemen entered the lists, and gave specimens of their faculty in walking on substitutes for natural legs. The first contestant was a tall, heavy man, Mr. Bates; he wore a pair of artificial legs he had used less than three weeks, and therefore walked somewhat unsteadily. The second competitor, Mr. Augburger, followed, wearing but one artificial leg; he walked a fourth of a mile, without a cane, in four minutes, with apparent ease, and was warmly applauded. Mr. Frank Stewart closed the performance, wearing two artificial legs; he walked half a mile in nine minutes, without a cane, and with so much spirit and naturalness that he was frequently obstructed and taken hold of by persons who could hardly believe that he had an artificial leg. This triumphantly successful limb, if we rightly understand, was the handiwork of Dr. Marks, who introduced a plan of terminating the leg with a foot made of solid india-rubber, the elasticity of which accommodated itself well to the varied movements of a natural foot.

There are legs and legs, it appears; legs that do, and others that do not, fulfil the demands made upon them. One experienced maker says: "I have never yet met with two persons, out of the many hundreds I have had under my care, who could wear

each other's artificial limbs. I am not unfrequently asked by my patients whether I have a leg in my workshop I could lend them for a few hours while their own was undergoing repair—a request wholly impossible to comply with."

The most whimsical story we have ever met with in connection with an artificial leg is one that belongs to the days of Vauxhall Gardens, somewhat under fifty years ago. It was partly recorded in the Times and other daily papers, but more fully by William Hone, who gave most of the particulars in his inexhaustible *Every-Day Book*. It appears that one Joseph Leeming, a young man of about five-and-twenty, was a little cracked in the upper story, but with a decided proneness to gammon the public. He was well formed; so much so as to give him the notion that he was a perfect Adonis—a model for masculine human nature generally, and an irresistible attraction to feminine human nature. While living in Thavies Inn, he procured the attendance of an artist to model his beautiful leg. The operation was so tedious that the mould was not completed till eleven o'clock at night. It was taken away for the purpose of being cast; but Leeming became uneasy. He feared lest the modeller should take a hundred casts or so off-hand surreptitiously, and sell them about the country, where they would be sure to command a high price on account of their incomparable beauty. He rushed off to the residence of the modeller in the middle of the night, roused the servant, found his way into a workshop, and there found the mould quietly reposing, with no immediate preparations for casting. To make assurance doubly sure, he carried off the mould at once. In the morning he went to another establishment, had a cast taken while he waited, and carried away cast and mould with him. He next sallied forth to a last and boot-tree maker, in Holborn, and requested that the cast should be exhibited in the shop-window, as a means of gratifying an admiring public. This request was respectfully declined, as was also an offer to sell the cast for a very large sum; and so the leg found its way back to Thavies Inn again. The unlucky cast had a fall, and broke into pieces; and we do not hear that another was taken.

A little before or a little after this event, but at all events in the summer of the same year, Leeming made a sudden appearance at Vauxhall Gardens, to the sur-

prise alike of the proprietors and the public. The Times reported the matter thus: "An individual, in a splendid Spanish costume, has excited much attention at Vauxhall Gardens. Having walked, or rather skipped, round the grounds with a great air of confidence, saluting the company as he passed along, he at length mingled among the audience at the front of the orchestra, and distributed a number of cards, on each of which was written, 'The *Ærial* challenges the whole world to find a man that can in any way compete with him as such!' After having distributed three or four hundred of these challenges he darted off like lightning, making the whole circuit of the gardens in his career, and made his exit through the grand entrance into the road, where a coach was in waiting for him, into which he sprang, and was driven off."

Fuller details of this singular escapade were afterwards given. It appears that his dress comprised a close jacket of blue and silver, theatrical trunk hose or short breeches reaching not quite down to the knee, fine white silk stockings, blue kid shoes, a double frill or ruff edged with lace, and wristbands similarly edged. He entered the gardens without a hat. Some of the visitors thought him a distinguished foreigner, others, a performer who was about to take part in the evening's amusement. When pressed upon too closely he made his mercurial flight round the gardens, came to the rotunda and saloon, distributed the cards mentioned above, and also others inscribed: "The New Discovery challenges the whole world and artists individually, to find a man, or even design, that can in any way, in form or shape, be compared to him." He naturally attracted attention. The visitors made a path for him to show off his symmetrical form when walking. They then made a ring, within which he performed the Living Statue, in a way familiar to old playgoers who remember Mr. Ducrow, Mr. T. P. Cooke, and Mr. O. Smith; that is, imitations of the attitudes of famous ancient statues. A woodcut of this new hero was engraved for the *Every-Day Book*, in which he appears in his tight-fitting Spanish dress. After his display of attitudinarianism, he threw himself down on a couch in an elegant attitude, in the saloon, drank wine and rack-punch, and took his departure shortly afterwards. He went again the next night, and offered to wager five hundred pounds against any one

who would compete with him in beauty. He was, however, worried and pushed about a good deal by some of the visitors, who failed to pay due reverence to his exquisite personal attractions, and retired in some dudgeon. On a third occasion a Juvenile Fête was held in the gardens, among the visitors being the Duke of Cambridge and his son Prince George, the latter a boy seven years old (the present Commander-in-chief). | The *Ærial Wonder* also went, but was eclipsed by the superior attractions of royalty. He drank overmuch, offered to fight, and was overcome in a scuffle. He went off to sleep in a corner, passed a queer sort of a night, and was ignominiously expelled next morning. One more visit was attempted, but the door-keepers, instructed from head-quarters, refused him admission. About, and soon after, this period, he circulated a new set of handbills, in which he designated himself "an Adonis, the New Discovery, the Great Unknown, the Paragon of Perfection, the Phoenix, the God of Beauty, the Grand Arcanum of Nature." He tried to form a joint-stock company, capital one million, to exhibit himself, and to make enormous profits out of the enthusiasm of the public. Failing in this, he called on the managers of several theatres and proposed that they should engage him, simply to walk to and fro across the stage and receive the admiring plaudits of the audience, especially the ladies. The managers did not seem to see it.

Alas, that troubles should ever befall the beautiful! The final public appearance of this Paragon of Perfection, so far as we find record, was at the Marlborough-street Police Office, where, in October of the same year, Mr. Conant, the magistrate, fined him five shillings for being drunk and disorderly. The *Ærial*—it transpired during the examination—had invented a pair of wings, wherewith to fly à la Mercury from Dover to Calais; doubtless in a sweetly-simple tight-fitting dress, which would display his incomparable leg to perfection.

DELVILLE.

IN TWO PARTS. PART II.

"YOU have seen the vanities of the world to satiety," said the Dean of Down in one of his beautiful letters to his wife before their marriage; and truly when we recal the experiences of her earlier life, we can the better appreciate her fresh and

vivid delight in the simple retirement of her home at Delville. The joyous outpourings of her happy heart at this time, in letters to her mother and sister, remind one more of the gladness of a child than the sober contentment of a person of middle age. Pain and anxiety were forgotten as things unknown, while she sat in her "English room" with her painting or marvellous needlework, "always in that sweet serenity of temper that makes herself and all about her happy, and still making new beauties to delight the knowing and set the ignorant a-wondering," or fluttering in and out of her pretty garden, picking her roses, writing letters to her friends, and sitting with "D.D." (her favourite name for the Dean) in their little summer-house, which would hold none besides those two, and which only the robin was permitted to share with them.

After her marriage, Mrs. Delany spent some months in England with her husband, and had the pleasure of seeing the Dean fully appreciated by her mighty relations. Then they crossed the sea to their home, Mrs. Delany all "impatience to see Delville."

"We arrived at our pleasant dwelling by eleven, and never was seen a sweeter dwelling. I have traversed the house and garden, and never saw a more delightful and agreeable place; but particulars must come by degrees, and I have now the joy of seeing the kind and generous owner of it perfectly well, and well pleased to put me in possession."

She gives, with pretty freshness, many details of these exciting days, given to making new friends and settling down in her new home, and she describes with gleeful minuteness the arrangements of her house, which must have been simple enough, compared with many to which she had been accustomed.

"The drawing-room is hung with tapestry; on each side of the door, a japan chest; the curtains and chairs, crimson mohair; between the windows, large glasses with gilt frames and marble tables under them with gilt frames; the bed-chamber within hung with crimson damask; . . . the closet within it is most delightful. I have a most extensive and beautiful prospect of the harbour and town of Dublin, and a range of mountains of various shapes. This bed-chamber and closet are on the left hand of the drawing-room; and on its right is a very pretty square room, with a large dressing-room within it, which, I hope, will be my dearest

sister's apartment when she makes me happy with her company."

Her "great parlour" is "a very charming room, cool in summer and warm in winter," and has a "projection" with three windows, from which the view is delightful.

"On the left hand of the hall is another large room, which is at present unfinished; but it is designed for a chapel" . . .

She has "apartments," "closets," and "little parlours," seemingly straying everywhere: some of them "lie pleasantly to the gardens;" and, "as we sit by the fireside, we can see the ships riding in the harbour."

She mentions three staircases, which take her about through her dwelling, and, after giving many lively particulars, finishes with—

"I forgot to add, that out of my English room you go into the library, which is most plentifully filled, and D.D. has fitted up the vacancies of my shelves with the modern poets, nicely bound."

It is difficult to glean a little from her raptures over her "garden," by which she seems to mean the whole extent of the inclosure within Delville walls. We hear of the brook, with its high bank and hanging wood of evergreens; of long walls, covered with fruit and bordered with flowers; "the greatest quantity of roses and sweet-briar that ever I saw;" the hayrick at one side of the bowling-green, with the men at work upon it, "terrace walks" and "parterres," and "the prettiest orangery in the world." She describes the ruin overhanging the long terrace-walk, "under it a cave, which opens with an arch, which will make a very pretty grotto;" "the plan I had laid for my brother's at Calwich I shall execute here;" and, at the end of this terrace, the "pretty portico," to which "you go up a high slope, which gives it a mighty good air as you come up the walk." "In the middle, sloping every way from the terrace, are the fields, or, rather, paddocks, where our deer and our cows are kept, and the rurality of it is wonderfully pretty. These fields are planted in a wild way with forest trees and with bushes that look so naturally, you would not imagine it the work of art. Besides this, there is a very good kitchen-garden and two fruit-gardens . . . There are several prettinesses I can't explain to you—little wild walks, private seats, and lovely prospects. One particular seat I am very fond of in a nut grove, and

'the beggar's hut,' which is a seat in a rock: on the top are bushes of all kinds that bend over; it is placed at the end of a cunning wild path thickset with trees, and it overlooks the brook which entertains you with a purling rill. The little robins are as fond of this seat as we are; 't just holds the Dean and myself. And beyond all lie pleasant meadows bounded by mountains of various shapes, with little villages and country seats interspersed and embosomed high in tufted trees; to complete all, a full view of Dublin harbour, which is always full of shipping, and looks at this instant beautiful beyond description.'

Many people, mighty and simple, poured then through these old gates to make or renew acquaintance with the mistress of Delville, who declares she has had such a hurry of business within doors, and so many visitors, she has not spent half so much time in her sweet garden as she wished to do. Some of her visitors were hardly sympathetic; Lady Bell Monck, described as handsome and civil, but with a certain pert Miss Notable behaviour, comes twenty miles to pay a visit, walks in the cherished garden, has no eyes nor understanding to see that it is not a common vulgar garden, and does not commend anything she sees. "All the pearls were thrown away." Others were more genial. "All the Barber race" are invited; and "our good old friend"—who was Mrs. Barber, the poetess, in whom Swift was interested—comes from the neighbouring village of Glasnevin, where she lived, though she had "the gout upon her, and was forced to be lifted on men's shoulders;" and was delighted with everything, and "seemed very happy to see me the mistress of this charming place."

Her dear friend, "the lovely and ingenious Letty Bushe," paid long visits, painting so "ingeniously," designing "prettinesses" so skilfully, and making herself so generally agreeable, that wiles were sometimes practised to keep her at Delville. On one occasion the winds and waves entered into the conspiracy, and "kept back her clothes," which were coming to outfit her for a visit elsewhere. She was at hand to nurse her friend when Mrs. Delany got cold, by giving tea to a succession of visitors in her garden; the last company being the Duchess of Manchester, Lady Arabella Denny, Mrs. Fitzmorris, who stayed very late, and the wind north-east. Mrs. Delany declares her desire

to keep up the good name which Delville already possessed as to society; she thinks it is their duty to live sociably.

A biographer of the Dean tells us that for the last twenty years of his life he enjoyed an income of three thousand a year, and lived in a handsome and expensive style, leaving little behind him but books, plate, and furniture, though, it is added, he never left himself without the means of relieving distress or rewarding merit. In this latter kindly work his wife seconded him, opening her heart to his poorer relations, and doing her utmost to advance them in the world. We hear much of a Miss Delany, niece of the Dean's, very lively and good-humoured, and very ready to assist in the house, whom the new aunt proposes having a good deal with her, believing it may be some advantage to her; and, later, we hear of a Councillor Greene coming to make his proposal, and to be accepted by the young protégée, who, without being handsome, has something "engaging in her looks, and very proper in her behaviour." The aunt's thoughts are busy about her, the uncle gives her her fortune and wedding clothes; and Mrs. Delany hopes she will be happy, but regrets her loss, as she is very useful and diverting, and gives them many a hearty laugh. This pleasant young woman was not lost sight of, however, for after their marriage, the young couple resided at Delville some time, in order that they might economise; and two or three years later, we have record of a June morning, when the mistress of Delville worked four hours at her quilt, while Mr. Greene read aloud, Miss Bushe painted, and Mrs. Greene made a night-gown for the little boy. Very soon after that first wedding, we are told of another: "A nephew of D.D.'s, who is a kind of steward to us, and a sober, good sort of young man, bred up to farming affairs, marries "a very clever girl, bred up in the same kind of way—a niece of Mrs. Barber's. The Dean gives them a very comfortable farm about twelve miles off, and they are to supply us with farming affairs. When this is done, the Dean has not a relation left that he has not portioned or settled in some comfortable way; and if I were to tell you all the particulars of his goodness and his benevolence towards them, you would be astonished that his fortune had answered so well to the beneficence of his heart, but these are the things for which he has been blest. 'His leaf

shall not wither; and look, whatsoever he doeth, it shall prosper.'"

There is no end to the lively scenes of Delville, which the sprightly pen of its mistress has sketched. Guests of all grades come and go, noble and simple, obscure or remarkable. We have the "little rout" when the company were all matched in couples, the gentlemen, including two Mr. Swifts, young men of this village, and Mr. Parker, the curate; and the young ladies Miss Parker, Miss Delany, and Miss Greene; when they began at five and ended at nine, being entertained with tea, coffee, and cold supper, and beds for those who would accept them; and when, after "four hours' smart clever dancing," they were, "all quiet in their nests by twelve." Then we have the Dowager Kildare, arriving, and "Bushe and I" making visits in Dublin, "furiously dressed in all our airs!" Gentlemen of the college come, and every day there is company to dine. Now it is the Lord Primate and the Bishop of Derry, with their sisters; now it is the Lord-Lieutenant coming to breakfast or to dine.

"I had breakfast prepared in the drawing-room," she writes; "the Lord-Lieutenant (Lord Harrington) came, with Sir J. Cope, and the Captain of the Guard in waiting, at half an hour after eleven; the Dean met him at the street door and I at the bottom of the stairs; when he came into the drawing-room, and saw Miss Bushe, he asked me if he had ever seen that lady. I told him her name, and that her ill-health would not allow her to pay her respects to him at the castle, upon which he very politely saluted her; he seemed much pleased with the place. He walked into all my rooms on that floor, and said he must see the garden." On the same evening we find her going to the castle to return thanks for the honour done her, and hear of a strange enough festival "which nothing could put by," held there, on the anniversary of the Irish rebellion; when open house is kept, and "a vast dessert," and the common people let in to carry off all that remains, both of dinner and dessert, "and you may imagine what a notable scramblement it occasions." Again we learn that she was told by a lady she visited of a morning, that Lord Chesterfield, then Lord-Lieutenant, was coming to dine with her on Wednesday; but later in the day, when dining with the Bishop of Clogher, was informed by the Bishop of Waterford that it was the

next day this honour was to be conferred on her. She immediately sends a messenger with a note to her housekeeper, and, as soon as dinner is over, sets out for the castle, to invite Lady Chesterfield. The Dean goes to the Lord-Lieutenant, to know the hour, and to bid him bring whom he pleases, when the great man thinks there is a mistake, and cannot remember what day he intended to go. The matter is settled, however, and "home we went at eight, and it cost me an hour or two thinking, but my dinner turned out very well." If we had room to give the bills of fare which generally accompanied these records of festivity, written for her sister, who "loved a bill of fare," we could prove what a notable housekeeper was this lady, who was looked upon as rather a blue-stocking by some in her day. Again we hear of "our Viceroy and Queen" sending very early in the morning to know if she would have them to breakfast; upon which, to work went all the maids, sweeping, and dusting, and stripping the covers off chairs, which were worth covering, being all wrought in wonderfully natural-looking flowers, in coloured chenille, by Mrs. Delany; and the great people admired all they saw, were played to (rather reluctantly) on the harpsichord by their hostess, and walked over every inch of the garden, surprised at its varieties, and saying "more civil things than if it had been my Lord Cobham's Stowe." In another letter we find a necessity, unwillingly recognised, of inviting the Duke (then Lord-Lieutenant) and Duchess of Dorset, to breakfast; dinners having grown such luxurious things, that the Dean's wife does not feel inclined to compete with such magnificence. "Our Viceroy loves magnificence too well to be pleased with our way of entertaining company. I own I think there is a time of life, as well as a station, when very gaudy entertainments are as unbecoming as pink colours and pompadours!"

Breakfast was at all times a favourite meal for reunions with her. "My garden," she says, "is at present in the high glow of beauty, my cherries ripening, roses, jessamine, and pinks in full bloom, and the hay partly spread and partly in cocks completes the rural scene. We have discovered a new breakfasting place under the shade of the nut-trees, impenetrable to the sun's rays, in the midst of a grove of elms where we shall breakfast this morning; I have ordered cherries, strawberries, and

nosegays to be laid on our breakfast-table and have appointed a harper to be here to play to us during our repast, who is to be hid among the trees." To this charming breakfast-table the guests were to be "cunningly led and surprised." We also hear of her driving to Lucan to breakfast with her friends the Vesey's, in their dairy, where the rose-leaves blew in through the windows so thick that they lay in drifts upon the table and on the floor. Another time she "expects a rout of Hamiltons to breakfast," and tells of how, after breakfast, Miss Hamilton, very bashful and modest with her learning, read Homer's Iliad aloud, translating so well that Mrs. Delany was obliged to go and look over the back of her chair in order to make sure that the girl had not a translation before her eyes; after which the Dean made her read in Greek, and Mrs. Delany and other ladies, who sat by with their needlework, were shocked at their own ignorance in not understanding.

She made excursions to see various people, great and small, in return for their visits to her. Now it is a pleasant day in the country to see Mr. and Mrs. Lawe at their bleach yard, nine miles off, near the famous salmon leap of Leixlip; who had "a pretty cabin" there, and gave the visitors some fine trout caught out of their own brook just at their door. Now it is a tea-drinking with the nuns in their nunnery at King-street, where she visited their pretty chapel and played on their organ greatly to their delight, and in return for the honour done her by Miss Crilly, one of their community, who was a relation of the Dean's, and had dined with her at Delville that day. Again, it is a visit to Dangan, where she found Lord Mornington the same agreeable good-humoured man she had known him seventeen years before. "My godson, Master Wesley, is a most extraordinary boy." This lad of thirteen—afterwards father of the great Duke of Wellington, and famous also as a musician and composer of glees—was "a very good scholar, and whatever study he undertakes he masters it most surprisingly. He began the fiddle last year, he now plays everything at sight; he understands fortifications, building of ships, and has more knowledge than I ever met in one so young." Of the now ruined Dangan we hear that "the place is really magnificent;" the demesne consisting of six hundred Irish acres; there is a grand walk from

the house to the great lake fifty-two feet broad and six hundred yards long. The lake contains twenty-six acres, "with a fort built in all its forms," and of this fort Master Wesley is lord high admiral, and possessed of a perfectly fitted man-of-war on his lake, hoists all his colours in honour of Mrs. Delany's arrival.

In the midst of all this visiting and entertaining, the mistress of Delville contrived to spend many a sweet solitary day at home in her own peaceful bowers. "The sobriety of my own dwelling," she says, "is much pleasanter to me than all the flirtations of the world." No woman was ever more supremely contented with her home, whose sweets and sunshine she declares she would not exchange for any palace she ever yet saw. We hear again and again that her garden is a wilderness of sweets, that it is a Paradise, and so thickly does she strew her flowers over the page that we almost breathe their perfume, feeling that we have received a hundred other garlands from her bounty besides the orange leaf and yellow Indian jessamine which she plucks as she writes, with the wish that they may not lose their sweetness till they kiss her correspondent's hands. Indeed these letters of hers seem to have been almost always penned in sunshine and open air. One is written beside the carpenter who is sawing and hewing a little bridge for her from the walnut path across the rill; another is interrupted, first by a "little importunate robin" who is begging almonds for himself and his wife on her nest, and again by a thrush calling to her from the top of a high tree and warbling all his "harmonious varieties." Yet she did not spend all her leisure time in writing letters, and for those who know the wonderful amount of accomplished work she left behind her, it is interesting to hear in the letters of the progress of her painting, or the inventing of a new design for her extraordinary achievements with shells, or with her needle. She is going about a shell ornament for the bow window of her closet, festoons of shell flowers in their natural colours, and has just finished working covers in crimson silk for her stools and couches; or she is copying a large Madonna and Child after Guido for the chapel, besides being busily employed in making shell ornaments for the chapel ceiling. She is "as full of business as a bee," and in the midst of all her numerous employments is anxious to have a receipt for making candied orange flowers. At

one time she is putting up an organ in the chapel, at another lowering the garden wall, or changing the great parlour window into a door; and then Bushe reads aloud in the evening, and two favourite books are the History of the old Duke of Ormonde, and the Minute Philosopher for Sundays. We hear that the Dean is very angry at the author of *Tristram Shandy*, and will not have it in the house; but the evenings are not all given to reading, for sometimes there is backgammon, and commerce, and puss-in-the-corner. She goes to Baldoyle strand early in the morning to fetch shells for her shell-work, to supplement an East Indian supply, and spends a sweet evening in the garden with no company but D.D. and the birds, which eat out of the latter's hand, greatly to the delight of his wife.

The birds and animals had evidently a good time of it at Delville. "Mr. Greene has added three beautiful young deer to my stock," she writes after an absence; "my swan is well; Tiger (the cat) knew me. I have a very fine thriving colt and calf. The robins have not yet welcomed us, but one chaffinch has, and hops after us wherever we go." In another place she regrets having been obliged to kill any of her pretty herd, and could not have done it only they were two mischievous old rogues that almost killed the rest with their great unruly horns. The death of a favourite cow is an event worth recording in letters to England; and it would be impossible to describe the happy terms of friendship on which the various singing birds lived with the Dean and his wife about their doors. Sunshine, perfume, melody, happy animal murmurs, and sweet laughs and sighs of human contentment—all these are wafted to our senses by the breeze that flutters over the pages of the story of Mary Delany in her home at Delville. If we were not Christians we must feel blank distress to think that such a state of existence should ever end; as it is, we would fain stop short of the finish. We will not speak of the time when Mrs. Delany was obliged to leave Delville for ever, still less follow her to that other home provided for her later by Royalty, when she had become the chosen and valued friend of a king and queen. A pleasant day comes into our mind, when the gardens of Delville were in high order and beauty, the fruit and flowers unusually fine, a skilful gardener giving infinite satisfaction, the good old Dean busy with his

haymaking, while his wife gathered her roses, and the world outside the wooden gates was excited over his loyal vindication of his dead friend. Everyone knows the tragical story of Swift, Stella, and Vanessa; for Dr. Delany it was written across a page of his own past, and, knee-deep in the perfumed hay, he remembered those who had tasted life's sweets with him. "Politics, thank God, subside," writes Mrs. Delany; "and the present conversation runs on a book just published, author unknown, *Observations on Lord Orrery's Life of Swift*. I hear it very much commended, and D.D. has been applied to to know how he likes it, and if the facts are true, which you may imagine has given us some sport. I am glad to find it so well received; it is, you remember, never to be owned. Everybody thinks his lordship is very gently treated."

On this genial day then we prefer to take our leave of Mrs. Delany; and the happy shining face fades away in the sunshine, and the hundred years that have been pushed aside to let us see the past march up and drop into the ranks of Time. Delville was still there after we had rubbed our eyes; as sweet as ever, with the young green on the trees and the birds in the boughs, trim and well kept, with flowers blowing, and peace brooding everywhere. As it stands at present, the house and grounds answer exactly to her description, though the more superficial decorations are, of course, changed. A broad-leaved, magnificent creeper mantles the bower window of the great parlour with a rich drapery, and, interpenetrated with sunshine, fills the "projection" part of the room with a delicate green lustre. The trees have grown, and it is not now so easy to see ships riding in the harbour as it was in the last century. The only traces of Mrs. Delany's handiwork to be seen are the paintings in the portico at the end of the great terrace walk, and the beautiful wreath of shell flowers round the ceiling of the Dean's chapel, which is now used as a dining-room. The present resident in Delville is a gentleman of cultivated taste, and he and his family prize the old place as it deserves. The Dean's "great parlour," though now used as a drawing-room, is fitted up with a certain appreciative feeling for the past, and there hangs about it an air of repose and refinement which would, we believe, be highly pleasing to Mrs. Delany herself were it possible that her genial spirit could revisit this scene of her earthly contentment.

LYING FOR LUCK.

AMIDST the fun which annually ushers in our First of April, the origin of deceiving people by inducing them to believe falsehoods, has, we rather think, never been satisfactorily explained by antiquarians. We remember the curiosity with which, in younger days, we turned to that delightful repository of quaint information, Hone's Every-Day Book, for some explanation why reasonably decent and honest people should, on one particular day in the year, be seized with this strange anxiety to deceive; but the oracle was dumb. The horse-play of sending people on bootless errands, or on errands which are designed to end in their incurring some corporal distress or other, is a custom of a different complexion, and may be traced to its own source. But what is the especial charm of inducing people to believe that which is not true?

We think a very slender incident, which it is in our power to relate, throws some light on the subject, and is, to that extent, curious. Before mentioning it, however, we wish to say a word or two on Indian lying.

It is a common expression on the lips of those who have gone out to that country, "The natives have no regard for truth; it seems easier to them to lie, and they prefer doing so." And yet no one can have much intercourse with the inhabitants of India without finding out that, in many respects, they are an especially trustworthy race. The explanation of this apparent paradox may perhaps lie in the circumstance, that the natives draw a wide distinction between spoken and acted truth. For instance, it is a well-known fact that the fidelity of bankers was so great before our rule, that a breach of trust in their case was quite unknown, and bankruptcy is admitted to be a transaction they have learnt wholly from their conquerors. Indeed, all business dealings were singularly straightforward and *bonâ fide*. But the unfortunate notion seems to have prevailed from the first in Hindostan, that language was chiefly intended to conceal one's thoughts. It is a striking instance of how extremes meet, that an idea suggested to the Hindoo by that self-defence which a destiny of servitude had taught him naturally to assume, should find its full expression in the mouth of a polished French diplomatist; though not really stranger than that the Sanscrit theory,

which declares the land to belong to the State, should be echoed in these later times by the Socialist cry, that "landed property is theft." The fact is, that our estimate of the indispensability of spoken truth, as compared with that of acted truth, though we do not think of it, dates probably only from the Crusades and times of knightly chivalry. From those days, through swordsmen of rank and military men, the idea has been handed down to the present age, when you may engage in questionable speculations, and fleece people with rotten shares and waste-paper securities, and the world must hold its tongue, at any rate till the police court has spoken; but if you are accused, even now, of an untrue word, the stigma has to be effaced, or disgrace is certain.

Before a native of India answers a question correctly, he wishes to know why it was asked. His first replies, therefore, are equivocal; and when to this element of caution is added the atmosphere of miracle and wonder surrounding all intellects out there—deceiving, as it does, every sense—two very fair reasons are already forthcoming why spoken truth should be far from a common performance.

But it is an undoubted fact, notwithstanding, that, with a singular and sovereign disregard for veracity in the restricted sense of the word, there does co-exist a fidelity to engagements and a staunchness in fulfilling conditions, which amount to not less than a national characteristic. There is a high caste called *Bhats*, who are now engaged in agriculture and service, and have no speciality except singing legends and relating stories; but in former days they were employed to carry jewellery or articles of value from place to place. Absolute reliance could be put on their trustworthiness; they fell back on their religious rank to secure themselves against marauders, as they would threaten to destroy themselves if molested, and thus bring divine vengeance down on their assailants; and, indeed, have done so when hard pushed. Property might, of course, be lost when the robber took his chance of being punished by unseen powers; but embezzled or misappropriated it certainly never was. An instance of singular trustworthiness in a native servant, which occurred within the personal knowledge of the writer, may here be mentioned. During the mutiny, when preparing to leave his station, then on the eve of outbreak, there was an old family

seal he wished especially to possess, but, unwilling to incumber himself with any valuables except money, he asked a domestic servant to take charge of it as long as he could, though the chances of seeing it again seemed small. It was gravely taken, with a peculiar look, which indicated that the commission was considered a sacred one. The outbreak came; escapes and movings followed, and master and servant were separated for many months. At length the former was settled pretty securely at Cawnpore, and in time the communication with Agra was to a certain degree opened out, though the country-side was still seething with confusion. One day a ragged figure—who had forced his way through villages tumultuous with riot, and by outposts, at which every passer-by was searched, lest he should be travelling in the interests of the English, and had at length reached the main road through fields which the heavy rain had turned into swamps—rushed up to his master, who was sitting out in an open space, and, kneeling before him, let down the long lock of hair worn on the scalp, and, from among its folds, produced the family seal!

But now for the brief anecdote promised. Walking in the early morning at a small station in North-west India, the writer, on passing a shrubbery, observed a man stealthily moving in the bushes. The intruder was asked what he wanted, when he replied, "The Seth is dead." This Seth was the principal man in the native city adjoining the station, and a merchant universally known in the commercial world on account of his great riches. Forgetting, in his surprise at the announcement, that the reply was scarcely an adequate one to his question, the writer took his walk, and, on returning, expressed his astonishment to the servants that they had not told him the Seth was ill, mentioning the catastrophe he had learnt from the trespasser. One of the servants having happened, on his way from the city that very morning, to have seen the Seth hearty and well, it was decided on all hands that the information was incorrect.

Thereupon one present remarked :

"The man who told your honour was probably a dyer."

"A dyer!" cried the writer; "but why should a dyer tell falsehoods?"

"He was probably lying for luck," was the answer; and then it was related that when a vat has been prepared for a dye,

some anxiety is felt as to whether it will turn out well—and the blue dye was said to be the most ticklish—and that during this doubt the dyers go out telling falsehoods, in the hopes that, if they are believed, the vat will turn out well. Further inquiries were made afterwards, and the facts were found to be correct; and, indeed, allusions to the custom were subsequently pointed out in native poetry. A lover would, perhaps, be made to address his mistress in some such mad hyperbole as this, "You deceived me, it may be, lest the blue vat of heaven, jealous of the heaven of your face, should wish to spoil itself."

There is no pretence that the incident marked any discovery; the circumstance is probably well known to anyone taking an interest in folk-lore and local customs, but it certainly explains how lying might be held a species of worship. Numberless traces exist of conciliatory worship in countries where the popular faith conceives spirits of evil to have independent power: such worship is opposed to that offered in the hope of obtaining benefits, and is in truth a bribe to secure abstinence from mischief. Akin to this is the fear of offending such hurtful beings by using unpropitious names: thus the furies must be called the Favourable Ones (*Eumenides*), and a certain undesirable personage should be mildly designated "the old gentleman."

Perhaps—but antiquarians must decide this—in our sport of April Fool, there may be a trace of this worship of an evil spirit. And so, as we laugh at some fun-bewildered person on a showery morning in the spring, and keep up the joke because we perpetrated it in our teens, we may be performing a rite which was of old like laying a garland of poisonous and sinister flowers on the altar of a demon, in the hope of securing good fortune for those who were not afraid of lying for luck.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

WE have already been present at more than one social gathering at Doctor Bodkin's house. But these entertainments have been of an informal character, and the guests at them all persons in the habit of meeting each other very frequently. On Mr. and Mrs. Algernon

Errington's arrival in Whitford, after their marriage, Dr. and Mrs. Bodkin issued cards for an evening party, and invited the leading personages of their acquaintance to meet the bride and bridegroom.

Mrs. Errington was in high delight. She appreciated this attention from her old friends very highly. Castalia, it was true, looked discontented and disdainful about the whole affair; and demanded to know why she must be dragged out to these people's stupid parties before she had had time to turn round in her own house. But then, as Mrs. Errington reflected, Castalia did not understand Whitford society. "The fact is, my dear," said her mother-in-law, with suavity, "it may be all a very trumpety business in your eyes, and after the circles you have moved in, but I assure you it is considered a very desirable thing here, to have the entrée to Dr. Bodkin's. And then they scarcely ever entertain on a showy scale; nothing but a few friends, tea and cake, your rubber, and a tray afterwards. But, for this occasion, I hear there are great preparations going on. They won't dance, because Minnie can't stand the vibration. But there will be quite a large gathering. Of course, my dear, it is not what I was accustomed to at Ancram Park. But they are most kind, well-meaning people. And Minnie is highly accomplished; even learned, I believe."

"I hate blue-stockings," returned Mrs. Algernon with a shrug.

"Oh! but Minnie is not the least blue in her manners! Indeed, her knowing Greek has ever been a mystery to me; for I assure you she is extremely handsome, and has, I think, the finest pair of eyes I ever saw in my life. But I suppose it is accounted for by her affliction, poor thing!"

Castalia had darted a quick, suspicious glance at her husband on hearing of Minnie's beauty, but relapsed into languid indifference when she was told that Miss Bodkin was a confirmed invalid, suffering from disease of the spine.

In other circles Mrs. Errington was by no means so cool and condescending in speaking of the doctor's projected party. The check administered to her exultation by Castalia's chilly indifference only caused a fuller ebullition of it in other directions. She overwhelmed her new landlady by the magnitude and magnificence of her "Ancramisms"—I have

already asked permission to use the phrase in these pages—and was looked up to by that simple soul as a very exalted personage; for the new landlady was no other than the widow Thimbleby.

Mrs. Errington occupied the two rooms on the first-floor, above Mr. Diamond's parlours. The place was smaller, and poorer altogether, than Maxfield's house, although it did not yield to it in cleanliness. Here was Mrs. Errington's old blue china set forth on a side-table in the little oblong drawing-room; and her work-box with its amber satin and silver implements; and the faded miniatures hung over the mantelpiece. Also there was a square of substantial, if somewhat faded, carpet in the middle of Mrs. Thimbleby's threadbare drugget, a mahogany table, and a roomy, comfortable easy-chair, all of which we have seen before. In a word, Mrs. Errington had taken advantage of old Max's somewhat rash offer, and had carried away with her such articles of furniture out of her old quarters as she fancied might be useful.

Mrs. Errington took some credit to herself for her magnanimity in so doing. "I could not refuse the poor man," she said to Mrs. Thimbleby. "I have lived many years in his house, and although he was led away by mistaken ambition to want his drawing-room for his own use, and certainly did cause me great inconvenience at a moment when I was up to my eyes in important business, yet I could not refuse to accept his little peace-offering. A lady does not quarrel with that sort of person, you know. And, poor old man, I believe he was dreadfully cut up at my going away, when it came to the point, and would have given anything to keep me. But I said, 'No, Mr. Maxfield; that is impossible. I have made other arrangements; and, in short, I cannot be troubled any more about this matter. But to show that I bear no malice, and that I shall not withdraw my countenance from your daughter, I am willing to accept the trifles you press upon me.' He was a good deal touched by my taking the things; poor, foolish, misguided old man!"

"Well, it was real Christian of you, ma'am," said simple Mrs. Thimbleby.

The day of the party at Dr. Bodkin's arrived; and there was as intense an excitement connected with its advent, as if it were to bring a county ball, or even a royal drawing-room. Whether a satin train, lappets and feathers, be intrinsically

more important and worthy objects of anxiety than a white muslin frock and artificial roses, I do not presume to decide. Only I can unhesitatingly assert that the Misses Rose and Violet McDougall could not have given their female attendant more trouble about the preparation and putting on of the latter adornments—which formed their simple and elegant attire on this occasion—if they had been duchesses, and their gowns cloth of gold.

Miss Chubb, too, contemplated her new dress of a light blue colour, laid out upon her bed, with great interest and satisfaction. And when her toilet for the evening was completed, she had more little gummed rings of hair on her cheeks and forehead than had ever before been beheld there at one time.

The company began to assemble in Dr. Bodkin's drawing-rooms about half-past eight o'clock. There were all our old acquaintances—Mr. Smith, the surgeon, and his wife; Mr. and Mrs. Dockett, with Miss Alethea, now promoted to long dresses and "grown-up" young-ladyhood. There was Orlando Pawkins; Mr. Warlock, the curate; and Colonel Whistler, with his charming nieces. Miss Chubb had dined with the Bodkins in the middle of the day, and, after being of great assistance to the mistress of the house in the preparation of her supper-table, had returned to her own home to dress, and consequently arrived upon the festive scene rather later than would otherwise have been the case. But she was not the last guest to arrive. Mr. Diamond came in after her; and so did one or two families from the neighbourhood of Whitford. ("County people," Miss Chubb said in a loud whisper to Rose McDougall, who replied snappishly, "Of course! We know them very well. Have visited them for years.")

"This is a brilliant scene," said good-natured Miss Chubb, turning to Mr. Warlock, whom Fate had thrown into her neighbourhood. Mr. Warlock agreed with her that it was very brilliant; and, indeed, Dr. Bodkin's drawing-rooms, well lighted with wax candles, and with abundance of hot-house flowers tastefully arranged, and relieved against the rich crimson and oak furniture, were exceedingly cheerful, pleasant, and picturesque. There was an air of comfort and good taste about the rooms—a habitable, home-like air—not always to be found in more splendid dwellings.

On her crimson lounging-chair reclined Minnie Bodkin. Her dress was of heavy cream-white silk, with gold ornaments. She wore nothing in her abundant dark hair, and her pale face seemed to many who looked upon it that evening to be more lovely than ever. Her lips had a tinge of red in them, and her eyes were full of lustre. There was a suppressed excitement about her looks and manner, which lighted up her perfectly-moulded features with a strange beauty that struck all observers. Even the McDougalls could not but admit that Minnie looked very striking, but added that she was a little too theatrically got up, didn't you think so? That was poor Minnie's failing. All for effect! "And," added Rose, "she has a good foil in that little pink and white creature who sits in the corner beside her chair, and never moves. I suppose she is told to do it. But the idea of dressing that chit up in a violet silk gown fit for a married woman! And she has no figure to carry it off. I really think it rather a strong measure on the Bodkins' part to ask us all to meet a girl of such very low origin on equal terms. But there it is, you see! Poor dear Minnie delights in doing startling things, unlike other people. And, of course, her parents refuse her nothing."

Miss Rose's opinion of Rhoda Maxfield's insignificant appearance was not, however, shared by many persons present. Several young gentlemen, and more than one old gentleman, vied with each other in offering her cups of tea, and paying her various little attentions according to their opportunities. Even old Colonel Whistler, when he thought himself unobserved by his nieces, sidled up to pretty Rhoda Maxfield, and was heard to say to one of the "county" gentlemen, "She's the prettiest girl I've seen this many a day, by George! And I know a pretty girl when I see one, sir; or used to, once upon a time!"

To Rhoda, all the strangers who spoke and looked so kindly were merely troublesome. Her colour went and came, her heart beat with anxiety. She started nervously every time the door opened. She could think only of Algernon and Algernon's wife. She made a silent and very earnest prayer that she might be strengthened to sit still and quiet when they should appear, for she had had serious apprehensions lest she should be irresistibly impelled to start up and run away, as soon as she saw them.

It was in vain that young Mr. Pawkins hovered near her, inviting her to accept his arm into the tea-room; it was in vain that old Colonel Whistler softened his martinet voice to ask her, with paternal tenderness, how she had enjoyed her stay at the seaside, and to say that, if one might judge by her looks, she had derived great benefit from the change of air. In the words of the song, "All men else seemed to her like shadows." She was in a dream, with the consciousness of an impending awakening, which she half longed for, half dreaded.

Two persons watched over her, and covered the mistakes she made in her nervous trepidation. Matthew Diamond and Minnie Bodkin exerted themselves to shield her from importunate observation, and to give her time to recover her self-possession, if that might be possible. Diamond was in good spirits. He could wait, he could be patient, he could be silent now, with a good heart. Algernon's marriage had opened a bright vista of hope before him; and perhaps he had never felt so disposed to condone and excuse his old pupil's faults and failings as at the present moment. "Minnie is a good creature," he thought, with a momentary, grateful diversion of his attention from Rhoda, "to keep my timid birdie so carefully under her wing! She might do it with a little more softness of manner. But we cannot change people's natures."

Meanwhile Minnie reclined in her chair, watching his tender lingering looks at Rhoda, and his complete indifference to everyone else, with a heartache which might have excused even less "softness of manner" than Diamond thought she displayed towards the girl beside her.

At length a little commotion, and movement among the persons standing near the door, announced a new arrival. Rhoda felt sick, and grasped the back of Minnie's chair so hard that her little glove was split by the force of the pressure. But that horrible sensation passed away in a few seconds. And then, looking up with renewed powers of seeing and hearing, she perceived that Mrs. Errington had made her entrance alone, and was holding forth in her mellow voice to Dr. and Mrs. Bodkin, and a knot of other persons in the centre of the room.

Mrs. Errington was radiant. She nodded and smiled to one and another with an almost royal suavity and con-

descension. She was attired in a rich dove-coloured silk gown (Lord Seely's gift to her at her son's wedding), and wore rose-coloured ribbons in her lace cap, and looked altogether as handsome and happy a matron of her years as you would easily find in a long summer's day.

"I have sent back the carriage for them, dear Mrs. Bodkin," she was saying, when Rhoda gained self-possession enough to take account of her words. "Naughty Castalia was not ready. So I said, 'My dear children, I shall go on without you, and put in an appearance for one member of the family at least!' So here I am. And my boy and girl will be here directly. And how is dear Minnie?—How d'ye do, Colonel?—Good evening, Miss Chubb.—Ah, Alethea! Papa and mamma quite well?—Oh, there she is! How are you, my dear Minnie? But I need not ask, for I never saw you looking so well."

By this time Mrs. Errington had arrived at Minnie's chair, and stooped to kiss her. Almost at the same moment she caught sight of Rhoda, who shrank back a little, flushed and trembling. Mrs. Errington thought she very well understood the cause of this, and thought to herself, "Poor child, she is ashamed of her father's behaviour!"

"What, my pretty Rhoda!" she said aloud. And, drawing the girl to her, kissed her warmly. "I'm very glad to see you again, child," continued Mrs. Errington; "I began to fancy we were not to meet any more. You must come and see me, and spend a long day. I suppose that won't be against the laws of the Medes and Persians, eh?"

The familiar voice, the familiar looks, the kind manner of her old friend, helped to put Rhoda at her ease. The fact, too, that Mrs. Errington had no suspicion of her feelings was calming. Mrs. Errington was not apt to suspect people of any feeling but gratification, when she was talking to them.

In the full glow of her satisfaction Mrs. Errington even condescended to be gracious to Matthew Diamond, who came forward to offer his congratulations. "Why, yes, Mr. Diamond," said the good lady, "it is indeed a marriage after my own heart. And I do not think I am blinded by the partiality of a mother, when I say that the bride's family are quite as gratified at the alliance as I am. Do you know that one of Mrs. Algernon's relatives is the Duke of Mackelpie and

Brose? A distant relative, it is true. But these Scotch clans, you know, call cousins to the twentieth degree! His Grace sent Castalia a beautiful wedding present: a cairn-gorm, set in solid silver. So characteristic, you know! and so distinguished! No vulgar finery. Oh, the Broses and the Kauldkails have been connected from time immemorial."

Then Colonel Whistler came up, and joined the circle round Mrs. Errington's chair; and Miss Chubb, whose curiosity generally got the better of her dignity when it came to a struggle between the two. To them sauntered up Alethea Dockett on the arm of Mr. Pawkins. The latter, finding it impossible to draw Rhoda into conversation, had philosophically transferred his attentions to the smiling, black-eyed Miss Alethea, much to the disgust and scorn of the McDougalls.

Mrs. Errington soon had a numerous audience around her chair, and she improved the occasion by indulging in such flourishes as fairly staggered her hearers. Her account of the bride's trousseau was almost oriental in the splendour and boldness of its imagery. And Matthew Diamond began to believe that, with very small encouragement, she might be led on to endow her daughter-in-law with the roc's egg, which even Aladdin could not compass the possession of, when a diversion took place.

Algernon-Errington appeared close behind Miss Chubb, and said, almost in her ear, and in his old jaunty way, "Well, is this the way you cut an old friend? Oh, Miss Chubb, I couldn't have believed it of you!"

The little spinster turned round quite fluttered, with both her fat little hands extended. "Algy!" she cried. "But I beg pardon; I ought not to call you by that familiar name now, I suppose!"

"By what name, then? I hope you don't mean to cut me in earnest!"

Then there was a general hand-shaking and exchange of greetings among the group. Rhoda was still in her old place behind Minnie's chair, and was invisible at first to one coming to the circle from the other end of the room, as Algernon had done. But in a minute he saw her, and for once his self-possession temporarily forsook him.

If he had walked into the sitting-room at old Max's, and seen Rhoda there, in her accustomed place by his mother's knee, with the accustomed needlework in

her hand, and dressed in the accustomed grey stuff frock, he might have accosted her with tolerable coolness and aplomb. The old associations, which might have unnerved some soft-hearted persons, would have strengthened Algernon, by vividly recalling his own habitual ascendancy and superiority over his former love. But instead of the Rhoda he had been used to see, here was a lovely young lady, elegantly, even richly, dressed, received among the chief personages of her little world evidently on equal terms, and looking as gracefully in her right place there as the best of them.

Algernon stood for a second, staring point-blank at her, unable to move or to speak. His embarrassment gave her courage. Not less to her own surprise than to that of the two who were watching her so keenly, she rose from her chair, and held out her hand with the little torn glove on it, saying in a soft voice, that was scarcely at all unsteady, "How do you do, Mr. Errington?"

Algernon shook her proffered hand, and murmured something about having scarcely recognised her. Then someone else began to speak to him, and he turned away, as Rhoda resumed her seat, trembling from head to foot.

So the dreaded meeting was over! Let her see him again as often as she might, no second interview could be looked forward to with the same anxious apprehension as the first. She had seen Algernon once more! She had spoken to him, and touched his hand!

It seemed very strange that no outward thing should have changed, when such a moving drama had been going on within her heart! But not one of the faces around her showed any consciousness that they had witnessed a scene from the old, old story; that the clasp of those two young hands had meant at once, "Hail!" and "Farewell!"—farewell to the sweet, foolish dream, to the innocent tenderness of youth and maiden, to the soft thrilling sense of love's presence, that was wont to fill so many hours of life with a diffused sweetness, like the perfume of hidden flowers!

No; the world seemed to go on much as usual. The McDougalls came flouncing up close beside her, to tell Minnie that they had just been introduced to "the Honourable Mrs. Errington;" and a very young gentleman (one of Dr. Bodkin's senior scholars) asked Rhoda if she had

had any tea yet, and begged to recommend the pound-cake, from his own personal experience.

"Go with Mr. Ingleby," said Minnie, authoritatively. "I put Miss Maxfield under your charge, Ingleby, and shall hold you responsible for her being properly attended to in the tea-room."

The lad, colouring with pleasure, led off the unresisting Rhoda. All her force of will, all her courage, seemed to have been expended in the effort of greeting Algernon. She simply obeyed Miss Bodkin with listless docility. But, on reaching the tea-room, she was conscious that her friend had done wisely and kindly in sending her away, for there were but two persons there. One was Mr. Dockett, who was as inveterate a tea-drinker as Doctor Johnson; and the other was the Reverend Peter Warlock, hovering hungrily near the cake-basket. Neither of these gentlemen took any special notice of her, and she was able to sit quiet and unobserved. Her cavalier conscientiously endeavoured to fulfil Miss Minnie's injunctions, but was greatly disappointed by the indifference which Rhoda manifested to the pound-cake. However, he endeavoured to make up for her shortcomings, by devouring such a quantity of that confection himself, as startled even Dr. Bodkin's old footman, accustomed to the appetites of many a generation of schoolboys.

But all this time where was the bride? The party was given especially in her honour, and to omit her from any description of it would be an unpardonable solecism.

The Honourable Mrs. Algernon Ancram Errington sat on a sofa in the principal drawing-room, with a discontented expression of countenance, superciliously surveying the company through her eye-glass, and asking where Algernon was, if he were absent from her side for five minutes. Castalia was looking in better health than when we first had the honour of making her acquaintance. She had grown a trifle stouter—or less lean. Her sojourn in Westmoreland had been more favourable to her looks than the fatigues of a London season, which, under other circumstances, she would have been undergoing. Happiness is said to be a great beautifier. And it was to be supposed that Castalia, having married the man of her heart, was happy. But yet the fretful creases had not vanished from her face; and there was even a more

suspicious watchfulness in her bright, deeply-set eyes than formerly.

Perhaps it may be well to record a few of the various verdicts passed on the bride's manners and appearance by our Whitford friends after that first evening. Possibly an impartial judgment may be formed from them; but it will be seen that opinions were strongly conflicting.

Said Dr. Bodkin to his wife, "What can the boy have been thinking of to marry that woman? A sickly, faded, fretful-looking person, nearly ten years his senior! I can forgive a generous mistake, but not a mean one. If he had run away with Ally Dockett from her boarding-school, it would, no doubt, have been a misfortune, but—I don't know that one would have loved him much the less!"

"Oh, doctor!"

"I am not counselling young gentlemen to run away with young ladies from boarding-schools, my dear. But—I'm afraid this has been a marriage wholly of interest and ambition on his side. Ah! I hoped better things of Errington." And the doctor went on shaking his head for full a minute.

Said Mrs. Smith to Mrs. Dockett, "What do you think of the bride?" Said Mrs. Dockett to Mrs. Smith, "A stuck-up, unpleasant little thing! And I do wish somebody would tell her to keep her gown on her shoulders. I assure you, if I were to see my Ally half undressed in that fashion, I should box her ears. And Ally has a very pretty pair of shoulders, though I say it. She is not a bag of bones, like Mrs. Algernon, at all events."

Said Miss Chubb to her old woman servant, "Well, the Honourable Mrs. Algernon Errington is very distangy looking, Martha. That's a French word that means—means, out of the common, aristocratic, you know. Very distangy, certainly! But she lacks sentiment, in my opinion. And her outline is very sharp, Martha. I prefer a rounder contour, both of face and figure. Some of the ladies found fault with her because of her low dress. But that—as I happen to know—is quite the custom with our upper classes in town. Mrs. Figgins's—wife of the Bishop of Plumbun, you know, Martha—Mrs. Figgins's sister, who married Sir William Wick, of the Honourable Company of Tallow Chandlers, I believe—that's a kind of City society for dining sumptuously, Martha, you mustn't suppose it has anything to do with selling tallow candles!

Well, Lady Wick sat down to dinner in low, every day of her life!"

Mr. Diamond and young Pawkins walked a little way together from the doctor's house to the Blue Bell Inn. The master of Pudcombe Hall, on attempting to resume his acquaintance with the bride, had been received with scant courtesy. But this was not so much because Castalia intended to be specially uncivil to him, as because at that moment it happened, unfortunately, that she saw her husband in a distant part of the room, talking to Minnie Bodkin with an air of animation.

"By Jove!" cried the ingenuous Pawkins, "I don't envy Errington. His wife looks so uncommon ill-tempered, and turns up her honourable nose at everybody."

"She does not turn up her nose at him," returned Diamond. "And Errington will not be over-sensitive on behalf of his friends."

"Oh, well! But she's so crabbed, somehow. One expects a bride to have some kind of softness in her manners, and—hang it all, there's not a particle of romance about her."

"My dear fellow, if there is in the United Kingdom a young man of three-and-twenty who can comfortably dispense with romance in his wife, our friend Errington is that young man."

"Oh, well! I know Errington's a very clever fellow, and all that, and perhaps I'm a fool. But I—I shouldn't like my wife to be quite so cool and cutting in her manners, that's all!"

"Neither should I. And perhaps I'm a fool!"

"Shouldn't you, now?" Orlando was encouraged, by this admission on Diamond's part, further to express his opinion that it was all very fine to stick "Honourable" before your name; but that, for his part, he considered little Miss Maxfield to look fifty times more like a lady than Mrs. Algernon. And as for good looks, there was, of course, no comparison. And though Miss Maxfield was too shy and quiet, yet if you offered her any little civility, she thanked you in such a sweet way, that a fellow felt as if he could do anything for her; whereas, some women stared at a fellow enough to turn a fellow into stone.

But the Misses McDougall were enthu-

siastic in their praises of Algernon's wife. They performed a sort of Carmen Amcebœum after this fashion:

Rose. "That sweet creature, the Honourable Mrs. Algernon! I can't get her out of my head."

Violet. "Dear thing! What high-bred manners! And did she tell you that we are positively related? The Mackelpies, you know, call cousins with us. There was the branch that went off from the elder line of Brose"—&c. &c. &c.

Rose. "Oh yes; one feels at home directly with people of one's own class. How lucky Algernon has been to get such a wife, instead of some chit of a girl who would have had no weight in society!"

Violet. "Yes; but she's quite young enough, Rose?"

Rose. "Oh, dear me, of course! But I meant that Algernon has shown his sense in not selecting a bread-and-butter Miss. I own I detest school-girls."

Violet. "She asked us to go and see her. Do you know, I think we were the only girls in the room she seemed to take to at all! Even Minnie Bodkin, now—She was very cool, I thought, to Minnie."

Rose. "My dear child, how often have I told you that the people here have quite a mistaken estimate of Minnie Bodkin? They have just spoiled her. Her airs are really ludicrous. But directly a person of superior birth comes to the place, you see how it is! Perhaps you'll believe me another time. I do think you were half inclined to fall down and worship Minnie yourself!"

Violet. "Oh no; not that! But she is very clever, you know. And, in spite of her affliction, I thought she looked wonderfully handsome to-night."

Rose. (Sharply.) "Pshaw! She was dressed up like an actress. I saw the look Mrs. Algernon gave her. How beautifully Mrs. Algernon had her hair done!"

Violet. "And did you notice that little flounce at the bottom of her dress?"—&c. &c.

Both. (Almost together.) "Isn't she charming, uncle?"

"Very," answered Colonel Whistler, twirling his moustaches. Then the gallant gentleman, as he took his bed-candle, was heard to mutter something which sounded like "d—d skinny!"

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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HALVES.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGBERD," "A PERFECT TREASURE," "AT HER MERCY," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XIII. THE ACCUSATION.

ALTHOUGH I have spoken of brother Alec as an invalid, he was not such in the ordinary acceptation of the term; for, although he denied himself to guests, he came down to every meal, and was treated in every respect as usual by his hostess, which, I am sorry to say, was with no respect at all. It was not to be expected that much fuss should be made about a "poor relation," who felt a little out of sorts, but it seemed shameful that her tongue should be just as rancorous against the poor old gentleman, in his present depressed and feeble state, as though he had been in good health.

"So, Mr. Alexander," observed Mrs. Raeburn at dessert that evening, and immediately after the servant had withdrawn, "you have been telling pretty tales to Mr. Hastings, I hear."

This was evidently a feeler; some suspicion probably still lingering in her mind that the rector might have learnt more than he chose to tell.

"Tales, madam? I had no tales to tell," answered poor brother Alec, in tones that, for all my pity for him, reminded me of the needy knife-grinder in Canning's ballad.

"Oh, indeed," was the snappish reply; "then I suppose Mr. Hastings invented them. You want to see the doctor, it seems, and make complaints that your wish has not been anticipated."

"Indeed, madam, there is some mistake. I never expressed any such wish to Mr.

Hastings. No doctor would do me any good; no, no." The pathos of his words, which pierced every heart but one, only added fuel, I could see, to Mrs. Raeburn's fire; but he went on, unconscious of that, with his humble apology. "There is nothing the matter with me, Hastings," I said. "I am not ill."

"You look ill then," exclaimed his hostess with acerbity, "and that is exceedingly unpleasant. 'Why doesn't he cut off that dreadful beard,' said Mr. Hastings, 'which makes our friend look so ghastly.' I wish you would, Mr. Alexander; I have always said I disliked it." Cruel and insolent as were her words, the voice and manner with which she spoke them were even still more harsh.

A faint flush crept over the old man's white face, as he cast—it was very rarely that he did so now—a mute appealing glance at his brother.

Mark shuffled in his chair uneasily.

"Matilda, I think you are going too far," he said, "in meddling with my brother Alec. It cannot make any difference to you whether he wears a beard or not. He is not your husband—eh, Alec?" (here the attorney gave a ghost of a laugh.) "He is old enough, my dear, to choose for himself, whether he shall shave or not, I suppose."

"I only echoed Mr. Hastings's very reasonable remark," replied Mrs. Raeburn, more mildly; not influenced probably so much by her husband's appeal, as moved for the moment by the displeasure evident in Gertrude's face, and the disgust (I hope) expressed by my own. "A beard, as I always said, does not become Mr. Alexander; and in every case it is an outlandish and unnecessary appendage.

People of position can, of course, be as eccentric in their appearance as they please; but that is certainly not your brother's case. I have heard you say, myself, that it is absurd in the chemist's assistant to wear moustachios. I mean nothing offensive, but I object to it on principle, as incongruous and unseemly. Of course Mr. Alexander will do as he likes, but I have expressed my sentiments."

Here Gertrude rose from her chair in indignation: it was her intention to have walked straight out of the room, in sign that she would be no longer witness to her cousin's humiliation; but Mrs. Raeburn, affecting to misunderstand her, and to have herself given the signal for retreat, rose with her, and they quitted the apartment together.

"Mark," said brother Alec, "you heard what your wife has said to me; what am I to do?"

His voice, though gentle, was very steady; more so than it ever had been since the change had occurred in his position in the house.

The attorney helped himself to a whole glass of brandy—he made no stranger of his brother now in that respect—and then answered, "I should please myself, Alec. You heard what I said to Matilda. I would say as much again and more. It is I who have prevented her sending away your parrot. I had a great fight for that, and she is at me about it almost every night."

"Do not make your life unhappy on my account, Mark," was the quiet rejoinder. "You mean well, but you are not strong enough to help me. How can I expect it, when you cannot even help yourself?"

"I don't know what you mean, Alec," replied the attorney, with an angry flush. "I am master in my own house, I hope. But, of course, there are some things in which one's wife will have her way; at least, that is so in England, however matters are managed in Peru."

"I see," said the other coldly.

"You say 'you see,' my dear Alec," laughed the attorney, on whom the liquor had begun to have an effect, "as if seeing was not believing; but was it not so? Did you not find your Peruvian wife rather inclined to take the bit in her mouth, eh, like Matilda?"

"My wife is dead, Mark. When alive, she was quite a different person from my sister-in-law."

"Well, you see, you don't hit it off, you

two; and it's a sad pity. Matilda is naturally masterful, and you having no profession are always at home with her, and liable to her little onslaughts. It's a good thing for a married man to have a calling, if it's only that it gives him a loophole through which he can make himself scarce occasionally. I could defend you well enough—I've proved it to-night—if I could be always by, Alec; but I have no doubt she worries you when I am away. As for your beard, I say again she has no business to dictate such a thing; but if I were in your place, and loved peace and quietness, I'd cut it off. Then, perhaps, she will be pacified, and not pitch into me again for a night or two about the bird."

The openness with which the attorney was accustomed to discuss his domestic affairs, especially when he had been taking his favourite liquor, had long ceased to astonish me; but I had never heard him confess his wife's supremacy so plainly as on this occasion. If he had nerved himself thus to acquaint his brother, once for all, that he was powerless to help him, he effected his object, since to my knowledge brother Alec never made appeal or remonstrance to him again.

Except in matters relating to his own profession, wherein Mark was singularly discreet, and, indeed, so reticent in communicating them that I suppose no articulated clerk ever learned less law than I did, during the space of time that I remained under his tutorship, he was, as I have said, by nature open and unreserved; this characteristic was shared by his son John, in whom it was even heightened by a total want of perception of the necessity of concealment; while Mrs. Raeburn, from long habit of despotic rule, rode roughshod over everybody, and gave herself no trouble to put the velvet glove on her iron hand. Thus it happened that, though but a youthful student of human nature, the proceedings of the Raeburn family—for poor brother Alec was a character one might run and read—and even their motives, were as clear to me as though I had been a Machiavelli. Nor was Gertrude Floyd any enigma to me by this time. Although no vows had been interchanged between us, I felt myself secure of her affections, and fondly hoped that only patience was needed on my part, to enjoy a happiness of which I nevertheless acknowledged myself undeserving. Every day brought for me some new proof of her generosity and spirit; and I watched her

ripening charms of mind and body, as the child watches the peach that has been promised to him ripening on the garden wall, without a thought of the canker-worm, or of the thief. Indeed, who could be the thief in this case, even in design, save the volatile John, of whose rivalry I knew I need entertain no fears?

Thus then stood matters at the Priory, when a circumstance occurred which placed the unhappy dependent on his brother's bounty in even a more humiliating position than he had yet occupied, while it also threatened to deprive him of the sympathy entertained for him by those who claimed to be his friends. This sympathy was just then at its height, since the poor fellow had actually submitted to the personal degradation suggested by his implacable hostess, and parted with his venerable beard. I am aware of the ludicrous ideas that such a sacrifice cannot but suggest. "The manly growth that fringed his chin" is a line which tries the gravity of even the readers of an epic; and how, therefore, is it possible to make such matters serious in plain prose? Yet the personal indignity inflicted on brother Alec, considering his age, and kinship, and forlorn condition, was as great as it is possible to conceive, and stirred the indignation of all beholders—fortunately by this time confined to the family circle. There was one feature in the case that might have made even Mrs. Raeburn herself, had she not been as emotionless as a millstone—namely, that the change thus wrought in the old man's appearance brought out his likeness to her son in the most extraordinary manner. The lines and wrinkles in the old man's face were already mirrored in that of the young one, produced there, I fancy, partly by his tricks of grimacing; and now that the dignity which the beard always gives to the aged was gone, there was really little but the grey head—except that the depressed and broken manner contrasted strongly enough with John's upstart and graceless ways—to distinguish uncle from nephew.

However, "Well, Mr. Alexander, I call that a great improvement; you really do look now like a civilised being," was all the remark that the old man's compliance with her wishes drew from his sister-in-law. If he had hoped to conciliate her by his obedience, he was mistaken indeed.

A few days after this a letter arrived by the afternoon's post for Mrs. Raeburn, the contents of which (for it happened

that she received it at the dinner-table) appeared to disturb her exceedingly.

"What is it, Matilda?" inquired the attorney anxiously. He was always anxious about letters, but of late months I had noticed that this habit had greatly increased with him. He did not drink more than usual in my presence, but I had a suspicion that he had taken to do so more and more in private, and that his nerves were beginning to be affected.

"Never mind just now, Mark; you will all hear soon enough," was his wife's reply, delivered in her most frigid tone; and presently, when the servant had left the room, we did hear.

"Mr. Alexander," said she, with stately calm, "this communication concerns you nearly, and myself in a more remote degree. Am I favoured, sir, with your attention?"

This question, which was shot out with amazing sharpness, startled brother Alec not a little. He had grown so accustomed to be the object of his sister-in-law's remarks, which partook largely of the style of a judge's address to the prisoner at the bar, and always ended in a pretty severe sentence, that he rarely raised his head when she addressed him, but he looked up now with a grave and deprecating air, and said, "I am quite at your service, madam, I assure you."

"So you say, sir, and so you would have others believe, I know. It is part of your plan to be always submissive and yielding. It has brought you a great deal of sympathy in this house, and as, no doubt, you also intended, considerable opprobrium upon myself. As for me, however, I have cared nothing for that, since I have been actuated solely by a sense of duty. I made a tolerable guess at your character when I first set eyes upon you."

"Matilda!" exclaimed the attorney in mild expostulation, for, either from weakness or want of will, he now hardly held up the shield at all between his brother and these cruel darts. "Matilda, I am surprised at you."

"You will be more surprised at that man there"—and she stretched out her arm, and pointed to brother Alec across the table—"when I have told you what I have just now heard about him. I have incurred much odium, I say, upon this gentleman's account, because I read him from the first, and was therefore not disposed to spoil and humour him. I have never permitted him—and I am now most thankful to say it—to have his own

way in this house, though, I trust, I have not forgotten that he was my husband's brother."

"A little more than kin and less than kind," murmured brother Alec softly.

"I daresay," continued Mrs. Raeburn contemptuously, "you would not be so glib with your quotations, sir, if you knew what was coming." Her dislike of her poor relative was so excessive that she could not prevent herself from flying at him in this cat-like manner, although it seriously compromised the dignity of her judicial tone. "The time has come, Mr. Alexander," she continued, more solemnly, "for the correctness of my judgment to be established. It seems that we have not only harboured an impostor in this house, Mark, in the person of your injured brother yonder, but a common thief."

An exclamation of horror broke from every lip save that of the accused. The colour came into his face, as it had often done under his sister-in-law's insults, and his thin white hands trembled excessively; but he did not even lift his eyes.

"This is monstrous, Matilda; there must be some mistake," ejaculated the attorney.

"Mistake!" echoed she, with a bitter laugh. "Look at the man, sitting there without a word to say for himself, and judge for yourselves."

"I will answer for him, Mrs. Raeburn," exclaimed Gertrude, boldly. "If it is a mistake, or if it is not a mistake, it is a falsehood."

"I am quite of Miss Floyd's opinion," said I. "It is a most infamous charge, whoever made it."

"It's worse than that," observed John; "it's actionable; and you had better look out, mother."

Mrs. Raeburn regarded us with complacent contempt.

"The mistake, or falsehood, as you so delicately put it, Gertrude, is at least none of mine," said she; "you shall hear whose it is, then judge whether it is likely to be correct or not. Three or four days ago I wrote to the Zoological Society in London, offering to dispose of a Peruvian Night-Parrot; and this is the official reply I received this afternoon:

"MADAM,—In reply to your communication of the 15th instant, I am instructed to acquaint you that the bird of which you speak is already the property of the Zoological Society, from whom it was stolen some six months ago. It should

have arrived at Southampton by the Java—the vessel you came in, I believe, Mr. Alexander—on the 18th of October last. The parrot had been bespoken from Peru, and our agent went down to the port in order to receive it, but found—

"That the bird had flown," interpolated the irrepressible John, in close imitation of his mother's manner.

"Silence, sir!" exclaimed she, so vehemently that John fell back in his chair with the air—a trifle exaggerated—of a gentleman who has been shot through the head.

"But found that the bird had been already conveyed away by a passenger. You are quite correct as to its value, and it is the fixed determination of the society to recover their property. Your brother-in-law, they have no doubt, received it in ignorance that it had been unlawfully come by; but unless it is instantly restored to them, without charge and with a satisfactory explanation of how he became possessed of it, they will be compelled to communicate with the police. Should any accident happen to the bird in the meantime, they will hold him responsible in the sum of one hundred pounds."

"You will not deny, I suppose, Mr. Alexander, that you were the passenger who took that bird away from the ship?"

"Mark," said brother Alec, softly, "your wife asks me whether I am a thief. Can you not answer for me, even that far?"

"Of course, my dear Alec, of course; but why can't you answer for yourself? Nothing can surely be easier. It's a simple question of fact, you know."

With a gentle sigh the old man turned to his hostess, "If, then, I needs must say so, madam, I did not steal the bird."

"Do not prevaricate, sir. I did not ask you that question. What I asked was, Were you not the passenger referred to who brought that parrot from the ship?"

"I was, madam; but I did not steal it."

"That is another subterfuge. Can you account for its possession? How came you by the bird? Can you tell us that?" And Mrs. Raeburn looked around her triumphantly; she piqued herself on her powers of cross-examination, before which many a domestic had succumbed in tears.

"You wish to hear how I came by Chico?" answered the old man, quietly.

"Nay, madam; I will not tell you that."

"You will not? That means you dare not!"

Brother Alec's pale face worked convulsively. It was some time before he found voice to say:

"You have my answer, madam, and it is final."

"Very good, sir, perhaps you will be more communicative to the police. The parrot will be sent to-morrow morning to its rightful owners. I am sorry, for your sake, that the serpents have been destroyed, since a donation of them might have been considered in the way of amends. As to an explanation of how you became possessed of the bird, I have only one to offer."

"But, Mrs. Raeburn—" appealed Gertrude.

"No, Gertrude, I must decline to listen to you. The matter is too serious to be made the subject of sentimental interference. If, as I guess, you were about to propose to pay the hundred pounds for this worthless fellow, I will not permit it; that would be, as my husband will tell you, to compound a felony. The Zoological Society may, perhaps, be content with the restitution of their property; but I am not going to run the risk of seeing the officers of the law enter my doors in search of a felon. After to-day, your brother will find a home for himself elsewhere. He shall stay no longer under this roof."

"But this is being very precipitate, Matilda," remonstrated the attorney.

"Precipitate do you call it, Mr. Raeburn, when this man has been our guest here the better part of a year—eating and drinking of the best? It was through my weakly yielding to your wishes that I have harboured him so long, not to mention his bird, which is not his, it seems, nor ever has been. I must assert myself for once, Mark, as the mistress of this house. You must take your choice between your wife and him; for either he or I shall leave this roof to-morrow."

There was not much doubt as to which of the two would have to go.

AMONG THE ADVERTISERS.

THOSE who lay down their morning paper without scanning the serried columns of matter provided by paying contributors, miss learning some things not generally known. Few are aware that a brewer is a professional man, and "the Ethiopian" a profession of many branches; that a child's caul is cheap at eight pounds; and oblite-

rated foreign postage stamps worth, one with another, about two shillings apiece which they must be, since the fortunate possessor of ten thousand offers to take nine hundred and eighty pounds for the lot. Fewer, still, would suppose one must go as far as Kansas to see grass in its natural condition, or guess that the one thing needful for dispelling care is a musical-box. Our gratitude for being thus enlightened is somewhat diminished by our advertising friends bewildering us with riddles past solving. What sort of creature may a good jobbing Christian man be? Why must a certain company insist upon its office boy, aged twelve, being able to repeat the ten commandments, and answer the question "What is man's chief end?" Why should a shopman be expected to take an active interest in a first-class trade, and in a quiet family? Why should the fact of a man being anxious to promote the temporal and social welfare of those among whom he lives, impel him to undertake shirt making for a firm, or anyone requiring the same? Surely this philanthropic shirtmaker would be just the sort of man for the draper, who wants a Christian young man seeking a situation where he could develop the whole of his soul. What sort of support does the "celebrated actor" expect from the three ladies and two gentlemen, "totally inexperienced," to whom he is continually inquiring? What is "a housemaid entire?" Is "a second hand lady's wig" a widow's wig? and what can anybody want with one, "condition immaterial?" Lastly, what is the meaning of "A permanent home in a large ladies' school; no payment required, but to sit with the masters, and fulfil a few little duties of the same kind?" Perhaps if we pressed for an answer, we might come off as badly as the gentleman who sent thirteen stamps to be taught how to make home happy, and was told—"If you are as big a fool as we think you must be for giving us your money, you can make home happy by leaving it, and emigrating by yourself!"

Murderous mysteries are hateful things! It is like stumbling against an ugly ruffian in a dark lane, to come suddenly upon "Whereas it is believed that attempts have, for some time past, been made to poison a lady in Lancashire, a reward of One Thousand Pounds is hereby offered to anyone who may turn Queen's evidence or may give such information as may lead

to the conviction of the guilty party." Charity suggests the lady's bonnet harboured a very big bee, although not quite so big a one as that nursed by the individual offering fifty pounds for the conviction of sundry evil-disposed persons, associating at a house near his father's residence, for the purpose of keeping him in a state of excitement, by means of magnetism; and even his plight is an enviable one compared to that of the unhappy P.P. who advertises: "Murder! Whereas, in consequence of evidence in my possession concerning divers murders, or suspected murders, committed in times past, I am under the painful apprehension that the strongest possible motives exist in certain quarters for destroying my life; and whereas, I have good reason to suspect that drugs have been given to me at different times since July last, and in previous years, and that I am now in danger of being stricken down by poison, violence, or disease, artificially created; and whereas, I have recently suffered from sleeplessness and nervous irritability, with muscular twitchings, ripplings of the blood, stiffening of the fingers, etc., and am now suffering from incipient weakness of the chest:—I hereby offer an annuity of fifty pounds, during my life (with full pardon so far as I may be able to secure it) to any person who, recognising one from having been concerned in administering to me any noxious drug or poison, shall furnish such evidence as will prove a murderous intention in the instigation of the crime. This is a matter which imperatively demands the earnest attention of every true-hearted Englishman. I particularly desire that this advertisement, which is published *ex majori cautela*, may not (in the absence of positive proof) be considered as throwing an imputation upon any individual."

It is easy to understand that a man of education, great travel, and connection, making a hundred or more monthly by the utilisation of nearly forty years' study and dearly-bought experience, who could surely increase his income five or ten-fold, with extra capital and assistance, would be glad to meet a party of education to join him; but it is not so obvious why he should give the preference to a dark-eyed Scotch lawyer or doctor. Such a limitation is in curious contrast to the notification of the young man about to start a business, certain to realise thousands yearly, that he would not object "to

either sex as a partner." He is evidently ready to combine sentiment with business, like the modest youth possessing an infallible system for winning two hundred thousand francs at roulette, who is in quest of a widow or spinster, with a capital of ten thousand francs, willing to associate in the venture. Since wife and husband seekers have rejoiced in a journal specially devoted to their interests, matrimonial advertisements have passed out of the category of curiosities; but four years ago we clipped the following unique specimen from the *Morning Post*:—"A lady, who must shortly leave a near and dear relation, is very desirous to find a suitable helpmeet for him. Although she has a large circle of female friends, there is not one of them he would have. Under these circumstances she avails herself of the medium of an advertisement. Any lady disposed to assume the duties of a most important sphere of usefulness, and to dedicate herself to works of piety and charity, will have a providential opening. The lady applicant must see the importance of taking up her abode with the advertiser, in order to form her acquaintance. It is requested none should apply who is much younger than thirty years of age, and certainly not much above forty. Her friend has ample means, so that more money, however otherwise acceptable, would not be sufficient to enable advertiser to bring matters to a prosperous issue. A good education, and being able to hold her own in first-class society, is absolutely essential. No notice will be taken of any answer, beyond the returning of letters, where the parties do not seek a personal interview, and will remain some time in or near the dwelling of the lady who inserts this; for the obvious reason that, otherwise, neither party would accomplish the object of their mutual wishes. It would only be proper for any person ambitious of this high and honourable post to send their photo; and it may also be said, her near and dear relation, in whom she takes so deep an interest, cannot, she is certain, accomplish, now that she must leave him, all the good works he meditates." Very different is the tone and style adopted by a wife seeking information as to the whereabouts of her truant lord. "To lodging-house keepers at watering-places. A man named — of —, styling himself a coffee broker, has left his home and cottage at —, with a charwoman, who is passing as his

wife. He is tall and thin. She is very plain, aged between forty and fifty, with only two large front teeth left." A womanly bit of revenge that. Another lady gives somebody a bit of her mind, in the announcement, "Martha objects to pay the debts of the man with the Shabby Hat, unless he returns to his comfortable quarters at St. John's Wood!"

Can the man with the Shabby Hat be the gentleman who is anxious to dispose of his jewellery, already mortgaged for one-fourth its value; or is he that other gentleman desirous to raise a temporary loan, upon the deposit of what he delicately terms "documents relating to family and personal property," or the young fellow who, from adverse circumstances, is painfully in want of a few pounds? Advertising Skimpoles are usually more precise in their demands, like the Catholic who wants to re-create a position with fifty pounds of somebody else's money; the professional man who, from infirmity, finds himself involved to just that amount, and wishes to meet with a benevolent individual willing to advance it, and wait for repayment until the death of an aged relative, from whom he has fair expectations; and the gentleman who cannot save his family from deep distress, unless some wealthy and charitable person supplies him with one thousand pounds. A hundred years ago they did things in this style:—"A lady of very considerable connections and acquaintances has it in her power highly to promote the interest of a single gentleman of spirit and honour, willing to assist her husband, who is a person of reputation and abilities, with three or four hundred pounds, wanted on an emergency. Satisfactory security will be given for the money advanced, and a moral certainty of very considerable advantages will be demonstrated; therefore it is requested that none but persons of real fortune, integrity, and unblemished reputation will answer this." Mr. Puff, himself, might have written that, but even he could not equal the eloquence of M. Michel Monceau's appeal to the wealthy of this world:—"It is youth, education, and sentiment which, united with riches, constitute the charm of human life. I am young, well-educated, and possessed of feeling, but—alas! I am not wealthy. Now which of you, who have a surplus of riches, is willing to bestow a share upon me? Do not offer a smaller sum than ten thousand pounds; for to accept less

than that would be to beg!" Impudent though he be, M. Monceau deserves better fortune than the penitent publican who, being engaged in the liquor traffic, in a paying business of his own, which he has conducted for some years, feels a conscientious objection to continuing in the trade, on account of the widespread misery the drinking habits of the people is causing. He therefore takes this somewhat strange way of appealing to the public, believing that there are many who would help him to obtain some suitable and permanent situation, to support his family; it being possible that, if he relinquishes his trade, his example and experience may be useful to those who are concerned to stop the spread of intemperance. If that permanent situation was forthcoming, there is some hope for the good mother who asks, "Will a rich maiden lady name after her a little girl, just born, very pretty and highly respectable?"

An Englishman, speaking French fluently, possessing the united virtues of a teetotaler, an early riser, a hard worker, a good walker, and an honest man, ought not to lack employment, when ready either to keep books, to call for orders, or to serve behind a counter. But even he is surpassed by the American genius, who is competent to take charge of any department of a printing or publishing establishment, and particularly suited to act as local preacher or as pastor of a small evangelical church; whose aid would be invaluable to a dentist or chiroprapist; and who would not mind undertaking to instruct a select class of young ladies in the higher branches, or, if need were, accepting a professorship to teach ornamental painting and penmanship, geometry, trigonometry, and many like sciences; and failing that, would cheerfully accept a position as a bass singer in a choir, and board with a family decidedly pious. But for a man capable of making himself generally useful, commend us to the confident worthy who advertised his qualifications in this sprightly fashion:—"Do you want a servant? Necessity prompts the question. The advertiser offers his services to any lady or gentleman, company or others, in want of a truly faithful, confidential servant, in any capacity not menial, where a practical knowledge of human nature in various parts of the world would be available. Could undertake any affairs of small or great importance, where talent, inviolable secrecy, or good address would be neces-

sary. Has moved in the best and worst societies, without being contaminated by either. Has never been a servant; begs to recommend himself as one who knows his place. Is moral, temperate, middle-aged. No objection to any part of the world. Could advise any capitalist wishing to increase his income and have the control of his own money. Could act as secretary or valet to any lady or gentleman. Can give advice or hold his tongue, sing, dance, play, fence, box, preach a sermon, tell a story, be grave or gay, ridiculous or sublime; or do anything, from the curling of a peruke to the storming of a citadel, but never to excel his master." It is a pity this perfect gentleman's gentleman could not have paired off with the lady ambitious of presiding at the table and superintending the household of a single gentleman, who described herself as agreeable, becoming, careful, desirable, English, generous, honest, industrious, judicious, keen, lively, merry, natty, obedient, philosophic, quiet, regular, sociable, tasteful, useful, vivacious, womanish, Xantippish, youthful, zealous, &c. Generally speaking, ladies desirous of becoming housekeepers are content with proclaiming themselves very domesticated, thoroughly domesticated, practically domesticated, or domesticated in every department. A lady-like widow without family, however, goes a little farther, and tells us she would be found an acquisition in a bachelor's establishment, as lady-housekeeper or companion. Another recommends herself, oddly enough, as "a married lady, whose husband has committed bigamy and left England;" and a third, wishing to act as housekeeper to a mechanic, rather unnecessarily observes, "a comfortable home more an object than a large salary."

"Never give your reasons," said a wise judge. Had a lady in search of a really plain governess borne the advice in mind, she would have notified her objection to "brilliancy of conversation, fascination of manner, and symmetry of form," without adding significantly, "as the father is much at home, and there are grown-up sons." Another advertiser with a home grievance entreats to be informed where he can find a treasure in the shape of a good general servant, able to cook meat, fish, and vegetables, fit to be eaten, who can neither read nor write, or knows anything about tatting, crochet, or embroidery. And a gentleman who disdains plain prose, sings: "Required, by a gent,

near to Bromley, in Kent, a cook on plain cooking plainly intent. She need not make entremets, sauces, or jellies, that cause indigestion and irritate bellies; enough if she's able to serve up a dinner that won't make her master a dyspeptic grinner. If asked to bake bread, no excuse she must utter; must be able to churn and to make melted butter. If these she can do—eke boil a potato, and cook well a chop, with a sauce called tomato; the writer won't care to apply further test, that she's up to her work, and knows all the rest. She must be honest, industrious, sober, and clean; neat in her garb, not a highly-dressed quean; and must be content, whatever her age is, with sugar and tea, and twenty pounds wages!"

Old bills of fare, unless very old indeed, are not amusing reading. It would be difficult to find a pendant to one issued in 1820, by Frampton, landlord of the King of Prussia, in Wych-street, under the heading, "Theatre of Epicurean Variety." After a short preamble, stating that this compact, comfortable, snug, and cosy little theatre is open for the Winter Season, and that tickets of admission may be had for the separate branches of the entertainment, the following details are "displayed" in proper playbill fashion—a form space will not allow us to imitate. "During the week the following entertainments will be presented. A favourite Burletta, in one act, called Something Like Breakfast. The chief characters by the celebrated foreign performers Signiors Tea, Coffee, Sugar, &c. Price of admission, tenpence. Hours from eight to ten A.M. After which a Bagatelle, or Interlude, in one act, called, If You Like It, Lunch It. The characters by Messrs. Cheshire, Gloucester, Cruet, Kidney, Rarebit, and other well-known performers, who will be found ever ready at the call of the public. At the hour of three P.M., a grand Melodrama, in two acts, called, Here Shall I Dine. The chief character, on Monday, by the celebrated old Roscius of the Epicurean stage, Roast Beef; the other characters by the celebrated Murphys, assisted by the Little Pickles. Guards, Messrs. Cayenne, &c. Scenery by Messrs. Diaper and assistants. Dresses by Mrs. Cook. Music (a joint composition of Handel and Steele) by Messrs. Knife and Fork. Price of admission, one shilling. The powerful characters in the above-mentioned pieces will be sustained by different actors of celebrity during the week, viz., Monday, Boiled Mutton; Wed-

nesday, Roast or Boiled Pork; Thursday, Veal and Bacon; Friday, Boiled Beef; Saturday, Roast Mutton. At eight P.M. every evening the well-known eccentric Pat Murphy, in company with his friend Pat Butter, will have the honour of making his appearance in his much-admired hot jackets of brown. N.B.—A stout and venerable white-headed Porter, from the office of Messrs. Goodwyn and Co., will attend the theatre for the purpose of keeping good order during the performance."

Managers are so deaf to the charming of untried dramatists, that we fear the authoress of *The King's Banner*, "an Original, Romantic, Serio-Historical Drama, in Four Acts and several Tableaus. Period, the Civil War (from 1648) and the escape of Charles the First from Carisbrook Castle (to 1669), ending with the Restoration. Finished complete, July, 1869. Copyright secured, March, 1870," will not be overwhelmed with offers for her play, albeit she has provided it with a Hop-Garden Ballet, her sole invention and property; and with many new sensational effects, including a "Will o' the Wisp scene, ending in a Bog Adventure, during the search for Fugitive Cavaliers through the Forest," and "an admirable Ghost Scene, in an Abbey Ruin, with an original Ghost Medley;" and furthermore certifies that, "this great Drama" has been read and highly recommended by many leaders in the profession. The lady, at any rate, believes in herself and in her work; which is more than can be said for the author offering liberal terms to anyone who will skilfully correct and revise a Christmas book for girls and boys, and prevail upon some respectable firm to publish it. Equally desirous, we opine, of enjoying the honours without experiencing the pains of authorship, is a gentleman of literary habits, wanting the services of an amanuensis with a poetic imagination. Another aspirant, biding his time in a Dorsetshire village, appeals to Tory editors—as if it were their mission to run-a-muck at feminine extravagances—to afford him the opportunity of astonishing society with an original, brilliant, and powerful satire on the follies and vices of a fast and fashionable lady of the period.

Until Jonathan Wild's misdeeds spurred Parliament to action in the matter, advertisements for the recovery of stolen property ended, as a matter of course, with, "No questions asked." Nowadays, a victim of

the light-fingered tribe—unless, indeed, he be a noble earl—must be careful not to make any such promise. He must not speak out like the advertiser in the *New York Herald*, who put the thing thus:—"The fat gentleman who assisted on Friday evening, on the Seventh Avenue Car, can make fifty dollars by returning the watch. Better take it!"—nor must he imitate the American actor's:—"If the party who took a fancy to my overcoat was influenced by the inclemency of the weather, all right; but if by commercial considerations, I am ready to negotiate for its return;" or take for exemplar, "M. Lefeuve, 48, bis Rue Basse du Rempart, begs the lady in black, who does not like draughts in omnibuses, kindly to send him the purse she found in his pocket on the 1st of February, and to keep the money it contained as a reward for her cleverness." The best way out of the difficulty is obviously to ignore the fact that there is a thief in the case, like the nobleman who, upon being robbed of his portmanteau, advertised that if the person in possession of it should be deterred, by feelings of delicacy, from restoring it to its former owner, he would confer a great favour upon him by sending the letters and papers when their perusal had been accomplished; in which case, no allusions of a character to wound the feelings of either party would be made to the transaction. But if the individual in question was able to subdue his *mauvaise honte* sufficiently to return the whole, his generosity would be appreciated and rewarded.

Under the odd heading, "Wines for precocious Summer," we read, "A sense of visible summer may reject Port and Sherry, without acknowledging any instinct for the German or French Wines of June, July, or August. Hungary, a country of extinct volcanoes, affords innumerable opportunities of exercising those solvent properties of the vine, which have illustrated the lava-beds of classic countries with wines, almost as famous as their volcanoes. To these opportunities we owe our wines, which hold in a solution more subtle than is achieved by art, re-agents that exactly fit them to be the beverages of such a season." If that is a good style of composition, what is this?—"Country Parsonage, furnished, roomy, dry, commodious, comfortable, divisible, double offices. Vicar (elderly) would let whole, major, or minor part, and board (liberally) or lodge with tenant. Gardens,

stables, land, optional. Parochial helper or ladies' school preferred. Most healthy, picturesque, accessible; sea air, bracing; education, hunting, cricket, archery." The elderly vicar has evidently a weakness for the sex. He would have no sympathy with the single gentleman seeking board and residence in a respectable family, where there are no marriageable daughters; but would rather incline to the young man blessed with an artistic eye, who makes it a sine qua non that there should be at least one pretty female face in the sociable family, to which he desires to attach himself as a lodger. The artistic-eyed youth, again, would scarcely appreciate the horse-loving young gentleman who wishes to reside at an establishment devoted entirely to horses, on a very large scale; and he, in his turn, would look down with contempt upon that other young gentleman, desirous of boarding with a farmer, who only cares to have "particulars as to number and size of family," and "would gladly assist in the work of the farm, when feeling inclined to do so;" while all these exacting young fellows would decline acquaintanceship with the Unitarian gentleman, wanting "a furnished bedroom as sitting-room," for four shillings a week, "including washing, general repairing, cooking, and household appendages," and making a special proviso that, "if the chimney smokes, he will require it to be remedied."

The printer must, perhaps, be held answerable for announcing the performance at a Monday Pop., of Beethoven's Septet for winged and stringed instruments, and for inventing a novel method of constituting a directorate, by heading a list of bank directors with the words, "made in competition for the Queen's Prize;" and we may put down to him, too, the "undesirable reference given and required" of a lodging-house keeper's advertisement. Not that advertisers cannot blunder sufficiently without the printer's aid. The disconsolate master of a missing retriever promises to reward anybody not concerned in the theft; one auctioneer announces the sale of a large and shady brick gentleman's house; and another asserts the situation of an estate is not to be surpassed, "the land sloping from the cliff, where it is upwards of four hundred feet above the sea-level, the house being nearly three hundred feet high!" Somebody wants to get rid of a splendid grey horse, calculated for a charger, "or

would carry a lady with a switch tail;" somebody else wants to let on hire a pony and cart, that "can read and write, and knows town;" "six dozen of prime port, lately the property of a gentleman, forty years of age, full in the body, and with a high bouquet," lie waiting a purchaser; and a journeyman pork-butcher "objects to Sundays." Refreshing bits of candour occasionally astonish us. A lawyer, wanting a junior clerk at a small salary, promises the difference will be made up in over-work. The advertisement of a wonderful hair-producing preparation runs:—"Whiskers, Mustaches, Baldness. An elegant crop of these desirable adornments produced in a few weeks;" and one of those accommodating gentlemen, so benevolently anxious to assist distressed householders by advancing cash on furniture without removal, prepares his clients for the inevitable end, by winding up his advertisement with, "A staff of men kept for taking possession." Some advertisers take strange liberties with the Queen's English. The inventor of a new propeller assures us that it is approved by classical engineers; a Glasgow man of business desires to assume a partner; a gardener terms himself a good plantsman; a lady declares her readiness to housekeep for a single gentleman; the proprietor of "a travelling clock" guarantees it to be "a perfect timeist;" and lastly, one T. S. proclaims himself a "corrector of the Spanish language, and compositor of French, Italian, Portuguese, and Latin."

THE TWO SONGS.

WHEN love was young, at brightening morn,
While high above the yellowing corn
The glad lark shrilled, to her whose eyes
Seemed homes of radiant ecstasies,
I sang. The glory of the time
Rang through the notes and ruled the rhyme.
The rapture of the sun-kissed rose,
When bud-bound petals first unclose,
Spoke from my lips afire from those
Whose sweetness thrilled my spirit through,
And the song's jubilant music knew
Joy's impulse in each soaring strain,
Each cadence low, each glad refrain.
I turned. Those eyes looked praise, and yet
Some shade of fear or faint regret,
Like a thin cloud o'er sunlit stream,
Hovered a moment and was gone.
Ah! is it that dawn's daring dream
Each soul must shape alone?
Sweet the oases that guerdon gave
For that glad song! Can shadows start
Beneath joy's sun, or passion crave
Yet closer clasp than heart to heart?

The night was young, the night-bird's trill
Shook softer than a far-heard lute
From that grey copse beneath the hill,
And then was mute!

Her head clasped close above my heart,
I sang, for that the words would start
From laden lips—a song as low
As Spring's first streamlet's timid flow,
Low, yet as happy as the tears
Which fall unchecked from shining eyes,
When hope, outlasting sundering years,
Attains its paradise.

Whispers of trees, when storms have fled,
Bear such sweet burden; odours shed
By rain-washed roses through the night
Breathe such serene and sure delight
As this my song. I might not see
Her eyes in that leaf-cumbered place,
But cloelier drew her tender face,
And pressed her heart to me;
And, through the silence and the dark,
There came a gladness that the lark
Hath not a song for. Love that lives
Through sorrow such deliverance gives
From fear, its shadow may not start
To chill the clasp of heart to heart.

IN MID AIR.

“YOU'LL not get back to Chili that way, senior; not with a whole throat, that is. I'd sooner go from here across the Pampas, alone, in spite of the wild Indian horsemen and their fire-hardened spears, than I would try the smooth, broad pass of San Felipe, over the Cordilleras, here at hand. Five diligences and carrossas rifled in nine days! And not a soldier to protect the road! The saints be good to us, for the government of the Republic does little for us, here, to the west. Only, if I were you, Don Carlos Digby, I would not be in too great a hurry to make acquaintance with Diego and his band.”

These were the facts of the case: I, the Charles Digby to whom my excellent friend, Don Miguel Lopez, storekeeper and alcalde of the pretty town of San Juan, had addressed the above well-intended warning, was simply a young Englishman, who had been long enough in South America to be fluent in Spanish speech, and to have learned something of the peculiarities of the country. I was—being by profession an engineer—superintendent or manager of the Great Hermandad Silver Mine, on the western or Chilian side of the southern chain of the Andes, and I had crossed the mountains to San Juan to arrange for the purchase and transport of provisions and stores.

But the homeward road had suddenly become dangerous and difficult. A band of robbers—headed by a noted leader called Diego, who had once, I was told, been a captain in the army of the Banda Orientale, but had rebelled, or refused to join in a military pronunciamiento, I forget which—were committing great cruelties on the

ordinary road that led across the mountains. In little more than a week they had stopped above a hundred travellers, had robbed all, murdered several, and put a few, who had offered resistance or were suspected of possessing hoarded money, to the torture. Such episodes of life in New Spain were too common to excite much surprise. Captain Diego was merely endeavouring, by the vigour of his early atrocities, to invest his name with a wholesome halo of terror, immediately profitable in the form of plunder and ransom, and which might not possibly lead to the whole gang of highwaymen being bought off on their own terms, and taken into government employment as deputy-corregidores and police officials; but, in the interval, the little town of San Juan was crowded with travellers, unwilling to incur the risk of proceeding on their journey.

Among those thus detained was a young English lady, who, with her parents and her young brother, were on their way to Chili from Buenos Ayres, where they resided. She was a very beautiful girl, whose golden hair and bright complexion looked all the lovelier because the style of her beauty contrasted so forcibly with the raven locks, dark flashing eyes, and sallow tint of the olive-skinned Spanish senoras. I met with her more than once during my stroll through the streets and the plaza, but we were not acquainted, and it was by the merest accident that I learned that the name of the family was Trevor.

At last I lost all patience, and, chafing at the delay, yet unwilling to run into the lion's mouth by attempting the Felipe Pass, I hired a mule and a guide, and, leaving the stores I had bought to follow me at leisure, I set off for the more rugged and rarely-frequented passage called Las Neves, or, The Snows, an especially toilsome route, leading the pilgrim over some of the highest ground in the Southern Andes, but which was reasonably secure from brigands.

The first day's march was easy and uneventful. The puebla, or cultivated plain, was crossed, and then came the gradual ascent of the spurs of the mountain range, dotted as they were with hamlets, fields, and here and there the silent shaft and heaps of dross and scoriae that indicated the situation of some abandoned mine.

“It's to-morrow, Senor Inglese,” said Antonio, the guide, a young Indian from the highlands above us, “that our real work will begin. This is a mere promenade, but

we must trudge hard and long to clear the distance, from the halting-place to Hermandad, betwixt dawn and dark."

We slept at a farmhouse, and, before noon on the ensuing day, I had reason to agree that Antonio had not over-rated the labours of the ascent. The path was steep, rugged, and broken, and it led amidst the most savage ravines and inaccessible heights of the stony Cordillera. No four-footed creature less sure-footed than a mule could safely have ventured to carry a load up so narrow and perilous a track as that, which wound like a white snake among the beetling precipices and yawning gulfs, which make up the most characteristic features of the scenery of the higher Andes. Above us, there soared volcanic peaks, crested with unsullied snow, and with flanks seamed and scarred by the lava floods of ages ago; while here and there would open out some darkling glen, choked by such a mass of tangled vegetation as to render it all but impenetrable to man or beast. There was but little sign of life, save that here and there some huge bird of prey, perched on a towering rock, seemed to survey tableland and valley as if to espy its destined spoil. The few villagers whom we met—miners, for the most part—were melancholy-eyed Indians, clad in garments of undyed wool, and wearing sandals of a quaint pattern, who returned my greetings civilly enough.

We made brave progress, and, after many a scramble in places where a fall or a false step might have entailed a drop of several hundred feet upon sharp stones or thorny shrubs, found ourselves, earlier than Antonio had anticipated, near the summit of the wild pass. Early as we were, however, we found ourselves preceded by another party of travellers, whose forms we could see on the narrow road that wound in irregular curves overhead.

"A bad bit that, English sir!" said my guide, as he made me remark how slow was now the progress of the group in our front, and how broken and steep the track.

"They are just coming to the Paso del Diablo, the worst arrow-flight of the whole road. Look, if it isn't just like a bookshelf in the cura's parlour, yonder in my village; only the books have the best of it. They rest safely there; whereas, on the Paso del Diablo, a stumble, or a gust of wind may send you—see!" And he tossed over the edge of the precipice

a large pebble, which awoke the slumbering echoes of the hills as it leaped from crag to crag into the giddy depths, too far for the eye to follow.

The Paso had really some fanciful resemblance to a bookshelf, being simply a ledge of bare stone, running along the face of a tall, gaunt rock, while the road, being narrow and utterly unprovided with rail, or bank, or parapet, overlooked the awful abyss below, at the bottom of which, faintly visible, a torrent gurgled amongst its boulders of water-worn stone. An uglier place of passage, or one more calculated to shake weak nerves, I had never seen, and I could well imagine that, in time of snow or storm, to attempt it would have been a foolhardy exploit. In fine weather and broad daylight, however, it could, no doubt, be traversed in tolerable security.

I looked forward; my eye caught the flutter of ladies' dresses and the outline of several figures, most of them being mounted on mules. Now, a mule is very wary and sure of foot, and partially deserves the eloquent praise which, in prose and poetry, has been bestowed on that obstinate animal. But, when you are quick of eye and lithe of limb, you, as a man, are by far fitter for safely treading an awkward path than any beast less agile than the hill-fox or the ibex can be. Accordingly, I preferred walking where the track was slippery and the risk of stumbling considerable, and had dismounted before approaching my friend Antonio's "bookshelf." The travellers in front were all mounted, and pushed on, as the width of the path dictated, in Indian file. First of all rode, as I judged, a girl, whose plumed hat danced gaily in the yellow sunlight; then came a stripling on a mule; and, after these, followed five other persons, two mounted, three on foot. Those on foot were talking loudly and gesticulating vehemently. Their harsh laughter came faintly back to us as we advanced.

"They have given drink to their guides, the imprudent ones!" muttered Antonio, shaking his head. "Lucky for them that it is fine weather, and a peon from the poblas, who knew the road, could—Ay de mi!" And he dropped on his knees, and began to tell the beads of his rosary with a passionate fervour, which would have astonished me more had not my business brought me much into contact with the strange, impressionable race to which he belonged. I knew that there must be a cause for this sudden outbreak of religious zeal.

"What is it?" I asked, impatiently. "Leave off, man, mumbling out the names of the saints, for one minute, and give me a plain answer. What is wrong?"

Antonio jerked his elbow towards the suddenly overcast sky. Around the peak of the giant volcano, to northward, heavy clouds had gathered; while, elsewhere, a thin white film, like flax from the spindles of the Fates, spanned the turquoise blue of the southern heaven.

"What is it?" I asked again, as I noticed that the mule, snorting, and evidently frightened, seemed trying to squeeze itself against the rocky wall.

"It is coming—coming!" cried Antonio, hoarsely.

"What is coming?" I exclaimed, angrily. "Tell me, scoundrel, or——"

"You'll know soon enough. El Vente del Muerte—the Wind of Death—Great Gregory, Rose of Lima, my patron, save us now!" replied the guide, as a lurid flash of lightning illumined the whole mountain panorama, and, mingling with the diapason of the thunder, came a shriek, as of an imprisoned spirit let loose, and a rush of bitterly cold wind fairly hurled me against the rock, to which I clung for support, while the mule, sobbing and panting, cowered down upon its knees. For some four or five minutes this resistless blast endured, and, when it relaxed its fury, my first thought was to creep forward on hands and knees and to look upwards, so as to ascertain what had happened to the travellers on the rocky ledge above. To my horror, the shelf of stone was empty. No; on it there remained, pressed against the rock, one slender figure in female garb; while near her, crouched down like a terrified dog, stood the mule from which she had dismounted. The rest were gone!

So sudden, so dreadful, was the catastrophe that had occurred, almost before my eyes, that for some moments I remained as though incredulous of the full horror of the scene. The voice of my guide, as he moaned out, "May they find mercy, whoever they were. Pray for those who are dead. Pray, too, for her who is about to die! - Pobra Nina!"

The Indian's quick eyes were not at fault. It was a woman—a girl—and by her dress probably a lady, who was in mortal peril within a few yards of me.

"Come, Antonio!" I cried, staggering as I rose to my feet; "on, and we may yet be in time to save one life at least. Twenty dollars, man, if we save her!" I added, im-

patiently, as my dusky follower remained motionless.

"Not all the silver in Chili, cavalier would profit the wretch who should venture to cross the Paso, there, when Elborazo wears his cap of clouds, and the death-wind is blowing. I'm no coward, senor; but I'll not risk life on such a cast."

"If you won't, I will; and alone, too!" I answered, hotly; and without paying any attention to the warnings which the Indian shouted after me, I scrambled up the steep and winding road, and stood upon the Paso del Diablo itself, being careful to keep as close as possible to the bare rock-wall, and away from the precipice.

Most fortunately, the force of the furious wind had slackened since the first terrible gust had exacted its early toll of human victims, or, otherwise, I doubt if the hardiest mountaineer could have traversed that place of peril. As it was, it cost me a desperate struggle to keep my foothold and advance towards where the girl stood, partly screened by a large stone that must, years before, have fallen from above, and which was overgrown with moss and lichen. Near her was the mule, its feet firmly planted on the rock, and its heaving flank all but flattened against the flinty wall, while its eyes, stony with terror, seemed to stare at the narrow platform on which we stood. I took in, I scarcely know how, all these details, as it became incumbent on me to creep past the mule, which partly obstructed the path, and, in doing so, to skirt the perilous verge of the abyss. I had now lost my grasp of the overhanging wall, to which I had hitherto clung with an eager clutch, and began to fear that the rushing wind would bear me away over the edge of the rock; but, though I reeled under the force of the blast, I kept my feet, and reached the spot where the girl was kneeling, with clasped hands and averted face.

Before I could speak, the mule, in the agony of its alarm, set up the screaming cry which its species utter under the influence of pain or rage, and the girl turned her head, and, for the first time, saw me. My recognition of her was immediate. Well did I remember that golden hair; those blue eyes, dilated as they now were, and expressive only of grief and fear; that fair, pure face! It was the beautiful English girl I had seen at San Juan, and, doubtless, her late companions had been her own family, of which she was, alas! the sole survivor.

"Save them! oh save them!" she exclaimed in Spanish. "Go to their help, sir, for the love of heaven! My poor father—my dear mother—my brother—All! all!—"

She wrung her hands, pointing with a piteous gesture to the edge of the cliff.

"I fear, Miss Trevor," I began, speaking in our own language, when the girl gave a little start and uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"You know me?" she said; "yet——" and she paused for a moment, looking wonderingly at me, and then slowly murmured, "Ah! yes—I recollect—in San Juan, yonder!"

And even at that terrible time a faint blush rose to her cheek, as she possibly recognised in me the strange Englishman whose eyes had, perhaps too openly, expressed the admiration that he felt for beauty such as hers.

This, however, was no time, nor was the Paso del Diablo a fitting place, for fine speeches or elaborate apologies.

"Miss Trevor," said I earnestly, "I am here to save you if I can. Every minute that we linger here adds to the chance that a fresh squall may set in, and, should it do so, it may be beyond human strength to get clear of this perilous ledge. Twenty yards off, as you see, is an angle in the path, by turning which, as I judge, we shall be comparatively safe. I will endeavour to support you if you will——"

She interrupted me with an earnest prayer that I would leave her where she was, and go to the rescue of her parents and brother. Their need, she said, was greater than hers. I was, of course, but too well aware that these unfortunate persons must be beyond the reach of any earthly aid, but to say so would have been gratuitously cruel, and I therefore urged on her the necessity for accepting my escort so far as the nearest hamlet or cluster of miners' huts, promising to return with ropes and men, and to undertake a search for her lost relatives, which, alone, I could not hope to carry out. She was very gentle and confiding, as a child might have been, and rose up from her knees, expressing her willingness to follow me. And just then some flakes of snow came whirling down, whitening the rocky platform.

There were, as I have said, some twenty yards to traverse before reaching a corner, by rounding which, as I conjectured, we should have quitted the ledge of rock and gained the wider road beyond. But twenty

yards, in some cases, may give cause for more anxiety than leagues of ordinary wayfaring. I had need of all my strength to support Miss Trevor's uncertain steps as she advanced, and, when we drew near to the angle in the path, I perceived, with no slight trepidation, that she was trembling like an aspen leaf, as her eyes were turned towards the tremendous gulf below.

"Hold me back! Pray hold me!" she exclaimed, almost wildly. "It draws me to it—it will——"

I understood her, luckily. I am one of those men who can remain cool and steady on the dizzy verge of a precipice. That is a mere question of constitutional temperament, for I have known the bravest, who had faced death on the battle-field without flinching, utterly unnerved by the terrible fascination which a yawning depth below the gazer's feet can exert upon him. The dread desire to plunge, and end life and fear at once, I could well appreciate; and I saw that Miss Trevor would never get round the sharp angle of the rock, where the path narrowed to a width of some eighteen inches at most.

By a sudden impulse, I caught up the girl in my arms, and by a mighty effort succeeded in rounding that dangerous point, and in reaching, as I had expected, the broader road beyond. The snow was falling fast, while still the thunder rolled, and the ice-cold wind swept howling past. Already the road was white with fallen flakes. Far across the deep valley, on an opposite table-land, I descried the walls of a convent nestling amidst trees, and with farm buildings and Indian cottages around it. Could we but reach it we should be safe, but the only way to gain it speedily was evidently by crossing one of those suspension bridges of native construction, which spanned the ravine from side to side. And this, in rough weather such as we were experiencing, presented no trifling risk. These bridges—which moved the wonder and admiration of the Spanish conquerors, and which still afford the only means of crossing some of the ghastly chasms that seam the mountain range—are apparently frail constructions of grass-ropes, twisted by Indian hands; the floor, a strip of matting; the hand-rail, a cord of grass; while, even with a light weight to carry, the passage is, to a novice, more exciting than agreeable.

With these remarkable bridges I was tolerably familiar, although I had never before seen one which spanned so wide

and profound a gulf as that which now yawned beneath us, as I led Miss Trevor across the seemingly fragile construction, which rocked in the wind as a hammock on board a ship might do. We had traversed some two-thirds of the distance, when a fresh and more violent gust came howling through the pass, and it was all that I could do to prevent Miss Trevor from being dashed from the quivering bridge, on the floor of which we were both compelled to crouch, while the pliant matting that supported us swayed to and fro like a swing in a playground, and the snow and hail flew around us. The snapping of a rope, the giving way of a few strands of the plaited grass that bore us up, meant death, instant and inevitable. And, even should the tough grass-cords endure the strain upon them, we were in no slight danger of losing our hold from sheer exhaustion, and of being jerked from the bridge as a stone is propelled from a sling. Once I made a resolute effort to lead the way to firm ground, but the violence of the vibration, as we neared the steeply-sloping extremity of the bridge, all but tore me from my hold of the tough fibres, and we were thankful to regain the middle of the narrow web, with which we swayed, backwards and forwards, as we may see a spider swinging on a single thread.

What was that scream, so loud and so near, in its harsh shrillness? Instinctively we both looked up, to see, flapping its huge dark wings over our heads, a very large bird, which, by its curved beak, fierce red eye, and breast-feathers of ashengrey, I knew to be a condor. Three or four times it circled round us, as if to mark us for its prey, and then, with complaining cry, dived far down into the ravine below us. I shuddered to think whose were the helpless limbs that probably allured the gigantic vulture to his foul repast in the gorge below, but our own situation was one which left but little time to spend in regrets for those whose fate might at any moment be ours. Then, too, the intense cold which, as often happens in the Andes, seemed the more intolerable on account of the heat of the morning—so benumbed the delicate frame of my fair companion that I constantly feared that before the storm should cease she would have sunk into that fatal lethargy that knows no waking. By chafing her cold hands, and, in spite of her remonstrances, wrapping

her in the loose coat I wore, which was fortunately a woollen one, I saved her, at any rate for the time, from frost-bite or stupor, although the snow and frozen hailstones whitened our garments, as we crouched waiting, rather than hoping, for deliverance.

We talked together—to have kept silence in such a spot and at such a time would have been maddening—and it was touching to hear how Miss Trevor took blame to herself for my present peril, all incurred, as she said, through the generous impulse which had led me, at my own imminent risk, to succour her, a stranger. She laid such stress on this that I could not forbear saying that I should, I hoped, have done as much for any one in peril; but that if I could save her, whose sweet face had haunted me in my dreams since first I beheld her— Here I came to an awkward pause, and felt as though I could have bitten my own tongue for what I had said, for might it not seem as if I were presuming on the position in which accident had placed me, and on the service which I had rendered? I do not think, however, that Miss Trevor understood the purport of my clumsy compliment, for she continued to converse quite simply, as a child might have done, often expressing her natural eagerness to procure help for her ill-fated relatives, of whom she made mention as though they must be still alive, though perhaps sorely hurt, in the valley below. I had not the heart to contradict her, knowing, as I did, that nothing short of a miracle could have preserved the lives of those who had fallen over the edge of the Paso del Diablo.

Hours elapsed, and the wind abated, but I began to despair. No traveller might come that way for days, while I could not anticipate that Miss Trevor could endure the keen frost of the coming night in that exposed situation. Yet, how was it possible for me, in her exhausted state, to— What was that sound? This time it was not the boding scream of the vulture, but a loud halloo from human and, as it seemed, friendly voices, and instantly I replied to the hail. Then there came, creeping towards us over the plaited floor, a lithe figure, followed by another, while the voices of those on the bank were raised in a cheer of encouragement.

“Safe and sound, Caballero! St. Nicholas and the Virgin be praised for that! Ay, and the *senorita*, too!” said the well-

known voice of Antonio, my guide, for he it was who headed the party. "Why, then, I'll say all my days, Inglesse, that you bear a charmed life. Few who cross the Paso——"

But I did not hear the rest of the Indian's speech, for now, for the first time, I too grew faint and giddy, and realised the terrible strain on mind and body which the excitement of peril had enabled me to maintain, and, though I aided in lifting Miss Trevor's almost insensible form from the snow, I can remember nothing more until I found myself lying on the bed in a guest-chamber of the convent, while a bearded monk, in brown robe and rope girdle, was warming something in a pipkin over a brazero of glowing charcoal.

"Drink this, Englishman!" said the good-natured Capuchin, as he poured the hot wine into a large silver cup, emblazoned with the armorial bearings of some Spanish viceroy of long ago; "drink this, and then get to sleep again, if you can. Nothing like it when once you are warm and sheltered. Yes, yes," he added, with a smile, as he anticipated my question, "the young lady, too, is well, and asleep, too, I daresay. Heretics or not, you and she are welcome here, cavalier!"

I have little more to relate. Of the remains of the unfortunate persons who fell over the rock of El Paso, no trace was ever found, although, at Miss Trevor's urgent entreaty, a long and painful search was instituted among the glens below. But so wild and broken was the ground, and so intersected by snowdrifts, torrents, and thorny thickets, that from the first the Indian miners and herdsmen despaired of success, and, as I have said, the bodies were never recovered. So soon as my beautiful charge had regained strength enough to enable her to travel, I accompanied her to the city of Santiago, where her father's sister resided, and there, beneath her aunt's roof, I left her to mourn for the dear ones whom she was never more to behold. But our parting was not for long. I became a frequent visitor to Santiago, and was a frequent guest in the house of Ellen Trevor's aunt. There, after a while, I told her my love, and thence I led my bride to the altar, if I may use so high-flown an expression concerning the Consular Office, with its white-washed walls placarded with announcements of wreck and salvage, and other matters, interesting to mariners, where we were married.

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

If I am not mistaken, it was the author of Pelham who, commenting on the discovery of a pair of loaded dice at Pompeii, remarked that, if some of the virtues are modern, all the vices are ancient. I will not, however, undertake to say that the world is more virtuous than of old, as I well know that, if I hazarded that hypothesis, I should bring my learned friend, Professor Gleichgewicht, down upon me at once with his world-famed demonstration that blackguardism in man is a constant quantity varying from age to age only in its phenomenal or outward seeming, but remaining unchanged in its diabolical essence. Keeping clear, however, of the professor, I may, I think, risk the supposition that we improve in the faculty of appreciation, and in some few instances render honour where honour is due. It is true that this faculty is rather widespread than centred in the regions whence flow collars and crosses, stars and garters, and that these ornaments are rarely bestowed upon those who add to the health and happiness of the world; but this official neglect is, in the case of the medical profession, almost compensated by the rank conceded to it in modern society. It was otherwise in the good old times. It is true that certain learned doctors were mentioned only with bated breath and a hasty glance over the shoulder, but these awful personages were revered in proportion rather to their supernatural power than their professional skill. It is very doubtful, indeed, whether they ever really cured anybody, being, for the most part, too busy with the stars to find time to study the products of our globe, and they showed a curious incapacity when brought face to face with the black death and other forms of epidemic disease which, following in the track of war and famine, contributed in no slight degree to thin the population of England in its "merrie" days. The ancient physician—we may take it for granted—was at least as dangerous as the majority of diseases, but his humbler brother, the "chirurgion," seems to have been useful enough. It must be recollected that, in the "merrie" period referred to, there was plenty of need of the surgeon's art, and comparatively little for that of the physician. Taking into account the big wars and little wars, crusades, rebellions, the free exercise of the "right of private

war" by persons of noble birth, and ordinary brawls and squabbles, it seems to have been long odds on cold steel against all other ailments whatsoever, and there was little fear of a gentleman's life being protracted to the prejudice of his heirs by a correct observance of the laws of Hygeia. The chances were all in favour of being knocked on the head at a comparatively early age; but it is well known that in the hand-to-hand conflicts with sword and buckler, for instance, many more were hurt than killed. The wounded sought either the monks or the Jews, who employed as their assistants the barbers of the period, an alliance whence arose the famous Company of Barber-Surgeons. How closely the two callings were at one time knit together is shown by the sign which surgeons have abandoned altogether, and which barbers nowadays but rarely hang out. The well-known pole is an imitation of one formerly held in the hands of patients during the operation of phlebotomy—now abolished altogether—and the stripes represent the tape or bandages used for fastening the arm; both pole and tape being in olden times hung up outside the shop as soon as done with, to announce that there was a vacancy for a patient wishing to be "blooded." The foundation of the Company of Barbers is ascribed to as early a date as the reign of Edward of Carnarvon, but the first Royal Charter was granted to the Barber-Surgeons by Edward the Fourth and his amiable brother, the Duke of Gloucester. For some unexplained reason the barbers and surgeons did not pull very well together, and the surgeons severed the connection; but so much inconvenience arose from the jealousy of the two companies that they were reunited by the Act 32 Henry the Eighth, under the name of Masters or Governors of the Mystery and Commonalty of Barbers and Surgeons of London. This document bound the associated crafts firmly together till the year 1745, when the surgeons finally departed to the Old Bailey, and subsequently, in 1800, formed the body now well known as the Royal College of Surgeons in Lincoln's-inn-fields.

Barbers' Hall still occupies its original site in Monkwell-street, but has been partially rebuilt during the last few years; and the court-room, designed by Inigo Jones, must be sought in the rear of huge perpendicular walls. The room is well worthy of a visit. It con-

tains a fine portrait of Inigo Jones, by Vandyke, and a superb full-length of the Countess of Richmond, by Sir Peter Lely. These are notable enough; but the great treasure of the company is the magnificent picture, by Holbein, of King Henry the Eighth granting the Charter to the Barber-Surgeons. Every one is familiar with engravings of this splendid picture, which only give the faintest possible idea of its rich colour and wonderful finish. The central figure of Henry himself glows with gorgeous hues: attired in royal raiment of cloth of gold and ermine, crowned, and holding in his right hand the sword of state, the great Tudor hands the charter to T. Vycary, master of the company in the year 1541. On either side of the king are grouped the dignitaries of the company—seventeen in number—each being a portrait, with the name painted on it. A curious proof of the authenticity of the portraits is supplied by the cartoon for the picture now in the Royal College of Surgeons: each portrait is a separate study, made on a separate piece of paper, and afterwards pasted on in its proper place.

On grand occasions a handsome display of plate is set forth at Barbers' Hall, including a silver-gilt cup, presented by Henry the Eighth to the company, whose past-master, I. Chambre, was his own private physician. Charles the Second also gave the Barber-Surgeons a silver cup, as he gave a splendid mace to that famous Royal Society, of which he was the founder. Queen Anne also presented the company with a silver bowl. Two very curious mementoes of royal gifts are preserved with great care in Monkwell-street: one is the head of a fat buck, a present from Charles the Second; and the other is the back shell of a mighty turtle, given by Queen Anne. The head of the buck is splendid with gilt antlers, and the turtle-shell is emblazoned with the arms of the company. These memorials of bygone banquets are cheering enough, but as much cannot be said for the handsome screen, painted in scroll-pattern on leather and profusely gilt. To that screen literally "hangs" a tale, as it was presented to the company by a culprit who, having undergone his sentence, revived under the knife of the dissector, and, being perfectly restored, testified his gratitude by making a gift to the company. This ghastly incident is said to have given rise to the modern practice of letting criminals hang for an hour before cutting them down; but this

explanation and the theory brought forward by my informant, that a man, having been hanged and resuscitated, can cry quits with the law, together throw serious doubt upon the story. I find, however, that the famous John Hunter is said to have alluded to it in his lectures; and that, according to that version, the sheriffs were sent for, who took the man back to Newgate, ultimately to be permitted by the king to depart for a foreign country. There is no inscription on the screen to warrant the authenticity of this narrative, which rests on simple tradition and the presence of the screen, which seems to be of fifteenth or sixteenth century work. Another peculiar feature about Barbers' Hall is, that the ancient apartment, once used as a dissecting-room, has for many generations been employed as a kitchen. Not very long ago it was yet garnished with sundry uncanny hooks, and unpleasantly-suggestive boards and shelves—a sight of which has more than once determined the plainest of plain cooks to sheer off in an agony of terror.

Leaving Barbers' Hall, and following the surgeons from the Old Bailey to Lincoln's-inn-fields, whither they removed shortly after receiving the royal charter of incorporation in 1800, we find them established in the building erected by Barry in 1836. To would-be surgeons this is a dreadful spot, the haunt of the awful tribunal whose diploma is esteemed of such surpassing value. It is true that the diploma of a surgeon, and the degree of doctor of medicine to boot, can be obtained elsewhere; but the mystic letters, M.R.C.S., yet possess a singular charm, for it is known, high and low, far and near, that not only is the professional examination very severe, but that applicants for matriculation are tested in order to make sure that they have received something approaching a liberal education to begin with. A list—far too long to transcribe here—is given of the certificates admitted, as conveying assurance of sufficient proficiency in general education. In default of these, candidates are required to pass an examination in nine compulsory subjects—to wit: reading aloud a passage from some English author; writing from dictation; English grammar; writing a short English composition; arithmetic up to vulgar fractions and decimals; questions in geography; questions on the outlines of English history; mathematics, in-

cluding the first two books of Euclid and algebra to simple equations; and translation of passages from the second book of Cæsar's Commentaries, "De Bello Gallico." To these compulsory subjects are added six of the "optional" class, of which the candidate must select at least one, and may select four, for his examination. These six are translations from either the Anabasis of Xenophon, Saintine's Picciola, or Schiller's Wilhelm Tell, and the elements of mechanics, chemistry, or botany and zoology. Having either presented certificates, or passed the above examination successfully, the candidate is free to devote himself to professional study, either in the hospitals, or as a pupil to a properly-qualified surgeon, and after four years of work is permitted to present himself with his certificates for the dreaded professional examination. To go through this ordeal, the young surgeon must be provided with certificates of regular attendance, &c., but these avail him naught if he be unable to overcome the technical difficulties placed before him. Many persons may be under the impression that this professional examination includes, or should include, all the true functions of the Royal College of Surgeons, but they will disabuse themselves of this error on hearing that nearly one-half of the young men who come up for the matriculation examination are "plucked"—an ample demonstration, if any were needed, that this preliminary examination is exactly what is required to keep out the great army of the incompetent. What with examinations for fellowship, membership, and other minor affiliations to the Royal College of Surgeons, the court of examiners is pretty well employed, some two thousand persons presenting themselves for examination every year. The examination for the diploma is divided into a primary and a pass examination. About one-third of the candidates break down in the "primary," and are referred back to their studies for several months; while of those who get through the primary examination for the diploma, nearly one-third never offer themselves for the final or pass examination, which enables them to put M.R.C.S. at the end of their names. As this proportion is constant, it is impossible to avoid noticing it. If the proportion of one-third included those who merely "presented" themselves for the primary examination, and were "referred to their studies" for a

time, the phenomenon would be explicable enough, as simply due to the despair of the "plucked;" but that one-third of the successful in the "primary" examination, which confers no certificate of proficiency, should decline any further attempt to obtain a diploma at the "pass" examination, is simply incomprehensible.

The cost of maintaining the college, the library, and the museum is between twelve and thirteen thousand pounds per annum, and is met—with the exception of about one-fifth, derived from rents and funded property—entirely by the fees derived from the examinations. For the preliminary examination in general education, a fee of two pounds is required, and for the primary and pass examinations for the diploma, twenty-two pounds. Additional fees, however, are demanded from the lazy and the stupid. Any candidate who, after two consecutive failures at the primary examination, wishes to try again, is mulcted in the sum of five guineas, and any future light of the profession who breaks down twice in succession at the pass examination, is also assessed in a like sum before being examined for the third time. The consideration of these protections against the waste of examiners' time produces the at once saddening and reassuring conclusion that either young Englishmen are great blockheads, or our surgeons a "highly tried" and accomplished race. A considerable source of expense to the college is the library, containing thirty-five thousand volumes, and as many pamphlets, essays, and reports of various kinds. Hither come many thousands of readers, who are supplied with every convenience for study. The great glory, however, of the college, is its museum, unrivalled in the world. Other capitals rejoice in special anatomical museums, such as the Musée Dupuytren, at Paris; but for general comprehensiveness and completeness, the museum in Lincoln's-inn-fields stands alone. Its original formation was due to the celebrated John Hunter, who left at his death upwards of ten thousand preparations—obtained, it is supposed, at a cost of seventy thousand pounds—and which were purchased from his widow for fifteen thousand pounds by the Government, who presented them to the college.

Here are skeletons enough to stock another church of St. Ursula, like that at Cologne. Attending first of all to the genus *himana*,—it is extraordinary how naturally

hard words come to one in the College of Surgeons—we find the skeletons of sundry remarkable persons in odd juxtaposition. Charles O'Brien, the famous Irish giant, who died in 1783, is said to have had a confirmed and, as it appears, well-founded horror that the surgeons would be on the watch for his remains. Just before he died—of too much good liquor, at the age of twenty-two—he made dispositions for his burial, requesting that he might be sunk in the sea, far beyond low-water mark. All his fears and schemes, however, proved useless to avert his fate, or rather the fate of his bones to remain above ground. At a cost, it is said, of three hundred pounds, his body was secured and the skeleton prepared. He was, if we are to believe all we hear, eight feet two inches high during life; the skeleton, however, measures only seven feet seven. Other skeletons are there of giants and dwarfs, and one of a middle-sized, thick-set man, not remarkable from an anatomical point of view, but otherwise interesting enough. It is that of a famous individual, no less than "Jonathan Wild the Great," who, in the language of his biographer, Henry Fielding, finally "swung out of the world." By the side of the skeleton is the coffin-plate bearing the inscription, "Mr. Jonathan Wilde. Died May 24th, 1725, In y^e 42^d year of his age"—a date which clashes considerably with Fielding's narrative, which sets down as the birthday of his hero that on which the great plague broke out in 1665. Almost equally interesting is the skull of Thurtell, the murderer of Mr. Weare. It is worthy of note that, while the head of Wild presents no special peculiarity of conformation, being rather small and elegant than otherwise, that of Thurtell possesses an atrocious "facial angle," the lower jaw, abundantly furnished with great white teeth, projecting hideously. Eugene Aram's head, again, is conspicuously small. Very curious is the result of putting people's heads together. The skull of the Baresark and of the mild Hindoo are hardly distinguishable; while those of the negro, the New Hollander, and the Tasmanian, differing from each other, differ yet more widely from the heads of white men. Horribly ghastly are the prepared heads from the Indian Archipelago, covered with paint and gilding; and supremely curious are the long heads preferred by the Caribs, and the flat heads admired by the tribes of North

America. Near these are casts of the brain cavity of various animals, showing how very small in proportion are the brains of the whale and the elephant when compared with that of man; and overhead is an enormous skeleton of the "right" whale weighing several tons. Further on is the osseous framework of poor Chunee, the famous elephant whose destruction at Exeter 'Change excited so much sympathy at the time.

Near the skeleton of poor Chunee stands that of a far happier creature—one whose neck was clothed in the thunder of applauding thousands—who took the highest honours to be compassed by any animal; a thing of strength and beauty while he lived; a name "written large" in the genealogy of his race for ever. This horse, so light of bone below the knee, was a Derby winner—the famous Orlando—who ran second to the fraudulently-entered Running Rein in 1844. The last-named animal carried in his white jacket first on Epsom Downs, but was disqualified for being over age, and Orlando received the prize of equine immortality. Born in 1841, after a short but illustrious career on the turf, he retired to Hampton Court paddocks, became the sire of many famous "flyers," and died, full of years and honour, in 1868.

Carefully preserved under cases are portions of the remains of the great mammoth—the thick hide, the long shaggy hair, and the soft wool which lurked under the hair, to preserve the animal from the cold; and then we come to more skeletons: the Irish deer, with his wide-spreading horns; the extinct mylodon; and casts of the gigantic ostrich (*dinornis*) of New Zealand, and eggs which perhaps gave rise to the fable of the roc; skeletons of the cachalot or sperm whale, with vast head, containing the cavity known technically as the "well," whence the precious material is shovelled out in great scoops by men slung from the top; the skeleton of the first baby hippopotamus born in this country—very piggy-looking; the framework of the dugong (of which bacon is made) and of the manatee: so heavy is this last, that it is wonderful to find it in a swimming animal. Farther on are the "scaffolding" of the ostrich and of the humming-bird; the curious skeleton of the cobra, with ribs the extremities of which serve as feet, and with mouth armed with the well-known hollow fangs for injecting poison; the agile monitor lizard; and the unpleasantly man-like gorilla,

and orang-utan. Upstairs are preparations of various organs of human and other bodies, in health and out of health. I do not recommend this part of the exhibition to non-medical persons. The specimens and preparations are beautiful from a scientific point of view, but are hideously suggestive of the diseases one might accumulate in the course of a pleasant life. As I am puffing and blowing with the exertion of running upstairs, I am not cheered "to any great extent" by inspecting preserved hearts, in every state of fatty and other degeneration; or bottled lungs, in a hideously tubercular condition; and as the courteous attendant draws my attention to "nutmeg" and other unhealthy livers, I decline, with thanks, to look upon what may be the counterpart of my own recalcitrant organ. But my guide will not let me off the contemplation of the wonderful collection of skin diseases, done in wax, and presented by that great authority, Erasmus Wilson. In ghastly array are all the horrors to which the human exterior is subject, from leprosy and elephantiasis to ringworm, and those by no means agreeable disorders communicated by socks and other under-clothing, infected by arsenical dyes. Of curiosities there is enough and to spare. Old-fashioned surgical instruments, awful to look upon, are set aside in a small chamber with ancient apparatus for reducing dislocations—by squeezing, screwing, pulling, and hauling a shoulder or an arm into place. I suppose success sometimes rewarded those primitive efforts; but, judging from the pictures showing the treatment, the agony of the patients must have been excruciating. In the same room is the embalmed wife of Martin van Butchell, who looks terrible enough in a sort of upright coffin, and concerning whom a legend exists of his having had some object, legal or otherwise, in "keeping her above ground;" another instance of the facility with which stories crystallise around remarkable objects. Of other curiosities there are enough and to spare: a carriage-shaft pulled out of the chest of a man who recovered perfect health; a cast of Dr. Livingstone's arm injured by a lion; and a collection of needles which gradually worked their way out through the flesh of a woman, who had swallowed a paper of those useful but indigestible articles. The foot of a Chinese lady, cramped and

crippled according to fashion, is also here, as well as a curious selection of articles swallowed by lunatics and other unfortunate persons. For instance, a bad half-crown which killed the "smasher" who swallowed it; a punch ladle swallowed by an enthusiastic drinker; a set of false teeth "bolted" by mistake; the table-knife which killed the knife-swallowing Indian juggler; a box full of pocket-knives devoured by a soldier; pencil-cases, spoons, egg-cups, pipes, and boxes of dominoes, also engulfed by people more or less mad; and a box full of pins, eaten by an unhappy woman, who liked to eat pins, but liked them crooked. In the midst of all, towering over mere accidental oddities, and rejoicing in the immense additions which have been made to his invaluable collection, is the figure of John Hunter—the true genius loci—to whom the visitor makes a reverent bow at parting, as the best representative of that noblest of all arts—the art of healing.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCIS ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MARCEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"LOVE in a cottage" is a time-honoured phrase, which changes its significance considerably, according to the lips that utter it. To some persons, Love in a cottage would be suggestive of dreary obscurity, privation, cold mutton, and one maid-of-all-work. To others, it might mean a villa with its lawn running down to the Thames, a basket-phaeton and pair of ponies, and the modest simplicity of footmen without powder. To another class of minds, again, Love in a cottage might stand for a comprehensive hieroglyph of honest affection, sufficiently robust to live and thrive even on a diet of cold mutton, and warm-blooded enough to defy the nip of poverty's east winds.

Lady Seely had joked, in her cheerful, candid way, with her niece-in-law about her establishment in life, and had said, "Well, Castalia, you'll have love in a cottage, at all events! Some people are worse off. And at your age, you know (quite between ourselves), you must think yourself lucky to get a husband at all."

Miss Kilfinane had made some retort to the effect that she did not intend to remain all her life in a cottage, with or without love; and that if Lord Seely could do

nothing for Ancram, she (Castalia) had other connections who might be more influential.

But, in truth, Castalia did think that she could be quite content to live with Algernon Errington under a thatched roof; having only a conventional and artificial conception of such a dwelling, derived chiefly from lithographed drawings. It was not, of course, that Castalia Kilfinane did not know that thatched hovels are frequently comfortless, ill-ventilated, "the noted haunt of" earwigs, and limited in the accommodation necessary for a genteel family. But such knowledge was packed away in some quite different department of her mind from that which habitually contemplated her own personal existence, present and future. Wiser folks than Castalia are apt to anticipate exceptions to general laws in their own favour.

Castalia was undoubtedly in love with Algernon. That is to say, she would have liked better to be his wife in poverty and obscurity, than to accept a title and a handsome settlement from any other man whom she had ever seen: although she would probably have taken the latter had the chance been offered to her.

Nor is that bringing so hard an accusation against her as may at first sight appear. She would have liked best to be Algernon's wife; but for penniless Castalia Kilfinane to marry a poor man when she might have had a rich one, would have required her to disregard some of the strongest and most vital convictions of the persons among whom she lived. Let their words be what they might, their deeds irrefragably proved that they held poverty to be the one fatal, unforgiven sin, which so covered any multitude of virtues as utterly to hide and overwhelm them. You could no more expect Castalia to be impervious to this creed, than you could expect a sapling to draw its nourishment from a distant soil, rather than from the earth immediately around its roots. To be sure there have been vigorous young trees that would strike out tough branching fibres to an incredible distance, in search of the food that was best for them. Such human plants are rare; and poor narrow-minded, ill-educated Castalia was not of them.

Had she been much beloved, it is possible that she might have ripened into sweetness under that celestial sunshine. But it was not destined to be hers.

In some natures, the giving even of

unrequited love is beautifying to the character. But I think that in such cases the beauty is due to that pathetic compassion, which blends with all love of a high nature for a lower one. Do you think that all the Griseldas believe in their lords' wisdom and justice? Do you fancy that the fathers of prodigal sons do not oftentimes perceive the young vagabonds' sins and shortcomings, with a terrible perspicuity that pierces the poor fond heart like sharp steel? Do you not know that Cordelia saw more quickly and certainly than the sneering, sycophant courtiers, every weakness and vanity of the rash, choleric old king? But there are hearts in which such knowledge is transmuted not into bitter resentment, but into a yearning, angelic pity. Only, in order to feel this pity, we must rise to some point above the erring one. Now poor Castalia had been so repressed by "low ambition," and the petty influences of a poverty ever at odds with appearances, that the naturally weak wings of her spirit seemed to have lost all power of soaring.

The earliest days Mrs. Algernon Errington spent in her new home were passed in making a series of disagreeable discoveries. The first discovery was that a six-roomed brick cottage is, practically, a far less commodious dwelling than any she had hitherto lived in. The walls of Ivy Lodge (that was the name of the little house, which had not a twig of greenery to soften its bare red face) appeared so slight that she fancied her conversation could be overheard by the passers-by in the road. The rooms were so small that her dress seemed to fill them to overflowing, although those were not the days of crinolines and long trains. The little staircase was narrow and steep. The kitchen was so close to the living rooms, that at dinner-time the whole house seemed to exhale a smell of roast mutton. The stowing away of her wardrobe taxed to the utmost the ingenuity of her maid. And the few articles of furniture which Lady Seely had raked out from disused sitting-rooms, appeared almost as Brobdingnagian in Ivy Lodge, as real tables and chairs would seem beside the furniture of a doll's house.

A second discovery—made very quickly after her arrival in Whitford—was still more unpleasant. It was this: that a fine London-bred lady's-maid is an inconvenient and unmanageable servant to

introduce into a small humble household. Poor Castalia "couldn't think what had come to Slater!" And Slater went about with a thunderous brow and sulky mouth, conveying by her manner a sort of contemptuous compassion for her mistress, and a contempt, by no means compassionate, for everybody else in the house.

The stout Whitford servant-of-all-work offended her beyond forgiveness, on the very first day of their acquaintance, by bluntly remarking that well-cooked bacon and cabbage was a good-enough dinner for anybody; and that, if Mrs. Slater had see'd as many hungry folks as she (Polly) had, she would say her grace and fall to with a thankful heart, instead of turning up her nose, and picking at good wholesome victuals with a fork! Moreover, Polly was not in the least awestricken by Mrs. Slater's black silk gown, or the gold watch she wore at her belt. She observed, cheerfully, that such-like fine toggerly was all very well at church or chapel; and, for her part, she always had, and always would, put a bit of a flower in her bonnet on Sundays, and them missises as didn't like it must get some one else to serve 'em. But, when she was about her work, she liked to be dressed in working clothes. And a servant as wanted to bring second-hand parlour manners into the kitchen, seemed to her a poor creature—neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red-herring.

All which indignities Slater visited on her mistress, finding it impossible to disconcert or repress Polly, who only laughed heartily at her genteelst flights.

But these things were not the worst. The worst was that Algernon showed very plainly a disinclination to sympathise with his wife's annoyance, and his intention of withdrawing himself from all domestic troubles, as if he considered them to be clearly no concern of his. Mrs. Errington, indeed, would have come to the rescue of her daughter-in-law, but neither of Mrs. Algernon's servants were disposed to submit to Mrs. Errington's authority. And the good lady was no more inclined than her son to take trouble and expose herself to unpleasantness, for any one else's sake.

Castalia and her mother-in-law did not grow more attached to each other, the more intimate their acquaintance became. They had one sentiment in common—namely, love for Algernon. But this sentiment did not tend to unite them. Indeed—putting the rivalry of lovers out

of the question, of course—it would be a mistake to conclude that because A and B both love C, therefore A and B must love each other. Mrs. Errington thought that Castalia worried Algernon by complaints. Castalia thought that Mrs. Errington was often a thorn in her son's side, by reason of her indulgence in the opposite feelings; that is to say, over-sanguine and boastful prognostications.

"My dear Algy," his mother would say, "there is not the least doubt that you have a brilliant career before you. Your talents were appreciated by the highest in the land, directly you became known to them. It is impossible that you should be left here in the shade. No, no; Whitford won't hold you long. Of that I am certain!"

To which Castalia would reply that Whitford ought never to have held him at all; that the post he filled there was absurdly beneath his standing and abilities, and that Lord Seely would never have dreamt of offering Ancram such a position if it had not been for my lady, who is the most selfish, domineering woman in the world. "I'm sorry to have to say it, Mrs. Errington, since she is your relation. And you needn't suppose that she cares any the more for Ancram because he's her far-away cousin. At most, she only looks upon him as a kind of poor relation that ought to put up with anything. And she's always abusing her own family. She said to Uncle Val, in my presence, that the Ancrams could never be satisfied, do what you would for them; so he might as well make up his mind to that, first as last. She told me to my face, the week before I was married, that Ancram and I ought to go down on our knees in thankfulness to her, for having got us a decent living. That was pretty impudent from her to a Kilfinane, I think!"

Algernon laughed with impartial good-humour at his mother's rose-coloured visions and his wife's gloomier views; but the good-humour was a little cynical, and his eyes had lost their old sparkle of enjoyment; or, at least, it shone there far less frequently than formerly.

As to his business—his superintendence of the correspondence, by letter, between Whitford and the rest of the civilised world—that, it must be owned, seemed to sit lightly on the new postmaster. There was an elderly clerk in the office, named Gibbs. He was uncle to Miss Bodkin's maid Jane and her brother the converted

groom, and was himself a member of the Wesleyan Society. Mr. Gibbs had been employed many years in the Whitford post-office, and understood the routine of its business very well. Algernon relied on Mr. Gibbs, he said, and made himself very pleasant in his dealings with that functionary. What was the use, he asked, of disturbing and harassing a tried servant by a too restless supervision? He thought it best, if you trusted your subordinates at all, to trust them thoroughly.

And, certainly, Mr. Gibbs was very thoroughly trusted; so much so, indeed, that all the trouble and responsibility of the office-work appeared to be shifted on to his shoulders. Yet Mr. Gibbs seemed not to be discontented with this state of things. Possibly he looked forward to promotion. Algernon's wife and mother freely gave it to be understood in the town that Whitford was not destined long to have the honour of retaining Mr. Ancram Errington. Mr. Gibbs did the work; and, perhaps, he hoped eventually to receive the pay. Why should he not step into the vacant place of postmaster, when his chief should be translated to a higher sphere?

I daresay that, in these times of general reform, of competitive examinations and official purity, no such state of things could be possible as existed in the Whitford post-office forty odd years ago. I have only faithfully to record the events of my story, and to express my humble willingness to believe that, nowadays, "nous avons changé tout cela." I must, however, be allowed distinctly to assert, and unflinchingly to maintain, that Algernon took no pains to acquire any knowledge of his business; and that, nevertheless, the postal communications between Whitford and the rest of the world appeared to go on much as they had gone on during the reign of his predecessor.

Mr. Gibbs was a close, quiet man, grave and sparing of speech. He had known something of the Erringtons for many years, having been a crony of old Maxfield's once upon a time. Mr. Gibbs remembered seeing Algernon's smiling, rosy face and light figure flitting through the long passage at old Max's in his school-boy days. He remembered having once or twice met the majestic Mrs. Errington in the doorway; and could recollect quite well how the tinkling sound of the harpsichord and Algy's fresh young voice used to penetrate into the back parlour on

prayer-meeting nights, and fill the pauses between Brother Jackson's nasal dronings or Brother Powell's passionate supplications. Mr. Gibbs had not then conceived a favourable idea of the Erringtons, looking on them as worldly and unconverted persons, of whom Jonathan Maxfield would do well to purge his house. But Mr. Gibbs kept his official life and his private life very perfectly asunder, and he allowed no sectarian prejudices to make him rusty and unmanageable in his relations with the new postmaster.

Then, Mr. Gibbs was not altogether proof against the charm of Algy's manner. Once upon a time Algy had been pleasant to all the world, for the sheer pleasure of pleasing. Years, in their natural course, had a little hardened the ductility of his compliant manners—a little roughened the smoothness of his once almost flawless temper. But disappointment, and the—to Algernon—almost unendurable sense that he stood lower in his friends' admiration (I do not say estimation) than formerly, had changed him more rapidly than the mere course of time would have done. Still, when Mr. Ancram Errington strongly desired to attract, persuade, or fascinate, there were few persons who could resist him. He found it worth while to fascinate Mr. Gibbs, desiring not only that his clerk should carry his burthen for him, but should carry it so cheerfully and smilingly as to make him feel comfortable and complacent at having made the transfer.

I have said that disappointment had changed Algernon. He was disappointed in his marriage. It was not that he had been a victim to any romantic illusions as regarded his wife. He had had his little love-romance some time ago; had it, and tasted it, and enjoyed it as a child enjoys a fairy tale, feeling that it belongs to quite another realm from the every-day world of nursery dinners, latin grammars, and torn pinafores, and not in the least expecting to see Fanfreluche fly down the chimney into the school-room, or to find Cinderella's glass slipper on the stairs as he goes up to bed. Romances that touch the fancy only, and in which the heart has no share, are easily put off and on. Algernon had wilfully laid his romance aside, and did not regret it. Castalia's lack of charm, and sweetness, and sympathy would

not greatly have troubled him;—did he not know it all beforehand?—had she been able to help him into a brilliant position, and to cause him to be received and caressed by her noble relatives and the delightful world of fashionable society. It was not that she failed to put any sunlight into his days, and to fill his home with a sweet atmosphere of love and trust. Algy would willingly enough have dispensed with that sort of sunshine if he could but have had plenty of wax candles and fine crystal lustres for them to sparkle in. Give him a handsome suite of drawing-rooms, filled with the rich odours of pastille and pot-pourri, and Algy would make no sickly lamentations over the absence of any "sweet atmosphere" such as I have written of above. Only put his attractive figure into a suitable frame, and he would be sure to receive praise and sympathy enough, and to have a pleasant life of it.

No; he could not accuse himself of having been the victim of any sentimental illusion in marrying Castalia. And yet he had been cheated! He had bestowed himself without receiving the due quid pro quo. In a word, he began to fear that it had not been worth his while to marry the Honourable Miss Kilfinane. And sometimes the thought darted like a twinge of pain through the young man's mind—might it not have been worth his while to marry someone else?

"Someone else" was talked of as an heiress. "Someone else" was said by the gossips to be so good a match that she might have her pick of the town—aye, and a good chance among the county people! But Algernon smothered down all vain and harassing speculations founded on an "if it had been!" Neither did he by any means hopelessly resign himself to his present position, nor despair of obtaining a better one. He persisted in looking on his employment as merely provisional and temporary; so that, in fact, the worse things became in his Whitford life, the less he would do to mend them, taking every fresh disgust and annoyance as a new reason why—according to any rationally conceivable theory of events—he must speedily be removed to a region in which a gentleman of his capacities for refined enjoyment might be free to exercise them, untrammelled by vulgar cares.

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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HALVES.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASHINGBERD," "A PERFECT TREASURE," "AT HER MERCY," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XIV. MRS. RÆBURN HAS MISGIVINGS.

IF I had not been a mere lad at the time of which I am speaking, I think I might have felt a greater pity for Mark Ræburn than even for his unhappy brother. As it was, the spectacle of that bowed and broken man, defamed (for I never believed him guilty of the paltry crime of which his sister-in-law had accused him), disgraced, and menaced with expulsion from the only roof on which he had a claim for shelter, monopolised all my compassion. I would have written at once to my uncle Hastings, upon whom I could count to afford his old friend at least a temporary home at Stanbrook, but some instinct warned me, in the first place, to consult "Brother Alec" himself upon the point. After that painful scene at table, however, he had withdrawn himself into his own room, and when I knocked at the door, and said I had a few words to say to him, he answered, "Write them down." Accordingly I did so, and pushed the paper under the door. A minute afterwards it was unlocked, and the old man stood before me. He had evidently been seeking comfort from Chico, who, standing on his shoulder, appeared to be administering it at that moment in his ear, and with some success; or, perhaps, it was the sense that I was genuinely interested in his well-being that had called up a smile on his chapfallen face. Through the half-opened door I could see, sitting as though on guard, on the chair by his little

desk (which he had never, by-the-by, been seen to use), the redoubtable Fury, with bowed legs and turned-out toes. The dog looked more hideously truculent than ever; the bones and scraps, which, since his master's fall, had taken the place of those succulent beefsteaks, had not quenched his spirit; but he graciously acknowledged my presence by blinking his bleared eyes and moving his stump of a tail just once, much as one coachman salutes another with his elbow. On the floor were the two empty boxes which the serpents had inhabited; and on the mantelpiece hung the cold and ashless pipe which had been brother Alec's solace in so many troubles, but was denied him now. Smoking in the house, much less in his room, was strictly forbidden under the new régime; and indeed, if it had not been so, it was a question whether he possessed the money wherewith to purchase tobacco.

"Your note is kindly meant, Mr. Sheddon," said he, holding out his thin fingers, "and I thank you for it. But to have written it was an imprudence. Nothing offends the powerful so much as the aiding those who have incurred their displeasure."

I answered him, honestly enough, that I did not estimate Mrs. Ræburn's displeasure at the value of one of her own bottles of ginger wine; and that I felt very sorry and distressed about what had happened.

"Well, it was still kind in you—very—young sir, if no imprudence," replied he, earnestly. "You must not write to your uncle in my behalf; but your suggestion is nevertheless of service to me. If I were to call at Stanbrook to-morrow morning, the rector would be at home, I suppose?"

"Yes," said I, eagerly, "and I am sure will be most pleased to welcome you, not as a caller only, but as a guest. Mrs. Hastings, like himself, has a great regard for you."

A sad smile flickered on the old man's face.

"Aye; that is the chief thing, lad, is it not? We may mean well to our friends, but the wife must mean well too, for anything to come of it beyond fair speeches."

Then when I did not answer, since I knew that he was referring to his brother, "Good night, once more I thank you," said he, and gently closed the door.

His words set me thinking of the attorney, and caused me to take more than usual note of his behaviour when I went downstairs.

It was clear that Mark Raeburn was very ill at ease. He had been beaten by his better half, but he was not submissive. He had not the courage to make an attempt to recover his Alsace, but he very openly showed his resentment for its loss. He manifested an unwonted disposition for bickering, as if striving to assert in small matters the authority he had lost in great ones. Mrs. Raeburn, on the other hand, was yielding; she reminded me of some full-grown person who holds a door against which a child is pushing—she let him have his way a little, knowing that she had only to put her foot down to negative all his puny efforts. As a general rule, she had not patience enough to sustain a hypocritical part; her high principled arguments, as compared with her high-headed acts, were but as a half-pennyworth of bread to an intolerable amount of sack. But, that night, her utterances would have formed headings for the pages of a moral copy-book. Meek she could not be, but she was virtuous and didactic to a degree that she had never before approached, and I could see John taking copious notes of the performance for future representation. Splashed and flooded with moral aphorisms, the attorney still contrived to keep the embers of his wrath alive, and as his wife was retiring from the drawing-room, he fired this parting shot: "Mind, Matilda, I will not have that letter written to-morrow."

"What letter?" inquired she, putting down her candlestick and confronting him.

"That letter you meant to send to London about the bird."

"I never told you I was going to send a letter."

"No, but I know it, nevertheless. If there is anything wrong about Alec's conduct, which nobody believes who knows him, except yourself, it shall not be hunted out by you."

"Do you suppose, then, that my own sense of the family disgrace, sir, would not keep me silent?"

"Yes, I do; when you dislike a person you stick at nothing."

"John, what has your father been drinking to-night?" inquired Mrs. Raeburn, significantly.

"Nothing, ma'am; it is native spirit," added John, in a lower but by no means inaudible tone. To do him justice, in all these domestic quarrels John was always on the side of the weak—that is, on his father's side.

"It is not my intention to write a letter, Mr. Raeburn," continued the lady, once more taking up the candlestick, but this time with a trembling hand. "Whatever my sense of public duty may have dictated in the case of that unhappy man upstairs, I could not so far forget the connection which unhappily exists between us, as to consign him, by my own act, to a felon's doom."

Despite the attorney's now habitual potations, he had still gleams of his native astuteness, and it is my opinion that his wife had had the intention in her mind with which he had taxed her, otherwise the sense of defeat implied in her tone and manner would not have been so marked. An incautious phrase which she added, as she swept out of the room, corroborated this view. "At all events, mind this, Mr. Raeburn, that that bird goes back to its rightful owner to-morrow morning."

But when the morning came, neither the bird nor his master were to be found; the bed had apparently been slept in, and his dog was still sleeping, as usual, beneath the bed, but brother Alec had left the house along with his feathered favourite. I guessed at once that he had started thus early for Stanbrook, taking Chico with him to insure its safety (for nobody who valued his life would have meddled with Fury), but I kept that information to myself, and watched Mrs. Raeburn's troubled face with no little satisfaction. For some reason or other, this sudden fitting of her brother-in-law was unwelcome to her. Perhaps she resented his not waiting at the "Priory" until he should have been turned out of it; or

perhaps she feared the gossip of the servants' hall, for her classic brow was gloomy throughout the morning meal, and her tongue maintained an unwonted silence. Her husband had given expression to one pregnant remark.

"Well, madam, I hope you are satisfied at last, since you have driven my own brother out of my house," to which she had responded nothing; and now the attorney was silent also.

"Don't you think," John observed innocently, "that it would be well to drag the pond?" "But even to that valuable suggestion, designed, doubtless, to put everybody at their ease, there was no response.

In giving reins to her dislike for her late unhappy guest, Mrs. Raeburn had committed, what was not unusual with her when her prejudices were excited, a great social mistake, and she herself had become aware of it. It would have been a much wiser, although not a less cruel course, to have graduated her proceedings against brother Alec, and to have rendered her house uncomfortable rather than intolerable to him. His present abrupt departure from it was likely to have quite as ill an effect in the neighbourhood, as though the fact of his poverty, and the family failure in the way of expectation, had been publicly proclaimed. As for me, knowing that he was where he would be well cared for, I was well content to miss the old man's woe-worn face, and to be spared the witnessing his humiliation; but it was sad to watch the melancholy of Gertrude, to whom I had had no opportunity of revealing whither he had gone, and who sat with her untasted food before her, full of piteous thoughts. When the front-door bell was heard to ring, she started up in haste, then sat down again, white and trembling; John's mischievous words had, I think, taken possession of her mind, and she was apprehensive of some fatal news. However, nothing had arrived but the post, which generally brought many business letters for Mr. Raeburn, which, after a glance at their superscription, he was in the habit of taking with him unopened into the office. On this occasion there was one for Mrs. Raeburn, the official seal of which let her know at a glance from whence it came.

"This is no fault of mine, Mark, understand," said she, holding it in her hand; "but here is a letter from the Zoological Society." That she should have thought it necessary to make excuses for herself

showed how greatly dissatisfied she was with the course events were taking.

"Pass it here," said the attorney, gruffly. "I suppose it will devolve on me, to get us out of the scrape into which your meddling has brought us."

"Don't say 'us,' I beg," was the lady's haughty reply, as she for once obeyed her lord; "because your brother steals a bird——"

"Idiot!" exclaimed the attorney, starting to his feet with an oath. "What irreparable ruin has your temper brought us?"

"Idiot! temper! ruin!" repeated Mrs. Raeburn, in a voice trembling with rage and apprehension; "are you mad, Mark?"

"Yes, madam, or nearly so, thanks to you. Read this. No, I will read it myself aloud, since it is only just that my brother Alec should be proved guiltless of this stupid charge, in the presence of the same persons before whom you accused him.

"MADAM,—I have the great pleasure of informing you that the unpleasant surmises which we were compelled to entertain respecting your brother-in-law's possession of the night-parrot about which you wrote to us, have been wholly removed, and in the most satisfactory manner. The bird that died had been bespoken by the Society from Lima, and was expected by the Java, it seems, at that port before the vessel sailed; while, from inquiries we have instituted, it turns out that, by a curious coincidence, another specimen of this rare genus, the property of the great Peruvian merchant, Mr. Pittsburg, came over in that very ship, and was doubtless presented by that gentleman to Mr. Alexander Raeburn. I am directed by the committee of the Society to express its deep regret for the unfortunate error in which it has been led, and to apologise for the same."

"Well, I am sure it is a great satisfaction to all of us, that the imputation upon Mr. Alexander's moral character has been thus satisfactorily removed," observed Mrs. Raeburn. She turned towards Gertrude, not so much in appeal to her, I believe, as to avoid her husband's gaze, which was fixed upon her with rigid displeasure, and Gertrude answered, coldly:

"For my part, Mrs. Raeburn, I never needed any proof of my cousin's innocence."

"Nor did any one else in their senses," exclaimed the attorney, vehemently.

"Thank you, sir; since, however, you have already called me an idiot, this new compliment is a mere redundancy," observed

Mrs. Raeburn. It was surprising to me that, under the provocation she had received, she used such fine language, which it was her custom to do only when her temper was under control; but the fact was that her keen intelligence had at once guessed the full signification of the letter that had just been read, and understood the cause of the unwonted fire that gleamed in her husband's eyes.

The wits of men are sharpened by their self-interest, and the attorney and his wife were the first of us to be cognisant of the terrible mistake into which they had possibly fallen with respect to their relative, and which this communication from town suggested.

"You cannot, at all events, be overburdened with sense, madam," continued Mr. Raeburn, testily, "if you do not understand who the great Peruvian merchant, Mr. Pittsburg, is likely to be."

"Of course I see that it is possible. I remember that Pittsburg was the name of your brother's partner at Richmond."

"Possible! Is it not certain that Alec and this man are identical; that he adopted, for the purpose of concealment, the name that happened to be most familiar to him, and yet which would reveal nothing?"

"But why should he adopt an alias, Mark?"

The attorney snorted contemptuously. "How should I know?" were the words he uttered, but what his angry face said was, "It is easy enough to guess, madam; it was to try the genuineness of the affection of his relatives; and a very pretty mess, thanks to you, have we made of that ordeal."

Furious as the attorney was with his wife, yet, as I believe, he was even more irritated with himself, whom he had long felt to be degraded and disgraced as host as well as brother. The sense that a more dutiful and manly course would have brought him fortune and respect was almost maddening him. This last conviction had somehow gained entire possession of him, notwithstanding the comparatively slender ground on which it was built. It was, I thought, too, in a hesitating tone, as though she herself had but little confidence in her own words, that Mrs. Raeburn presently observed:

"After all, Mark, we are going much too fast. Mr. Pittsburg, or a Mr. Pittsburg, may have really come over in the Java, and given the bird to Mr. Alexander; and if I knew where he was, I

should make a point of instantly writing to your brother, and handsomely apologising for our unfortunate mistake."

"Yes, by Jove, a regular mucker," muttered John, whom this conciliatory proposal from his mother convinced at once that she, at least, was certain that she had been entertaining an angel—or at least what stood for an angel in her eyes—"a man made of money"—unawares. "Why, I might have been heir to a millionaire, and now I've been disinherited by my own mother."

"You are right there, John," observed the attorney, peevishly, "for, though she chooses to call it 'our' mistake, it was nobody's but her own."

My habit had made me so familiar with the bickerings of the family that this scene gave me little uneasiness, especially since its chief feature was the discomfiture of Mrs. Raeburn; nor could I forbear a smile when that lady quietly observed, "Well, you may call it whose mistake you please, but I beg to say that it was my opinion, from the first, that your brother Alec was a wealthy man."

"And that was why you treated him not only as a pauper, I suppose, madam," responded her husband, contemptuously, "but as though his poverty was a crime."

"I took Mr. Alexander at his word, of course," replied she, with unabashed coolness. "How was I to know that his humour was to appear penniless, when he was very rich?"

This was said without irritation; it really seemed as if her conviction of her brother-in-law's prosperous circumstances had already caused her to regard him with less of animosity; or was she tutoring herself to play once more towards him a hypocritical part in case it should turn out—though, indeed, that seemed impossible—that matters had not gone too far to be irrevocable?

Nothing else was said till the conclusion of the meal, when, as we three slaves of the law were about, as usual, to troop off together into the office, Mrs. Raeburn called to John, saying, "I want you for a few moments," whereat he made a comical face at me, expressive of apprehension, and followed her out of the room and upstairs, where presently I heard them conversing overhead.

"Do you think it likely, Sheddon," inquired the attorney, suddenly, as I sat at my desk, "that my brother may have gone to Stanbrook?"

His tone was careless enough; but I noticed that he stopped in the arrangement of his papers while waiting for my reply, as though careful not to lose a word.

"Yes, Mr. Raeburn, I do," answered I, frankly. "My uncle has always shown himself his friend, as you are aware, and he would naturally apply to him in—"

I was going to say "in his calamity," not remembering by whom that had been brought about; but I finished my sentence just in time with "in the present circumstances."

"I hope it is so," answered the attorney. "The rector is an old friend of the family"—here he looked up at the tin box that held my uncle's papers—"and would, I am sure, do his best towards a reconciliation."

Though the attorney was looking at me very hard, I could not prevent my shoulders moving towards my ears, to which they so naturally gravitated.

"You do not think, then, that my brother will ever be reconciled, or come back again to us?" inquired Mr. Raeburn, with a sigh.

It was not the sigh, but the fact that a man so many years my senior should be asking my opinion on such a matter, and be so moved by it, that touched me. I remembered, too, that, though Mark had been weak in defence of our departed guest, he had not been designedly unkind.

"I do not think your brother will come back, sir," answered I, gently.

The attorney did not reply; but I could read in his face that he thought the same. He looked utterly cast down, more depressed even than pained; and the blotches in his cheeks, which were generally obscured by his high colour, told their sad tale very clearly. He went on sorting his papers, and I with my task of copying out some deed, in silence, when presently a scream ran through the house, so loud that it penetrated through the double doors of the office.

"Good Heavens! what's that, Sheddon?" The words expressed some excitement, but his tone was that of one who, already overwhelmed by misfortune, has little more to fear, nor did he stir from his seat.

But, as for me, I leaped to my feet and rushed from the room like a madman, fearing some misfortune had befallen Gertrude. Guided by the screams, which still continued, I ran upstairs and found that they proceeded from the room of our late guest, the door of which had been already opened and was surrounded by a

little throng, none of whom, however, ventured within side, for a very manifest reason. Upon the chair of brother Alec's desk (which, when not filled by himself, was generally in the occupation of his bull-dog) stood John Raeburn, with a bundle of papers in his hands, crying, "Help! help!" at the top of his voice, and staring with terror-stricken eyes at Fury, who was standing on the hearth-rug with legs a-kimbo, growling hideously, and already devouring him with his saucer eyes.

"Bring the gun, Sheddon!" yelled the unhappy youth, so soon as he caught sight of me. "He'll tear me to pieces else before your eyes."

This appeal for my assistance seemed to excite the truculent animal as though it had really understood its nature, and I thought that it would have leaped at John upon the spot, and made an end of him.

"Tell your husband to get the gun," whispered I to Mrs. Raeburn, who stood wringing her hands in agony at the perilous situation of her terrified son. "In the meantime I will try to get the beast away."

Then I went into the room, a little way, and called "Fury, Fury," in my most seductive tones.

The dog only acknowledged my presence with another growl, as though he would have said, "Don't you interfere, this is my business;" yet he sat down on his haunches, like one in some measure released from his responsibility, and, dropping his cannibalistic air, seemed to "watch" his enemy, like a very determined sentinel who has his orders to fire on his prisoner if he moves, and means to obey them.

"Keep quite quiet, John," said I; "don't move a muscle."

"That's all very fine," returned John, bitterly; "but a fellow can't help it when he's all of a shake. If I hadn't jumped up here, I do believe that infernal beast would have swallowed me by this time."

"But how came you here at all?"

"Oh—I came to look after something. My mother sent me for it," explained John in a tone of abject apology, which, since he kept his eyes fixed on the dog, seemed to be addressed to that animal himself. "How the deuce was I to know that this brute was under the bed?"

At this moment we heard a confused noise in the hall below; then footsteps on the stairs, while one of the female domestics exclaimed, "Oh, thanks to goodness!"

I thought, of course, Mr. Raeburn was bringing the gun, and cried out to him, without turning my head, not to shoot the dog until the last extremity. "Remember," said I, "how fond your brother is of the creature——"

But here, to my astonishment, Fury suddenly abandoned his post, and with a yelp of joy ran frantically towards the door. At the same time a grave, stern voice, which I did not recognise, cried, "What are you doing, John, in my room?" and, looking round, I saw "Brother Alec" standing in the doorway.

THE LOST PAINTER.

SOME thirty years ago severe civil war raged in France, especially in Paris: albeit, blood was not spilt in the conflict. The combatants indeed were men of peace—professors and students of art and literature. They differed concerning the old and new styles or schools. "Romanticism" and "Classicism" were the watchwords on either side. The classical school fought for the conservation of established rules and forms—they valued precedent, hated innovation—holding that the best of all possible things were of the past, and that men should strive only to imitate and reproduce these. The romanticists were for freedom, the dethronement of pedantry and its absolutism; for irregularity in poetry, and melodrama upon the stage; for effect at any price—so their foes alleged.

The excitement knew no bounds. The struggle proceeded with a fierceness that is now hardly to be understood, and may seem to be even somewhat ludicrous. Bands of students—and the students were chiefly romanticists (youth is generally a reformer, if not a revolutionist)—met together to glorify their calling, their cause, their achievements, and themselves; to regenerate the æsthetic world. At one of their assemblies certain landscape drawings—studies painted upon paper, and then pasted upon canvas—were handed round for inspection. The students hailed these works as a new revelation. They were proclaimed masterly examples of the romantic school of landscape painting; essentially original, bold, vigorous, broad in treatment and effect; wholly unlike the productions of any known artist. By whom had they been executed? None could tell. They were unsigned; they had been found strewn upon the floor of a

broker's shop, of the lowest class, in one of the by-streets of Paris. There were hundreds of them; many of them of old date. The broker regarded them as little better than litter and rubbish. They were in nearly every instance views taken from the heights of Montmartre, and other well-known points in the immediate neighbourhood of Paris. It was clear, then, that the artist was a Parisian, and had been following his calling in Paris for many years past.

The young romanticists were eager in their inquiries concerning the painter of these anonymous pictures. It was only by slow degrees they could obtain the information they desired. But, after long search, they lighted upon an old broker who could tell them something of the painter. His name was Michel, it appeared; Georges Michel. He had died but a little while since, poor and infirm, eighty years of age. At Montmartre there were memories of an old man seen there day after day, sometimes alone, sometimes accompanied by his wife and daughter, carrying a paint-box, and setting up his easel here and there about the plain of St. Denis.

In 1846, three years after the discovery of the pictures, an article appeared in the *Constitutionnel*, relating the story of Georges Michel's life, so far as it could then be told. To his works enthusiastic praise was awarded. In the tone of his sky he was said to approach *Ruydael*; the richness and breadth of his foregrounds, the mysterious shadows of his trees and massed underwood, were likened to *Huysman* and *Hobbema*. It was not until three years later that the discovery was made of the existence of *Madame Michel*, the widow of the painter. A member of the band of youthful romanticists was elated to find that, with her daughter, she was his fellow-lodger in a house in the *Rue Bréda*. She was sixty years of age, bent and withered, and very poor, but with a certain calm dignity of manner nevertheless. She was pressed to tell all she knew about her late husband. So much excitement about one who had so long been overlooked; such enthusiasm concerning works that had always seemed valueless, or nearly so, amazed and even alarmed her. Her husband had been a sort of a hermit painter; he had worked nearly all his life, underground as it were, like a mole. She was his second wife, and willing, so far as she could, to supply

materials to his biographers. Otherwise, indeed, he had been scarcely less obscure in death than in life—he had been for ever *Pictor Ignotus*—and his unsigned works had remained always anonymous, or nearly so. As it is, the story of the hermit painter's life contains many obscure passages. The main facts of his career have been fairly established, however.

He was born on the 12th of January, 1763, in the parish of St. Lawrence, in the crowded and gloomy district of the Temple, Paris. His parentage was humble enough—his father was merely a labourer in the public markets. At a very early age the little boy was found to exhibit talent for art. A patron and protector came to him in the person of M. de Chalue, farmer-general, who placed him under the charge of the curé of Vertus, a village on the plain of St. Denis. He learnt the catechism, to read and to write—very little more. At twelve years old, thanks still to the efforts of M. de Chalue, he was admitted as a student of the academy of St. Luke—a society of painters and sculptors which then received pupils and supplied instruction in art by way of rivaling the Royal Academy of Paris, to which more pretentious institution it succumbed, however, in 1780. The preceptor of Georges was Leduc, assistant professor in the academy, and a painter of some fame. His art was of the high and dry school, classical and conventional, but he trained his pupils upon sound principles, insisting upon firm and accurate drawing and severe application. Georges passed through his apprenticeship and became a skilled artist. His fine sense of colour was his natural property, but for the completeness of his technical education he was certainly indebted to Leduc. Still he was not only a student of this academy; he was a student of nature also. Oftentimes he abandoned the plaster casts, statues, and models of St. Luke's, and the somewhat oppressive and pedantic lectures of Leduc, to wander about the open plain of St. Denis, and fill his sketch-book with studies of rural scenes and figures.

M. de Chalue watched, with much satisfaction, the boy's progress and promise. At the age of fifteen, Georges was engaged to give drawing-lessons to Madlle. de Chalue, the daughter of his patron. He was not more than fifteen when he married. His wife was named Marguerite Legros, a laundress, young and poor as himself. He carried her off in spite of the objections and

remonstrances of the parents and friends of both. At sixteen he was a father. At twenty he had five children dependent upon him. In all, eight children were born of this boy and girl marriage of Georges Michel and Marguerite Legros.

It was hard work, providing for the wants of his family; let him be as industrious as he might, he could find few pupils to teach or picture-buyers to relieve him of his works and put money in his purse. He was, indeed, miserably poor.

Still one cordial admirer he did obtain. Colonel de Berchigny, a dashing hussar, was not the less an enthusiastic amateur artist. He took great delight in sitting beside Georges's easel and watching him as he worked. For some time he was the artist's most constant companion. But then came orders for Berchigny to quit Paris and join his regiment in Normandy. He was in despair at the thought of parting from Georges. He entreated the painter to accompany him to Normandy. In return for lessons in painting, he promised Georges that he should live and rank as a sous-officer in the hussar regiment. His pay he could transmit to his family. Georges accepted the offer and remained for a year with Berchigny in Normandy, delighting in the hills and vales, winding streams and secluded villages of that picturesque province. Then came an irresistible longing to return to Paris, and rejoin his wife and children.

He had, as a boy, attracted the attention of Madame Vigée, better known as Madame Lebrun, a very prosperous and fashionable portrait painter, the wife of Pierre Lebrun, a picture dealer, especially trading in works of the Dutch and Flemish schools, and in copies of the old masters made for sale. Georges Michel was employed by both husband and wife. He supplied the backgrounds of the lady's portraits—sometimes the details, furniture, and accessories; and he copied and repaired pictures for Pierre Lebrun.

By help of the Lebruns, Georges obtained employment and found patrons. He was engaged to give lessons in the house of M. Crammont-Voulgy, the steward of Monsieur, afterwards Louis the Eighteenth. The Duc de Guiche and his young duchess became his pupils, and carried the artist with them to the Rhine and into Germany. M. de Crammont-Voulgy tempted him to Switzerland.

But Georges had been affected by the "new ideas." He left his patrons in

Germany, and reached Paris in good time to take part in the destruction of the Bastille. He became a fervent revolutionist, joined the ranks of the "patriots" and the clubs of the Jacobins. The revolution had commenced, and something more than commenced.

Madame Lebrun forthwith hastened to escape with her aristocratic patrons, entreating Georges to accompany her flight. Her offers and her fascinations were hard to resist. But the painter was faithful to his beloved Paris. He remained there throughout the most troubled time, even during the Terror, an ardent politician, but nevertheless toiling hard at his easel. Lebrun, too, stayed behind, and was enabled to prevent his fugitive wife from being proscribed by the stern laws passed against émigrés. In return she helped forward his trade in the foreign countries she visited; and thus, indirectly, Georges Michel was benefited, for he painted pursuant to the orders of Lebrun—not merely copies of the Dutch masters, but original works. In England, Germany, and Russia some demand had arisen for the pictures of Michel. From his own countrymen, however, Georges had as yet obtained little recognition. He was essentially a painter of landscape. He delighted to depict rural scenes and peasant life. He seemed at home only in the woods and fields. He had sketched in Normandy; in Switzerland, and on the Rhine; but he found endless pleasure in studying the plain of St. Denis, and the irregular slopes of Montmartre.

In revolutionary France there was no room for a painter of this class. His art seemed but a paltry and ignoble thing in times devoted first to reproducing the classical and the antique, and afterwards to illustrating, after a most melodramatic fashion, the achievements of French arms. For forty years—from 1785 to 1815—the "tyranny of David" prevailed. Pictorial art dealt only in history—in pomp, and attitude, and exaggeration. Michel, with his faithful transcriptions of unsophisticated nature; his rural studies; his gnarled trunks of trees; still, shadowed pools; miry roads; furrowed uplands, and purple horizons, could scarcely hope to secure favour or even attention.

He contributed pictures, however, to the exhibitions of 1791 and 1793. He exhibited under the Directory in 1795 and 1796; under the Consulate in 1798; then came a pause. He was represented in the

exhibitions of the Empire of 1806, 1808, 1812, 1814. After 1814 he exhibited no more. To buy bread he resumed his former employment of copying the old masters, especially those of the Dutch school; in restoring and retouching damaged works; and in providing sketches for amateur artists to palm off as of their own producing.

It is true that a small band of cordial friends and appreciative critics had not failed to recognise the merits of Michel. This was but a trifling public, however, and it steadily decreased. The applause it bestowed—if deficient in force and volume—had, without doubt, a soothing and cheering effect upon the painter. But gradually even this measure of acknowledgment seemed withdrawn from him. The ranks of his admirers did not gain recruits. He outlived his friends. He was left at last absolutely alone.

In the later times of the Revolution and the Empire he obtained some government employment. Apartments and a studio were assigned to him in the Louvre, and, with other artists, he was charged with the arrangement and restoration of the galleries. He revered the old masters, and dealt with them tenderly and skilfully. He was ultimately dismissed from this office by Count Forbin, Director of the Museums under the Restoration. Annuities, by way of compensation, were offered to the artists who had been employed in the Louvre. Michel was the only one of them who declined the offer. He could not accept alms, he said. His lodging in the Louvre had been necessary to him during his restoration of the pictures; but for this money, which he had not earned, he did not want it, and could not take it.

Of his eight children, there survived in 1813 but one son, a musician, member of a regimental band, who had served in Spain, and had now returned to France to depend upon his father. Michel had been all his life, in a desultory way, a collector of odds and ends, articles of vertu, carvings, furniture, pictures, and even books. Father and son opened a curiosity shop, and jointly conducted the business. The younger Michel was often absent seeking customers or attending sales. Meanwhile, Georges took charge of the shop. But he was now more than fifty. He had been so long accustomed to wander freely to and fro, sketching from nature as he went, that he found this enforced confinement indoors extremely irksome. Work of the

old kind was necessary to him. He improvised a studio in the rear of the shop, by piling up the furniture so as to screen him from the observation of the customers. Thus sheltered, he piled his pencils and brushes as diligently as ever. But, probably, in this way the business of the curiosity shop came to be somewhat neglected. It was closed altogether shortly after the death of the younger Michel in 1820. Georges sold by auction the collection of curiosities, and invested the proceeds in the purchase of an annuity for the lives of himself and his wife. He had all a Frenchman's thriftiness. Poor as he had been throughout his life—often, indeed, most miserably poor—he had yet managed to save money. He had even purchased a small house and garden in the Avenue Ségur, near the Hôtel des Invalides. These premises he let at a rental of some sixteen pounds. This amount, with his annuity and such trifling profits as might accrue to him from his unappreciated paintings, constituted his income. It was slender enough, yet he made it sufficient, for his wants were very few.

The Restoration of 1815 had banished David and his school, but had only benefited Michel in that it had advanced the fortunes of the Baron d'Yvry, the last of his patrons, a monarchist, who, nevertheless, had not been scared from France by the revolution. The baron had been protected by his tastes as an amateur; he had found refuge in the studios, even when the bloodhounds of the Terror had been in search of him. He affected to be a painter, and Michel helped him to seem so, touching upon his pictures for him, sometimes repainting them altogether. The baron paid a fair price for these services. Royalist as he was, he even tolerated the violent revolutionary sentiments of Michel. "Only paint for me for two hours," he would say, "and for two hours more I'll listen while you chatter as much nonsense about Robespierre as you like." The baron was wise in his generation; he prized the works of Michel, oftentimes locking him up in a secret studio, that he might work to more advantage. Michel entered the baron's house in the early morning, with his face muffled up, to avoid notice and recognition, and passed out late at night. The world had lost sight of him. The baron encouraged the general belief that the painter no longer existed. "Poor Michel," he would even say, in reply to direct inquiries, "he died long since!" Meantime the baron obtained more

and more of the works of Georges, hoarding them jealously, and keeping all rival collectors at arm's length.

Even during the almost total eclipse of the fame that was his just due, curious gleams of distinction now and then pierced the veil of his obscurity and illumined him for a moment. He was employed by Cardinal Fesch, the uncle of Bonaparte, to arrange and restore his noble gallery. Lucien Bonaparte, finally retiring from France after the Restoration, had besought Michel to accompany him to Rome and take charge of his priceless art-treasures assembled there.

In 1827 died Michel's wife, Marguerite Legros, the laundress, with whom he had eloped eight and forty years before. The poor woman, during a tedious illness, had been tended by a kind neighbour, the widow of a M. de Ponlevaux. In 1828 Georges married the good widow, whose full name, by-the-by, was Anne Marie Charlotte Claudier Vallier Ponlevaux. Georges was sixty-four at the time of his second marriage, but he did not look more than forty-five, his second wife averred. "He was brisk as a bee, and very easy to get on with when one got used to his ways." A daughter was born of this marriage.

The Revolution of 1830 parted Michel and his last patron, the Baron d'Yvry. It was true that the painter expressed his political opinions with less violence than of yore. At the first revolution he had been young and penniless: the second revolution found him nearly seventy years old, with money in the funds and possessed of a small house and garden. He was less ardent than formerly about the advantages of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. Still he had some faith in the charter, and he gloried unreservedly in the fall of the elder branch of the Bourbons. The baron was too stanch and severe a Legitimist to forgive him. Their quarrel was final and irreparable.

For the remainder of his life Michel was absolutely a hermit painter. He rose at seven and worked indoors all the morning. In the afternoon he sallied forth armed with paint-box, brushes, and some small squares of paper, usually in the direction of Montmartre—then wild and desolate enough, the hill hard to climb, the roads very rough, and interspersed with pitfalls. There was an ominous look about the deep black quarries on the hillside. Still beyond the bleak and barren foreground were stretches of fertile country,

vineyards, and cornfields; here groups of dwarf elms, there thick growths of brushwood, with fresh green water-meadows. The spire of St. Peter's church and the tower of the Semaphore were prominent objects on the heights.

To Michel, weather was no hindrance. He preferred, indeed, to depict the effects of wind and rain. He brought home various sketches to be completed afterwards, late at night or early in the morning. He would sit on the edge of one of the quarries of Montmartre, gazing about him earnestly, deliberating upon his subject. Then he would set to work energetically, shifting his point of view presently, and beginning another sketch. He was content if he could carry back with him the materials for three or four pictures. Returning, he dined with his wife and daughter at a wine-shop in the Rue Cadet. He was careful to preserve the grey, blue, or yellow sheets of paper in which his tobacco or his candles were wrapped, smoothing them carefully, and storing them in his portfolio for future use. He was of a very thrifty turn of mind. Hundreds of his sketches were executed upon scraps of paper but three inches square. It was no matter if the paper had been soiled with candle-grease. He maintained that often a sort of velvety gloss was in such wise acquired by his charcoal drawings!

Now and then stories were told of a certain mysterious old painter haunting the plain of St. Denis. In 1833 the Marquis de Rantz, when mayor of St. Ouen, about three miles north-west of Montmartre, went forth in quest of the strange apparition. The marquis was himself an amateur painter, and a collector of pictures. He came suddenly upon Michel—his face shadowed by a felt hat, an ample blue cloak wrapped about him—sitting upon a stone in the centre of the plain, absorbed in his sketching. The marquis was surprised and delighted. He became a collector of the works of Michel. He was pleased, too, with the old man's talk, with the simplicity of his manners, his liveliness and native gaiety. The marquis inquired as to the best method of learning to paint. "It's easy enough," said Michel; "it needs only sharp eyes and a firm hand. See how easy it is to make trees, for instance. Leave the wrist free, and give the brush a circular movement; paint the shadows delicately and the lights boldly, and you have a fine oak

tree." He sketched as he spoke, to explain his instructions. "Lay in the foreground solidly; work away in the thick fresh paint as with a sculptor's chisel; mark the ruts firmly, and you have one of the muddy roads or the rough lanes of St. Denis. It is not more difficult than that—only it's as well to begin in early youth." The marquis, perhaps, was but little edified by this brief lecture upon art, yet he admired the old man's simple way of demonstrating a method of painting he had been all his life acquiring.

In his eightieth year Michel was stricken with paralysis. He remained so long in a state of insensibility that many supposed him to be dead. He rallied, however; his mind regaining its usual vigour, although his body was injured past repair. He determined to settle his worldly affairs, and to sell by auction all he possessed. Some of his curiosities still remained to him—scraps of armour, early firearms and other weapons, with two hundred canes, eighteen fancy clocks of all sizes, innumerable tobacco pipes, two thousand books, a thousand paintings on paper, and two thousand sketches of all sizes. The paintings were sold in lots of ten, fifteen, and twenty. Many were sold at three francs the half-dozen. One buyer obtained four hundred for a mere trifle. Presently he was retailing these at twenty francs, then thirty francs, piece. Of late years, examples of this class have realised from two hundred to four hundred pounds! The paintings of Michel are, indeed, much sought for nowadays, and are steadily increasing in value.

The sale of Michel's whole possessions, however, brought him but two thousand francs! He expressed no disappointment at this poor result. He could not, however, be altogether insensible of the world's neglect of him. "I am happy," he said with quiet irony, "that people are willing to pay the same price for my pictures as for good apples."

He could paint no more; the paralytic attack had deadened his right arm. Still he managed to crawl into his garden daily, and work there feebly. But his strength failed him more and more; at last, he could not rise from his bed. His mind was at ease, however, his heart light; he could still talk and even jest, making merry over his afflicted state. His wife and daughter were always with him, tending him affectionately.

On the morning of the 7th of June, 1843,

they noticed that he looked unusually bright and cheerful. "Do not grieve for me," he said, "although my eyes are very dim, I see exquisite pictures on every side of me; magnificent landscapes. If strength would but come back to this poor right arm, I could paint such things as have never yet been seen!"

In the evening he conversed pleasantly with his family. "I feel so well!" he said suddenly. But he never spoke again.

He lies buried in the cemetery of Mont Parnasse. He had desired that his grave might be upon high ground, with his head turned towards the rising sun—his beloved heights of Montmartre were for ever in his mind; and that no monument should be reared above him. It was his fancy that, while lying in the earth, he should be able to hear the grass rustling and the birds singing in the sky overhead.

Close upon his death came the rise or the revival of landscape painting in France. His unsigned works came to be regarded by devoted students with extraordinary reverence. They were unsigned, it should be stated, upon principle. Michel had never affixed his signature to any of his pictures. He declared that a picture should not be "baited with a name," but should speak for itself, and please by reason of its merits; the painter's signature being observable in his method of execution and in his manner of observing and transcribing nature.

LAVENDER.

How prone we are to hide and hoard
Each little token love has stored,
To tell of happy hours:
We lay aside with tender care
A tattered book, a curl of hair,
A bunch of faded flowers.

When Death has led with pulseless hand
Our darlings to the silent land,
Awhile we sit bereft.
But time goes on; anon we rise,
Our dead being buried from our eyes,
We gather what is left.

The books they loved, the songs they sang,
The little flute whose music rang
So cheerily of old:
The pictures we have watched them paint,
The last-plucked flower, with odour faint,
That fell from fingers cold.

We smooth, and fold with reverent care
The robes they, living, used to wear;
And painful pulses stir,
As o'er the relics of our dead,
With bitter rain of tears, we spread
Pale purple lavender.

And when we come in after years,
With only tender April tears
On cheeks once white with care,
To look at treasures put away
Despairing on that far-off day,
A subtle scent is there.

Dew-wet and fresh we gathered them,
These fragrant flowers,—now every stem
Is bare of all its bloom.
Tear-wet and sweet we strewed them here,
To lend our relics sacred, dear,
Their beautiful perfume.

That scent abides on book and lute,
On curl, and flower, and with its mute
But eloquent appeal,
It wins from us a deeper sob
For our lost dead—a sharper throb
Than we are wont to feel.

It whispers of the long-ago,
Its love, its loss, its aching woe,
And buried sorrows stir;
And tears like those we shed of old
Roll down our cheeks as we behold
Our faded lavender.

UNDER THE HAMMER.

FUR AND FEATHER.

THERE is no particular reason why I should not invite the readers of ALL THE YEAR ROUND to accompany me to the London Commercial Sale Rooms, Mincing-Lane, to assist at a sale of the spoils of bird and beast. In the sale-room the articles are reduced to mere abstractions. Lot Four hundred and seventeen, consisting of five lion-skins, is merely Lot Four hundred and seventeen; Lot Four hundred and fifteen, consisting of one thousand three hundred and seventy-five dyed black lamb-skins, is merely Lot Four hundred and fifteen; Lot Three hundred and sixty-two, consisting of three hundred and forty-four house-cat-skins (poor pussy!) is only Lot Three hundred and sixty-two; and Lot Three hundred and thirty-seven, of five hundred musquash or musk-rat-skins, is simply Lot Three hundred and thirty-seven. The tenderest-hearted person may visit the auction-rooms aforesaid, and see the abstractions alluded to knocked down without feeling a pang shoot through a male or female bosom, but it requires "another guess sort" of creature to go through the preliminary process of "sampling" the goods disposed of in such vast quantities as mere numerical expressions. I would not ask Mr. Morris, or any other of the gentlemen who write pathetic but lengthy letters to the Times, about the slaughter of a tom-tit, or the necessity of putting down our own farmers in their finch slaying, and the importance of getting up an International Society for the Protection of Small Birds, to take my arm on my morning's walk through St. Mary Axe and Billiter-street, for I am sure that those excellent gentlemen would have no appetite for luncheon. Ladies, however, have harder hearts than men, where

finery is concerned; and I think that one at least of my maiden aunts, and no inconsiderable percentage of my wife's relations, would look with a dry eye upon the scene I am about to describe, and buoyed up with the hope of luxuries at the Ship and Turtle, would get through the ordeal unmoved. They would "bear up," I take it, pretty well, as they would if the hide of the writer were added to the exhibition; but I misdoubt the effect on my wife, herself, of a rug made from the skins of tortoiseshell-cats. I would rather not speculate on this subject any more.

Messrs. Culverwell, Brooks, and Co., of St. Mary Axe, have an advantage over many other brokers, in being able to show their goods on their own premises. A large warehouse attached to their office looks over on St. Helen's church, with its Gothic windows, and contains an ample store of the spoils of the chase. Among these are thousands of African monkey-skins—grey and black—very fashionable a few seasons ago, for ladies' muffs, but not in such great demand just now, to the delight of the poor monkeys, no doubt. Conspicuous among ordinary monkey-skins are those of that "half-mourning" monkey, the Abyssinian, a quaint fellow, in deep black, with long white frills and fringes. The empty skin of a dead beast produces on the writer an effect entirely different from that of a carefully stuffed and prepared specimen, illumined with cunningly-fashioned eyes, and posed with a strict regard to the habits of the animal. The latter may be endured, but the hide of a creature, especially that of a joyful monkey, is inexpressibly saddening to look upon. Luckless Abyssinian monkey—poor relation of mankind—here is your smooth, lustrous back; your superb tail, fringed and trimmed—as no milliner can trim her work—by the tasteful hand of nature herself; your bright leggings; but where are the hands that would cling fondly to our own, and open the fingers till the hidden apple was captured? Where is thy skull, poor four-handed Yorick? where thy merry face, thy grins, and chatterings? All gone! There remains thy skin, and it takes thee and sixteen of thy brethren to make Lot Thirty-five—presently to come Under the Hammer. Not quite so much pity can I bestow upon our little friend the ermine, with his snowy body and coal-black tail. As the ermine, his destiny is noble enough: to enfold the shoulders of beauty, to deco-

rate royal and judicial robes: but in his unregenerate condition—unwhitened as yet by Siberian snows—he is a truculent little beast, known as the "stoat;" small, but spiteful and bloodthirsty—an awful neighbour to a hen-roost. Here is a hogshead full of ermine—some twelve or fifteen thousand skins—turned inside out, and tied up in little bundles. Larger, bolder, more bloodthirsty, and still more valuable, is the sable, represented here by a contingent of some thirteen hundred skins, to be sold in lots comprising from twenty to a hundred in each. Near this tiny monarch of all fur-bearing animals we find the spoils of the pretty little grey chinchilla and the fierce marten. A few "minks"—in demand just now—are also on view, and several hundred "badgers," useful, I apprehend, to Highlanders, whose "sporrans" is oftentimes built of a badger-skin, with the face as an ornament—and a very pretty one it is—and to makers of paint-brushes, the animal thus being connected with "drawing," whether dead or alive. Here also are "foxes" and "beavers." Respecting the latter, a few words of explanation may be necessary. The beaver, as seen at the "Zoo," and the beaver-skins offered for sale in Mincing-lane, are covered with long sharp stiff hair, like pins and needles, differing very much from the beaver fur trimming which, for the last few years, has adorned the winter mantles of our wives and daughters, and precisely the same remark will apply to seal-skin. Both of these furs are subjected to an ingeniously-constructed machine which pulls out the long hair—which serves, in fact, to throw off the water—and leaves below, adhering to the skin, the soft brown fur which keeps the animal warm, and which is, in fact, the beaver fur and seal-skin known to the public. The 'coon, beloved of nigger melodists, is here in slender numbers; but the 'possum, equally celebrated by banjoists, appears in thousands. The "gum-tree" has been pretty well shaken to bring down these thousands of soft furry creatures, and that pile of musquash-skins has not been collected without putting the skill of the trapper to the proof. From Siberian wastes and the icebound regions once known as the Hudson's Bay Territory come the most valuable furs contributed by the polecat race, represented by the fitch himself, the skunk—ill-savoured beast—whose fur was in high request a winter or

two ago, as producing a feathery or rather bristly kind of trimming, like scalp-locks; the martens, with their handsome tails; the costly sable; and the tiny ermine. In those dreary countries, too, were killed the original owners of those magnificent black and white bear-skins rich and heavy with furry wealth, and of the beautifully-marked wolf-skins, which are hardly so much admired as they deserve to be. A very different kind of creature is a large contributor to fur sales: the silver-grey and the white rabbit, bred originally as fur-bearing animals, and only incidentally consumed as food, figure in thousands and tens of thousands. Dyed Belgian rabbit-skins, brown and black, hardly find buyers just now, for there is a run upon bristly fur, and naught smooth will go off, save only seal-fur; and even this must be trimmed with a bristly trimming—beaver, skunk, mink, or sable—to take off the smoothness and give a sufficiently wild and savage air to the fair dames who wear it.

Under the general appellation of "cat" are classed, commercially, the lynx, the wild cat, and—I shudder as I write it—the "harmless, necessary" house-cat. I freely confess that I have little or no compassion for the lynx, who, if his eyes are as sharp as they are said to be, ought to be able to take care of himself; nor am I inclined to bewail the fate of a hecatomb of wild cats. But, poor pussy! She is here in hundreds and thousands, black, white, tabby, and tortoiseshell. That huge pile of rugs is made entirely of cat-skins. In each rug lie embedded, like fossil specimens, the beautiful tabby or tortoiseshell backs of a dozen pets. I wonder who the people are who buy these rugs—whether they keep a cat themselves, and how that sagacious animal looks when one of these dreadful rugs is brought into the house!

The monarchs of the feline race make up in dignity what they lack in number, and figure grandly in some half-dozen lots of lion, tiger, and leopard skins. An attempt was made last season by an enterprising man-milliner in Regent-street to introduce leopard-skin into female attire. Perhaps it is a pity he did not succeed, for, had leopard-skin become fashionable, the animals would have been obliged to change their spots pretty quickly, on pain of extermination. Spite of their teeth and claws, leopard and panther, cheetah and ocelot, would soon have gone the way of

seals and other inoffensive creatures unlucky enough to attract the feminine eye. Pestiferous jungles and rocky nullahs would have extended their arms in vain to protect those doomed by Fashion's fleeting fancy. For the arm of Fashion is long, and the whim of a Parisian belle propels the savage assegai in the sunburnt lands under the Equator. Leopards demolished, it would have been necessary to fall back on the tiger, and a good riddance that handsome gentleman would have been. Unfortunately, fashion has not yet set in the direction of the more dangerous and destructive of beasts, except in the horrid custom of wearing tigers' claws as a bracelet or a brooch; but the squirrel, the kolinski, the biscocchia, the chinchilla, and such small deer, are sacrificed readily enough, and the lamb lies down with the lion in the proportion of tens of thousands to one. There are many varieties of choice lamb-skin. There is the "real" Astrakhan, jetty and wavy, like watered silk, but incomparably more rich and lustrous; the black, curly variety, equally lustrous, but curled up in tight little lumps; and the beautiful grey Persian, a delight to the eyes of beholders. I may here mention that black furs are always dyed, the colour provided by nature not being "fast," and, moreover, of a dull, brownish hue. A curious instance of the superiority of artificial over natural dyes occurred, some twenty years ago, in the case of the so-called "natural" Scotch woollens, made of the brown sheep's wool without other preparation than cleansing from grease. The home-spun material looked very well at first; but, to the horror of the wearers, faded away on exposure to rain and sun. Since then "natural" brown woollens have always been dyed artificially, and are really "fast."

At the present moment, perhaps, birds are the greatest sufferers from the vagaries of fashion. Swan-skins are for sale in hundreds; but these are as nothing by the side of some twenty thousand grebe. For ages the grebe and the penguin had a fine time of it. In the fastnesses of the Arctic and Antarctic circles these singular birds increased and multiplied amazingly. Man did not care much about them—they are not good eating—and confined his depredations to stealing a few eggs now and then. One fine day an enterprising hatter stuck the glittering breast of a grebe in a pork-pie hat, and doomed the grebe to indiscriminate slaughter. Fashion adopted

the primitive decoration; no hat was complete without a grebe's or a penguin's breast stuck in it. Fashion presently went farther, and prescribed grebe trimming as your only wear. Black velvet mantles, trimmed with grebe, became the rage; and the beautiful bird-breast was often used to trim jackets torn from the baby seal. Grebes and penguins had a terrible time for a few years; but Fashion has now turned from them, and urged her shikarries towards sunnier climes, still retaining her curious fancy for "natural" decorations—owl-heads, hawk-heads, fox-masks, and the like—but delighting most in the feather trimming, the latest craze of all. To provide the fine feathers to make fine, fashionable birds, the world is just now being ransacked of its most beautiful inhabitants. There is no occasion to be sentimental over the ostrich feathers—the ostriches are, like the eels, used to it. In the Billiter-street warehouse we find ostrich feathers enough. Seventy cases of ostrich feathers are laid out for inspection—a serious business. The feathers are sold by the case only, and, as a case contains several hundred pounds' worth of assorted feathers, buyers are driven to the necessity of making an accurate calculation before they venture on a bid. If one case were filled with pure white feathers—long, handsome, and symmetrical as those in the crest of the Prince of Wales—and the rest with gradually descending qualities, ostrich-feather buying would be an easy task; but assorted cases task all the acumen of the daughters of Judah, who are busily engaged in the tedious work of examining the contents of the cases laid out upon tables for inspection. An assorted case may contain fifty bundles of white feathers—some only of which will be perfectly long, full-tipped specimens—and perhaps two hundred bundles of the qualities and shades known as Femina, Byocks, Spadona, Boos, and drab, together with the beautifully rich and silky black. The function of the sampler is to go completely through the various qualities—about a dozen—and to calculate how much money can be got out of the fine white perfect feathers, and then, in descending scale, through the various qualities, until a total is arrived at by which to regulate bidding. Now as every case is assorted in different proportions, it follows that considerable ability is required, and much time must be invested, before the heavy cost of a case can

be risked. The value of an ostrich feather depends upon a variety of qualities—colour, length, and, above all, on a finely-shaped full "top," showing no sign of abrasion. Descending from the ostrich floor, let us inspect the miscellaneous feathers, about to be sold at the Commercial Sale Rooms. Here are huge packages of vulture feathers, which, when cropped, docked, and dyed, are used for a variety of purposes; and an immense quantity of so-called "osprey," paddy-bird, and heron feathers. Commercial nomenclature, I may observe, is not remarkable for scientific accuracy, and "osprey" feathers may be cited as an instance thereof. The true osprey, I take it, is one of the "raptors"—a sea-eagle or fishing falcon, little loved by salmon fishers; while the osprey of commerce is a generic term, held to include the heron, stork, egret, crane, and other long-billed, long-legged, long-winged waders, bearing far greater resemblance to an ostrich than an osprey, except in their ichthyophagic proclivities. The osprey feathers are carefully sorted and selected, and are sold in cases, and also in lots, at so much per ounce, and not at so much per case, like ostrich feathers. Cook feathers are not absent, and the peacock is accorded a prominence becoming his Sublime Refulgency. His raiment is sometimes sold whole, but a more frequent practice is to sell the gorgeous blue-green plumage of the breast at so much apiece, and to knock down the feathers in single bundles. I do not mind owning that I am callous about feathers, and that I can look without emotion upon the empty skins of the Impeyan pheasant, and other birds which are good to eat, although I cannot disguise even to myself the painful truth that these "birds of rare plume" are not slain to assuage the pangs of hunger, but for their superb garment of iridescent metallic lustre. By a careless observer, the gorgeous Impeyan might be taken for a "property" bird, built up of foil, strayed into Billiter-street by accident—a relic of the Bower of Beautiful Birds in some bygone pantomime. Closer inspection, however, reveals that the feathers of this wonderful creature are close and hard, forming a true defensive armour of such dazzling splendour, that the eye turns for relief to the Argus pheasant's sober brown, black and white, displayed in the myriad "eyes,"—from which it takes its name—to the handsome yellow-brown bittern,

and the refreshing grey of the long-winged heron. Here, too, are cases of bird and other skins, interesting to the naturalist—quaint owls, horned and hornless; great hornbills—deadly enemies to serpents—rare monkeys, flying squirrels, and huge bats, cranes, and jungle-cocks. Near these are myriads of tiny creatures, which afford at once the most curious and most painful sight at Billiter-street warehouses—creatures inexpressibly beautiful and diminutive—the last dainty and barbarous addition to Fashion's wardrobe—the flying jewels called humming-birds. Long rows of cases are filled to the brim with these glittering marvels, among whom Fashion has already selected certain species for a fatal preference. The unfortunate ruby humming-bird is in great request as a novel trimming. Thousands of these pretty creatures have been used in Paris to adorn a single ball-dress—the beautiful iridescent bit of plumage on the neck being the chief point of attraction. The "blue creeper" is another favourite, and brightly, beautifully blue he is. A charming little fellow is the "cardinal," with his bright scarlet cap, though even he is thrown into the shade by the still more brilliant red tanager, a perfect blaze of scarlet. Some four or five thousand kingfishers are for sale, and a like number of jays, whose cheerful ranks must have been terribly thinned by this time, to provide all the light-blue trimming made from their wings. Dotted here and there among the smaller fry are cases of toucans, with their rich plumage and wonderful development of beak; trogons; and the famous bird of paradise, with his golden hues. For brilliant scarlet, the ibis is not outdone by any of these; for brilliant white, the great cockatoo is difficult to excel; and for gold and black, the yellow oriole bravely holds his own, until contrasted with the rich orange of the cock of the rock. The beautiful red tanager is not the only specimen of his race given over to the destroyer, for piled around in gorgeous profusion are orange, black, blue, and port-wine tanagers. The cocoa-head, black and yellow, the brown cuckoo, the black cockatoo, the red-head and coloured finches, add to the variety of rich colouring, supplemented by thousands on thousands of birds classed as "various humming." Glancing over this wealth of brilliance, the eye becomes too wearied to appreciate the metallic splendour of a lot of insects, put down roughly as about

eighteen thousand. These are mainly beetles of various kinds of blue-green with metallic lustre and yellow-spotted—affording decoration for the hair and for light aerial evening toilettes—beasts, birds, and insects thus being at length laid under contribution by human vanity. Recognising the comforting quality of a fur coat, cap, and gloves when the mercury is low in the tube, and confessing with sorrow and contrition that the quill pen with which I am writing was, in all probability, torn from a living goose, I yet cannot refrain—vain as I know the effort to be—from raising my feeble protest against the wholesale slaughter of humming-birds to serve no object but the gratification of a vanity which has not even the excuse of good taste. The present rage for furry and feathery adornment appears to my unfashionable mind to indicate a retrograde movement in fashion—a desire on the part of a "grande dame" to deck herself in ornaments better fitted for the dusky shoulders of a savage queen.

For one other prime natural product the emissaries of Fashion must go to Mincing-lane. Judging from the quantities in which it is imported, this article must be in considerable demand. The "lot" with which we are more immediately concerned is lying in Cross-lane, and weighs some five thousand pounds—a tolerably large consignment of an article which is—well!—not necessary, perhaps, but apparently finds customers readily enough. It is human hair. The great bulk of it comes from China, is black as coal and coarse as cocoa-nut fibre, but of magnificent length. Many a Chinese head has been shorn to produce these tons of material, to be sold only in lots of two cases (of about four hundred pounds) each, and expected to realise about half-a-crown a pound in this wholesale transaction. Skilled experts are weighing and feeling the long tresses, but soon leave them to investigate the various shades and qualities of ore bale of choice European, worth ten or eleven times as much as the Chinese. Whence comes this? From Germany mainly—from Russia and from France sometimes. Here lies a heap of samples culled from this valuable bale, with the weights of each colour carefully attached. With what variety and richness of hues glow these long, fine, silky tresses; ranging from the deepest brown, through every shade of ruddy auburn and sunny

chestnut, to the purest gold and fairest flaxen. What a monument of self-abnegation is here! what a picture of self-sacrifice! for when woman parts with her hair, she performs an act far more trying than when she parts with her jewels. That maiden must be poor indeed who parts with her crowning charm for a few shillings. Legends to the contrary notwithstanding, how can she get more than a pitiful sum, when a choice bale, after passing through the hands of the shearer, the local merchant, and the importer, and paying cost of transport, will fetch no more than seven - and - twenty shillings per pound? The blonde mädchen, whose superb tresses I hold in my hand, did not, I apprehend, get much for them. Perhaps a few florins; little enough, according to our estimate of money, but yet sufficient to keep the wolf from her mother's door for a little space. But this silken crown, which brought its original owner so little, must pass through many hands before it adorns the still handsome head of Lady Barepoles—who is not quite the woman she was when Barepoles became the captive of her bow and spear in her first season—but is yet a leader of fashion. Meanwhile, we have no time to lose in the crowded auction-room in Mincing-lane. We have other things to sell; China hats, and matting; Japanese arrows; coir yarn; cow hair, white and red; everything, apparently, that the world ever produced; and must knock down our choice lot of imprisoned sunbeams and begone.

A TYROLESE MOUNTAIN LEGEND.

TYROL, like most mountain countries, is rich in legendary lore. Numerous are the tales of ghosts, condemned to haunt the scene of their earthly crimes until released by some courageous mortal. Mischievous kobolds; dwarfs and their king Laurin, with his wondrous "rose garden;" giants, foremost among whom stand the famous Giant Haymon, who is buried in the church of Wilten, a suburb of Innsbruck; and the Giantess Queen, Frau Hütt, who was transformed into a mountain, which still bears her name, as a punishment for having ordered the servants to wipe the mud off her little son with bread-crumbs. Witches and demons also play their part in the traditions of the peasantry; weird creatures guard hidden treasures; and the wild huntsman with his phantom

chase gallops through many a dismal legend.

Frau Berchta, who appears in the "twelve nights" between Christmas and the Epiphany, is evidently, as her name denotes, the bright goddess Hulda, though the Puster Thal peasants say she is Pilate's wife. Woe betide the unfortunate woman who has left unspun flax on her distaff at that time, for she will incur Frau Berchta's heavy displeasure, and will suffer accordingly. Mermen and water-nymphs dwell in the crystal depths of the lakes, whilst the mountains are frequented by the "Venediger Männlein," or "Venetians," who are only visible where ore and precious stones lie buried in rocky caverns unknown to mankind. These little gnomes are believed to be natives of Venice, who merely visit Germany in order to seek for treasure. They are benevolently disposed towards the human race, and many stories are told of how they enriched some lucky peasant, or herd boy, with whom they chanced to become acquainted. The peasants say that the "Venediger" are good Christians, and attend High Mass at the holy seasons.

But perhaps the prettiest and most poetical tradition is that of the "Salige Fräulein." Their very name is descriptive, for "Salig" is, in all probability, derived from "Selig"—"blessed," or "happy." Popular belief depicts them as lovely maidens, clad in snow-white robes, with flaxen curls and blue eyes beaming with sweetness. Their sovereign is the beneficent and gracious goddess Hulda, the especial patroness of the flax culture, which may account for the chief home of the legend being in South Tyrol, where flax is most cultivated. There have always been many superstitions connected with flax. It is supposed that it will only flower at the time of day at which it was originally sown. He who sows it must first seat himself thrice on the sack, turning to the east. Stolen seeds mingled with the rest cause the crop to thrive. Flax, when in bloom, acts as a talisman against witchcraft: and sorcery can be practised even with the dry stalks. When the threads are spun, or woven into shirts under certain incantations, the wearer is secure from accidents or wounds.

It was Hulda who first taught mortals the art of growing flax, of spinning, and of weaving it. Her habitation is in the caves of the mountains; there she dwells with her maidens and their attendant dwarfs, in splendid palaces and grottos, the walls

of which sparkle with inlaid gold and jewels, while the domed roof is of transparent crystal. Moreover, there are beautiful gardens, leafy woods, and even verdant meadows, on which feed countless wild animals, particularly the chamois—the especial favourites of the Salige Fräulein.

However, the Salige Fräulein did not always remain in seclusion. In olden times, before they disappeared from the earth, the friendliness of their dispositions drew them to the haunts of mankind, for their character was as attractive as their appearance, and its chief feature was an unselfish benevolence. Legends of their numerous good deeds abound in the Ober Inn Thal, the Oetz Thal, and the Vinschgau, which are the poorest districts in Tyrol.

In those days, say the peasants, the country was not wild and desolate as it is now, but then resembled a luxuriant fertile garden, where the Fräulein tended their flowers, bleached their linen, and hung up their snowy garments to dry. No cords were needed for this purpose; the sunbeams themselves sustained the airy fabric. Then, in the cool of the evening, the maidens reposed on the mossy stones in front of the cavern, and sang enchantingly beautiful songs, whilst they combed their long golden locks.

The heart of many a shepherd and mountaineer felt the charm of this unearthly music drawing him with an irresistible longing to the Alpine regions.

This befell a fearless young hunter from Längenfeld, in the Oetz Thal. Since his childhood he had known the tale of this* paradise of animals, which was supposed to be situated close to the Oetz Thal glaciers, behind a wall of rock called "the Morin." The peasants say that this is a rich Alpine pasture, with splendid stone pine and maple trees, where chamois, Alpine hares, eagles, and other mountain creatures—even steinbocks—live peaceably together. Mighty boulders of ice guard the entrance, so that it is well-nigh impossible for even a hunter to penetrate within.

Nevertheless, the daring Längenfeld Schütz was resolved to make the attempt at all events. He scaled the precipice, and, having surmounted many imminent perils, he lost his way in the terrible icy desert of the glaciers. At last he slipped on the frozen surface, which stretches up some ten thousand feet into the clouds, and

dropped senseless on to a green valley far below. When he opened his eyes he found himself lying on a bed of edelweiss and fragrant lavender, in the crystal grotto of the Salige Fräulein, with his kind preservers watching anxiously round his couch. They nursed him tenderly until he had recovered from the effects of his fall, and showed him all the splendours of their subterranean palace, gardens, and groves, merely exacting from him a promise never to slay any Alpine animal, or to reveal what he had seen to any human being. Furthermore, they gave him permission to visit them every evening when the moon was full.

After three days the youth returned to his home, but his whole nature appeared to have changed during his short absence. The bold, venturesome hunter had become a mere dreamer. His only pleasure was visiting the rocky cavern of the Salige Fräulein, and every bright moonlight night he might be seen wending his way thither. These strange nocturnal wanderings at length excited his mother's curiosity, and one night she secretly followed him. But when she beheld her son hastening to enter the mountain cleft, she could not refrain from calling to him in her terror. The cleft instantly closed, and stones rattled down before it so as to conceal all traces of the former aperture. From that moment all happiness seemed to be extinguished in the young man's mind. He became quite melancholy, and was gradually pining away, despite the tears of his mother and his comrades' strenuous efforts to rouse him.

One autumn day two hunters chanced to come to his mother's cottage, and the account they gave of their hunting adventures awoke the old spirit in the pale sad young Schütz. Early next morning he accompanied the two men to that mountain world, which he himself had so long deserted, and he soon espied a chamois high up on a ridge. The animal fled, and the hunter followed in hot pursuit, till it paused on the verge of a chasm. He fired. Instantly three Salige Fräulein stood before him in dazzling radiance, but with stern and wrathful countenances. Beside them was the chamois unhurt. A shudder came over the young hunter; he staggered and fell headlong over the precipice, where he was dashed to atoms.

The persecution of their favourites seems to be the only thing which excites the anger of these gentle beings, and their gratitude is proportionate to those who

* Grimm says that the word "Paradise" literally signifies a park or preserve.

show kindness to the chamois. A wealthy peasant at Saltaus is said to owe his prosperity solely to his having reared a little chamois, which had been intrusted to him by a Fräulein, when he was watching his sheep on the mountain-side.

Amongst plants, flax is under the especial protection of the Salige Fräulein. The Oetzthaler, who make its cultivation their peculiar branch of industry, proudly point out a cave between Kropfbühl and Unterassalen as having been the entrance to Queen Hulda's mountain palace. Twice a year she passed through the valley, scattering blessings around her path: once in summer, when the blue flowers of the flax were brightening the fields; and again, during the mysterious "twelve nights." In olden times the gods and goddesses were believed to visit the earth at that season, and on the Thirteenth Day, our Feast of the Epiphany, they wandered from one sacred grove to another. The depth of winter is also the especial time for spinning, and Hulda highly approved of domestic industry. During her pilgrimage, in the dead of night, she examined each distaff, and, if the flax was dully spun off, prosperity was sure to attend the family during the year; whilst carelessness and laziness were punished with trouble and blighted crops. She even sent her own maidens to a specially favoured house. They helped in the household work, and the presence of a Salige Fräulein always conferred plenty and abundance on her hosts. Sometimes, on dark winter evenings, when the good-wives and girls were busily spinning, while the old grandmother in the chimney-corner related some ancient tale or legend to beguile the time, the door would open softly and two wondrously fair damsels, with hair shining like burnished gold, alighted gently in. Each bore a spinning-wheel of curiously carved manufacture, and, after silently greeting the astonished assembly, they set their wheels in motion. It is almost needless to say that the produce of their labour far exceeded that of any of their fellow-workers. When eleven o'clock came, and the usual spinning time was over, the strangers rose and vanished as noiselessly as they had entered.

However, the Fräulein did not confine themselves exclusively to spinning when they wished to assist mankind, for they also performed farm work or undertook the housekeeping. They were particularly fond of children, and often helped them to pick up wood, which then always

burnt especially long and well. The only way of affronting the Saligen was by offering them any remuneration for their services, or by asking their names. Then they wept bitterly and never appeared again.

A story is told of a peasant woman at Vulpera, near Tarasp, whom the Fräulein had helped in her spinning. When the end of the winter came she thought she ought to reward her kind assistants, so she prepared a sumptuous meal, and invited them to partake of it. But the two Salige shook their heads sadly, and, giving the woman a never-failing hall of cotton, they said, "This is the recompense for thy goodwill, payment for payment," and immediately vanished.

Above Jenesian, where the Salten commences and the road leads across the Nobels, there is a steep rocky declivity called the Lecklahne. Many years ago several maidens took up their abode in this Lahne, and no one knew whence they came or what they were called. The first person who saw them was a maid of the neighbouring Locher Bauer. Out of compassion she brought the strangers some milk one day. They took the jug from her, carried it into the cave, and brought it back filled with gold pieces. The girl, who was of an avaricious disposition, thought she would do the same again, but when the jug was returned it was full of blood instead of money. The Locher Bauer profited by his unknown neighbours, for they gave him good advice about his crops, and, as he always followed it, he speedily became very rich. For a long time they continued to dwell in the Lecklahne, and used frequently to go to the Locher Bauer to receive alms, which he willingly gave. One day they came when the new Bänerin was just baking "Krapfen." Entering the kitchen, they asked for some food as usual, and stretched out their hands to the cakes. This irritated the peasant's wife, and she struck their fingers with the frying-pan, which incensed the Fräulein, and they sang:

Ah, woe to thee! ah, woe to thee!
No more shall Locher riches see.

With these words they disappeared for ever. Their threat has been fulfilled throughout many generations, and there has been no wealthy Locher Bauer until the present possessor of the farm. A similar story is told of the Egger Bauer, at Vöran, who grudged the Salige Fräulein their milk, and on whom the same curse was pronounced.

One of the maidens of the Lecklahne fell in love with a brave, handsome young fellow named Mair, who lived at Ghaning. She actually married him, and became the Bänerin of the Mair Hof. They were very happy together, and all their worldly goods flourished. Unfortunately the peasant had no peace until he learnt the name of his beloved wife, and he insisted on knowing it, despite her prayers and warnings. At last she yielded and told him, but she vanished at the same moment, and only returned on Sundays and Holy days, to wash and dress her children. When in the room, she was visible to them alone, and the Bäner never set eyes on his wife again.

Another maiden, who was in the service of a peasant, kept her name secret. Once, when a labourer came back from the woods, he said to her, "Now I know thy name," and addressed her by it. The damsel shed bitter tears, and, going to the Bänerin in the kitchen, she cried, "I must now leave you, but I give you this ball of cotton as a keepsake. Take great care of it!" And so saying she disappeared. The ball of cotton was carefully preserved, and never seemed to grow less, however much might be used. Some years elapsed, and one day, when the workwoman was in the house, the Bänerin thought she would try, for curiosity's sake, whether there really was any end to the cotton. Accordingly, she began to unwind it, and very soon came to the end; but when she had finished, an invisible hand tapped at the window and a wail was heard outside. Since then nothing prospered in the household, and the whole place went to rack and ruin.

The Salige Fräulein at one time sojourned at Lusen, and in almost every house dwelt one of these ethereal beings, bringing, as usual, prosperity in her train. One evening a Fräulein was sitting on a bench in front of the house, when a poor woman came up and begged for a piece of bread. She received a loaf which possessed the marvellous property of never decreasing in size, eat as much as she would. After a few years the woman died, and left the magic loaf to her daughter, who subsisted on it for a long time. Once, however, when she was cutting a slice, she remarked in astonishment, "Well, this bread will never come to an end!" These words broke the spell, and the loaf soon diminished like any other. So the daughter had to go begging again, as her mother had done, though she never met with the same good fortune.

The Salige Fräulein have an implacable foe in the person of the "Wild Man," who pursues and slays them with relentless hatred. Their only safeguard is the neighbourhood of anything holy, and therefore benevolent woodcutters, whenever they fell a tree, always carve three crosses on the trunk, in order that the Fräulein may take refuge with the sacred emblem, which the Wild Man dare not approach. In the Tyrolese forests, trees may frequently be seen marked in this manner.

Once, when the Wild Man was pursuing the Saligen, they fled shrieking to the pine wood near the Salga, and concealed themselves there. But he soon discovered their track and overtook them. He then tore them to pieces like cobwebs. To this day the children point out the stone in the wood, on which the Salige Fräulein rested and wept inconsolably during their flight. A tipsy man once heard the Fräulein bitterly lamenting in the forest. He perceived that the Wild Man was chasing them, and called to him: "Hunt like mad and carry like mad, and when thou hast caught it like mad, give me part!" Next morning the peasant found a quarter of a Fräulein hanging at his door.

Even when engaged in the service of mankind the Saligen are not safe from their persecutors. Thus one of the Wild Men came to a Fräulein, who had served a peasant faithfully for two years, and said to her: "Stutza-Mutza, thou must go home, for the Monn-Jochträger" (supposed to be the chief of Wild Men) "says thy mother is dead." On hearing these words the Fräulein hastened away, followed closely by her enemy. Sounds of moaning and lamentation were heard soon afterwards, and the fair damsel was never seen again.

According to a Vinschgau tradition, the Salige Fräulein were driven away by the noise of firearms. When shooting was first introduced into Tyrol, the Fräulein fled, weeping and wailing, over rocks and crags, and never more returned to their mountain home.

It was, and is, in some parts, still customary to provide the mowers, when they go to the mountain meadows, with "Krapfen" (a species of cake), which is the festival food of the Tyrolese peasants. This was in case of a visit from the Salige Fräulein, as these cakes are the sole articles they will deign to accept. In former times, beautiful golden-haired maidens appeared to the mower and helped him with his work; but this only happened

to those whose character was blameless. In Martell, the labourers appear at meals in their holiday garb, which unusual custom is said, by old people, to be in honour of the Saligen.

Sometimes the Saligen go by the name of "Wilde Fräulein." On the path to the Zerzer Alp, near Burgeis, there is a spot called "Zu den Wilden Fräulein." It consists of a heap of stones, beneath which the Wilde Fräulein are believed to rest. Children, who go to the Alp for the first time, must pick up some stones and, after spitting upon them, must cast them on the heap with the words, "I sacrifice, I sacrifice to the Wilde Fräulein." Even grown-up people practise the ancient custom, for it is believed that whoever neglects this act of piety exposes himself to great danger, should he venture to pass the Wilde Fräulein alone. This is evidently a relic of the old heathen sacrifices.

Besides diligent housewives and the deserving poor, sick people had an especial claim on the kind hearts of the Saligen, and many a cure was wrought by their miraculous salves and potions. Instances are also related of the delicate Salige Fräulein having themselves undertaken the work of some sick servant, that the wages might not be forfeited. When the mother of a family was ill, the Fräulein would take the entire charge of the children.

In short, it was indeed a golden age when these friendly beings dwelt on earth!

Accidents from falls, drowning, or exposure were then of rare occurrence, for the Fräulein acted the parts of guardian angels in all such perils. It is a curious feature in this beautiful tradition, that although plainly of heathen origin, yet it appears connected with Christianity, for the Salige Fräulein love the sound of the Angelus bell and the sign of the Cross. Indeed, when one reflects on their kindly, unselfish character—as portrayed in the various accounts of their good offices—the story might well be a Christian legend.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXX.

It was true that Mrs. Algernon Errington had distinguished the Misses McDongall, by her notice, above all the other ladies whom she met at Dr. Bodkin's. The rest had by no means found favour in her eyes.

Minnie Bodkin she decidedly disapproved of. Ally Dockett was "a little black-eyed, fat, flirting thing." The elder ladies were frumps, or frights, or bores. Rhoda Maxfield she had scarcely seen. On the evening of the Bodkins' party, Rhoda, as we know, had kept herself studiously in the background.

Mrs. Errington intended to present Rhoda to her daughter-in-law as her own especial pet and protégée, but a favourable moment for fulfilling this intention did not offer itself. Rhoda had not distinctly expressed any unwillingness to be taken to Ivy Lodge, and it could never enter into Mrs. Errington's head to guess that she felt such unwillingness. But in some way the project seemed to be eluded; so that Castalia had been some weeks in Whitford without making the acquaintance of Miss Maxfield, as she began to be called, even by some of those to whom she had been "Old Max's little Rhoda" all her life.

Castalia, indeed, troubled her head very little about Rhoda, under whatever style or title she might be mentioned. We may be sure that Algernon never spoke to his wife of the old days at the Maxfields; indeed, he eschewed all allusion to that name as much as possible. Castalia knew from Mrs. Errington that there had been a young girl in the house where she had lodged, the daughter of the grocer, who was her landlord; but, being pretty well accustomed to Mrs. Errington's highly-coloured descriptions of things and people, she had paid no attention to that lady's praises of Rhoda's intelligence; good looks, and pretty manners.

No; Castalia troubled not her head about Rhoda. But she was troubled about Minnie Bodkin, of whom she became bitterly jealous. She did not suppose, to be sure, that her husband had ever made love to Miss Bodkin; but she was constantly tormented by the suspicion that Algernon was admiring Minnie, and comparing her beauty, wit, and accomplishments with those of his wife, to the disadvantage of the latter. Not that she (Castalia) admired her. Far from it! But—she was just the sort of person to be taking with men. She had such a forward, confident, showy way with her!

Some speech of this sort being uttered in the presence of the Misses McDongall, was seized upon, and echoed, and re-echoed, and made much of by those young ladies, who pounced on poor Minnie, and tore

her to pieces with great skill and gusto. Violet, indeed, made a feeble protest now and then on behalf of her friend; but how was she to oppose her sister and that sweet Mrs. Algernon? And then, in conscience and candour, she could not but admit that poor dear Minnie had many and glaring faults.

In fact, Rose and Violet McDougall were installed as toadies in ordinary to Castalia. They were her dearest friends; they called her by her christian name; they flattered her weaknesses, and encouraged her worst traits; not, we may charitably believe, with the full consciousness of what they were doing. For her part, Castalia soon got into the habit of liking to have these ladies about her. They performed many little offices which saved her trouble; they were devoted to her interests, and brought her news of the doings of the opposite faction. For there was an opposite faction; or Castalia persuaded herself that there was. The Bodkins were ranged in it, in her jealous fancy; and so were the Docketts, and one or two more of Algernon's old friends. Miss Chubb she considered to hover as yet on neutral ground. As to the unmarried men—young Pawkins, Mr. Diamond, and the curate of St. Chad's—they were not much taken into account in this species of subterranean warfare, carried on with an arsenal of sneers, stares, slights, hints, coolnesses, bridlings, envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness.

I have said that the warfare was subterranean; occult, as it were. Had the enemy been actuated by similar feelings to those of Castalia and her party, hostilities must have blazed up openly. But most of them did not even know that they were being assailed. Among these unconscious ones were Dr. and Mrs. Bodkin. Minnie had, at times, a suspicion that Algy's wife disliked her. But then the manners of Algy's wife were not genial or gracious to anyone, and Minnie could not but feel a certain compassion for her, which extinguished resentment at her sour words and ways.

With the rest of the Whitford society, the bride did not enter into intimate, or even amicable, relations. She offended most of the worthy matrons who called on her, by merely returning her card, and not even asking to be admitted to see them. As to offering any entertainment in return for the hospitalities that were offered to her during the first weeks that

she dwelt in Whitford, that, Castalia said, was out of the question. How could more than two persons sit at table in her little dining-room? And how was it possible to receive company in Ivy Lodge?

But Whitford was not quite of her opinion in this matter. It was true her rooms were small; but were they smaller than Mrs. Jones's, who gave three tea-parties every year, and received her friends in detachments? Why was Ivy Lodge less adapted for festive purposes than Dr. Smith's house in the High-street?—a queer, ancient, crooked nook of a dwelling, squeezed in between two larger neighbours, with a number of tiny dark rooms, like closets; in which, nevertheless, some of the best crumpets and tea-cakes known to that community, not to mention little lobster suppers in the season, had been consumed by the Smiths' friends with much satisfaction. As Mrs. Dockett observed, it was not so much what you gave, as the spirit you gave it in, that mattered! And she was not ashamed, not she, to recall the time, in the beginning of Mr. Dockett's career, when she had with her own hands prepared a welsh rabbit and a jorum of spiced ale for a little party of friends, having nothing better to offer them for supper. In a word, it was Whitford's creed that even the most indigestible food, freely bestowed, might bless him that gave and him that received; and that if the Algernon Erringtons did not offer anyone so much as a cup of tea in their house, the real reason was to be sought in the lady's proud reserve, and a general state of feeling which Mrs. Dockett described as "stuck-up-ishness."

Castalia was unaccustomed to walking, and disliked that exercise. Riding was out of her power, no saddle-horse that would carry a lady being kept for hire in Whitford, and the jingling old fly from the Blue Bell Inn was employed to carry her to such houses as she deigned to visit at. Her mother-in-law's lodging was not very frequently honoured by her presence. The stairs frightened her, she said; they were like a ladder. Mrs. Thimbleby's oblong drawing-room was a horrible little den. She had had no idea that ladies and gentlemen ever lived in such places. In truth, Castalia's anticipations of the Erringtons' domestic life at Whitford had by no means prepared her for the reality. Ancram had told her he was poor, certainly. Poor! Yes, but Jack Price was poor also. And Jack Price's

valet was far better lodged than her mother-in-law. However, occasionally the jingling fly did draw up before the widow Thimbleby's door, and Castalia was seen to alight from it with a discontented expression of countenance, and to pick her way with raised skirts over the cleanly sanded doorstep.

One day, when she entered the oblong drawing-room, Castalia perceived that Mrs. Errington was not there; but, instead of her, there was a young lady, sitting at work by the window, who lifted a lovely, blushing face as Castalia entered the room, and stammered out, in evident embarrassment, that Mrs. Errington would be there in a few minutes, and, meanwhile, would not the lady take a seat?

"I am Mrs. Ancram Errington," said Castalia, looking curiously at the girl.

"Yes; I know. I—I saw you at Dr. Bodkin's. I am spending the day with Mrs. Errington. She is very kind to me."

Algernon's wife seated herself in the easy-chair, and leisurely surveyed the young woman before her. Her first thought was, "How well she's dressed!" her second, "She seems very bashful and timid; quite afraid of me!" And this second thought was not displeasing to Mrs. Algernon; for, in general, she had not been treated by the "provincial bumpkins," as she called them, with all the deference and submission due to her rank.

The girl's hands were nervously occupied with some needlework. The flush had faded from her face, and left it delicately pale, except a faint rose-tint in the cheeks. Her shining brown hair waved in soft curls on to her neck. Mrs. Algernon sat looking at her, and critically observing the becoming hue of her green silk gown, the taste and richness of a gold brooch at her throat, the whiteness of the shapely hand that was tremulously plying the needle. All at once a guess came into her mind, and she asked, suddenly:

"Is your name Maxfield?"

"Yes; Rhoda Maxfield," returned the girl, blushing more deeply and painfully than before.

"Why, I have heard of you!" exclaimed Mrs. Algernon. "You must come and see me."

Rhoda was so alarmed at the pitch of agitation to which she was brought by this speech, that she made a violent effort to control it, and answered with more calmness than she had hitherto displayed:

"Mrs. Errington has spoken once or

twice of bringing me to your house; but I—I did not like to intrude. And, besides——"

"Oh, Mrs. Errington brings all sorts of tiresome people to see me; she may as well bring a nice person for once in a way."

Castalia was meaning to be very gracious.

"Yes; I mean—but then—my father might not like me to come and see you," blurted out Rhoda, with a sort of quiet desperation.

Mrs. Algernon opened her eyes very wide.

"Why, for goodness' sake? Oh, he had some quarrel or other with Mrs. Errington, hadn't he? Never mind, that must be all forgotten, or he wouldn't let you come here. I believe the truth is, that Mrs. Errington meant slyly to keep you to herself; and I shan't stand that."

Indeed, Castalia more than half believed this to be the case. And, partly from a sheer spirit of opposition to her mother-in-law—partly from the suspicious jealousy of her nature, that led her to do those things which she fancied others cunningly wished to prevent her from doing—she began to think she would patronise Rhoda and enlist her into her own faction. Besides, Rhoda was sweet-voiced, submissive, humble. Certainly, she would be a pleasanter sort of pet and tame animal to encourage about the house than Rose McDougall, who, with all her devotion, claimed a quid pro quo for her services, and dwelt on her kinship with the daughter of Lord Kauldkail, and talked of their "mutual ancestry" to an extent that Castalia had begun to consider a bore.

At this moment Mrs. Errington bustled into the room, holding a small roll of yellow lace in her hand. "I have found it, Rhoda!" she cried. "This little bit is nearly the same pattern as the trimming on the cap, and, if we join the frilling——" Here she perceived Mrs. Algernon's presence, and stopped her speech with an exclamation of surprise: "Good gracious! is that you, Castalia? How long have you been here? This is an unexpected pleasure. Now you can give us your advice about the trimming of my cap, which Rhoda has undertaken for me."

Castalia did not rise from the easy-chair, but turned her cheek to receive the elder lady's kiss. Rhoda gathered up her work, and moved to go away.

"Don't run away, Rhoda!" cried Mrs. Errington. "We have no secrets to talk, have we, Castalia? You know my little

friend Rhoda, do you not? She is a great pet of mine."

"Oh, I will go and sit in your bedroom, if I may," muttered Rhoda, hurriedly. "I—I don't like to be in your way." And, with a little confused courtesy to Mrs. Algernon, she slipped out of the room and closed the door behind her.

"She is such a shy little thing!" exclaimed Mrs. Errington.

"Well," returned Castalia, "it is a comfort to meet with any Whitford person that knows her place! They are the most presumptuous set of creatures, in general, that I ever came across."

"Oh, Rhoda Maxfield's manners are never at fault, I assure you; I formed her myself, with considerable care and pains."

"She seems to make herself useful, too!" observed Castalia, with a languid sneer.

"That she does, indeed, my dear! Most useful. Her taste and skill in any little matter of needlework are quite extraordinary. Poor child! she is so delighted to do anything for me. She is devotedly attached to me, and very grateful. Her father really did behave abominably, and she feels it very much, and wishes to make up for it. No doubt the old man repents of his folly and ill-humour now; but, of course, I can have nothing more to say to him. However, I willingly allow the girl to do any little thing she can. She has just been trimming this cap for me most exquisitely!"

Castalia thought, more and more, that it would be worth her while to patronise Rhoda.

"I shall go to old Maxfield myself, and get him to let her come to my house," said she, as she took leave of her mother-in-law, and slowly made her way down Mrs. Thimbleby's ladder-like staircase, holding fast to the banisters with one hand, and not lifting one of her feet from a step until the other was firmly planted beside it.

On returning home that evening, Rhoda was greatly startled by her father's words, "Well, Miss Maxfield, here's a honourable missis been begging for the pleasure of your company!"

Rhoda turned pale and red, and said something in too low a tone to meet her father's ear.

"Oh yes," the old man went on; "the Honourable Mrs. Algernon Ancram Errington has been here, if you please! Well, I wish that young man joy of his bargain! Our little Sally is ten times

as well-favoured. Your Aunt Betty saw her first; and, says she, 'Is Mr. Maxfield at home?'"

"I answered that your father was engaged in business," said Betty Grimshaw, taking up the narration.

"You should ha' said I was serving in the shop," observed old Max, doggedly, "and would sell her fine ladyship a pen'north of gingerbread if she'd a mind, and could find the penny!"

"Nay, Jonathan, how could I have said that to the lady? Says she, 'I wish to say a word to him.' So I showed her into your drawing-room, Rhoda, and called your father, and——"

"And there she sat," interrupted the old man, with unwonted eagerness in his face and his voice, "in a far better place than any she has of her own, if all accounts are true, looking about her as curious as a ferret. I walked in, in my calico sleeves and my apron——"

("He wouldn't take them off," put in Betty, parenthetically.)

"No; I wouldn't. And she told me she was come to ask my leave to have my daughter Rhoda at her house. 'Of course you'll let her come,' she says, 'for you let her go to Mrs. Errington's and to Mrs. Bodkin's?' 'Why, as to that,' says I, 'I'm rather partic'lar where Miss Maxfield visits.' You should have seen her stare. She looked fairly astonished."

"Oh, father!"

"Did I not speak the truth? I am partic'lar where you visit. I told her plainly that you was in a very different position from the rest of the family. 'I am a plain tradesman,' said I. 'I have my own place and my own influence, and I have been marvellously upholden in my walk of life. But my daughter Rhoda is a lady of the Lord's own making, and must be treated as such. And she has plenty of this world's gear, for my endeavours have been abundantly blessed.'"

"Oh, father!"

"Oh, father!" repeated the old man, impatiently. "What did I say amiss? I tell you the woman was cowed by me. I am in subjection to none of their principalities and powers. The upshot was that I promised you should go and take tea with her to-morrow evening."

Rhoda was greatly surprised by this announcement, which was totally unexpected. "Oh, father!" she exclaimed in a trembling voice, "why did you say I should go?"

"Why? For various sufficient reasons. Let that be enough for you."

The truth was, that Castalia had more than hinted her suspicion that her mother-in-law selfishly endeavoured to keep Rhoda under her own influence, and to prevent her visiting elsewhere. And to thwart Mrs. Errington would alone have been a powerful incentive with old Max. But a far stronger motive with him was that he longed, with keen malice, that Algernon should be forced painfully to contrast the love he had been false to with the wife he had gained. He would have Algernon see Rhoda rich, and well-dressed, and courted. If Rhoda would but have flaunted her prosperity in Algernon's face, there was scarcely any sum of money her father would have grudged for the pleasure of witnessing that spectacle. But, although it was hopeless to expect Rhoda to display any spirit of vengeance on her own behalf, yet she might be made the half-unconscious instrument of a retribution that should gall and mortify Algernon to the quick. That Rhoda herself might suffer in the process was an idea to which (if it occurred to him) he would give no harbourage.

Rhoda sat silent until her aunt had left the room to prepare the supper according to her habit. Then she rose, and going close up to her father, took his hand, and looked imploringly into his face. "Father," she said, "don't make me go there. I—I can't bear it."

"You can't bear it!" burst out old Maxfield. He scowled with a frown of terrible malignity. But Rhoda well knew that his wrath was not directed against her. She stood trembling and pale before him, whilst he spoke more harsh and bitter words against all the family of the Erringtons, than she had ever heard him utter on that score. He dropped, too, for the first time in her hearing, a hint that he had some power over Algernon, and would use it to his detriment. Rhoda mustered courage to ask him for an explanation of those words. But he merely answered, "No matter. It is no matter. It is not the money. I shall not get it, nor do I greatly heed it. But I can put him to shame publicly, if I am so minded."

The poor child began to perceive that any display of wounded feeling on her part, of reluctance to meet Algernon and his wife, of being in any degree crushed

and dispirited, would inflame her father's wrath against that family. And, although she had only the vaguest notions as to what he could or could not do to spite them, she had a hundred reasons for wishing to mitigate his animosity. So, with the gentle cunning that belonged to her nature, at once timid and persistent, she began to unsay what she had said, and to try to efface the impression which her first refusal had made upon her father.

"I—I have been thinking that you are right, father, in saying it will be best for me to go to Ivy Lodge. You know Mrs. Errington has always been good to me, and it would please her, perhaps. And—and, after all, why should I be afraid of going there?"

"Afraid of going there!" echoed old Max, with sternly-set jaw and puckered brow. "Why, indeed, should you be afraid? There's some as have reason to be afraid, but not my daughter—not Miss Maxfield. Afraid!"

"Perhaps people might think it strange if I did not go?"

"People! What people?"

"Well, no matter for that. But if you, father, think it well that I should go——"

"You shall go in a carriage from the Blue Bell Inn. And Sally shall accompany you and bring you back. And see that you are properly attired. I would have you wear your best garments. You shall not be shamed before that yellow-faced woman. I don't believe she has a better gown to her back than the one I bought you to wear at Dr. Bodkin's."

Rhoda waived the point for the moment; but, after a while, she was able to persuade her father that her grey merino gown, with a lace frill at her throat, was a more suitable garment in which to spend the evening at Ivy Lodge than the rich violet silk he recommended for the purpose. Real ladies, she urged timidly, did not wear their smartest clothes on such occasions. And old Max reluctantly accepted her dictum on this point. But nothing could shake him from his resolve that Rhoda should be conveyed to Mrs. Algernon Errington's door in a hired carriage. So, with a sigh, she yielded; devoutly wishing that a pelting shower of rain, or even a thunderstorm, might arrive the next evening, to serve as an excuse for her appearing at Ivy Lodge in such unwonted state.

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGBERD," "A PERFECT TREASURE," "AT HER MERCY," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XV. NEW TERMS.

"WHAT are you doing, I say, in my room?" inquired its proprietor, for the second time, of the unhappy John, who, still standing on the chair, exhibited almost as piteous a spectacle as when threatened with immediate extinction by the jaws of Fury.

"John is here, Mr. Alexander, by my directions," interposed Mrs. Raeburn, who with great presence of mind had already dismissed the servants from the scene. "I take the whole responsibility of his presence on my shoulders."

"I should have concluded as much, madam, had you not confessed it," observed brother Alec, drily. "It still remains, however, for you to explain why you sent him."

To look at them, and hear them speak, these two persons might have been said to have changed characters since their last meeting, save that it was as impossible for Mrs. Raeburn to be mild as for brother Alec to be insolent: her manner was deprecating almost to cringing, though the effort that it cost her to be so showed like a strong limb through a flimsy garment, while that of her brother-in-law was contemptuously stern. It was as though Goneril, after all her cruelties, had suddenly discovered that her father's abdication was invalid, and King Lear had come to his own again, not with triumph, indeed—far from it; with broken hopes, and a wounded heart—but with

full knowledge of the baseness of his kindred.

"My explanation, Mr. Alexander, of John's presence here is simple enough. When you left us this morning so suddenly, to our extreme distress and dismay, we knew not what to think. We were all consumed with apprehension, lest, resenting an imputation for which I alone was to blame, and which I regret above measure, as being utterly false and unfounded, you might have taken some desperate step. For my part, I honestly confess that I feared you had left the Priory for ever. Under those circumstances, I thought it my duty to place all your effects under lock and key, until such time as it might suit you to send for them."

"But my desk, madam, was under lock and key—at least when I left it this morning. It is now open, I perceive; and your son has possessed himself of a portion of its contents. It is curious that I, though absent, am able to offer, you see,"—here he looked round upon the family circle, which, I now noticed for the first time, had an addition to it in the person of my uncle Hastings—"a more complete solution of this proceeding than Mrs. Raeburn herself. Moved by suspicions of her own, or by information received from others, with respect to my possession of property, she resolved to convince herself of the fact by an examination of my private papers."

"Dear me, dear me, I hope not," said the rector, jingling the silver in his pocket, as he was wont to do when perturbed in mind. "You must take care what you say in your excitement, my dear friend; you must really take care."

"Look at the lady's face, and judge for yourself, Hastings," answered the other, coolly; "or look at this," and stepping forward, he plucked from John Raeburn's hand the paper it still mechanically grasped. "This is a statement of my property as at present invested—a document which had, doubtless, a very great interest for some of my relatives here, and which it is a pity, for their own sakes, that they did not obtain a sight of earlier." Bitter as was the old man's tone, it still spoke less of bitterness than of an inflexible purpose; and the stress that he had laid upon the words, "at present," had a significance it was impossible to misunderstand.

"I leave the Priory to-day, with my good friend the rector, here—"

"I am sorry for it, Alec," interrupted the attorney, speaking for the first time; "genuinely sorry, but not surprised. We have deserved it."

"You are right, Mark," answered the other, sternly, "and you are the one to blame. Your wife acted according to her nature; we do not look for gentleness in the wolf, or mercy in the wild-cat—"

"Pon my life, sir, I can't stand this," interposed the rector, vehemently; "you put me in a cold perspiration. I promised you, as a matter of friendship, and in hopes to be the means of reconciliation between you and your family, to accompany you hither, and afterwards elsewhere; but I must go away if you use—dear me!—such very extraordinary language."

"I have done, Hastings, with invectives; and I am sorry I indulged in them in your presence; I owe it to you to make your position here as painless and unembarrassing as I can. I was about to say, Mark, that you, whose nature, as I used to know it, is kind and genial, have been most to blame, since you have permitted it to be warped by another; since you have looked on with folded hands, while wrong and insult were heaped upon one, who had a claim upon you for protection, such as even this dog here would scarcely have ignored. However, I am not here to reproach you. I am come, accompanied by my good friend here, to set forth my future intentions, without possibility of mistake on either side, and also—of this, too, you may be quite certain—without hope of change. I have brought Mr. Hastings to be a witness to them; and I wish, besides, that all those who have

been acquainted with my treatment in this house"—here his voice failed him for the first time—"should also be present. Shall we adjourn to the drawing-room, madam, or may I have my say out here?"

"You may do just as you please, sir," answered Mrs. Raeburn—her face had grown deadly pale, and now and again she moistened her thin lips with her tongue, like one in fever—"this room is good enough for me."

We all six, therefore, remained where we were, in brother Alec's room; he himself standing by the desk, the rifling of which had nearly cost his nephew his life, and now bade fair to lose him his inheritance; John sitting, with disconcerted face, on the arm of the chair, the seat of which his mother filled; and the rest of us standing, with attentive looks, save Mark, who, turning his back upon us all, leant his head upon the chimney-piece, and listened without sign.

"I am not about to speak of late events," commenced the old man in a firm voice, "and still less of that far-back past, Mark, the remembrance of which was once so dear to me. I will not utter one word of reproach, for some hearts here feel already self-reproach, I see, and others no words of mine can move. But, in my own defence, I must needs say that I did not return to my native land with any idea of putting your affection to the proof; I had no doubt of its genuineness, no fear of its shortcoming whatever. But not knowing even whether you were still alive, I kept the same feigned name upon the voyage which I had always borne in Peru, so that, in case I had found you dead, and that you had left offspring, I might, without making known to them the fact of my relationship, until I saw fit to do so, judge of their characters for myself, and make up my mind in what proportion they should severally inherit my wealth. It was a foolish fancy, doubtless, and bitterly have I paid for it, since, if I had shipped under my own name, the fact of the fortune I had acquired in Peru would probably soon have come to your knowledge, and I should never have suspected that it was my riches alone that had evoked your welcome."

"Mr. Alexander is taking a very morbid view of human nature," observed Mrs. Raeburn, looking towards the rector with a sickly smile.

But my uncle, with all his gallantry and disposition to make matters pleasant,

moved not a muscle in encouragement, while brother Alec continued, as though no interruption had taken place.

"When I found, to my great joy, that you were alive, Mark, and still in the very place where we had grown up together from childhood, I came home impatient to embrace you, leaving my luggage and other property in town. This was another circumstance which tended eventually to mislead you as to my true position; but, as I tell you, it was wholly undesigned. When I reached this house, Heaven is my witness that I had no thought of any concealment of the state of my affairs. I was almost grieved—so tenderly I felt towards you—to find you prosperous, since the property I designed to at once make over to you, in accordance with our agreement—the half, that is, of my whole estate—would not prove so acceptable to you as though you had been in greater need of it. But I had not been an hour under your roof, when, on the part of one member of this family at least, I began to suspect the genuineness of the welcome that had been accorded to me. Even when I became convinced of this, however, it did not alter my intentions. This person, I reflected, was not connected with me by ties of kindred; if only my brother's arms were held open to me, that should be sufficient. I remembered how they had clasped me to his breast when we had parted years ago; they were still of the same flesh and blood as then. Let me not, however, inflict unnecessary pain. It is enough to say that I began to have my doubts of you, yourself, Mark; and I resolved to try you. If you had acknowledged our agreement, even though you had excused yourself from fulfilling the obligation it involved; if you had expressed to me your sense of the indignities that were heaped upon me, when it appeared that I was poor, and had acknowledged your powerlessness to prevent them, that would have been something, and I should have forgiven the rest." Here the speaker's voice trembled so excessively that he was compelled to pause; and Mrs. Raeburn took advantage of the circumstance to introduce an observation.

"When speaking of putting my husband on his trial, Mr. Alexander, you have omitted to state that you accomplished this by means of a deception. You told us that you were wealthy, and then acknowledged that you were poor. It was your duplicity, not your poverty, that

turned me against you. Since Mr. Hastings is your listener, it is but right that he should understand that there was a reason for my change of conduct. He should be made acquainted with all the facts—if with any."

"Madam, if I conceal anything from Mr. Hastings of what has happened here," returned brother Alec, coldly, "it is for Mark's sake. As to telling you that I was wealthy, I deny it. Your greedy wish was father to that thought."

"You said that the ropes and tackle of that box of silver had held firm, when you knew all the time that the bottom had come out," cried Mrs. Raeburn, reproachfully.

"I do not pretend, madam, that I took any pains to deceive you in the matter. And I will own that, when I discovered your utter heartlessness, I did deceive you. Let us not, however, waste time in recriminations. I will proceed at once to the business that has brought me back this morning. This paper, about which your son John yonder has shown himself so curious, is, as I have said, Mark, the statement of my property, as at present invested—about one hundred thousand pounds."

A shock seemed to pervade Mrs. Raeburn's system, as though she had incautiously laid hold of an electric-eel.

"The loss of the box of silver bars, which happened as I have described, was serious; but"—and here there was for the first time a touch of malice in the speaker's tone—"it was not the only box. Well, I call you all to witness that every shilling of my fortune, with the exception of a small proportion of it, which will never come to you, Mark, nor to any member of your family, I am about at once to invest in a life annuity. This resolve of mine, which is unalterable, must needs include Gertrude here, which I regret; but I am happy to think that she has a fortune of her own, which renders the matter of less consequence."

For my part, I thought this very unjust and harsh. Gertrude had always behaved towards the old man with affectionate solicitude, and had even been led into contention—a thing most repugnant to her nature—with her hostess, solely upon his account; and now the Raeburns had offended him, he must needs include her also, because she happened to be a relative of theirs, in the same sweeping condemnation. A tinge of heightened colour stole into the dear girl's cheeks at the mention of her name, but a quiet smile was her

only answer. To my great surprise, however, Mrs. Raeburn spoke up for Gertrude.

"You will do as you please, Mr. Alexander, with your own, of course; and though your displeasure with me and mine is most unreasonable, good taste forbids me to make any remonstrances; but, with regard to your cousin, she has always been your friend, and, indeed, I may say, has been devoted to you——"

"Mrs. Raeburn," interposed Gertrude with dignity, "I must beg of you to make no appeal to cousin Alec upon my account. As he very justly observes, I am in no want of his money, and whatever service I have been able to do him, was done, as he is well aware, without hope or wish for reward."

"Quite right! quite right!" assented the old man, coldly. "If Gertrude had been of that sort, she should have been duly recompensed."

The words "that sort," uttered, I must say, in a very contemptuous tone, appeared possibly to Mrs. Raeburn to have some personal significance; or, perhaps, now that all hope of reconciliation with her brother-in-law seemed to have died out, she saw no reason for repressing any longer the lava-tide of wrath that was pent up within her.

"And so, sir, you have only come back to us to spit out your malice, and have brought Mr. Hastings with you in order to be a witness to our humiliation. From you, that is no more than I should have expected; but as to the rector, here——"

"Madam, madam," interposed my uncle with nervous vehemence, "you are altogether wrong. If I had known that your brother-in-law would have said so much, I would have seen him—I mean I would certainly not have made one of your family party on this occasion. But, indeed, he has quite another object than that of vituperation.—Why the deuce don't you come to it, Alec?"

For the first time throughout this scene, which had certainly not been destitute of ludicrous situations, I saw a grin relax John's muscles; the rector's manifest discomfort and irritation would, indeed, if the circumstances had been less serious, have been the very height of comedy.

"You are right, Hastings, and I apologise to you for having let my tongue run when I promised to be silent," said brother Alec, frankly. "And you, madam, would, I admit, have just cause for complaint, if my mission here were only to re-

proach you. I came, however, to make a proposition, which, as it will certainly have its advantages for you, you will probably accept. Though rich, I am, alas! homeless; and it is my wish, notwithstanding all that has happened here, to still reside under this roof."

It was not only Mrs. Raeburn who started this time; an electric shock seemed to pass through the whole circle, with the exception of the rector, who had been already informed of the suggestion, and to whom, also, it would not appear so strange as it did to us, who had been witnesses to the treatment of our guest at the Priory. The attorney was most moved of all, and turned upon his brother a face full of tender surprise.

"This proposition, if accepted, will, however, no matter how it may be carried out, in no way affect the disposition of my property," continued the other, firmly, as if in answer to this look. "Being myself necessarily ignorant of the cost of English housekeeping, I have made inquiries upon the matter, and am informed that one thousand pounds would be a handsome annual allowance for a person in my position to allow for his maintenance in a fitting way, and I propose to pay that sum."

"Very liberal, I am sure," muttered Mrs. Raeburn, approvingly, but looking with great disfavour at my uncle.

My impression is, that she credited him with having estimated the cost of his friend's keep at the amount in question, with which, large as it was, she was dissatisfied; whereas my excellent relative was utterly uninformed upon such matters, and would probably have declined the post of arbitrator in any case. The fact was, as I afterwards discovered, that my aunt had been appealed to, and suggested five hundred a year as ample, and that brother Alec had doubled it.

"Then I am to understand that this arrangement meets your views, madam?" continued he. "Mrs. Raeburn is the housekeeper, and therefore I appeal to her, Mark," he added apologetically; to which the attorney only answered with a feeble smile. In his brother's presence it would have been idle indeed for him to have laid claim to domestic authority.

"The arrangement is satisfactory, Mr. Alexander," replied Mrs. Raeburn. "Most satisfactory, I am sure, to us; not only upon pecuniary grounds——"

"Those are the grounds alone on which I wish it to be transacted, madam," inter-

rupted her brother-in-law, sternly. "Let us consider, then, this business settled. I shall go to town this morning, but shall probably return to-morrow, or the next day, to take up my residence here. Hastings"—here he pulled out his watch—"we have not much time to spare before the train starts; if you will wait for me below-stairs while I pack up a few things, I will be with you in ten minutes."

At this hint we all withdrew from the apartment; but as I was going out last, the old man touched my arm.

"Will you help me to fill my carpet-bag, Sheddon?"

Of course I assented, though I was surprised at the request, for brother Alec was singularly independent of such assistance, and even in his palmy days had rarely summoned a servant for any purpose. When the door had closed upon the others, however, and I saw him sink into his accustomed chair, very white and trembling, it was easy to guess why he needed help. The previous scene, for which he had summoned all his strength, had completely exhausted him.

"Dear Mr. Raeburn," said I, "you are very unwell, and quite unfit, as it seems to me, for a long day's travel."

"No, no, lad, I shall do," said he, rousing himself with effort, and pointing out the few articles he wished put up.

I obeyed his directions; yet, really apprehensive of what might occur, again requested him to remember his debilitated condition.

"At least," said I, "put off your departure for to-day, Mr. Raeburn."

"Not I, lad," answered he, firmly. Then added, with a smile, "It would be hardly safe to stay under this roof with Mark's wife, with my will unsigned, and while Mark is my heir-at-law."

He spoke in jest, but there was a bitterness in his tone that made it half earnest, and gave his hearer a shudder.

THE DEAD CITIES OF THE ZUIDERZEE.

YOUNG people never entertain a suspicion that, one of these days, they will be changed into old people. "All men think all men mortal but themselves." The prosperous and over-crowded town naturally concludes, from what it sees, that it will always remain busy and populous. Of the existence of the past we have undeniable proofs; we acknowledge to have had an-

cestors: but can we realise the present's, nay, the future's, ever becoming ancient history? Shall we, by the lapse of time, be fossilised into ancestors ourselves? Human nature shuts its eyes and turns its deafest ear, while reason and logic answer in unison "Yes."

And yet—and yet—the mighty geological changes which we admit to have been effected by the continuous action of slight unheeded causes, might suggest that the fortunes of a country, as well as its geographical aspect, may gradually alter with the lapse of ages. Nevertheless, they fail to impress us with that very unwelcome possibility, although local prosperity varies much more rapidly than any material transformation of localities, which is not brought about by a sudden catastrophe. Not one, for instance, of the thronging inhabitants of Hoorn, or Enkhuizen, or Stavaren, surmised, a hundred years ago, that, in 1874, M. Henry Havard would print, with spirited etchings of their "monuments," his *Voyage aux Villes Mortes du Zuiderzee*, which we beg to recommend to our readers' perusal.

Human lives, though short, are still long enough to witness the birth, the mature vigour, the decrepitude, and death of many plants and animals. The rise and fall of nations and races; the foundation, prosperity, and decay of cities, demand greater longevity for us to observe them in our own proper persons. Important topographical revolutions are mostly effected still more slowly. Holland presents us with those events compressed into an unusually short space of time.

The Zuiderzee is of quite recent formation. It is the very youngest sea in Europe, not having acquired its full development until the close of the thirteenth century. When the Romans penetrated into these northern wilds, the present vast gulf was covered with dense forests. Bears and wolves disputed with man whatever game might lurk within them. In the midst of all was a great lake, the Flevo, mentioned by Tacitus, communicating with the sea by a river, which was called by the Romans *Flevum*, and which, perhaps, is the *Medemelach* of the Frisons, but whose course it is now impossible to trace. The lake, swollen by the rivers *Amstel* and *Yssel* (especially after *Drusus Nero* had diverted into the latter a portion of the Rhine waters), burst its bounds, converted woods into swamps, and soon became the *Zuiderzee*.

On its shores then arose many flourishing towns, which speedily acquired great influence and wealth, but which now are merely skeleton cities. This curious and interesting spectacle induced M. Henry Havard, in company with an artist friend, M. Van Heemskerck Van Beest, to undertake the circumnavigation of the Zuiderzee—a voyage which has not been performed by ten people in Holland, and probably by not one single writer, artist, tourist, or antiquary. They determined to visit ancient capitals, such as Medemblik and Stavoren, before the grass has grown over their ruins and their names are effaced from the map of the Netherlands.

The Dutch themselves are indifferent to most things that do not directly concern their interests. The dead towns of the Zuiderzee are unmistakably defunct; and, as there is little hope of bringing them to life again, they are inscribed with the gravestone motto, "Requiescant in pace." Travellers not animated by the true explorer's fire are deterred by special difficulties. The navigation of the Zuiderzee is far from being safe or easy. Mynheer Van Dunck's draughts of brandy and water "as deep as the Zuiderzee" made a shallow mistake in the simile adopted. On beholding that vast sheet of water in an ordinary map, you fancy you may run before the wind in any direction, but a good chart shows things under a different aspect. Shoals upheave themselves right and left, leaving between them a barely practicable way. A channel, fourteen, fifteen, sometimes twenty feet deep, is skirted by an enormous "zandbank," covered with often only one foot of water. The consequences of a squall or a slight mistake in steering are unpleasantly evident. The history of the Zuiderzee abounds in stories of shipwrecks, which are tragically illustrated by great carcasses of vessels seen here and there overtopping the waves, until they gradually fall piecemeal into ruin.

As there are no regular communications by water between the different points of the coast, the tourist must engage for his own use a bark drawing very little water, yet big enough to cook and sleep in, to hold provisions, and above all water, sufficient for a month; for nothing except bread and a few fresh vegetables can be reckoned on at the places visited. Nor are competent schippers easy to find. The shipping regulations tend to confine them to certain portions of the coast, and they

dislike to go out of their usual bounds. There are sailors who are born and die on the Zuiderzee, without having once been round it.

Through Van Heemskerck's assiduous search, a boatman named Sluring, a strict Protestant, was induced to say, "With God's assistance, and a good wind, we will manage to effect the voyage. I only make two conditions—to be judge of weather, that is, not to be obliged to go to sea in a storm; and, not to work on Sundays." As they went to see the country, and not to brave the elements, his terms were accepted. The modest but sufficient crew consisted of the schipper, his wife, one child, and one sailor. Sluring and his knecht were both young and active. The latter was lodged in a little hole in front; the master and his family occupied the chamber at the stern, where they spent their entire existence afloat, rarely going on shore, and never sleeping there, but always returning at night to their aquatic dwelling, which they preferred to the finest terra-firma mansion. The middle of the tjalk was divided, by old tapestry, into three apartments, the first of which, styled parlour and dining-room, was furnished with a carpet, four chairs, and a mahogany table. Unlike the cobbler of the ditty, the travellers had also kitchen and bedroom, the latter containing two smooth planks luxuriously spread with horsehair mattresses.

M. Havard possesses the talent of making a picture out of subjects that would drive ordinary sketchers to despair. What can a writer or an artist do with a horizon as flat as the distant sea, and a dead level foreground of pasture land? M. Havard shows what can be made of them. When most people would say there is absolutely nothing to paint or to describe, he sets that nothing before you in all its individuality; he causes you to see the absence of features which give their charm to other landscapes, and makes you half satisfied with the verdant monotony and the sluggish waters, which are the happy home of proud and contented millions. It is not his fault if the original is flat and tame, unprepossessing at first sight, and wearisome on long acquaintance. He gives you all; he can no more. But not every tourist has the skill to present you with an original so difficult to handle and to reproduce.

One Monday morning they started, according to agreement, and were at once rewarded by the magnificent spectacle of Amsterdam seen from the Ij. A great

black band outspreads itself beneath a grey-blue sky of indescribable softness; twenty thousand gable-ends seem to bite the sky, and towers and steeples proudly raise their belfries adorned with black balustrades and joyous chime-bells. To the right the Lutheran Church displays its corpulent dome; in the centre, the royal palace heaves its heavy cupola; on either side, slim and graceful spires point heavenwards, overtopping city churches which have renounced saintly names to take the commonplace titles of North and South Church, Old or New Church. In the foreground a rank of long and lean houses squeezing, crowding, and pushing against each other, show their brown faces, and, with their thousand windows framed in white, inquisitively stare at the great gulf which made the fortune of this singular city. The pressure of their weight on the piles which support them, slightly deranging their perpendicularity, gives them the air of a row of tipsy soldiers. The tall trees, which shade their granite doorsteps, protect them with a rampart of verdure, at whose foot groups of loungers and sailors stroll to and fro, while merchants, clerks, and port-officials pursue their diverse occupations.

Little by little the scene recedes, the houses become telescopic, the men invisible, the colours fade, the noise ceases. The bright tints melt gently into a blueish cloud. Here and there the steeples still reflect a ray of light, but their outlines are lost in a pearl-grey mist. Our ancestors have admired this spectacle, but our grandchildren will hardly know it; for shortly, in the place of this liquid plain, black and white cattle will graze, up to their knees in grass. A modest canal will replace this little sea, and the IJ, drained by modern skill, will exist only in our memories.

Along the Zuiderzee they thread their way, skirting its banks, interminably flat and green, whose striking sameness is only broken by scattered steeples pricking up from the plain, or windmills resting their weary sails. These eternal green levels, stretching out of sight, impress and at the same time lull the mind. In presence of an everlasting horizontal line, one has neither the inclination to think nor the strength to act. All other feelings are becalmed by an objectless but overpowering dreaminess, until Marken Island appears in the horizon; that is, the tops of its houses and the steeple of its church, for the ground is not yet visible. Then

uprise small villages perched on slight eminences, and then the whole island, like an immense green raft drifting over a dull-grey sea. Then, the intensely bright hues of the houses stand out strongly against the light blue sky. Black, red, and green—their most striking notes—acquire, by close contiguity, a strength which almost amounts to loudness.

What a joy for the artist is this natural colouring! And how easy, on witnessing it, to understand that Holland should have produced such eminent colourists! In fact, every inhabitant seems endowed with an intuitive sense of the harmony of hues. The houses, often painted with very violent contrasts, are still agreeable to the eye. In the utensils employed in ordinary life, the oppositions of tints are contrived with infinite skill. Thus, the milk-tubs are always painted blue, which brings out the whiteness of the milk; the pails for drawing water from the canals are red inside, which conceals the yellowish tinge of the water; the boats are decorated with green, red, and black, so well disposed as to show each other off to the best advantage. In one instance only did M. Havard find this instinct of the Dutch at fault. In an infirmary for children (at Enkhuizen) the little beds had yellow curtains!

For Marken, its customs and costumes; how M. Havard got on the right side of the children, and, through them, of their mothers (the fathers were all out fishing in the Zuiderzee), the reader must refer to his book. We merely observe that Marken would find it difficult to adopt a protective commercial policy. Native industry works—hard enough—within such narrow limits that, without free trade, it would be in a fix, having little besides flat-fish and hay to offer in return for furniture, clothing, for most of its food, beer, and even bread. Consequently, it would not be easy to demonstrate the merits of high import duties to a Markenar. Finally, at Marken births are numerous and deaths of agreeably rare occurrence. People of eighty are frequent enough to excite the hope that one may one day belong to that venerable fraternity.

Marken is neither dead nor dying; but higher up the Zuiderzee, Hoorn is charming in decay. After doubling the pier which, curved like a horn, gave, some say, its name to the town; after passing the big tower which commands the ancient port, you land on the brink of a delicious basin surrounded with verdure, trees, and

flowers. But the spot now covered by this bright vegetation was once occupied by ship-building dockyards, whence issued a fleet of vessels every year.

Hoorn is entirely ancient. All its houses are old coquettes, covered with pleasing carvings and pretty bas-reliefs, with a pointed roof tapering off in steps. They stoop a little, in order to see and to be seen the better. Everywhere projecting eaves, flights of granite steps, carved wood, and sculptured stone, varied by warm-tinted ruddy brick, give the dwellings an aspect of cheerful freshness which contrasts strangely with their age and their antique forms. And not merely two, nor ten, nor twenty houses are thus decorated. All are alike, from the first to the last, from one end of the town to the other. It seems absurd to walk about such streets in modern costume. There are places that ought to be visited in hat and feather, high boots, and a rapier at one's side. Hoorn is one of them.

Nevertheless, the view is not obstructed by the crowd. Passengers are distressingly scarce; and the broad deserted streets, leading one out of the other, all empty and inanimate, would be greatly improved by an increase of residents. And yet Hoorn once contained a busy and redundant population who covered the seas with their fleets, and studded the East with their factories. Every week its market was invaded by more than a thousand waggons, bringing mountains of cheese; every year its cattle-fair, founded in 1389, attracted multitudes of strangers from every corner of Europe. Hoorn then could number twenty-five thousand inhabitants. It is now reduced to a bare ten thousand, although its limits still remain the same, and its aspect is still superb, thanks to the massive towers and monumental gates that have survived the ancient ramparts.

When De Ruyter swept the North Sea with a broom at his mast-head, his squadron contained a certain number of vessels equipped by the town of Hoorn. Hoorn once possessed ten large churches, most of which still exist, but are no longer used for public worship. The oldest and the vastest, the Grootte Kerk, built in 1369, adorned with great magnificence and enriched with a piece of the true cross, was destroyed by fire in 1833. Hoorn gave birth to Abel Janszoon Tasman, the discoverer of New Zealand and Van Diemen's Land; to Jan Pietersz Koen, who, in 1619, founded Batavia; and to Wouter Corneliszoon Schouten,

who, in 1616, first doubled the extreme point of South America, and gave it the name of Cape Hoorn in memory of his native town. Besides these intrepid navigators, Hoorn reckons amongst her children a good number of doctors and learned men, whose names, latinised in "us" after the fashion of the day, have fallen into complete oblivion. Their fame has shared the fortune of their birthplace; which was brought so low as to be unable to supply our travellers with a scrap of fresh meat. A leg of veal was indeed discovered hanging in the principal butcher's shop; but it was reserved to feast a neighbouring and still more decadent city.

This is Enkhuizen, which has altogether outlived itself. Nor has it been long-lived—eight or nine centuries old; no more. About the year 1000, in the time of Count Thierry the Third, a few houses (*enkele huizen*) were built on this tongue of land, which is a peninsula stretching out of another peninsula. Where sixty thousand active and industrious inhabitants once contributed to the wealth and power of Holland, you can now scarcely muster five thousand souls. The port which sent out a thousand ships, at present owns fewer than the island of Marken. The silent streets are too wide for the scanty passengers, and whole quarters have disappeared. If you stroll through this deserted city with a resident who knows its history, he will tell you, while you gaze at its tumble-down houses, "This was once a rich and busy quarter; those mansions belonged to our aristocracy, one of the wealthiest in the world."

But the most touching spectacle is where the houses finish. You think the bounds of the town are reached; nothing of the kind. Ever so far off, out in the country, a city-gate is standing. A century ago, up to that gate, houses were crowded one against the other. To reach it now is a twenty-minutes' walk through pasture land, in which grass grows almost as thick as in the polders.* Sheep are

* Polders are lakes or meers which have been drained, and thereby brought into cultivation as pasture land. These pastures are intersected by ditches which serve for further drainage, subdivision, and water carriage. Polders are a specially artificial result. In other countries the emptying of a lake is an operation whose duration and expense are limited; the thing is done once for all. But in Holland the difficulty consists, not in opening an outlet for the water, but in preventing water from entering, and in pumping out what falls from the skies, or rises from springs, by means of machines or windmills, which must be constantly at work. The former Sea of Haarlem is now a vast and productive polder.

feeding, and cows chewing the cud, where human passions have had their full swing. The plain is an immense cemetery, but void of crosses, coffins, or monuments; a vast common grave, an enormous charnel-house, in which lie interred pell-mell the pleasures of the rich and the labour of the poor, the industry of the artist and the artisan. And yet a hundred and fifty years ago it was populous, full of streets and houses, shops and churches, crowded with men striving to forward the Republic's interest at the same time as their own, proud of their liberty, rejoicing in their power.

In the Government warehouses, which still exist, is perhaps the most considerable manufactory of buoys in Europe; which is explained by the circumstance that no spot in the world makes greater use of them than the *Zuiderzee*. There are ancient tapestries at *Enkhuizen*, and pictures, notably one magnificent specimen of *Ferdinand Bol* in the burgomaster's cabinet. Those in the *Stadhuis* illustrate the way in which the Dutch language lends itself to puns, double meanings, and mistakes.

A gentleman asked the burgomaster's permission to copy a picture in the aforesaid town-hall. Leave was given, and the doorkeeper was informed that a painter, who would be there next morning with his easel, was to be shown into the Marriage Chamber. Now easel and ass are the same, "ezel," in Dutch. The old fellow, who had never seen an easel in his life, wondered what a painter could possibly want with a donkey in the room where civil marriages were contracted. All that night he got no sleep, through horror at the monstrous introduction. Nevertheless, he resolved to obey without grumbling or asking impertinent questions; but, as a precautionary measure, he covered the floor with a litter of straw.

Dutch humour, however, finds opportunities of exercising itself independently of verbal equivocations. *M. Havard* and his friend, while hunting out the local curiosities at *Hoorn*, asked an honest-looking fellow if he could direct them to any remarkable old things, to antiquities of any sort, which were not known to the generality of strangers.

"Antiquities, old things?" he said, after a minute's deep reflection. "You have only to go to the end of that street, and you will find exactly what you want."

They followed his advice, and found themselves in front of the Old Women's Hospital.

A FEW ODD PLEAS.

BROUGHAM, defending a rogue charged with stealing a pair of boots, unable to gainsay his client's guilt, demurred to his conviction because the articles appropriated were half-boots, and half-boots were no more boots than a half-guinea was a guinea, or half a loaf a whole one. The objection was overruled by Lord *Estgrove*, who, with befitting solemnity, said: "I am of opinion that boot is a *nomen generale* comprehending a half-boot; the distinction is between a half-boot and half a boot; the moon is always the moon, although sometimes she is a half-moon." Had *Brougham* proved the boots to be old ones, his man would probably have come off as triumphantly as a tramp tried at *Warwick* for stealing four live fowls. The fowls had been "lifted" in *Staffordshire*; still the indictment was declared good, it being held that a man committed felony in every county through which he carried stolen property; but when it came out in evidence that the fowls were dead when the thief was taken, he was at once set free, on the ground that he could not be charged with stealing four live fowls in *Warwickshire*. Such hair-splitting was common in the good old days—not such very old days either—when the law compounded for its cruelty, by providing plenty of loopholes for the escape of offenders. It has mended its ways since, but all the holes are not yet stopped. In the matter of embezzlement, for instance, such nice distinctions are drawn, that theft is not always theft, but sometimes merely helping oneself to one's own. Liberal as our judges are in defining what is a man's own, they have not gone quite so far as their *Neapolitan* brethren, who directed the acquittal of a knavish rent-collector, because the money belonged to the people, and as the collector was one of the people he was part-owner of the money, and could not be punished for stealing what was his own. Law and justice parted company then, as they did when a female receiver experienced the very tender mercy of a *Hungarian* court. The accused, a woman owing to forty-four, did not attempt to combat the evidence, but simply pleaded infancy. Just six months before, she had renounced Judaism and been baptised a Christian, and as in *Hungary* the date of baptism is taken as the date of birth, she contended that she was only six months

old in the eyes of the law. The bench agreed with her, and the ingenious infant was set at liberty, licensed to set all laws at defiance for a score of years.

Ladies with a Euthanasian mission, and philosophers holding that suicide may be a duty, and murder a meritorious deed, should betake themselves to the land of the Magyars if they pine to be appreciated. A year or two ago one Esaba, a shoemaker, killed his sister-in-law. The girl had won him from her sister, and the injured wife, upon discovering how affairs stood, left her home in righteous wrath; whereupon this faithless shoemaker went out and bought a revolver, wherewith to end his life and domestic trouble together. While he was gone, the frail cause of all took poison, and when Esaba came home to carry out his resolve, he found her writhing in agony on the floor. Horrified at the sight of her sufferings, the shoemaker shot his paramour four times, and finding she still lived, put her out of her pain with an axe. Then he shot himself as ineffectually as he had done the girl, and rushed out of the house to drown himself in a lake hard by, but was baulked by the arrival of the police just in the nick of time. For the murder of his mistress Esaba was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. This, he thought, was more than he deserved, and he appealed against the sentence to the High Court of Pesth, pleading that the dead woman had poisoned herself past recovery, and he had only used his pistol and axe out of a kind desire to shorten her agony. The court in its wisdom altered the term of imprisonment to three years; although, if it considered his act a charitable one, it is hard to see how it was justified in punishing the man at all. In 1731 a woman of Montagne, France, killed an old man by burning the crown of his head and the soles of his feet, in hopes of thereby breaking a spell he had cast upon her husband; and it was urged in her behalf that she was actuated by conjugal affection—an argument, however, that did not avail with her judges. Still it must be allowed that the superstitious wife was more deserving of sympathy than the self-confessed attempter of Colonel Phayre's life, who, professing to look upon the colonel as his father, laid the blame of his baseness upon his luck: he was predestined to do what he had done, and could not help himself; while the accomplice thought it sufficient to say he was a

poor man, who could not be expected to refuse a bribe. Had the precocious pair ever heard of Fenianism, they might have raised the more specious plea that killing is no murder, if the killing be done to serve a political purpose; like the Frenchman who objected to being condemned to death for murdering his wife and child, because capital punishment for political offences was abolished, and he only executed his relations because they were Legitimists; a plea that proved as ineffectual as the argument of the French advocate, that as his client, by killing his father and mother, had rendered himself an orphan, it was the duty of society to protect the bereaved creature. That interesting orphan was as much to be pitied as the Irishman who, leaving his wife at a public-house, went home and hanged his little son to the lintel of the door, "to frighten his wife out of her bad habits."

Many a man has thought with Proteus, that unheeded vows may heedfully be broken, and has paid smartly for the error. It is not so easy to cry off a matrimonial bargain if the other party concerned refuses an order of release; and when he is compelled to show a jury just cause for the default, the recalcitrant lover is apt to cut a pitiful figure. The pleas put upon the record being mere formal ones, he has to rely upon the excuse devised to mollify the lady; and such excuses are generally very shallow ones. Most defendants, in breach of promise cases, try to shift the responsibility upon somebody else's shoulders. One declines to keep troth because his mother does not altogether approve his choice, and he cannot forsake his parent in her old age; another, after courting a girl openly for sixteen years, finds he had no idea the prejudice his mother had against her was so strong, and filial affection forbids him to run counter to that prejudice; and a third cannot marry against his father's inclinations, the old gentleman inclining, as the girl's lover knew, to take the lady to himself. One young rascal asked his dear Polly to release him from his promise, out of consideration for a grumpy old uncle's objection to receiving a dressmaking girl for a niece; while a cheesemonger's assistant suddenly discovers that his prospects will be blighted by keeping faith with his "spotless dove," it being utterly impossible for him to marry one with whom his friends would not associate, because she was the daughter of a small farmer. More

artful defendants pretend to be actuated by consideration for the lady's welfare; one pleading he is such a ne'er-do-weel that, if he gets any money he can never keep it, and, therefore, is not likely ever to be able to keep a wife; and another discovers, at the last moment, that his love is delicate, and his means insufficient to provide the luxuries a lady under such circumstances would require. Not quite such a lame excuse, as that of the gentleman who declined to ratify his agreement, on account of a bad foot and general debility; and assuredly more reasonable than the extraordinary declaration made in open court by a defendant, that he had broken off his engagement, because the plaintiff took no interest in cricket, and was deficient in conversational powers!

A rough-and-ready fellow brought a ten years' lovemaking to an end with, "Dear Miss,—I write these few lines to say that I don't think you and me should agree if we was to come together. I am generally inclined, and you are the other way, so I beg to be excused." The generous creature had to pay roundly for not discovering the incompatibility before; as did another fickle swain, who, after five years' courtship, found out that he did not love his promised bride as truly as he should do, and as summer had rolled on without throwing additional light and warmth on his affection, and creating a proper attachment, begged to withdraw from the engagement, and counselled the lady to make as little fuss about it as possible, as revenge and retaliation could do no good. We have more sympathy for Mr. John Jackson, who felt compelled to give up fair Miss Bell, because she resented certain freedoms on his part and pitched into him "so effectually and unmercifully, sufficient to curb the zeal of any man," that it set him to thinking the thing "solidly over," and finally impelled him to write to the object of his affections: "I came to the conclusion, first, that you considered my disposition bad and unworthy; second, that you are quite arbitrary and too decisive; third, that we are of different religions, therefore I considered it wisdom to forget the acquaintance whatever effort it might cost. I have been in that strain of thoughts ever since the time you might see when you were over there; although I tried, I could not make free, for I always felt restraint when in your presence. This proceeded from my being conscious of having lowered myself in your estimation,

also that you put me down so low that I cannot come up again.

So from you I must part,
I make the sacrifice from my heart;
So farewell Miss Bell,
Alone I'll dwell.—Yours respectfully,
JOHN JACKSON."

It is often said that British jurymen are too liberal in awarding damages to disconsolate damsels, and too ready to accept their interpretation of looks, and words, and soft nothings. It may be so, but male flirts might go farther and fare worse. In 1873 Miss Roxalana Homan sued Alexander Earle for breach of promise of marriage, in the court at Brooklyn, New York. The plaintiff admitted there had been neither a written nor a verbal promise, but pleaded that the defendant had kissed her many times, and brought witnesses to prove the fact. The judge told the jury no interchange of words was necessary; the glance of the eye, and the conjunction of the lips, when frequent and protracted, being quite sufficient. The jury gave the lady fifteen thousand dollars.

One Eckhart was brought before a court in Philadelphia for having deserted his wife and family. He did not deny the desertion, but handed in a document setting forth eighteen pleas in extenuation. Two of them alleged infidelity on his wife's part, the others ran thus:—"1. She slaps me four times on the back. 2. Smash the large looking-glass and break over my head. 3. Try's to break my bedroom door with a haschet, where to see thirteen marks yet. 4. Firert a hot coffee-pot over my head and skull me. 5. She sold my Pluplick-house for two hundred and thirty dollars. I was offered eight hundred dollars. 6. She trit to kill my boy with a flat-iron, fourteen years old. 7. She licked my boy, twelve years old, unmorcell. 8. Ditto, the little girl seven years old. 9. She drinks very hard. 10. She went to a pluplick-house, treating a party of men four times, and came home drunk, committing assault and battery. 11. She left us for three monts. 12. She breaks all the crockery in the house. 13. She is half-crazy; her sister died in the insane hospital. 14. Not fit taker care of children. 15. A new high hat smash is with a poker. 16. When she commit assault and battery on me, then she runs out and hollows murder, and puts the blame on me." The unhappily-mated man of many pleas avoided weakening his own

case like the duck-stealer, who first said he did not steal the duck; next that he found it; then, that it was given to him; then, that he bought it; then, that his dog picked it up; and, finally, that a policeman put the duck in his pocket. His counsel could not safely adopt any one of his too inventive client's explanations in the face of the other five, so he put the case to the jury thus:—"My unfortunate client has told half-a-dozen different stories as to how he became possessed of this duck. I don't ask you to believe all the stories, but I will ask you to take any one of them." The jury acquitted the prisoner. A Frenchwoman charged before the Tribunal of Correctional Police with singing in the Palais-Royal gardens, and insulting the officers who removed her, ingeniously pleaded that she had a very compassionate heart, and was seized with the idea of singing, in order to get some money to buy cakes for the poor little children she saw around her. Reminded that, as she had above forty francs in her pocket, she had no need to sing, she replied that she was a widow, living upon an irregularly paid pension, and therefore dared not trench upon her purse. As to acting violently, her nervous system had become very irritable, and she was so shocked at being laid hold of by a man, that very probably her tongue pronounced words her principles and education disavowed. Upon hearing herself sentenced, she cried out, "A fortnight's imprisonment! My pension is not paid me. I am not allowed to sing, and I am sent to prison! My nerves can never endure so much—never! never!"

It is pleasant to know that one English-woman has achieved her rightful position, without taking to the platform. The husband of this pattern for her sex, appearing to answer a School Board summons, declared it was his earnest wish that his child should go to school; but his domestic arrangements were entirely governed by his wife, who, he was happy to say, governed him. A bigoted magistrate refused to recognise this abdication of masculine prerogative, and told him he must be held responsible, as head of his family, even if his wife ruled him with a rod of iron. More mindful of man's dignity was a sweet-stuff dealer, who pleaded that it was not to be expected that a guardian of the parish was going to serve a farthing's-worth of toffy, when he had got a child to do it. In a similar

predicament an Exeter dame asserted her right to do as she liked with her own children, and vindicated her refusal to send them to the Board school on the ground that, there, children were only taught how to dance and to sing—

Ten little niggers went out to dine,
One choked his little self, and then there were nine.

The owner of a stolen Bible might reasonably incline to forgive a thief actuated by a godly propensity; but the members of a building society, whose secretary helped himself to twelve thousand pounds, may be excused if they did not resent the robbery the less because the money was spent upon experiments in litho-photography, and in connection with a company for providing public gardens for the people. The outrageous doctrine that "the end justifies the means," stood another rogue in no better stead. He was a baker's man, charged with embezzling twelve pounds of his master's money. Admitting the fact, he pleaded in extenuation that he had laid out every penny upon religious tracts, which he gave away as he went his round, and actually got off with a gentle intimation from the magistrate, that "it was a mistake to take money in a dishonest manner for a religious purpose!" The baker's kind admonisher would have commiserated the poor woman who was "chemicalised by the sewer;" and dealt lightly with the drunk and incapable groundsel-merchant who "got a little drop too much, that got into his head; he got abroad, and then got on the ground;" and the hatter who stripped the park-beds of their flowers under the influence of an attack of neuralgia. Nor would he have been hard upon the drunken mail-cart driver, who pleaded that he had only smashed a deal perambulator in his mad rush through a crowded street; and as to the bacon-stealer who averred that the Devil told her to steal the bacon, and she was obliged to obey him, the worthy magistrate would probably have dismissed her with—"My dear woman, you are labouring under a delusion."

A plea, bad in one sense, may be good in another. A man lent another a ladder. After the lapse of a few months he wanted it back again, but the borrower flatly refused to give it up. He thereupon sued him for the value of the ladder. The defendant pleaded that the ladder was borrowed on an express condition—that he was to return it as soon as he had done

with it. He had not done with it, and therefore no action would lie: the plaintiff was nonsuited. Impudence is not always so successful. The court might smile at the burglar's pleading it was so easy to break into country houses, but it sentenced while it smiled; and the Scotch prison-breaker vainly urged that the prison was weak, and he had sent a message to the gaoler that, if he did not get him some more meat, he would not stay another hour. Not a whit more satisfactory was the defence made by an Irish relieving-officer for neglecting to open the polling-booths at the proper time, and for allowing the ballot-papers to be shown about, when he pleaded that the voters had no reason to complain about the non-opening of the booths, since they were equally unready; and, for the other matter, he had acted with the strictest impartiality, and permitted anyone to examine the voting-papers who wished to do so. Even more impertinent was the answer of a Welsh railway company in an action brought by a gentleman for the cost of a conveyance he had taken, after waiting in a station until twenty minutes past one for the departure of a train advertised to start at five minutes past twelve, by which the company contended that punctuality would be inconvenient to the public, and that the plaintiff had no business to trust to their time-tables, as the irregularity of the train-service was notorious. The latter plea was ingenious certainly, but not so daring in its ingenuity as that advanced by certain grocers, who accounted for the presence of iron filings in the tea they sold, by averring that the soil of China was strongly impregnated with iron, and the iron must have been blown upon the leaves before they were gathered—a statement as likely to be credited as that of the thief in Glasgow, who, when stopped by a policeman with, "What have you got in that bundle?" replied, "I have lost my powers of speech, and consequently can't tell you anything about it!"

UNDER THE HAMMER.

FRANKINCENSE AND MYRRH.

ALL the costly cargoes of the navy of Tharshish, which came but once in three years to King Solomon, would hardly produce a fluctuation in the great market of Mincing-lane, where are to be found "gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks" galore. Peacock feathers and monkey

skins we have already viewed, and we need not pause longer in the ivory warehouse than to note that each "tooth" is sawed into three pieces—sold separately—the solid point, or "ball ivory," the hollow but still useful "middle," and the inferior stump of thin poor stuff towards the root: but many potent drugs and precious gums—frankincense and myrrh, spikenard and manna; many fragrant spices—"cinnamon and ginger, nutmegs and cloves;" many costly seeds, anise and cumin, coriander and fenugreek, bear odorous witness of their presence in "the Lane" itself and in the neighbouring warehouses, and well deserve attention. At the great fortnightly drug sales at the Commercial Sale Rooms, in Mincing-lane, and the Corn Exchange Sale Rooms, in Mark-lane, in the warehouses, and at the brokers' offices, where samples are on view, drugs are known by names other than those by which they are recognised by everyday folk. Frankincense, for instance, is known to commerce as gum olibanum. On the rocky shores of Arabia Felix—the kingdom of the Queen of Sheba—and on the limestone hills of the Somali country, this famous gum is collected by the natives, and finds its way to Bombay, and thence to Mincing-lane. Quite recently, the frankincense-tree has been the object of the elaborate and valuable researches of Dr. Birdwood, now curator of the Indian Museum. According to this excellent authority, there are many species or varieties of the frankincense-tree, yielding different qualities of the "lubán," or milky gum, which has, from time immemorial, sent up the smoke of sacrifice from high places. Distinct records have been found of the traffic carried on between Egypt and Arabia in the seventeenth century B.C. In the paintings at Dayr el Bâhri, in Upper Egypt, are representations not only of bags of olibanum, but also of olibanum-trees, planted in tubs, being conveyed by ships from Arabia to Egypt; and among the inscriptions deciphered by Professor Dümichen are several describing shipments of precious woods, heaps of incense, and "verdant incense-trees, brought among the precious things from the land of Arabia, for the majesty of this God Amon, the lord of the terrestrial thrones." The main northerly route, however, of frankincense was not through Egypt. The Sabæans sold their gum to the Arabs, whose caravans carried the precious stuff to Gaza of the Philis-

tines, who reverently burnt some of it before their fish-god, Dagon, and sold the rest—like smart traders—at a good profit. In ancient times it was accepted as tribute, along with silver and gold. Darius, for instance, received from the Arabians an annual tribute of one thousand talents of frankincense. To the London market, gum olibanum comes in barrels; and when of fine quality, appears in detached tears of gum-resin, of a pale yellowish or of a milky hue. It is of no use in medicine, but is entirely reserved for its traditional fate—to form the principal constituent in the incense burned before the altar. The Roman Catholic and Greek churches, and especially the churches of South America, consume an immense quantity of olibanum, as do the Chinese also in their joss-houses. Frankincense accommodates itself to every creed, but in the western world, at least, is rarely burned alone. Marjoram and other herbs are added to it, and also a considerable quantity of gum benzoin, an important item in the drug trade, called in commercial English, gum Benjamin. In the deep forests of Siam grows the unknown tree which produces the finest quality of benzoin. There is plenty of it on view this morning. Great heaps of flattened tears, some of which have agglutinated together, show, by their milky appearance, that the Siam Benjamin is of good quality. In the mouth this fine gum soon becomes soft, and may be “chawed” like mastic. When put into the incense-burner, it soon evolves a powerful fragrance, together with the irritating fumes of benzoic acid—which probably account for the “choky” effect of incense upon many persons. Long before the Siam gum was imported in any quantity, a large trade was carried on in the inferior benzoin of Sumatra, worth about half as much per hundredweight. This is seen in the form of great cubes of solid stuff, like Castile soap in colour and appearance, all trace of the original tears being lost, except where here and there white opaque particles give it the “almondly” look prized by buyers, for the reason that the almondiness of the gum reveals the quantity of benzoic acid it contains. The consumption of benzoin in the Greek churches is very great, and a large quantity is also consumed in the East. Like other gums, it is knocked down in Minoing-lane in lots of two or three cases each, at so much per hundredweight. Some keen-looking men

are examining the gum myrrh, offered for sale in cases and bales, and merchants of the good old school are complaining that myrrh is no longer so good as it used to be, and that miserable yellow and brown translucent stuff now takes the place of the fine pink opaque teardrops of former days. A tremendous fuss has always been made about myrrh, which, like many other gums, is a native of the country about the Red Sea. It has been used as a constituent of incense, and contains certain bitter aromatic properties, but, except for making washes for the teeth, is of very little value. Nevertheless, it ranked high in olden times, being an ingredient in the holy oil used in the Jewish ceremonial, as laid down by Moses, and it also formed part of the celebrated Kypri of the Egyptians, a preparation used in fumigations and embalming. For a long time it was one of those things without which no present from an Eastern to a Western potentate was complete, but it has at last fallen into something like contempt. Next to the myrrh are twenty-one cases of “picked” and many packages of gum Arabic—so called because it grows in Africa and the East Indies. The various qualities are easily distinguished by those to the manner born or made, but are apt to deceive an “outsider” trying to pick out the best gum by the unaided light of his own intelligence. Those fine handsome pieces, large and beautiful, with their yellow or pinky translucency most resembling uncut topaz, are, my friend, gay deceivers, only fit for common “stick-fast,” and will never be raised to the dignity of true druggists’ mucilage, like those little muddy, opaque tears of a dirty white colour. Of somewhat different complexion are the pebbly drops of gum ammoniacum, a Persian product, useful as an expectorant and as an ingredient in plasters, and valuable when in well-defined lumps, from the size of a pea to that of a cherry, but less eagerly bought when the tears have run together—a rule which holds good, by-the-way, of almost all gums; such, for instance, as kino, a valuable astringent, which, when of the best quality, looks like a heap of garnets or carbuncles. Gum elemi, however, is an exception to the rule, generally arriving in a soft state, like old honey. Many other gums, other than those I have enumerated, are sold from time to time in “the Lane,” but are hardly considered medicinal. Chief of those are gum copal, largely used in varnish making; and gum kaurie, a fossil

gum (like amber) dug out of the submerged forests of the antipodes.

Of the medicinal roots on sale, spike-nard, or sumbul root, is a somewhat rare visitor, the musky smell, for which it was highly prized in ancient times, being now supplied by the musk of the musk-deer. This drug arrives in its natural condition in small pouches, packed in tins or caddies, and often horribly adulterated. Downright fictitious musk is also sent to this country, the emptied pouches being refilled with abominable trash concocted for purposes of fraud by the "heathen Chinese" and other child-like orientals. A great quantity of genuine musk, however, comes from Tonquin, from Central Asia, and from the Indian Archipelago. The extraordinary permanence of this perfume is well known. A handkerchief once scented with it may be washed a dozen times and stored away for years, but when taken out the scent of the musk-deer "will cling to it still" and display the power falsely ascribed to the rose. Other instances of the endurance of musk might be given—such as the famous one of the apartments of the Empress Josephine at Malmaison, from which no quantity of scrubbing, painting, and fumigating could remove the subtle penetrating odour. Ambergris, of which sundry tins are for sale, is another curious animal product, a secretion of the sperm whale, still known as a perfume, and sold at a large price in Mincing-lane, but much fallen from its mediæval celebrity as a condiment. We do not care much now for dishes "drenched with ambergris"—truffles being good enough for the gourmands of these degenerate days. Saffron, too, has fallen from its high estate, and is no longer prized as of old as medicine, condiment, perfume, or dye. In the good old times saffron and almond-milk were the sheet-anchors of the "master cooks" of such luxurious monarchs as our Richard the Second; but, except in bouillabaisse and baba cakes, saffron is now rarely met with on our tables. So highly was it esteemed in the middle ages, that tremendous edicts were fulminated against sophisticators of the popular condiment. In Germany—notably at Nuremberg—a Safranschau or saffron inspection was established, and adulterated goods, whether holden "knowingly" or not, were burnt, together with the proprietors. At one time it was largely cultivated around Saffron Walden, in Essex, but the cultivators do not seem to have

made a very good thing of it, judging by the well-known saying, "Saffron Walden—God help you." Another potent condiment greatly used by our forefathers, and still loved by our Indian subjects, is asafoetida, with its tremendous odour as of acres of garlic double distilled. Modern Europeans wonder little at the aversion of Horace for the Persian dishes, into which asafoetida doubtless largely entered, and conclude that the dainty poet, to whom even garlic was abhorrent, must have been driven from the table by the frightful exhalations of the potent drug, which, in Western countries, is now only used in medicine as a stimulant and antispasmodic. Sweet galingale, now written "galangal," is also a condiment strongly recommended by mediæval cooks—who powdered almost everything with it—but now completely supplanted in the kitchen by ginger. It is, however, imported in large quantities into London, probably for re-exportation, as this Chinese root is much used in Russia by brewers and makers of vinegar and cordials. Old remedies drop out of use in the quickly-moving West, and are supplanted by new. Those things like sausages are the valuable remedies against nervous headache known as Guarana, and those dried flowers are the kousoo of commerce—of Abyssinian origin, and the fashionable specific against internal parasites. At the appearance of kousoo in the stomach the terrible tapeworm gives up the ghost at once, and relieves patient and physician of what at one time was an almost inexpugnable enemy. Beside two hundred bales of galangal are ranged about a score of Seneca root, once used by the Seneca Indians as a remedy for the bite of the rattlesnake, but now employed in cases of pneumonia, asthma, and rheumatism, and very popular among white people in America. Rhatany root, another Indian remedy, but from South America, is also for sale, and from a native preservative of the teeth and gums has grown into general employment as a powerful astringent. Fifty bags of turmeric quicken the pulse of old Indians who have reduced their livers to a hopeless condition by a prolonged course of curry-eating. Huge quantities of this well-known root are consumed in this country for dyeing and in the manufacture of the thousand-and-one mixtures sold as real "Indian curry powder," many of which, it is fair to state, are quite as good as any imported ready

made from India, the superiority of the curries made there being solely attributable to the freshness of the condiments used. Other ingredients of curry powder are offered for sale in bulk: coriander seeds, with their fragrant smell and aromatic taste; cardamoms, with their hot biting twang; fenugreek, with its spicy flavour, beloved by white men and black, by bipeds and quadrupeds; and cumin, with its strong aromatic taste and smell—not unlike caraway. It is curious that the four last-mentioned seeds are largely used in veterinary practice, and fenugreek especially is employed in flavouring artificial cattle foods.

Caraway is a widely-distributed plant, growing from Morocco to Iceland. It is cultivated in England, but Holland sends our chief supply—some twenty thousand hundredweight annually, devoted mainly to seed cakes, distilled waters, and the manufacture of oil of caraway. Abroad it is applied to a multitude of purposes, as a spice in bread, cakes, cheese, pastry, confectionery, and sauces, and above all as an ingredient of the alcoholic liquid known in Germany as Kümmel, and the famous liqueur now drunk all over the world under the name of Doppel Kümmel, or Alasch. Anise is another historical remedy for human and animal complaints. It is an excellent aromatic stimulant and carminative, and is imported from Southern Russia, the Levant, Northern India, and recently from Chili. Fennel seed, which is of various kinds, is also largely employed in cattle medicines; and outsiders are struck with astonishment at the large quantities of seeds disposed of in "the Lane." Dill, for instance—only connected in the popular mind with a grandmother's remedy called dill-water—is imported in large parcels, and meets with a ready sale.

From these aromatic seeds—suggesting highly-spiced dishes and soothing cordials—it is decidedly unpleasant to turn to the subject of senna, of which several cases of Alexandrian, and many more bales of Bombay, are offered for sale. The finest Alexandrian senna is very carefully picked, and contains only the leaflets of the plant, without stalks, stumps, or other admixture, and, when of a fine greenish colour and unbroken in the leaf, fetches the best price. Bombay senna, another variety of the plant, is chiefly the produce of Arabia, and is shipped from Moka, Aden, and other Red Sea ports to Bombay, and thence to

Europe. It is poor stuff as compared with the Egyptian senna, being collected without care, and full of all sorts of impurities. On the uses of senna I forbear to dilate, and turn from it to contemplate those bags filled with a dried root of nice plump, parsnipy, chumpy appearance—a most valuable root—it is jalap, suggestive of "powders," those loathsome remedies which lie concealed in black-currant jelly, and bring that sweetmeat into disrepute. I have no doubt that black-currant jelly is nice, and that black-currant pudding is excellent to those who never were young, but to me they irresistibly suggest the hideous "powders" of my youth, and produce inevitable nausea. Under the name of Indian rhubarb, jalap was introduced into Europe by the Spanish conquistadores, and is now imported into England at the rate of a hundred and sixty thousand pounds per annum. In scientific works it is described as a "brisk cathartic," having a "mawkish taste, followed by acidity." Mawkish indeed! Ugh! By way of getting through this savoury part of the show as quickly as possible, let us look at the samples of rhubarb. From the earliest times the rhubarb root has been grown in the western provinces of China, and has, in time, acquired three various designations, by no means indicative of the place where it is grown, but rather of the routes travelled by it in its western course, which have given rise to the familiar titles of Turkey, Russian, and China rhubarb. From the time of Marco Polo, rhubarb found its way over the barren steppes of Central Asia, by Yarkund, Kashgar, and Turkestan, to the Caspian and Black Seas (hence radix pontica or rha ponticum), or by a southern deflection from that route by Bokhara and Afghanistan, and thence down the Indus or the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea and Alexandria, and through Persia to Asia Minor. This was Turkey rhubarb. In 1653 China permitted Russia to trade on her frontiers, and the line of traffic was therefore diverted from the direct track to the Caspian and Black Seas farther north, taking its way from Tangut (now Kansuh) across the steppes of the high Gobi, and through Siberia to Moscow. In 1728 a line of custom-houses was established, and the Russian Government monopolised the trade until 1762, when it was again thrown open. The surveillance was exercised at tea-renowned Kiakhta. The rhubarb was carefully inspected, trimmed (to the profit of the Russian officials, doubt-

less), dried, and packed in chests, which were sewed up in linen, covered with hide, and pitched over. Once a year the drug was dispatched, but only in quantities of forty thousand pounds, by way of Lake Baikal and Irkutsk, to Moscow, to be there delivered to the Crown apothecaries, and in part to be sold to druggists. While the ports of China were rigidly closed to foreigners, the Russians enjoyed the lion's share of the rhubarb trade; but, on the opening of several ports in the north of China, the government of St. Petersburg saw the overland rhubarb trade menaced with extinction, and declared Kiakhta a free port, but these concessions came too late; the overland route was abandoned, and, in 1863, the Russian Rhubarb Office was abolished. During the Russian rule of the trade the rhubarb sent westward was, owing to the severe inspection, of the very finest quality, and was known to everybody to have come through Russia, but in this country it was always called Turkey rhubarb. Plenty of rhubarb is grown in England, France, and Germany, but commands a much lower price than the Chinese root. Rhubarb is a drug which depends very much on its good looks for a ready sale. Not only medicinal properties but appearance are required of it, especially in England. By-the-way, many readers of ALL THE YEAR ROUND may have seen from time to time itinerant vendors of Turkey rhubarb with a mighty stock of great genuine pieces on a barrow, and have marvelled at the low price which those humble followers of Esculapius were prepared to accept for their wares. Dropping into what is called a "rummage sale," or sale of unclaimed goods, the other day, I saw heaps on heaps of rhubarb utterly spoiled and useless, but still keeping up a brave appearance. This poor stuff is sold literally for what it will fetch, and the purchase of a cheap lot thus explains the occasional kerbstone traffic in rhubarb. While China sends us rhubarb, Cochin China and Siam contribute gamboge, a remedy which must be taken with discretion, and is perhaps better used as a pigment than as a medicine. The gamboge exhibited for sale is in sticks, showing the mark of the inside of the bamboo into which the gum, when liquid, was allowed to run. What is this pitchy stuff in barrels and boxes, in gourds, and in monkey-skins? Heaven save us! More physic! It is aloes, alack! and what a lot of it. Cases by scores, kegs by dozens, gourds by the

hundred—a wilderness of aloes: how ill everybody must be to want so much! This grewsome stuff comes hither from Socotra, from Barbadoes, and from Natal. That from Socotra is far the best in quality, and arrives at Zanzibar in a very soft state, packed in goat-skins, whence it is transferred to wooden boxes, in which it concretes into the black substance we are now sampling. In this connection I may observe that the drug aloes, the inspissated juice of the aloe plant—the substance now discussed—is totally distinct from the fragrant aloes mentioned in the Bible and other ancient writings. The latter, also called in Latin "lignum aloës," is a resinous wood, once valued everywhere for use as incense, but now esteemed only in the East. It is the substance mentioned by Maundrell as being used for that fumigation of beards, which conveyed a polite congé among the Turks of his day.

These drug warehouses and brokers' offices are very like life—the bitter preponderates terribly over the sweet, but some little sweetness is here notwithstanding. Passing by the samples of fragrant sandal-wood—used in China for incense and here for the extraction of essential oil—let us try the tamarinds, with their grateful sour-sweet taste, excellent to dispel the flavour of horrid rhubarb and still more detestable aloes; let us dally for a while over those bundles of slender yet sausage-like objects, like things one sees in a barber's shop, for they are sweet to the nostrils and grateful to the palate—vanilla pods, in ordinary language, but in that of Mincing-lane, "vanilloes;" "the Lane" rejoicing ever in a language of its own, not caring, for instance, for catechu as such, but resolving it into catch and gambier. In like manner commerce troubles itself very little about the question recently raised by Mr. R. Clements Markham as to the correct spelling of that celebrated febrifuge, Peruvian bark. Mr. Markham may, if he be very persistent and very lucky, persuade the scientific world—which is well known to be free from prejudice, and always ready to welcome anybody who undertakes to set it right—to alter its spelling from cinchona to chinchona, but Mincing-lane will have none of this. It has been written in the books of Lewis and Peat as cinchona, and that spelling is followed in the Public Ledger, founded in 1759, and the oldest newspaper extant in London. So there is an end of

that matter; but for colloquial purposes it is "bark:" just "bark," and nothing more. Bark is a big thing nowadays. It is sold in tens, hundreds, and thousands of "serons." There is a bark trade, there are bark analysts, brokers, and merchants, and makers of bark into quinine — not forgetting its other alkaloids. The "serons," of which many around us are open, are made of the hide of the ox, doubled over into a kind of rough envelope, and packed tightly with bark, which varies greatly in value. In spite of the increasing use of cinchonidine, it may be safely said that the richness of any parcel of bark in quinine is the test of its value. Bark, therefore, is not usually bought by mere inspection. Samples are taken by intending bidders and submitted to analysts who have made bark analysis a special study, and it is by their report that biddings are guided. To be a shade more exact, the value depends on the percentage of quinine which will combine with sulphuric acid and form the white crystals known as the sulphate of quinine of commerce. For ages after the famous bark was introduced into Europe by the illustrious Ana de Osorio, Countess Chinchon and vice-queen of Peru, after whom the powdered bark was called "Countess's powder," fever patients were treated with infusions of the bark itself; but of late years practice has favoured the employment of the most potent principle, which it contains in sufficient quantity to be commercially valuable. The quinine extracted from the bark is now an important article of commerce, and is exported in immense quantities to Japan, and, in lesser proportion, to other countries. Albeit the manufacture of quinine is by no means confined to England, Mincing-lane is yet the great European mart for "bark," and German and French houses find it convenient to buy their raw material here. One part of the Fenchurch-street warehouses is filled with sarsaparilla root, packed in a curious cross between a "seron" and a bale—cylindrical—open at the sides, topped and bottomed with circular pieces of hide, sold afterwards for making drum-heads. Sarsaparilla comes from Jamaica, Honduras, Mexico, Guatemala, and Brazil, and is largely consumed as an infusion and in the form of a compound extract—unlike most wholesome drugs, very nice to take. There is, however, much difference of opinion as to its remedial virtues. None of this uncertainty hangs over the root which, not unlike

sarsaparilla in appearance, has yet a name — judging by recent American matches—almost impossible to spell in a hurry:

Coughing in a shady grove,
Sat my Juliana;
Lozenges I gave my love,
Ipecacuanha.

It has long been used in this country as an expectorant, but, since its application to dysentery, in India, has increased rapidly in price, which has about quadrupled in the last twenty years. But we cannot delay much longer among the ipecacuanha roots, or we shall overlook many curious things, such as "dragon's blood," a resinous pigment of a splendid red colour, used in medicine as a colouring agent, in the arts for varnishes, and in necromancy as a potent spell. Burnt in the fire, while a proper incantation is pronounced, it is still supposed by no inconsiderable proportion of the British female population, to possess the property of bringing back to their feet an inconstant lover. Quite as interesting are the Calabar beans, used in their native country as an ordeal, and here as an ophthalmic medicine for contracting the pupil; belladonna, used for dilating the same; tonquin beans, met with in snuff-boxes; beeswax and vegetable wax; guasa or bhang, smoked and eaten in India, and used here as an anodyne and nervous stimulant; strychnine-bearing nux vomica; Chilian honey; orange peel in bags; liquorice - root in bales; saracenia, or pitcher - plant leaf, good for small-pox; jaborandi leaves, a new-fangled sudorific; roll annatto for colouring cheese; bales of camomiles and cases of shellac; Cocculus Indicus and grains of paradise, concerning the uses of which the less said in a beer - drinking country the better. The chemicals, representing the active principles of the drugs knocked down in the Commercial Sale Rooms, are rarely brought to the hammer, and must be sought of the wholesale drug merchants, such as Messrs. Cyriax and Farries, among whose stores may be found, in pure white crystals, such vigorous agents as monobromide of camphor, the last new sedative; atropine, the principle of belladonna; deadly strychnine and brucine; swift-slaying nicotine and costly cantharadine; fruit essences and fragrant oils. Nevertheless large quantities of essential oils, distilled from Indian grasses, are sold by auction, as are cod-liver oil and that curious product, iodine—samples of which are carefully kept

from the light. Drug sales—and there are many of them—succeed each other rapidly in Mincing-lane, for the brisk auctioneer allows no halting and no discussion, while “lots” containing within them the life and death of thousands are brought under the hammer.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCIS ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF “AUNT MARGARET’S TROUBLE,” “MABEL’S PROGRESS,” &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXI.

No Jupiter, rainy or thunderous, lent his assistance to account for the extraordinary phenomenon of Rhoda Maxfield’s driving up to the garden-gate of Ivy Lodge, instead of arriving there on foot. On the contrary, it was a fine autumn evening, with a serene sky where the sunset tints still lingered.

Rhoda alighted hurriedly from the carriage, and walked up the few feet of gravel path, between the garden fence and the house, with a beating heart. “You can go away now, Sally,” she said, being very anxious to dismiss the Blue Bell equipage before the door should be opened. But Sally was not in such a hurry. Her master had told her that she was to wait and see Miss Rhoda safe into the house, and then she might come back in the carriage as far as the Blue Bell. And Sally was not averse to have her new promotion to the dignity of “riding in a coach” witnessed by Mrs. Algernon Errington’s Polly, with whom she had a slight acquaintance. So Miss Maxfield’s equipage was seen by the servant who opened the door, and stared at from the front parlour window by two pairs of eyes, belonging respectively to Miss Chubb and Mrs. Errington.

“You can go into the parlour, miss,” said Polly. “Master and missis are still at dinner. But the old lady’s in there, and Miss Chubb.”

That they should be still at dinner, at half-past six o’clock in the evening, seemed a strange circumstance to Rhoda, and was one that she had not reckoned on. But she supposed it was according to the customs of the high folks Mrs. Algernon had been used to live among. The innovation was not accepted so meekly by most of the Whitfordians, whom, indeed, it seemed to irritate in a greater degree than more serious offences. But it is true of most of us, that we are never more angry than

when we are unable to explain the reasons for our anger.

“I am afraid I’m too early,” said Rhoda, when she had entered the parlour and greeted her old friends, “but father said he thought it was the right time to come.”

“Mr. and Mrs. Ancram Errington dine late, my dear. Castalia has not yet got broken of the habits of her own class, as I have had to be. Indeed, she will probably never need to relinquish them. But it is no matter, Rhoda. You can make yourself comfortable here with us for half an hour or so. Miss Chubb called in to see me at my place, and I brought her down here with me. I knew Mrs. Ancram Errington would be happy to see her if she dropped in, in an informal way.”

“I never can get used to the name of Ancram, instead of Algernon,” said the spinster, raising her round red face from her woolwork. “It isn’t half so pretty. Nine times out of ten, I call your son ‘Algy’ plump and plain. I’m very sorry if it’s improper, but I can’t help it.”

Mrs. Errington smiled with an air of lofty toleration. “Not at all improper,” she said. “Algernon is the last creature in the world to be distant towards an old friend. But as to the name of Ancram, why it was, from the first, his appellation among the Seelys. And Castalia always calls him so. You see, ‘Ancram’ was a familiar name in the circles she lived in; like Howard, or Seymour, or any of the great old family names, you know. It came naturally to her.”

“Well, I should think that one’s husband’s christian name would come natural to one, even if it were only plain Tom, Dick, or Harry.”

“He didn’t begin by being her husband, my dear!”

Rhoda had nestled herself down in a corner behind a small table, and was turning over an album and one or two illustrated annuals. She hoped that the discussion as to Algernon’s name would effectually divert the attention of the two elder ladies from the unprecedented fact that she had been brought to Ivy Lodge in a carriage. But she was not to be let off altogether. Miss Chubb, folding up her work, declared that it was growing too dark to distinguish the colours, and observed, “I was standing by the window, to catch the last daylight, when you drove up, Rhoda. I couldn’t think who it was, arriving in such style.”

"That was the Blue Bell fly you were in, Rhoda," said Mrs. Errington. "I believe it to be the same vehicle that my daughter-in-law uses occasionally. She complains of it sadly. But I tell her that she cannot expect to find her Aunt Seely's luxurious, well-hung carriages in a little provincial place like this."

Miss Chubb was about to make what she considered a severe retort, but she stifled it down. Mrs. Errington's airs were very provoking, to be sure; but there were reasons why Miss Chubb was more inclined to bear with her now than formerly. If it pleased this widowed mother to soften her disappointments about Algy's career and Algy's wife (it began to be considered in Whitford that both would prove to be failures!) by an extra flourish or two, why should any one put her—"No!" said Miss Chubb to herself, as the question was half-framed in her mind, "that is not the right word, certainly. I defy the world to put Mrs. Errington out of conceit with herself! But why should one snub and snap at the poor woman?"

Indeed, Miss Chubb never snapped, and rarely attempted to snub. She had a fund of benevolence hidden under a heap of frothy vanities and absurdities, like the solid cake at the bottom of a trifle.

"Well," said she, smiling good-temperedly, "I'm sure Rhoda doesn't quarrel with the Blue Bell fly, do you, Rhoda?"

"I shouldn't have wished to use it, myself, but father said, 'It is rather a long way,' and father thought——"

"Oh, my dear, there is no need to excuse yourself, or to look shy on the subject. We should all of us be glad enough of a coach to ride in, now and then, if we could afford it. I'm sure I should, and I don't mind saying so."

Mrs. Errington did not approve of the coach quite so unreservedly. She observed, with some solemnity, that she was no friend to extravagance; and that, above all things, persons ought to guard against ostentation, or a thrusting of themselves into positions unsuited to that station in life to which it had pleased Providence to call them. And, in conclusion, she announced her intention of availing herself of the circumstance that Rhoda had a carriage at her disposal for the evening, to drive back with her as far as Mrs. Thimbleby's door—"which," said she, "is only a street and a half away from your house, Rhoda; and it will not make

any difference to your father in point of expense."

Castalia found her three guests chatting in the twilight; or rather she found Mrs. Errington holding forth in her rich pleasant voice, whilst the others listened, and threw in a word or two now and then, just sufficient to show that they were attending to the good lady's harangue. In Rhoda's case, indeed, this appearance of attention was fallacious, for, although she said "Yes," and "No," and "Indeed!" at due intervals, her thoughts were wandering back to old days, which seemed suddenly to have receded into a far-distant past.

Castalia shook hands languidly with Miss Chubb and condescendingly with Rhoda. "I'm very glad you've come," she said to the latter, which was a speech of unusual warmth for her. And it had the merit, moreover, of being true. Castalia was not given to falsehood in her speech. She was too supercilious to care much what impression she made on people in general; and if they bored her, she took no pains to conceal the fact. Weariness of spirit and discontent had begun to assail her once more. They were old enemies. Her marriage had banished them for a time; but they gathered again, like clouds which a transient gleam of wintry sunshine has temporarily dispersed, and shadowed her life with an increasing gloom. This young Rhoda Maxfield offered some chance of brightness and novelty. She was certainly different from the rest of the Whitford world, and the pursuit of her society had been beset with some little difficulties that gave it zest.

A lamp was brought into the room, and then Castalia sat down beside Rhoda, unceremoniously leaving the other ladies to entertain each other as best they might. She examined her guest's dress; the quality of the lace frill at her throat; the arrangement of her chestnut curls; the delicate little gold chain that shone upon the pearl-grey gown; the neatly-embroidered letters R. M. worked on a corner of the handkerchief that lay in her lap, with as much unreserve and coolness as though Rhoda had been some daintily-furred rabbit, or any other pet animal. On her part, Rhoda took cognisance of every detail in Castalia's appearance, attire, and manner; she marked every inflection of her voice, and every turn of her haughty, languid head. And, perhaps, her scrutiny was the keener and more complete of the two, notwithstanding that

it was made with timidly-veiled eyes and downcast head.

"What an odd man your father is!" said the Honourable Mrs. Ancram Errington, by way of opening the conversation.

Rhoda found it impossible to reply to this observation. She coloured, and twisted her gold chain round her fingers, and was silent. But it did not seem that Mrs. Ancram Errington expected, or wished for a reply. She went on with scarcely a pause: "I thought at first he would refuse to let you come here. But he gave his consent at last. I was quite amused with his odd way of doing it, though. He must be quite a 'character.' He's very rich, isn't he?"

"I don't know, ma'am," stammered Rhoda.

"Well, he says so himself; or, at least, he informed me that you were, or would be, which comes to the same thing. And don't call me 'ma'am.' It makes me feel a hundred years old. You and I must be great friends."

"Where is Algernon?" asked Mrs. Errington from the other side of the room.

"He will come presently, when he has finished his wine. Do you know we found that stuff from the Blue Bell, that you recommended us to try, quite undrinkable! Ancram was obliged to get Jack Price to send him down a case of claret, from his own wine-merchant in town."

"Most extraordinary!" exclaimed Mrs. Errington, and began to recapitulate all the occasions on which the wine supplied to her from the Blue Bell Inn had been pronounced excellent by the first connoisseurs. But Castalia made small pretence of listening to or believing her statements. Indeed, I am sorry to say that obstinate incredulity was this young woman's habitual tone of mind with regard to almost every word that her mother-in-law uttered; whereby the Honourable Mrs. Castalia occasionally fell into mistakes.

"Could you not try Dr. Bodkin's wine-merchant?" suggested Miss Chubb. "I am no judge myself, but I feel sure that the doctor would not put bad wine on his table."

"Oh, I don't know. I don't suppose there is any first-rate wine to be got in this place. Ancram prefers dealing with the London man."

And then Castalia dismissed the subject with an expressive shrug. "Who are your chief friends here?" she asked of Rhoda,

who had sat with her eyes fixed on a smart illustrated volume, scarcely seeing it, and feeling a confused sort of pain and mortification, at the tone in which the younger Mrs. Errington treated the elder.

"My chief friends?"

"Yes; you must know a great many people. You have lived here all your life, have you not?"

"Yes; but—father never cared that I should make many acquaintances out of doors."

"You were Methodists, were you not? I remember Ancram telling me of the psalm-singing that used to go on downstairs. He can imitate it wonderfully. Do tell me about how you lived, and what you did! I never knew any Methodists, nor any people who kept a shop."

The naïve curiosity with which this was said might have moved some minds to mirth, and others to indignation. In Rhoda it produced only confusion and distress, and such an access of shyness as made her for a few moments literally dumb. She murmured at length some unintelligible sentences, of which "I'm sure I don't know" were the only words that Castalia could make out. She did not on this account desist from her inquiries, but threw them into the more particular form of a catechism, as, "Were you let to read anything except the Bible on Sundays?" "I suppose you never went to a ball in your life?" "How did you learn to do your own hair?" "Do the Methodist preachers really rant and shriek as much as people say?"

Algernon, coming quietly into the room, beheld his wife and Rhoda seated side by side on a sofa behind the little Pembroke table, and engaged, apparently, in confidential conversation. They were so near together, and Castalia was bending down so low to hear Rhoda's faintly uttered answers, as to give an air of intimacy to the group. He lingered in the doorway looking at them, until Miss Chubb crying, "Oh, there you are, sir!" called the attention of the others to him, when he advanced and shook hands with Rhoda, whose fingers were icy cold as he touched them with his warm, white, exquisitely cared-for hand. Then he bent to kiss his mother, and seated himself between her and his old friend Miss Chubb, in a low chair, stretching out his legs, and leaning back his head, as he contemplated the neatly-shod feet that were carelessly crossed in front of him.

"You did not expect to see Rhoda, did you, my dear boy?" said Mrs. Errington.

"Yes; I believe Castalia said something about having asked her. It is a new freak of Castalia's. I think she had better have left it alone. The old man is highly impracticable, and is just one of those persons whom it is prudent to keep at arm's length."

"I think so too!" assented Mrs. Errington, emphatically. "Indeed, I almost wonder at his letting his daughter come here."

Algernon quite wondered at it. But he said nothing.

"Of course," pursued Mrs. Errington, "letting her come to me is a very different matter."

"Why?" asked Miss Chubb, bluntly.

"Because, my dear, the girl herself is so devotedly attached to me that I believe she would fret herself into an illness if she were forbidden to see me occasionally. And I believe old Maxfield is fond of his child, in his way, and would not wish to grieve her. But, of course, Rhoda can have no particular desire to visit Castalia. Indeed, I have offered to bring her more than once, and she has not availed herself of the opportunity."

"Old Max is ambitious for his daughter, they say," observed Miss Chubb, "and likes to get her into genteel company. Perhaps he thinks she will find a husband out of her own sphere. I'm told that old Max is quite rich, and that she will have all his money. But I think Rhoda is pretty enough to get well married, even without a fortune."

Then, when Mrs. Errington moved away to speak to her daughter-in-law, Miss Chubb whispered slyly to Algernon, "You were a little bit smitten with our pretty Rhoda, once upon a time, sir, weren't you? Oh, it's no use your protesting and looking so unconscious! La, dear me, well it was very natural! Calf-love, of course. But I'll tell you, between you and me, who is smitten with her, and pretty seriously too—and that's Mr. Diamond!"

"Diamond!"

"Well, you needn't look so astonished. He's a young man, for all his grave ways, and she is a pretty girl. And, upon my word, I think it might do capitally."

"You look tired, Algernon," said Mrs. Errington to her son a little later in the evening. It must have been a very marked expression of fatigue which could have

attracted the good lady's attention in any other human being.

"Oh, I've been bored and worried at that confounded post-office."

"What a shame!" cried Mrs. Errington. "Positively some representation ought to be made to Government about it."

"Oh, it's disgusting!" said Castalia, with a shrug of her lean shoulders, and in the fretful drawl, which conveyed the idea that she would be actively angry, if any sublunary matters could be important enough to overcome her habitual languor.

"I don't remember hearing that Mr. Cooper found the work so hard," said Miss Chubb, innocently. Mr. Cooper had been the Whitford postmaster next before Algernon.

"It isn't the work, Miss Chubb," said Algernon, a little ashamed of the amount of sympathy and compassion his words had evoked. "That is to say, it is not the quantity of the work, but the kind of it, that bores one. Cooper, I believe, was a steady, jog-trot old fellow, who did his daily task like a horse in a mill. But I can't take to it so comfortably. It is as if you, with your taste for elegant needle-work, were set to hem dusters all day long!" Algernon laughed, in his old, frank way, as he made the comparison.

"Well, I shouldn't like that, certainly. But, after all, dusters are very useful things. And then, you see, I do the fancy work to amuse myself; but I should be paid for the dusters, and that makes a difference!"

"Paid!" screamed Castalia. "Why you don't imagine that Ancram's twopenny salary can pay him! Good gracious, it seems to me scarcely enough to buy food with. It's quite horrible to think how poor we are!"

"Come," said Algernon, "I don't think this conversation is particularly lively or entertaining. Suppose we change the subject. There is Rho—Miss Maxfield looking as if she expected to see us all expire of inanition on the spot!"

And, in truth, Rhoda was gazing from one to the other with a pale, distressed face, and a look of surprise and compassion in her soft brown eyes.

Mrs. Errington did not approve of her daughter-in-law's unscrupulous confession of poverty. Castalia lacked the Ancram gift of embellishing disadvantageous circumstances. And the elder lady took occasion to remark to Miss Chubb that everything was comparative; and that

means which might appear ample to persons of inferior rank were very trivial and inadequate in the eyes of the Honourable Mrs. Ancram Errington. "She has been her uncle's pet for many years. My lord denied her nothing. And I needn't tell you, my dear Miss Chubb, that the emoluments of Algernon's official post are by no means the whole and sole income of our young couple here. There are private resources"—here Mrs. Errington waved her hands majestically, as though to indicate the ample nature of the resources—"which, to many persons, would seem positive affluence. But Castalia's measure is a high one. I scold her sometimes, I assure you: 'My dear child,' I say to her, 'look at me! Bred amidst the feudal splendours of Ancram Park, I have accommodated myself to very different scenes and very different associates;' for, of course, my dear soul, although I have a great regard for my Whitford friends, and am very sensible of their kind feelings for me, yet, as a mere matter of fact, it would be absurd to pretend that the society I now move in is equal, in point of rank, to that which surrounded my girlish years. And then Castalia's perhaps partial estimate of her husband's talents (you know she has witnessed the impression they made in the most brilliant circles of the Metropolis) makes her impatient of his present position. For myself, feeling sure, as I do, that this Post-office business is merely temporary, I can look at matters with more philosophy."

"Ouf!" panted Miss Chubb, and began to fan herself with her pocket-handkerchief.

"Anything the matter, Miss Chubb?" asked Algernon, raising his eyebrows and looking at her with a smile.

"Nothing particular, Algy. I find it a little oppressive, that's all."

"This little room is so stuffy with more than two or three people in it!" said Castalia.

"I'll do my part towards making it less stuffy," said Miss Chubb, jumping up, and beginning to shake hands all round. "I daresay my old Martha is there. I told her to come for me at nine o'clock. Oh, never mind; thank you," in answer to Castalia's suggestion that she should stay and have a cup of coffee, which would be brought in presently. "Never mind the coffee. I have no doubt I shall find a bit of supper ready at home." And with that she departed.

"I hope it wasn't too severe, that hit about the supper," said the good little woman to herself, as she trotted homeward, accompanied by the faithful Martha. "But, really—offering one a cup of coffee at nine o'clock at night! And as to Mrs. Errington, I am sorry for her; and can make allowances for her; but she did so go beyond all bounds to-night that, if I had not come away when I did, I think I should have choked."

"Is the little woman affronted at anything?" asked Algernon of his wife, when Miss Chubb's footsteps had ceased to be heard pattering down the gravel path outside the house.

"Eh? What little woman? Oh, the Chubb? No; I don't know. I suppose not."

"No, no; not at all," said Mrs. Errington, decisively. "But you know her ways of old. She has no *savoir faire*. A good little creature, poor soul! Oh, by-the-way, Castalia, you know the patterns for autumn mantles you asked me to look at? Well, I went into Ravell and Sarsnet's yesterday, and they told me—" And then the worthy matron and her daughter-in-law entered into an earnest discussion in an undertone; the common interest in autumn mantles supplying that "touch of nature" which made them kin more effectually than the matrimonial alliance that united their families.

"I'm afraid you must have had a very dull evening," said the master of the house, looking down on Rhoda as he stood near her, leaning with his back against the tiny mantelshelf.

"No, thank you."

"I'm afraid you must! There was no amusement for you at all."

"My evenings are not generally very amusing. I daresay you, who have been accustomed to such different things, would find them very dull."

This was not the humble, simple, childlike Rhoda whom he had parted from two years ago. It was not that she had now no humility or simplicity, but the humility was mingled with dignity, the simplicity with an easier grace. Rhoda was more self-possessed at this moment than she had been all the evening before. The weakest creatures are not without some means of self-defence; and, if she be but pure-hearted, the most inexperienced girl in the world can put on an armour of maiden pride over her hurt feelings, that has been known to puzzle even very in-

telligent individuals of the opposite sex ; and has perhaps given rise to one or two of the numerous impassioned complaints that have been uttered from time to time, as to the inscrutable duplicity of women. In like manner, if a man scalds his finger, or gets a bullet in his flesh, he endeavours to bear the pain without screaming.

So little Rhoda Maxfield sat there with a placid face, talking to her old love, turning over the leaves of a picture-book, and scarcely looking at him as she talked.

Now, if Algernon had been consulted beforehand as to what line of conduct he would wish Rhoda to adopt when they should meet, he would, doubtless, have said, "Let us meet pleasantly and frankly as old friends, and, behave as if all our old love-making had been the mere amusement of our childhood!" And yet, somehow, it a little disconcerted him to see her so calm.

"You—don't you—don't you go out much in the evening?" he said, feeling (to his own surprise) considerably at a loss what to say.

"Go out much in the evening? No, indeed; where should I go to?" Rhoda actually gave a little laugh as she answered him.

"Oh, I thought my mother mentioned that you were a good deal at the Bodkins."

"Yes; I go to see Miss Minnie sometimes. They are all very good to me."

"And my mother says, too, that you are growing quite a blue-stocking! You have lessons in French, and music, and I don't know what besides."

"Father can afford to have me taught now, and so I have begun to learn a few of the things that girls are taught when they are little children, if they happen to be the children of gentlefolks," answered Rhoda, with considerable spirit.

"I'm sure there is no reason why you should not learn them."

"I hope not. But, of course, I am clumsy, and shall never succeed so well as if I had begun earlier. I am getting very old, you know!"

"Oh, very old, indeed! Your birthday, I remember, falls——" he checked himself with a sudden recollection of the last

birthday he had spent with Rhoda, and of the bunch of late roses he had been at the pains to procure for her on that occasion from the gardener at Pudcombe Hall. And, on the whole, he felt positively relieved when Slater came to announce, with her chronic air of resentful gentility, that "Miss Maxfield's young woman was waiting for her in the hall."

"And are you off too, mother?" he asked.

"Yes, my dear Algernon. I am going to drive home with Rhoda."

"Drive! Oh, so you are indulging in the extravagance of a fly, madam! I am glad of it, though you did give me a lecture on the subject of economy only last week!"

"You know that I always do, and always did, disapprove of extravagance, Algernon. A genteel economy is compatible with the highest breeding. But—the fact is, that Rhoda has a coach to go home in, and I'm about to take advantage of it."

There was something in the situation which Algernon felt to be embarrassing, as he gave his arm to his mother to lead her to the carriage. But Mrs. Errington had at least one quality of a great lady—she was not easily disconcerted. She marched majestically down the garden path, entered the vehicle which old Max's money was to pay for, with an air of proprietorship, and invited Rhoda to take her place beside her with a most condescending wave of the hand.

"You must come again soon," Castalia had said to her new acquaintance when they bade each other "Good night."

But Algernon did not support his wife's invitation by a single word, though he smiled very persistently as he stood bare-headed in the moonlight, watching his mother and Rhoda drive away.

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HALVES.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGBERD," "A PERFECT TREASURE," "AT HER MERCY," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XVI. DE. WILDE.

It was several days before brother Alec returned to the Priory, and during his absence great alterations and improvements were made in the house for his future behoof. A small room adjoining his own (but on the other side from mine) was made to communicate with it, and the Kirkdale upholsterer was directed to fit it up as a little boudoir. Thus, in case the old man should fail in health, which seemed only too probable, he would have his sitting-room upstairs, while the bed-room itself was supplied with some handsome articles of furniture—of which, indeed, it stood in no little need. "Business," however, as John observed, "was not carried on as usual during the alterations." Mrs. Raeburn was not herself. Her domineering manner was gone, her incisive speech had become mild, she ceased to toss her head back in her impatient equine manner. The impression on the family circle, which did not, however, extend to the domestics, to whom it was whispered she was more "cantankerous" than ever, was that the mistress of the house was bent on making herself agreeable—"going into training," her son called it—against the return of her guest. This explanation of so great a change was not, however, completely satisfactory. That she should be civil and conciliatory to brother Alec was only to be expected, but why should she give herself the trouble to be so to ourselves, and even to her husband? Perhaps the

consciousness that it was owing to her own misbehaviour in this respect, that the prize of her brother-in-law's wealth had been lost to her and hers, might have made her penitent and humble; but that again seemed highly improbable. In the meantime, we all took advantage of this favourable state of things and basked in the unexpected sunshine, with two exceptions. The attorney was in very low spirits, and took more than ever to his usual remedy for them; and the parrot pined. Chico, who had accompanied his master from Stanbrook, had been placed in Gertrude's charge, who lavished every attention on the bird, but he was dull and listless. He would not eat his customary fruits, and while they lay in untasted profusion about him, would inconsequentially croak forth, "All gone! all gone!" in sepulchral tones. In spite of his scarlet plumage he had a widowed look, and in consequence of certain snatches of lugubrious rhyme which he had picked up—it was said from myself—was reported to be composing an In Memoriam. The bulldog, on the other hand, who had never been gay and festive, like Chico, took his master's absence philosophically enough. It being out of the question to let him remain in his old quarters, where he would have made mincemeat of the upholsterer and his men, he passed most of his days in the drawing-room, enjoying the utmost respect of all who met him there, and utterly unconscious of the incongruity of his position.

Notwithstanding the change for the better in Mrs. Raeburn's behaviour towards myself, it struck me that I had become somewhat more isolated from the rest of the family than had heretofore been

the case. The attorney and his wife and son now held frequent councils together, to which I was not admitted, nor did John unbosom himself concerning them with his usual charming frankness. This circumstance would in no case have distressed me, but as it was, it became above measure welcome, since it left Gertrude and me alone together. They might plot and plan as they liked for what I cared—for I did not believe, as Mrs. Raeburn would have had me credit, that their talk was all about the domestic alterations—and welcome. Like the great national poet, who,

His arms about his dearie, O,
Bade warl'y cares and warl'y men
To a' gae tapsaltarie, O,

I cared nothing about the family schemes, provided only they should not be devised to part me from Gertrude. At the same time, I protest, though a poet myself, to whom the licence of the profession might fairly have been permitted, I never ventured to put my arm round that young lady. Matters were very pleasant and comfortable however, because the love was understood between us, and when once that foundation has been established, conversation of all kinds has its charms. Among other things, we talked, of course, of our expected guest.

"Why my poor cousin should wish to come back again to the Priory, after what he has suffered here," observed she, "I cannot guess, Harry!"

"I can," said I. "In the first place, where else is he to go to? At his age he cannot make new friends, nor can his money purchase them; it can only purchase ease and comfort, which await him here. And though he has an enemy in this house, he has his true friend also. One especially, who, I am sure, is a great attraction to him. If I had been in his case, and been treated ten times worse, I should still prefer to live at the Priory if you were its inmate, Gerty."

To this compliment, instead of a burst of gratitude, I received this reply, which will explain how matters stood between us:

"You! Yes, of course you would, sir; but then you are not cousin Alec."

When the old man returned, he looked as though he had come back, not to live with us, but to die. His appearance shocked us all, and probably his sister-in-law as much as any, since the shorter his span of life, the less often

would his quarterly payments enrich the domestic exchequer. In a moment of sentiment, I heard her murmur to Gertrude, "What an enormous annuity your poor dear cousin must have got!"

And, curiously enough, he himself almost expressed as much. "I do assure you, my dear Sheddon," said he, with a faint touch of his old humour, "the annuity people thought I was tricking them. Everybody does look as ill as they can, it seems, when bent on such a business, and they were of opinion that I rather overdid the thing. It took all your uncle's respectability to carry me through with it."

The jest was a sad one, and the sadder because it reminded me of those early days when the old man had been full of jests. It was hard to believe that scarcely a year had elapsed since he had arrived among us, tolerably hale to look at, and with a flow of good spirits that had benefited our social atmosphere, as the Gulf Stream is said to warm the climate. If anybody chilled him—by the expression of what he deemed harsh or heartless sentiments—he had always had a vigorous reply ready; but all that was now over. His mental powers seemed to be, in a manner, palsied by the revelation of the baseness of his relatives, or, rather, of his brother—for I think that it was through him alone that the fatal wound had been inflicted; and the failure of his physical frame, which the hardships and anxieties of his life in America had, moreover, tried severely, was, doubtless, owing to the same cause. He was but a year older than his brother, yet, in spite of the effects of Mark's bad habit, which was growing more and more apparent, he looked his senior by ten years.

Of course there was no longer any question as to whether our guest at the Priory should have medical advice or no. He would still have preferred to do without it, but Mrs. Raeburn "insisted" upon her brother-in-law seeking the aid of science—"If not for your own sake, Mr. Alexander, at least for ours," as she innocently expressed it, intending to be very civil, and using, as such persons do, the first conventional phrase that occurred to her, without respect to its meaning. So Dr. Wilde was accordingly called in. This gentleman, as I have already mentioned, had not been long resident at Kirkdale, and was still designated by its tea-table conversationalists as "our new medical

acquisition." He had purchased, about two years ago, the practice of the late Mr. Rombold, a gentleman who had brought half the present generation of the town into the world, and assisted half the last generation out of it; and though he had by no means so many patients as his predecessor, he had an excellent reputation for skill. What gave Dr. Wilde a great advantage in securing this high opinion of his neighbours was, that, materially, it was of no consequence to him, since he was possessed of independent means. It pleased him, rather than otherwise, to see many of the ordinary cases that had helped to swell his predecessor's income, slip out of his hands into those of Messrs. Bell and Doldrum, the general practitioners. He liked his profession for its own sake, not for what it brought him, and took the same interest in a complicated case as a chess-player in a problem; not, indeed, that he did not feel for the patient—far from it—but when he lost the game—if the sick man died—he took it to heart, and spent long hours over the matter still, trying to discover how it was that he had been beaten. Nobody ever complained that Dr. Wilde did not take pains enough, or hurried one case over in order to attend to another, though it was said, by persons who liked to twaddle over sick-beds, that he was too "impetuous." With patients also who liked to fancy themselves ill, he was not a favourite, for he was very impatient with them, and would "neglect" the richest of them in a very unhandsome manner, for the sake of some wretched creature in Tinker's-alley, who happened to have "a complication." But he generally brought the wretch "through," and the rich man recovered without his aid.

Dr. Wilde possessed other elements of popularity besides his means and his skill. He was a bachelor, and still young, which made him, socially, very "eligible." He was sometimes called in, it was whispered—but the atmosphere of Kirkdale was electric with scandal—to lady cases which the patients themselves would have had him believe were affections of the heart, that he alone could cure. On the other hand, there was one serious drawback to his character; he was never seen at church, nor even at chapel. Dr. Rombold, who had had thrice his practice, always made a point of appearing there, at all events till the first lesson, when his man-servant generally used to hurry in with an urgent

face, and carry him off on some professional errand. Dr. Wilde had no such excuse, and his absence was resented. If the gossips had known what I came to know in later years respecting him, they would have resented it still more. The fact which formed the explanation of his shortcoming in this respect, and also of his being so obstinately proof against the charms of the Kirkdale belles, was a curious one. To the hospital with which Dr. Wilde was connected in London, was brought one day a young lady who had been run over in the street; her injuries were severe, and it was long before she was pronounced sufficiently recovered to leave the private room, which had been granted for her use at the request of her friends. She had been placed under Wilde's care, at that time a very young practitioner, but who had already earned for himself a reputation in the profession, and throughout her sickness and convalescence she had been tended by her sister, a very beautiful and attractive girl. With this sister the doctor fell in love. It was not calf-love; he was eight-and-twenty years of age, and by no means given to flirtation. His affection—for passion it could in his case scarcely be called—was returned, nor did any difficulties oppose themselves to their union in the way of money matters. His social position was superior to her own, her father being a Baptist minister, with little means beyond what he derived from the pew-rents of his chapel, while the doctor possessed an independent fortune. For some time things promised fair for the young couple, till, in an evil hour, Dr. Wilde permitted himself to be drawn into a theological argument at the minister's table. To fall out with one's father-in-law is the common lot of humanity, but to quarrel with him before marriage it is possible by prudence to avoid. Wilde was not imprudent, but he considered it to be his duty at all times to maintain the truth. His antagonist went farther; he was of opinion that we should not make companionship with the Infidel. Unhappily, the truth of Dr. Wilde was the error arrived at by a religious and thoughtful man whom his friends pronounced to be "crotchety," while the truth of his opponent was the heresy of a Baptist minister. The latter gentleman informed Dr. Wilde that no man who held such opinions, however eligible in other respects, should, with his consent, become the husband of his daughter. The match, he said,

which had hitherto been of so goodly a savour to him, now stunk in his nostrils like a brimstone-match.

"Say nothing in haste," pleaded the doctor, who found his own temper very difficult to restrain.

"Don't talk to me of haste, sir!" thundered the heterodox divine; "this is not a question of time, but of eternity!"

If there was one thing the doctor disliked more than Homeopathy, or the Anti-vaccination Society, it was the cant of the conventicle, and he said so.

Eventually the minister rang the bell for his daughter. "You must choose," said he, "between this man and me; nay, between perdition and salvation."

This alternative, for a tender-hearted young person of nineteen years of age, devoted to her lover, but who had gone to chapel regularly, and thought herself to blame when she did not enjoy it, was a terrible one; but the matter ended in the doctor's dismissal. No one believes in broken hearts in these days, so that we will take it merely as a romantic coincidence that this dutiful and charming girl faded away, and died before three months were out; yet just before she expired she sent her former lover a letter, which would seem to imply that she laid her death to their separation; "only," she was careful to add, "neither you nor dear papa were to blame."

From that moment the hospital became intolerable to the doctor, though his work was dearer to him than ever; and, finding country air and outdoor exercise essential to his well-being, he bought Dr. Rombold's practice at Kirkdale. The profession in London could not conceive "why Wilde should have thus thrown up his chances and gone to bury himself alive in the North;" while the profession at Kirkdale, who were secretly persuaded of his superiority, and were not ignorant of his previous reputation, had no doubt there was "something fishy" in the whole transaction. Even some of the more intelligent Kirkdale laymen thought so too, but were not displeased at the result. They felt like some poor country gentleman who has engaged a classical tutor for his son, at fifty pounds a year, and finds he once held the Ireland scholarship at Oxford.

This brief account of a most remarkable man I have thought it right to set down, since he afterwards played a considerable part in our domestic drama.

TIPS AND VAILS.

THERE are gifts which are only nominally gifts, so far as the giver is concerned. They are but taxes in disguise—liabilities that may not be ignored, extortions that must needs be submitted to. Indeed, to the receiver even they seem to be dues rather than donations. As he pockets them, a pleasant sense that right has been done may pervade him, but no strong feeling of gratitude for an unexpected benefit stirs within him. Christmas-boxes are in the nature of these pseudo-gratuities. It cannot be said that they are distributed very cordially—nowadays at any rate. Well, to the postman, perhaps, who is usually welcome to the street-door; the possibility of his bringing us pleasant tidings somehow overriding the certainty of his delivering to us, in due season, our unpaid bills. But to the turncock? the dustman? the scavenger? the lamplighter? the beadle? No; the conviction arises that these functionaries should be paid for their services by their employers, and should not seek additional remuneration at the hands of strangers. Nevertheless, their applications to be "remembered," as it is called, at Christmas, scarcely abate, although they may, perhaps, have met with less success in these later years than formerly. And then there are fees to box-keepers, wearing the air of donations, yet in truth compulsory payments, in discharge of the small debt incurred by having the seat we are to occupy in the theatre formally pointed out to us. Only sixpence; yet oftentimes that sixpence costs the giver a good shilling's worth of annoyance and indignation. And does the receiver suffer in no way? Does he not feel the mockery resulting from the contrast between his comeliness of aspect, his evening dress of black broadcloth, his spotless cravat and unrumpled shirt-front, and the mendicancy of his office? the soliciting of sixpences—like a bold beggar, too, who will take no denial, but will rather, if denied, proceed to outrage and violence!

Gifts to servants, "tips" or "vails" as they were designated in the last century, are, however, the most serious of these social taxes, and, indeed, are hardly so much free-will offerings as exactions, which custom and tradition have sanctioned—not wholly without challenge, as shall presently be shown.

The subject of "vails" has often dis-

turbed the world both of masters and of servants; and, although the word has become obsolete, the thing is still extant, its proportions being now, however, far less formidable than once they were. One still hears occasionally of game-keepers who look to receive "paper" from each member of a shooting-party—nothing short of a bank-note being held worthy of their acceptance. And sometimes we are told that gold is expected by the housekeeper in charge of the castle, or mansion, or other place in the country, in return for her exposition of its contents: the grand gallery, the library, the blue chamber, the yellow withdrawing-room; with their painted ceilings and carved mantelpieces, and various portraits and pictures. But exorbitancy in the matter has generally departed. Certainly times are altered since those early days of Captain Gronow, when, as he relates, "if one dined at any of the great houses in London, it was considered absolutely necessary to give a guinea to the butler on leaving the house." Yet this "very bad habit," as the gallant officer pronounces it, could boast a long continuance—a distant origin. A century and a half before, Pope had decided that he could not afford to dine with the Duke of Montague, finding that each dinner involved the disbursement of five guineas to the servants of Montague House. Subsequently the duke accompanied his invitations to the poet with an order for the amount in question. This was his Grace's way of avoiding offence to his servants and the breach of an old custom, the while he secured the pleasure of his friend's society, which, to so rich a nobleman, was surely cheap at five guineas.

In the World of the 25th February, 1754—the World being the publication famous for the contributions it received from the great Lord Chesterfield—a correspondent discusses the absurdity of giving vails to servants, and the inconveniences arising from that perverted form of benevolence. It is charged against a certain noble lord that, by his connivance at the custom of bestowing gifts upon his servants, he, in truth, compelled his guests to pay for the entertainment afforded them at his table; indeed, it is almost hinted that his hospitality had thus been turned into a source of profit. The attendants are described as very numerous, and their exertions are done full justice to. "They get about you, are very diligent, fetch you

whatever you call for, and retire with the tablecloth." But the departure of the guest is the signal for the demands of the servants. He is then made sensible of the responsibilities he has incurred. "They are drawn into two lines, right and left, and make a lane which you are to pass through before you can get to the door. You are now required to take out your money and apply it first on your right hand, then on your left, then on your right, and then on your left again, till you find yourself in the street." Meantime the situation of the master of the house is described as particularly ridiculous. "He attends you to the door with great ceremony; but he is so conscious of the awkward appearance he must make as a witness to the expenses of his guests, that you can observe him placing himself in a position, that he would have it supposed conceals him from the inhospitable transactions that are going on under his roof. He wears the silly look of an innocent man who has unfortunately broken in upon the retirement of two lovers, and is ready to affirm with great simplicity that he has seen nothing." The case of a guest whom misfortune constrains to be economical in the matter of vails is then set forth. "Having an earnest desire," states the sufferer, "of mixing with those friends whom an early intimacy has most endeared to me. . . . I cannot at all times refuse their invitations, even though I have nothing for their servants. And here, alas! the inconveniences of an empty pocket are as strongly exhibited, as in any case of insolvency that I know of. I am a marked man. If I ask for beer, I am presented with a piece of bread. If I am bold enough to call for wine, after a delay which would take away its relish were it good, I receive a mixture of the whole sideboard in a greasy glass. If I hold up my plate, nobody sees me; so that I am forced to eat mutton with fish sauce, and pickles with my apple-pie." "Mr. Fitz-Adam," the editor, replies to his correspondent, admitting his ingenuity, veracity, and humour, yet supplying ironical arguments in favour of the servants and the practice of giving them vails. Many servants, he alleges, are in the employ of younger sons, who are inattentive to the payment of wages; or of ladies of fashion, who appropriate the "card money" left at their routs and parties, and of right belonging to the servants, to defraying the expenses of tea, coffee, and wax-candles.

The domestics of persons of quality are so numerous, and have so little to do, therefore, that they are under the necessity of spending great part of their time in ale-houses and other places, where, in imitation of their superiors, they divert themselves with the fashionable vices of drinking, gaming, &c.—amusements of an expensive nature, requiring more than bare wages to support them. Other servants, living in the City in the houses of grocers, haberdashers, pastry-cooks, oilmen, pewterers, brokers, tailors, and so forth, have such uncertain humours and so many airs to submit to, that their spirits would be quite broken but for the cordial of vails. Further, it is alleged that at least a third part of the whole body of servants in the Metropolis, for certain wise reasons, pass with their masters for single men, while they have really wives and families to maintain. Could these, it is asked, be supported “in any degree of elegance” if the perquisites of servants were abridged, and their vails withheld from them? Altogether, Mr. FitzAdam humorously decides that he is not only for continuing the custom of giving money to servants, but is anxious to publish his opinion that, in all families where the said servants do not number more than a dozen or fifteen, “it is mean, pitiful, and beggarly in any person whatsoever, to pass from table without giving to all.”

Mr. FitzAdam's opinion was adopted by Dr. Johnson, perhaps from mere love of contradiction and contempt for Scottish manners and customs; for he delighted “to play off his wit” against Boswell's fellow-countrymen and native land. And when Boswell boasted that in Scotland “we had the honour of being the first to abolish the inhospitable, troublesome, and ungracious custom of giving vails in Scotland,” Johnson thundered down upon him: “Sir, you abolished vails, because you were too poor to be able to give them.”

This question of “vails” seems to have been much discussed in the year of King George the Third's accession. The London Chronicle, or Universal Evening Post, of the 16th January, 1760, publishes as an item of news from Scotland, that, at a meeting of the gentlemen, freeholders, and commissioners of land-tax for the county of Aberdeen, one-and-twenty gentlemen came to a resolution to discourage, as far as lay in their power, the custom of giving vails to servants, and for that purpose

engaged, and mutually gave their words of honour, that, in visiting one another, they would give no money to servants, nor allow their own servants to take any money from their guests; holding the practice to be “not only hurtful with respect to servants, but likewise shameful in itself, and destructive of all real hospitality.” The same newspaper, a few days later, announces that the Honourable Company of Scots Hunters, at their annual meeting, held at Edinburgh, had agreed upon a similar resolution. The custom of giving vails is stated to have arrived at a very high pitch, and to have become “not only a great expense, but to be in its consequences very pernicious to servants.” It was judged to be preferable that there should be an increase to the wages of the servants, although nothing definite in this respect was determined upon; but the Secretary of the Company was instructed to notify to the public the resolution that had been arrived at, touching the general subject of vails. An editorial note, appended to the account of the proceedings of the Scots Hunters, highly applauded their resolution, which, it is alleged, “cannot fail to be adopted by the noblemen and gentlemen of every county in England, the first opportunity they have of meeting;” the inhospitable custom in question being alike “disgraceful to the nation, in the eyes of foreigners, and disgraceful both to natives and foreigners.” The columns of the London Chronicle are subsequently much occupied with correspondence upon the question. The editor finds support in the letters of “a country gentleman,” writing from Norfolk-street, who expresses his opinion with abundant force. “With what contempt must foreigners consider us,” he writes, “when they see the numerous and splendid train of servants attending on the great, and reflect that not a fourth, not a tenth part, of these fellows' income is supplied by the man whose livery they wear; the rest is raised by contributions extorted from his friends and guests! . . . Indeed, the contributions these varlets exact are so heavy and burthensome, that a gentleman may often have a genteel dinner at a first-rate tavern, for a smaller sum than he is obliged to pay to them. What a sneaking, awkward figure does a gentleman make (I blush while I write it, as I recollect all the shame and uneasiness I have, a hundred times, suffered on these occasions) when

waiting on his friend to his horse or his vehicle, his guest's right hand locked in his, and the other fumbling in his pocket for half-crowns and shillings, while they pass through a parcel of trim, lazy, pampered serving-men, who, with an insolent, demanding eye, watch the motions of the hand, and hold theirs more than half extended, to receive these shameful doles, which they call their lawful perquisites! In vain the master, with averted look, pretends not to see what he is ashamed of, but has not courage to prevent, and perhaps next week countenances the practice, by giving his friend the same mortification." The country gentleman, however, has quite made up his mind. He will, so far as he can, suppress both the giving and the receiving of vails. He rejoices that the subject is about to be brought before the grand jury of his county at the ensuing assizes. For his own servants, should he find them accepting money from any person, of whatever denomination, entering his gates—"that instant I turn them adrift to the mercy of a press-gang; nor will I, from Lady-day, or from Midsummer next, at farthest, give a farthing to the servants of anyone. I can afford to pay my own servants myself, and want not the assistance of others." Finally, after calling upon men of spirit to imitate the example set by the numerous and respectable societies in the northern part of the island, and by the exhibition—*coûte qui coûte*—of unanimity and vigour "to stem the current, and crush this bloated Hydra," he appeals to the candour of his readers, to excuse the demerits of his letter, for—"I am no orator, Mr. Chronicle; my letter shows it; but my motive is good."

From the topic of vails the correspondence digresses to the consideration of the perquisites received by servants from tradesmen, and to the subject of "card money." Servants are charged, in the case of vails being refused them, with inflicting damage by way of revenge upon the coaches, horses, or apparel of the guest offending them by his economy. In the same way it is alleged they punish the tradesman who withholds from them what they consider their proper fees, by diverting from him the patronage of their employers. Thus, as a matter of self-defence, tradesmen are compelled to comply with the demand of the servants, the cost at last falling upon the master, who is charged extra prices to cover the expense of feeding his domestics. "There

is not a tradesman," writes one correspondent, "who furnishes great families with what may be wanted and is continually called for, but must fee the servant or servants employed to order them, &c., and when his bill is paid must, besides, give a very handsome gratuity to that servant in whose department his matter lay; and if he be paid by a servant, that servant also must have a gratuity. This is the case with the coachmaker, the wheeler, the saddler, the tailor, the upholsterer, &c., &c. All this must be done, or a tradesman lies so open to misrepresentation that may be made to the master by the servant with whom he has to do, that if he refuses to comply with what they call the established custom, he is almost sure of losing that family; and this many servants openly tell them." After the lapse of a century, this question of the perquisites received by servants from tradesmen remains very much where it was.

"Card money" rather concerned the masters than the servants. Each guest was required to pay for the cards, the expense being divided among the company. The host paid his share, by way of setting an example, and was oftentimes compelled to prompt negligent or forgetful guests to contribute their quota. This old-established custom was denounced in the London Chronicle as "sordid, mean, and scandalous." Cards were expensive articles, however, in 1760, while quite a passion for card-playing prevailed, and innumerable "packs" were consumed in an evening's entertainment. The levying of this tax has long since become obsolete, although a trace of the custom remained in the habit, cherished by old card-players, of leaving money upon the table concealed underneath the candlesticks. But with "card money" in addition to vails, it must be confessed that the guest of a hundred years ago was rather severely taxed.

It must not be supposed, however, that the system of "vails" did not find many champions among the correspondents of the London Chronicle. It was quite enough that the custom was old, and that it was English. A noble lord, a determined advocate of vails, threatened to knock down the first servant who refused to receive a gratuity; which was perhaps rather an idle sort of menace. A "true-born Englishman" denounced, in stinging terms, "the penurious gentlemen of the North." Foreigners were bidden to adhere to their

own customs and mind their own business; they were warned not to try to destroy the honourable character of the English nation, or to curb a free people, noted from time immemorial for their humanity, justice, and generosity. The country gentleman, who had written against vails, was charged with avarice, and accused of being some discarded placeman seeking "to ingratiate himself to a good table." He is warned, however, that "without he behaves as an Englishman, he is not worthy to put his feet thereunder." And the writer concludes: "For my own part, I am blessed with a moderate competency, can keep clear of rocks and shoals, and, whenever I dine at a nobleman's or gentleman's table, never leave the house without acting as my father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and all my relations have heretofore done." Another correspondent, signing himself "Lucius," is of opinion that the attempt to suppress vails proceeds from a meanness of spirit, and a degeneracy of that noble and benevolent disposition which our ancestors would have scorned to relinquish, out of complaisance to any foreign precedent whatever. Vails, it is stated, were a voluntary tax, levied by gentlemen upon themselves, for the benefit of those "whom the difference of fortunes hath decreed to servility, to enable them to bear the burthens of Fate;" whilst the opponents of vails are denounced as "a sort of growling mongrels, whom Fortune hath put it out of their power to act as gentlemen, while Nature hath not adapted them for servants." Exceeding admiration is expressed for the domestics of the period; they are described as most likely youths, the flowers of the British Isles, and their politeness in serving at table is greatly commended. The abolition of vails, on whatever beggarly pretence, would, it is alleged, not only deprive the servant of some ready money for his immediate necessity, but would surely rob him further of "the satisfaction he has in knowing that his services have been approved by a majority: which knowledge is the very spring of industry." War is, after a fashion, carried into the enemy's country: for it is argued that, if the vails should be abolished, then the system of perquisites prevailing in all public offices should also be suppressed; a proposition that, no doubt, seemed very monstrous a hundred years ago, when corruption figured largely in every department of the State.

Perhaps the best advocate of the vail

system, as it existed, is a correspondent, "Integrity," who—admitting the genuineness of his letter, and of this there can hardly be any doubt—manifests a very practical acquaintance with the subject.

"Sir," he begins, "I have made an observation that you are always willing to give each party an opportunity to vindicate their own cause. By giving this letter a place in your Chronicle you will not only oblige but serve thousands.

"I have been fifteen years a servant; the nine last I have lived with a gentleman in the middling station of life, and, having made a memorandum of my gain and expenses, I am able to give a true estimate of the same.

My wages for the first four years was £6 per year, the other five at £7 per year; the whole nine years' wages amounting to the sum of	£59 0 0
My vails and perquisites in the said term amounts to the sum and no more than	25 7 6
Which, being added together, makes my nine years' gains to be	84 7 6
My expenses one year with another, viz. :-	
For four pair of shoes, at 6s. per pair	£1 4 0
For mending ditto at 2s. per pair	0 8 0
For three shirts, the making, mending, &c.	0 15 9
For three neckcloths, at 2s. each	0 6 0
For two pair of stockings, at 4s. per pair	0 8 0
For washing the whole year	1 10 0
For one wig in two years, is per year	0 10 6
For spending money when out late at nights, &c.	0 5 0
The real expense in one year is	5 7 8
Which, in nine years, amounts to the sum of	48 5 3
Which, being deducted from the sum above, there will remain clear gains in nine years	£36 2 3

"And now, sir, if I had no vails, I should have had no more to show for my nine years' service than ten pounds fourteen shillings and ninepence; a great sum indeed to keep me when out of place, in sickness, or other casualties.—I am, sir, with submission, your most humble servant,
INTEGRITY.

"P.S. Where there is one that gets more, there is ten that gets less."

It will be observed from this letter that the wages paid to footmen a hundred years ago were but small, and that wigs were not included in the livery clothes provided by the master. Altogether, the wardrobe of "Integrity" was of a modest kind, some disproportion being evident in regard to the number of shoes required for the year's service as compared with the number of

stockings: there being but two pairs of the latter to four pairs of the former.

But the controversy about vails was not confined to correspondence in a newspaper. It seems that in 1764 certain gentlemen who had resisted the payment of these fees were attacked in Ranelagh-gardens by an angry mob of footmen. The gentlemen were hissed, and abused, and grossly insulted, their assailants proceeding subsequently to destroy the fences, break the lamps, and throw stones through the windows of the Grand Rotunda. They were apprehended and duly punished, constables being afterwards posted at Ranelagh to prevent any renewal of the disturbance.

The employers of the last century possessed a special means of punishing refractory footmen, which has long since departed. This was the press-gang—a very terror to the servants of that period, whose conduct, it must be confessed, often merited severe chastisement. Thus we read in the London Chronicle of a sort of mutiny among fifty of the servants who had accompanied the officers forming part of the English forces in Germany. These servants determined that, if their wages and perquisites were not advanced, they would leave their masters to shift for themselves; but, as their demands were exorbitant, the officers felt obliged to dispense with their services. "Thereupon the servants procured passes to come over to England in the transports lately arrived. At Sheerness, however, the captain of the Princess Royal, being informed of this behaviour, sent his men to press them, when most of them were found good, able men, fitter to serve his Majesty in the station of gentlemen-sailors than of footmen."

Of the objection to "vails" entertained by Samuel Foote, actor, author, and wit, many accounts have been recorded. There is a tendency, however, to father upon the facetious of established fame any comical adventure which seems at all in harmony with their system of humour; hence books of jests, bon-mots, and "good things" must always be viewed with suspicion so far as their authenticity is concerned. There is something of Foote's impudence, at any rate, in the story of the wag who, having dined sumptuously at a great house, presented to each of the servants, drawn up in a line to receive his parting gift—a bright farthing! They ventured to expostulate—to hint that there must be some

mistake. "I never give less, I assure you!" he said with the loftiest air, and made the best of his way to the street. Foote or not, this humorist may claim to have aided in the suppression of "vails" by involving them in ridicule.

KRESCENZ.

AN IDYL ON THE MOSELLE.

It was evening in the ancient town of Trier; the Angelus was ringing down from the great fortress-like Dom; the little carts and stalls had vanished out of the marketplace; and the carved saints, clustered on the fountain, smiled benignly in the setting sun. Old women in strange head-dresses, beads and books in hand, passed in and out of St. Gondolphus's curious gates; young girls, with long, fair, plaited hair, moved in groups across the open place; brilliant uniforms shone up on the balconies of the Rothe Haus; the shopkeepers in the queer little peaked houses stood at their doors and amused themselves; while the awful black arches of the Porta Nigra frowned more grimly than ever in the glowing light, and the gay and quaint little frescoes at the street corners seemed to blaze out with new colour at its touch. One particularly high-peaked roof was suddenly covered with a flock of white pigeons alighting to rest, and at the same moment a face appeared at a little open window among the birds, looked up and down the streets, and was withdrawn again. The face belonged to a young girl, and the room into which she withdrew was pleasant and neat, if a little bare. A work-table at the window showed that it was the home of a seamstress; a little shrine hung in a corner, with a tiny lamp burning; a few rude pictures decorated the walls. The girl was clothed in a holiday dress of dark green stuff, with white sleeves and apron, and wore a scarlet flower in her breast. She had a soft, sweet, innocent face, and her fair hair hung behind in two long golden braids from her neck to her knees.

As she turned from the window, a curly-haired boy burst into the room.

"I have a message for you, Krescenz. I met Karl, and he told me to tell you he could not see you to-night. He is suddenly sent on business."

A look of disappointment clouded the girl's face; but, after a few moments of silence, she said:

"How good it is that they find him so

useful! But come, Max, you shall not be disappointed of your excursion. You and I will go for our walk, and I will take you for a peep at our cottage."

Max snatched his hat, which he had flung off in disgust, and, locking the door behind them, the sister and brother descended many stairs, and took their way through the streets, and out by the Porta Nigra, into the country.

"Look here, Max, did you ever see anything so gloriously blue as the Moselle this evening? Could you bear to live away from it? How glad I am that our new home will be near it. And look, how magnificent the red light is upon the vine-covered banks, with the crimson earth glowing between! How the tall dark poplars and the golden acacias seem to thrill as they bask in this wonderful light! If I had been a man, Max, I should certainly have tried to be an artist. Karl laughs at me when I say so; he does not care for such things, and gets annoyed when I talk about them; and yet I never saw half the beauty of things till he loved me."

"How many people are out walking to-night, Krescenz. I never saw the road so gay. Oh, there is that Gretchen kissing her hands to me, and I will not look at her. Why? Because she was impertinent this morning, telling me that Karl had left off loving you, and was going to marry Luise."

"It was a silly joke, Max. I hope you did not get angry. What did you say?"

"Something that ought to have stopped her kissing hands to me," said Max.

"It was too foolish to be angry about, little brother. Some one said it to myself the other day, and I only laughed. I knew so well it was because I sent Karl a message to Luise the other evening. But Gretchen ought not to have said it to you, Max. When I go to my new home I don't think I shall ask her to come and see me. I do not want to hate anybody, and——"

"I will do the hating for you, Krescenz, and I hate everyone who says that Karl does not love you."

"Everyone! Don't give such a big name to two people, Max. If Karl did not love me, should not I be the first to know of it? Ah! do you see our little house peeping above the acacias up in the fields over there? How delightful it will be to live there, Max, with all the flowers growing in at one's windows. And Karl is providing this home for me! Ah, little

Max, this looks rather like loving one, doesn't it?"

Max was silent, and kept his face turned away, with a slight frown on the brows.

"I wish I could suddenly grow big, Krescenz," he said abruptly.

The sister laughed. "My dear, you must wait," she said gaily. "By-and-by you shall copy your brother Karl, and if you can manage to grow like him you will do very well. In the meantime, you are not quite so small as you were, my boy, when I first took you in my arms, and carried you about our poor garret, trying to put you to sleep. Mother had died the day before I was ten years old, and you were only born. I was a very little nurse, wasn't I? But it seemed to me that my heart was a hundred years old. How proud I was of you, and how I loved you!"

"And you worked for me, Krescenz?"

"Ah, didn't I? We were alone in the world, only you and me. I paid a poor old woman, a very, very old woman, who could not do anything else, a penny a day for taking care of you, and I worked for us two. I was a strong little girl, and as industrious as a bee. People gave me work to do; it was very hard until I was about fourteen, and then I learned to sew, and things began to be better. At sixteen I was able to rent a little room for myself, and so bring home my little brother. Ah, Max, how often we have been hungry together! and yet you are a brave boy for your age. I have pulled you through the worst, and now God has taken us both into happiness and safety. No more scanty crusts for you. No more sitting up all night, sewing by a candle, for me. No more pinching at the heart when rent-day is coming round. Who could have thought of it; that Karl, whom everyone admires, should have sought out me! I did not accept him hastily, Max, for I was afraid he might change his mind; afraid that he had not known what he was saying, or that he did not know perfectly how much people thought of him. But he would persist in loving me, he would, indeed; and that is why I laugh so much when the people tell idle tales. 'If you only knew, my good people,' I think; 'if you only knew how well I know.' And Max—you see I do not mind saying anything to you—I must confess that the greatest trouble I have had lately, has been the fear that so much sitting up at night was taking away all my good looks. I look so

sickly sometimes when the morning light comes in. Stare me well in the face, Max, and tell me if I am getting ugly."

"You are the prettiest and loveliest girl in the town, sister Krescenz."

"But I am not rosy, like Gretchen, nor are my eyes so big and bright as Luise's, nor——"

"No matter," persisted Max. "Not one of them can smile the way you do."

"After that I must say something nice to you, Max. Sit down here on the grass, and let me tell you the kind of life we shall have over in our little house yonder. We shall have four rooms of our own, and there are vines growing round all the windows. We shall have a pretty garden with bees and flowers, and a field with a cow in it. I shall do my sewing-sitting under a tree, looking down on the Moselle. You will go to work with Karl, and in the evening you will both come home, and we shall have supper in the garden."

"I wish we had some now, Krescenz."

"I wish we had, my boy; and I think it is time to go and look for some coffee and bread."

The sister and brother turned their steps towards a pleasant summer-house of refreshment, built among trees, upon the high overhanging bank of the river, where the people of Trier love to drink coffee in the cool of the evening. As the girl and child took their simple meal in a nook of the projecting terrace, the blue Moselle rushed under their feet, and Trier lay bathed in ruddy glory in the distance before their eyes, with its strange contrasting outlines softened into magnificent harmony, and the fierce black Roman gates making a frown on the very front of the sunny landscape.

"How splendid it looks, the dear old town!" cried Krescenz. "Do you know, Max, I cannot understand why people ever leave their own homes to go out into the world."

"I should like to go out and see the world," said Max.

"You mustn't say so, Max. Nothing would ever induce me to leave Trier."

They were rambling among the trees on the hill-side, stopping now and then to lean forward and take a fresh peep at the beauty of the river and the exquisite gleams of the distance on either side.

* * * *

"Oh, Krescenz, Krescenz! I have found a pair of lovers."

"No! Have you, Max?" said Krescenz with interest.

"Behind that large tree, in such a pretty nook. Just peep round and you can see."

"Hide, then, while I peep, so carefully."

Max retired while Krescenz leaned forward with a smile of mischievous delight, and peered from behind a screen of leaves, herself unseen by the objects of her interest. When the boy thought he had waited long enough, he came forth again, and plucked her by the skirt.

She turned to him slowly, and put her finger on her lip.

"Krescenz! Krescenz!" whispered the child, "what makes your face so dreadful! Are they ghosts?"

"Hush, Max! I cannot see, take me by the hand, and get me into some quiet place, where nobody will find us."

"Oh, Krescenz, you are ill! Are you going to die?"

"No, dear, I shall not die. Fetch me some water, and tell nobody."

Max obeyed, and while the red light paled on the Moselle, and purple mingled with the crimson and olive of its banks, the girl's white face lay on the moss, gazing blankly upward with fixed eyes. The tears trickled over Max's innocent cheeks as he nestled at her side and kissed her lips, her hands, and her hair.

"Oh, Krescenz! may I not call someone to come and help you home?"

"No, dear, no," said the young girl, starting up. "We are not going home any more. We are going away somewhere else, you and I together."

"What, away from Trier?"

"Yes, I am tired of Trier."

"I thought you said you could never leave Trier; and what will Karl say to you?"

"Oh, Max! oh, Max!"

"Where shall we sleep to-night, if we keep walking on at this rate?"

"We shall rest on the road, and to-morrow we will travel farther. There are other towns besides Trier, where industrious people can get work to do."

"Oh, Krescenz! I am afraid you have gone mad. Those people behind the trees must have been the wicked spirits we read about, and they have harmed you."

"Do you know who they were, Max? Karl and Luise. Gretchen was right, after all."

"But did they say they were going to be married?" said the boy. "Oh, don't

groan, Krescenz, and I will try and ask no more questions."

"Dear Max, there is nothing more for me at Trier. That is why we are going together out into the world."

"Oh that I could grow big and go back and kill him!"

"Hush! you must not talk such nonsense. You must take care of me now, as I have nobody else."

"That I will, indeed; but oh, Krescenz, my canary!"

"Somebody will take care of it, dear. We can get another."

"And your pretty little shrine?"

"Somebody else will kneel at it. I can pray to God anywhere, you know."

Deepening shadows dropped on the Moselle, and the two young figures hurried on through the purple twilight away from Trier.

IRIS.

A MEMORY AND A PICTURE.

THE small soft rain fell tenderly,
A waning rainbow spanned the sky
From flying grey to breaking blue;
A wind-blown rose-spray shook its leaves
Down from the porch's moss-grown eaves,
Like snow-flakes gamed with dew.
One stood beneath, a still-faced youth,
With lips of strength and eyes of truth,
Waiting, The tangled leafage stirred
To some swift passage; as he heard,
His calm face quickened.
Flushed with flight
Through dripping wood-ways, with the light
Of dauntless youth upon her, brake,
Through parting boughs, a form to make
The young world's dreams seem simply true:
Raindrops besprent her wind-tossed hair,
Her lifted eyes, of radiance rare,
Were of such royal blue,
The flag-flower bowed beneath her feet,
Unnoticed in her passage fleet,
With their deep hue might scarce compete.
Swift, sweet, unspoiled, to love's keen sense
Each limb spake passion's eloquence.
"Iris!" he cried. Her cheek went flame;
Was it with joy or subtle shame?
A flying wood-nymph, god-espied,
With wind-loosed tresses floating wide,
Might stand so poised 'twixt shame and pride.

Ah, happy hour! Ah, meeting sweet!
The echoes of those flying feet,
The rain-drops' plash, the rustling leaf,
Make music still that mocks at grief.
A wildflower she, yet summer's rose
More hidden charms might not uncloze;
Untamed—yet were there tenderness
Like that of her most shy caress?
Iris! The eastern singers say
Those flowers on which the rainbow rests
Are sweetest. Though her laugh is gay,
And rapture from her eyes doth ray,
Love in her bosom nests.
Tender as Spring, as summer warm,
And constant still through shine or storm,
How should one limit her? Lo! her eyes

Dim the deep blue of southern skies!
See, at her feet the flag-flower lies,
The storm-bow bends above;
Not pearls, but raindrops gem her hair.
Ah! is there picturing may compare
With her whom Spring should love?
Iris! true child of shine and shower,
Bright as the bow, and sweeter than the flower!

UNDER THE HAMMER.

FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PRODUCE.

FUR and feathers, frankincense and myrrh, anise and cumin, by no means exhaust the catalogue of articles useful, ornamental, or luxurious, brought to the hammer in Mincing-lane. Apart from the great drug sales, which take place fortnightly, on Thursdays, and the miscellaneous sales occurring from week to week, are certain auctions of those drugs which, in "the Lane," are called "special," and have, at fixed seasons, sales to themselves. Of this character are opium and indigo, sold as the crops arrive in this country during our English summer. Both opium and indigo are "big things," grown largely within certain districts, in demand all over the world, and, like many other natural productions, fluctuating severely in value, according to the abundance or scarcity of the last crop or the prospects of the next. Hence these special drugs are good "gambling" stock, as the market affords plenty of facility for trying the alternative known to speculators as "making a spoon or spoiling a horn." Holders of opium must have suffered seriously since last year, as the drug has undergone great depreciation in value, and a failure in the present crop—which would have made their fortunes—has not occurred. Opium, however, has not made or marred so many fair estates as indigo, the produce of a truly "sensitive" plant. There are indigo speculators in London who have made and lost their hundreds of thousands within a very few years—who have gone up like a rocket and come down like the stick. I am told of others who have made their money and kept it, and notably of one brilliant operator who, having secured a triple "plum," dropped out of the trade altogether, content with his splendid success. Operations in opium cannot be compared—at least in this country—with those in the famous dye-stuff which enriches the planters of Tirhoot; for, although morphine is largely manufactured here, and a vast proportion of the opium sent to North and South America and the West

Indies is imported into London first, and then repacked in small tins, yet it must be owned that a little opium goes a long way. Into the United Kingdom are imported annually from three to five hundred thousand pounds of the drug, worth about as many pounds sterling. Therefore, there is not so "much money in it" after all, but this deficiency is made up in the excitement of prices fluctuating with uncertain supplies. Thus, in 1869, only a trifle over two hundred thousand pounds were imported, while the returns of 1871 record nearly five hundred thousand. This was nearly all Smyrna opium—that is to say, opium grown near Kara-Hissar, Amasia, and Angora, which finds its way to Smyrna for shipment—the imports of Persian opium having been curiously small and irregular, until within the last three or four years, when its great strength in morphine has made this variety a favourite with manufacturers. What then becomes of the product of the vast opium-fields of British India, the great and thickly-populated country extending eastward from Agra, and including the districts of Benares and Bahar? Within this area of some hundred and twenty thousand square miles, no fewer than five hundred and sixty thousand acres are actually under poppy cultivation. Another great opium region consists of the broad table-lands of Malwa, and the slopes of the Vindhya Hills, in the Mahratta country. Large quantities of the drug are produced in the plains of the Punjab, and more or less all over India. How much is produced in that great peninsula cannot be ascertained, but the amount exported is accurately known. Over ninety thousand chests are annually exported from the presidencies of Bengal and Bombay, each chest weighing from one hundred and thirty to one hundred and sixty pounds; and the monopoly of Bengal, and the export duty on Malwa opium, bring a net revenue to the government of India of between seven and eight millions sterling. None of this comes to Europe. Whither, then, does it go? To the country with which we first "went to war," said the late Earl of Dundonald, "in order to enable iron-headed old rats to smuggle opium." John Chinaman takes nine-tenths of the Indian drug, and the Straits Settlements take the rest.

To see what opium is in the London market, let us make a call on courteous Mr. Cutler, at the bonded warehouses, Red

Lion-wharf, hard by Southwark-bridge. There is a touch of old Bream's-buildings about this warehouse, with its iron bars and iron doors, its keys, and bolts, and chains; but the nostrils of the visitor, instead of being attacked by a mingled odour of fried fish, strong waters, and stale tobacco, are filled with a heavy, acrid, aromatic air—sweet and yet bitter, oppressive but yet soothing withal. This is the odour of opium in bulk; truly in bulk: hundreds and thousands of cases lying piled around—an opium city, Poppyville, the capital of the Land of Nod, with long lines of streets, and massive blocks of buildings of a material slowly scraped, drop by drop, by myriads of hands from innumerable plants. The streets of Poppyville are narrow, and dark, and mysterious, with queer turnings and odd corners. Let us walk quietly down Lethe-street into Oblivion-square, meditating by the way on the powerful denizens of this odd corner of the great world, and put up at the Hôtel Proserpine. The dishes served at this queer hostelry are very satisfying; if partaken of liberally enough, they satisfy one for ever and aye. Smooth, hard-coated Karasá will attract one gourmand, while the soft, rough-coated Boghadieh has charms for another. The quiet smoker can enjoy his pipe, the thirsty soul his dram of opium wine. Meat, drink, and smoke are served at the Hôtel Proserpine, but woe be to that traveller who pulls up too often at that house of entertainment for man and beast, which should be rather sought for health than pleasure, as the hostess soon tires of her guests. If these need her soothing care, she gives it at first readily enough; but, when too often appealed to, brings in a terrible bill, for her husband is a grim fellow, who must be paid to the day. There is no shirking his little account, with the great sprawling Pluto written at the bottom. Now and then, but very rarely, she, not unmindful of the day when she sported in the sunlight with her attendant nymphs, will plead earnestly for a favourite guest, and secure a respite for a De Quincey or a Coleridge; but ordinary customers must pay their shot at the Hôtel Proserpine, and pay to the day. How stand the books of the house with mankind, I wonder? On the one side, what countless lives saved, what unspeakable agonies assuaged! On the other, what record of weak indulgence, of bemuddled brains, of bodies and souls destroyed!

"Persian opium is bought by sample, Smyrna by inspection," says Mr. Cutler, as we emerge from Morphia-row into the suburbs of Poppyville. That is to say, the choice opium from Asia Minor is "inspected" by intending purchasers, before bidding at the monthly sale. Let us inspect a chest of prime Smyrna. Attendant spirits, singularly active denizens of Drowsyland, rip open the outer wooden case and the tin chest inclosed within. There is the opium in cakes or lumps of all shapes, and in size varying from a few ounces to two or three pounds. This form of the drug is called "scale" opium, not on account of its structure, but from the adaptability of these pieces to the weighing scales of the druggist. It is also christened "green-leaf" opium, from the fine green leaves in which each cake is wrapped. Taking up a cake, we proceed to inspect it, first making sure that it is soft and yielding to the touch, as these conditions are indispensable. The next step is to cut a deep gash into it with a penknife and to inspect the wound carefully. Prime Smyrna, when cut, shows an oily consistency, a fine brown colour, and emits a sweet scent of fresh poppies. This is the quality which fetches the highest price, and is mostly used for repacking to the West Indies in merchantable quantities. It is valuable for infusions—*laudanum*, *paregoric*, &c., and is far too valuable to be used in making *morphine*. For the latter purpose, Persian opium, stronger and coarser, is now largely employed. The Persian variety arrives in wooden chests, covered with hide and protected by sacking. As its value depends upon the *morphine* it contains—often as much as ten per cent.—it is sold by sample. From each cake is extracted, with a species of *cheestaster*, a slender cylinder, to be handed over to the analyst, by whose verdict the biddings will be guided. Beauty of appearance, and other qualities valuable in retail trade, are unheeded in the case of Persian opium, which is prized only for its strength in the "active principle."

Other potent drugs and costly essences nestle under that dry arch of Southwark-bridge, which forms part of the Red Lion-wharf warehouses. That black stuff, worth some forty shillings per pound, is *scammony*—hideous to the taste but salutary to the stomach of biped and quadruped. Very choice *scammony* such as that on view is known by its fracture, and its faculty of producing a milky fluid when

wetted and rubbed. If it "milks," it will fetch a high price. It is simply the dried juice of the *scammony* root, a native of that fecund Asia Minor made so rich by the bounty of nature, so poor by the hand of blundering man. Deeper in the recesses of the arch, in a cool refreshing spot, is stored a product which, in costliness, throws its more useful neighbours into the shade. This is the world-famed *otto*, or, more correctly, *attar*, of roses. *Mincing-lane*, however, does not recognise the latter spelling. Philologists and chemists may do as they please, and call old drugs by new names, but to "the Lane" *attar* remains "*otto*," and he who called it aught else would be laughed at as much as the daring innovator who should venture to write *vanilla*, in the place of traditional "*vanilloes*." *Otto*, then, is here galore. Some comes in bottles, which display its beautiful light yellow colour and curiously-crystallised structure to perfection; but the best *otto* is not sent in bottles at all, but in the flat circular vessels of tinned copper called *vases*, or "*cappers*." The vase I hold in my hand contains about sixty ounces of *otto*, worth as many pounds sterling in the wholesale market. Five of these vases pack neatly into a box, which could be carried comfortably under my arm. *Otto*, the essential oil of roses, is one of those articles marked by the adulterator for his own. For sophistication the volatile oil of an Indian grass, known in commerce as *geranium* oil, is largely employed, detection being extremely difficult, even by what is called the congelation test, or temperature at which the oil crystallises; the crystallisation-point of pure *otto* being as high as fifty-five degrees of Fahrenheit, at which only five minutes are required to congeal it well. A curious practice regarding *otto* still prevails. For some unexplained reason it is sold in Turkish ounces and drachms, and at Red Lion-wharf Turkish weights are kept for this purpose and for weighing samples, consisting of one drachm of the precious oil. Higher up in the lofty warehouse, overlooking Father Thames, is the sponge floor, holding sponges enough to drink up a fair-sized river. The floor is covered with a fine stratum of sand. Piles of sand are swept up in the corners. The air is full of fine, soft, velvety sand, knocked out of the sponges, which are now sold by weight, with twenty-five per cent. allowance for sand; the ancient practice of allowing the buyer one

kick round, to get the sand out before weighing, having fallen into desuetude. Sponges are not generally sold openly, but at a species of private trade-auction, whence outsiders, defined generally as men keeping shops, are rigorously excluded. The children of Israel have the sponge trade very much in their own hands, and, as it is "a good thing," seem inclined to keep it there. All kinds of attempts have been made to utilise the many tons of fine sand shaken out of the sponges, but hitherto all have failed, the sand being so highly charged with salt as to make it completely useless. Adjoining warehouses are loaded from top to bottom with all kinds of foreign and colonial produce: China teas, a term which would once have been laughed at, but is now rendered necessary by the important place assumed by Indian teas, of great strength and excellent quality: coffees of all kinds—Ceylon and Java, African peaberry, and the coffee of Rio, better liked in Turkey than in England on account of its strong astringent flavour, for what little Mocha coffee there is does not go to Constantinople. On the coffee floor are mountains—Alps and Cordilleras—of coffee, first classified by an adept armed with a pantomime cheese-taster divided into compartments, which retain samples of the middle and two ends of the bag, and then shot out on to the selected heaps. Great skill and long practice are required in this "sorting," as a cargo of coffee will contain many shades of quality. When the mountains of loose coffee have been well mixed together, samples are issued and the berries brought under the hammer like other produce. Coffee and cocoa, tea and sugar, are knocked down from year's end to year's end in Mincing-lane, but it must not be supposed that all the produce trade is done by auction. Enormous private sales take place, and a great sugar broker will sell to a refiner any number of cargoes afloat. Refiners—much worried just now by the French and their stupid, coddling export bounty—need to look well ahead, as many of them convert from a thousand to twelve hundred tons weekly, and must therefore always be supplied with enough Java or Cuba, Porto Rico, Manilla, Honduras, or Barbadoes, to keep their devouring "plant" going. Plenty of beetroot sugar is also imported into this country in its unrefined condition, and fetches a high price.

Strolling one day down Mincing-lane, I resumed my search for the extraordinary creature known as a "drysalter"—a being whose occupation had long been to me a matter of curious speculation. Plunging originally into my moral consciousness, I found that the ideas of saltiness and dryness ran together, and the image of one engaged in curing bacon, hams, Bath chaps, and other incentives to thirst, was flung upon the retina of my mind's eye. Like a true à priori philosopher, I asked no questions, till years and failing health brought me to the tardy conviction that, perhaps, I might be wrong. I inquired of a friend in the City, who told me I was wrong—ridiculously wrong—absurd. "Nothing of the kind, my good fellow," said he; "another beast altogether. Your idea is as wrong as usual. You writing-fellows always jump at conclusions." Much abashed I humbled myself, and meekly said, "So glad to have met you. Of course, you can tell me what a drysalter really is? Set my mind at rest. What manner of man is he?" "Ha!" responded my Gamaliel of groceries—"ha! ha! Not what you think, but er—er—quite different; nothing salt—dry, you know—fellow sells dye." I mildly suggested that dye was wet. "Not dye, stupid; but dye-stuffs, you know, before they are wetted." And away he dashed at a passer-by, and began inquiring about shellac. "Well," thought I, "I have grasped the impalpable; I have precognised the invisible; the drysalter is mine henceforth; I hold the mystery of his existence in the hollow of my hand. I can 'place' him. I will identify him, and brand him with his title." I descended on a friend learned in dry dye-stuffs: he showed me much choice safflower, and bewailed the falling off of that branch of trade since ladies left off wearing pink petticoats. He inducted me into the mysteries of cochineal, laying before me many samples of the humble insect who dies that he may dye. He revealed to me the peculiarities of indigo till, at last, I could restrain my pent-up feelings no longer, and cried, "I know your secret. You have kept it well; but it is safe with me. You are a drysalter!" No man ever looked more astonished. "Nothing of the kind," he said. "What on earth could have put that odd notion into your head? I am no more a drysalter than you are." I was dumfounded for a while; and, when I recovered speech, persisted, "Why deny your honourable

craft? There is nothing immoral, is there, in drysalting, whatever the nature of that occult pursuit may be?" "Nothing in life. Drysalters are very good fellows. Very rich." "But what, in Heaven's name, do they act, do, or suffer? What do they dry, and what do they salt?" "Don't quite know. Do something in dye-woods and gums, I think." "Oh, yes," rejoined I, "gums; yes, gums and, perhaps, chemicals, eh?" "Not quite sure. Most likely you are right." And I went forth in doubt and despair.

Pending the definition of a drysalter, I turn my steps down Hart-street and Crutched-friars to Jewry-street—a very disagreeable neighbourhood for the friars, by-the-way—and find myself in front of a huge building, inclosing a sizeable square of its own. Passing under a great archway, I enter the regions of Cærulea—the home of Blueskin. The walls are blue, the stones are blue, the doors are blue; blue mud splashes up as I cross the square; blue water, deeper-tinted than the "blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone," streams down the gutters; everything is blue but the sky, which is just now letting down a heavy summer shower. Under cover things look bluer than ever. The floor is permanently carpeted with a blue deposit; ceilings and walls, once white, have long since turned blue under the influence of the presiding genius; the air is full of a blue dust of intense fineness; the inhabitants are blue; the books are blue-books. A small specimen of the Blueskin tribe, a drummer-boy in the army of His Cærulean Majesty King Indigo, conducts me through blue passages and up blue steps to a blue lift, which whisks us rapidly aloft into a region of blueness, which would put Bluebeard's nose out of joint could he see it. Seated at tables are the members of King Indigo's Long Parliament, sitting in judgment on their master. They are curious-looking fellows, these denizens of the Blue Chamber. Their nether limbs are cased in stout leggings, their bodies in blue blouses with blue hoods and paper caps, and a blue leather apron helps to give them a black, or rather, blue-smith air. They are very busy, sitting with great trays and packages of fine Java, best Bengal, prime Guatemala, or less valuable Madras or Manilla before them. This "sampling" is a serious business, a blunder in which may lead to "blue ruin." Lumps are broken to show the quality of

the fracture, which, if the article be true indigo, will always "line"—that is, put on a bronzy lustre when marked with the finger-nail or rubbed against another piece. A keen and practised eye is required to judge the colour, which is most esteemed when of a deep purplish tone—Oxford blue in short. A fine texture of the material, technically called "paste," also characterises the higher qualities. The eye, of course, must judge of the colour, but the quality of "paste" is submitted to the ordeal by touch. Mr. Gladstone once compared "the feel" of a piece of fine old porcelain—*pâte tendre*—to that of a baby's skin; and fine indigo conveys a somewhat similar, but perhaps rather more velvety, sensation. A north light is that in which indigo buyers place the greatest reliance, and they are sorely disturbed in their work by the rain and cloudy atmosphere to-day. A prime difficulty of a very critical business is the almost impossibility of preserving to the eye its delicacy of perception while gazing for hour after hour at blue, blue, nothing but blue; for that fine organ, the human eye, is apt to become debauched by looking too long on one colour. To prevent mistakes, "guides" are employed. These are pieces of indigo stored in a box, and carefully labelled with the prices fetched by them. Thus, when a buyer is fairly puzzled what price he ought to give for the goods before him, he has the option of referring to his "guides," and, by careful comparison, insuring a correct conclusion. When all are hard at work, the air becomes thick with fine particles, which soon settle on the features and give to the workers a look of weird ghastliness, nowhere else beheld out of a pantomime. Work over, the blue-men disperse, carefully packing their "guides" and note-books, and descend to the lower floor of the building, past thousands of chests of indigo, piled on the various flats, and representing almost fabulous wealth; for this blue sheet-anchor of dyers is costly stuff, risky to grow, and requiring great care in its manufacture. Fine Java may be worth, according to the market, some nine shillings and sixpence per pound; best Bengal, perhaps a shilling less; while Madras and Manilla bring far lower prices. Arrived in the basement, the busy men proceed to doff their true-blue livery, and return it to their respective lockers. A tremendous process of abluition is now gone through, for the fine dust works its way right into the skin to so great a depth

as sometimes to make a hot-bath necessary; but, scrub and scrape as one may, the indigo can never be got out all at once, as for a week or ten days after a spell at indigo sampling, intense blue will crop up. Washed and adorned in sumptuous raiment, the indigo men sally out of the great warehouse, very different beings from the leather-aproned folk of half-an-hour ago. They are now, many of them, gay, fashionable young bucks, with a very West-end air about them. For if there be, mayhap, a few "Sir Balaams" nowadays, the "dull cit" is a creature of the past. Our modern City men not only know how to make their thousands and tens of thousands, but how to spend them with taste and discernment. Mincing-lane "père" has a handsome house out of town, and finds his carriage waiting for him at the railway station to take him home to dinner; or else lives in Tyburnia or Belgravia, and looks in at the Club for an hour or so, till his wife calls to drive him round the Park. Young Mincing-lane is a capital fellow—rides straight to hounds, pulls a right good oar, has a yacht down the river, and can wield the willow, as well as the hammer, like a hearty young Englishman as he is.

MY LITTLE DEARS.

MOST people's dears, however economical, still cost something to maintain and clothe. To obviate this, I have looked up a few dears which, although they come from foreign parts and have to be bought with a price—the purchase of fair ones is no novel custom—are yet cheaper than many a Light of the Harem, while their food and drink are extremely inexpensive, and their raiment perfectly so, being supplied entirely by themselves. Moreover, like an Eastern despot, I allow myself a multitude of favourites, and can understand La Fontaine's wicked line, "Diversité, c'est ma devise." Nevertheless, I manage to indulge that weakness without being unfaithful to old-established favourites.

With the Mormon elders, the last-come beauty is often the one that is made the most of. So it is apt to be with me, although no Mormon. The freshest arrival, at the present time of writing and claiming the most marked attention, happens to be a nice little thing, known to its acquaintance as *Cephalotus follicularis*—a creature with pockets, which seem inclined to re-

main empty.* I can address it with the song, "My friend and pitcher;" for my dear *Cephalotus* is, in plain truth, nothing more than a tiny pitcher-plant. Had it a voice, it would sing to me in reply, "Dear Tom, this green jug which I hold in my hand—has passed through as many transformations as its earthen compeer." It ought to have been a leaf, but is metamorphosed into a bag, and one of these days it may turn out to be a fly-trap; for it has a lid, and a lip fitting close to it before opening, which lid looks as if it might shut again at a moment's warning.

Cephalotus's travels are not less remarkable than its appearance. They might supply the text for a lesson on physical geography. It reaches me from Swan River, Australia; not direct, but through the intermediacy of Monsieur Louis Van Houtte, who, like several of his English fellow-horticulturists, devotes his energies to the introduction and spread of vegetable dears, both great and small. *Cephalotus* was, not very long ago, what small purses call costly. The first sight of it brought the water into amateurs' mouths, and a specimen fetched from two to three guineas—considerably more than its weight in silver, and equivalent, when small, to its weight in gold.

The plant takes its rest in winter; you must not fancy it is dead because it has gone to sleep and cast off its leaves and pitchers. Van Houtte's purveyors take advantage of its slumbers to tear it away from its native swamps. Having no almanac to consult on arriving here, it supposes our summer to be its own, although it is exactly the reverse. Moistened and covered with a bell-glass, in light, damp, turfy soil mixed with decaying moss, in an earthen pot or pan, and in semi-shade, it puts forth its leaves and its bright little pitchers as cheerily as if it were at home. Indoors, on a table or window-sill, or on a shaded pedestal in the open air, it is partly raised to the level of the eye, and invites inspection of its singular beauties. It inevitably suggests the question, "What can be the purpose or object of such a strange and elaborate conformation?" The flowers, borne aloft on a slender stalk that supports them in common, are whitish and inconspicuous, but valuable, because they afford a chance of multiplying the little treasure; for it is the very curiosity

* They have since become partially filled with what looks like water and house-flies.

to ornament a study, a boudoir, or any place where it can be looked at frequently.

It needs no hothouse, but simply rational culture based on the knowledge of its constitutional requirements, which are detailed in the catalogue No. 153, issued by L. V.H., Ghent, Belgium. He sends out this once three-guinea little dear (when he has it) for half-a-crown apiece, plus the carriage and the packing; which last performance is a wonder to behold. It is a pleasure to receive from L. V.H. a basket or a case of delicate plants, if only for the gratification of unpacking them and of admiring the skill with which they have been prepared, secured, and provisioned for their journey. It is packing carried to a luxurious pitch. There is wadding to support the weak ones; chaff and husks to prevent the crushing of tender ones; inverted pots to cover thirsty ones and prevent evaporation by the way. There is string enough to fly a kite sky-high; moss enough to make beds for beves of hermits; sticks enough to roast heretics brown, if the law allowed that edifying pastime.

Now that the carnivorous propensities of certain plants are a fashionable topic for discussion, vegetables suspected of that craving may be admitted to our domestic intimacy; for, even if odd, they are far from ugly, are extremely interesting, and not so expensive as to limit their possession to millionaires. The *Sarracenias*, pitcher-plants, or side-saddle flowers, are among the most curious of vegetables. *S. purpurea*, from Canada, has proved hardy here, and costs about the same as *Cephalotus*. *S. psittacina*, or parrot-like, is more costly, but handsomer, with the convenience of also being a dwarf. Its ascidia (which is merely Greek for little leather bags or bottles) are admirably spotted with white and stained with pink. *S. flava*, the yellow pitcher-plant, larger than the preceding, is so called from the colour of its flowers. All are bog plants, which indicates their mode of culture. Though not of the very easiest, it is still a culture quite possible for people who will exercise a little practical common sense. *Sarracenias* are sometimes grown in glass cages or Wardian cases, in order to maintain their atmosphere moist. It is doubtful, however, whether this treatment, which keeps the air around them stagnant and unchanged, suits them best. A bell-glass can always be removed from time to time. Mrs. London has an excellent sug-

gestion, namely, to grow them, when kept in a room or on a balcony, in double pots, the interstice being filled with moss, thereby preventing sudden thermometrical and hygrometrical changes. In the United States the *Sarracenias* are believed to be a sure antidote to the small-pox. One is named *S. variolaris*. Some at least of the species may be raised from seed. Pitcher-plants of the genus *Nepenthes* require the temperature of a hothouse, are free-growing climbers, and, however remarkable, are of no service as little pets. The pitchers of some of them are so large, that people might say you had converted your residence into a pothouse.

Plants with a story to them have their attraction, even if the story belongs only to their name. Lapeyrouse, one of France's bravest seamen, fought the English, was wounded and taken prisoner, off Belle-Ile-en-Mer. In fact, the circumstances of those times made fighting the English his first occupation. French and English were then both taught, as if it formed part of their respective catechisms, that one duty in which they must never fail was to destroy each other with all their heart, with all their mind, with all their soul, and with all their strength. A better employment afterwards assigned to him was maritime discovery. His mysterious, probably tragical, end has acquired for him a popular celebrity. He sailed from Botany Bay in 1788, and has never been heard of since. Some suppose that his two ships, *La Boussole* and *L'Astrolabe*, were simultaneously wrecked on some unknown reef; others prefer the theory that he and his crews were eaten and enjoyed either by his friends, the New Caledonians, or by ours, the Fijians.

On receiving a present of seed labelled "*Lapeyrousia juncea*," resembling duck-shot in much except weight, I sowed it, saying, "Here is a memorial of the unfortunate navigator, which will be remembered perhaps as long as the poem in his praise which gained the prize at the Toulouse Jeux Floraux, in 1823. If his grave had not been in the stomachs of savages, we might plant a few of these flowers upon it." This seed took a long time to vegetate. It sent forth grass-like, sword-shaped leaves; it formed corms or bulbs as big as a respectable pea, then went to sleep, sprung up again, and finally, as a reward of my patience, presented me with pretty bright-pink flowers inclining to brick red, at the top of a slender stem. Fancy a tuft

of green blades ten or twelve inches high, amidst which are borne, on slim wiry stalks, unpretentious but pleasing six-petalled blossoms, with a darker red spot on the three lower ones towards the centre, and you have my little protégée when grown in quantity.

But man is doomed to disillusion. Subsequent research suggests that the plant is, perhaps, dedicated, not to the brave mariner who met a sailor's fate, but to one Lapeyrouse, a naturalist, of Toulouse, who had a local literary reputation, and also his troubles under Robespierre. He is the author of several botanical treatises, and left besides, says his biographer significantly, "numerous manuscripts which will probably never see the light." It is some comfort to know that rejected articles are no nineteenth-century novelties.

Worse than all, someone has changed my little flower's name into *Anomatheca juncea*, which is a souvenir of nobody whatever that I remember. But, however called, it represents a family of very small Cape bulbs, the *Ixias* and *Sparaxis*, which are specially suitable for culture as little pets, in pots or boxes, by amateurs. In the open ground their tiny bulbs, of the same colour as the soil, are apt to be lost when the leaves disappear; and, as frost would destroy them, they must be wintered indoors. They like plenty of sun and air, moderate waterings, and light soil rich in vegetable matters, such as sandy heath-mould. Raised from seed, most of the family produce, the third year at latest, their graceful, neat, and brightly-marked flowers. They may be propagated, too, by offsets, which also take their time to bloom. They are but sparingly grown by exhibitors at shows, and still less by horticulturists, who have to supply the vast quantities and masses of showy things required for house-decoration on party-giving nights, and other like occasions. Nevertheless, we sometimes find gardeners who, besides regarding flower-growing under its commercial aspects, also indulge their own private tastes, and will keep in a sunny corner, not for the public eye, a frame bestarred with *Ixias* and others of their tribe. These bulbous floral pigmies do not demand much care; they are charming on a close inspection, are variously tinted, some sweet-scented, take up as little room as growing flowers can well occupy, and are far from expensive to obtain. In winter, when the bulbs are at rest, you put the pot in which they grow in a dry closet, down a cellar, under your

bed, or in any frost-proof storing-place where you would keep dahlias, gladioluses, and other tender sleeping beauties.

Plants with a private history of their own come to be regarded almost as personal friends, especially when the incident connected with them is distant either in space or time. I have a dear little houseleek, the spiderweb—*Sempervivum arachnoideum*—which I found at the foot of the Canigou, one of the Eastern Pyrenees, more than nine thousand feet high, and anything but a commonplace mountain. With most mountains we associate, around their lower half, verdure, sloping pastures, forests, waterfalls; and higher up, green turf again, unless the summit terminates in a rocky peak. The Canigou shows you nothing of the kind. On one shoulder, a scattered group of wretched firs makes the absence of trees the more conspicuous. Take an enormous Egyptian pyramid of unhewn stone; blow it up with gunpowder; the ruins will make a Canigou. It is a heap of vast blocks and boulders tumbled together, in whose interstices the snow on the summit, which is not visible below, by its gradual melting maintains mere threads of water, which feed a scanty vegetation, unseen, in crevices, deep hollows, and gaps in the great wreck. At a distance, and even when standing at its foot, you would take the Canigou to be as barren of plants as a London brick wall. But for those who will search in its intricate crannies it is rich in botanical rarities and gems.

One August morning—how hot it was!—we tried to ride up to the ruins of the Abbey of Saint Martin du Canigou. A light breeze came straight from the Mediterranean. The fresh elastic air was an antidote to the heat. Soon after starting from Le Vernet, and before beginning to climb, I found, quite unexpected in that southern latitude, growing between stones in a horizontal position in partial shade, the grass-like forked spleenwort—*Asplenium septentrionale*. The village of Castell was soon traversed, or rather escaped from. The passage was a running the gauntlet between hands, valid and invalid, held out on either side to beg. The mayor—for the hill-side hovels have a mayor—seems unaware of the Ordinance, "*La Mendicité est défendue dans le Département des Pyrénées orientales*;" or, perhaps, the mayor himself occasionally indulges in a native propensity to hold out his hand. Beyond Castell shade was not partial, but null.

Nevertheless, the sunbeams were more bearable than the beggars.

The mountain path became so rough and stony that we often preferred dismounting from our ponies, and leading them over the more rugged bits of zigzag. And such stones! frequently shapeless lumps of iron-ore, from which are extracted Catalan knives to cut Alphonst throats or gash Carlist stomachs. In spite of the heat, in the uncemented stone walls which now and then flanked the path where they were least wanted for safety, grew several pretty ferns, among them the brittle bladder fern—*Cystopteris fragilis*—which, like the wall rue, seems fond of establishing itself in the chinks of a rough vertical surface. The heat, too, suited sundry bright butterflies, grasshoppers, dragon-flies, lizards, and swift-winged beetles, which beguiled our upward progress by fluttering to and fro.

My narrative is not sensational; we didn't break either our own or our ponies' necks: but in a burning corner at one of the turns, I beheld some brave, rosy-red, starlike flowers, peeping above a heap of stones that would have roasted a pig in a primitive Otaheitean oven. It was the spiderweb houseleek bidding us welcome to the Canigou. We secured it at once, and succeeded in carrying it to a milder climate.

Here is a little invaluable plant! It is curious and pretty, even when not in flower; and it does flower with satisfactory readiness. One is shooting up its stem as I write. It will stand a baking; it will stand sharp frost; it will stand pelting rain; it will stand burying in snow. It will live for weeks without either earth or water. It will grow in a pot, on a wall, in a parterre, on a rock, indoors or outdoors. It never deserts you, winter or summer; for if an individual dies after blooming, its stem will be studded with little ones, and it may already have produced a family of offsets. Whether, like others of the houseleek genus, it wards off lightning when planted on roofs, and cures whitlows if crushed and applied as a plaster, I have no experience to offer.*

I must confess to a fancy for the Filmy ferns. Their pellucid, semi-transparent fronds look like crisp green seaweed, growing in air. They tempt one to eat them, with bread and butter, after a

dipping in pickle-flavoured vinegar; and in a ship, long suffering from a famine of salad, that is assuredly the way they would go. They too, like *Cephalotus*, demand bell-glass culture, which is far from unfitting them for indoor favour and ornament. The *Hymenophyllums* and *Trichomanes* are well known and frequently adopted; why not, as a change, take up *Todea superba*?

"Oh, but it is a tree-fern; too big, and too costly; four or five pounds for a handsome specimen," you say.

True, madam; but please remember that you were little, and certainly pretty, before you were big. So may a tree-fern be; especially this, which, I fancy, is never of very lofty stature. The dells in New Zealand, whence it comes, must be veritable vapour-baths. So humid an atmosphere could not permanently have great depth. Mr. B. S. Williams offers young ones at five shillings each; imported crowns from one to three guineas. Take a baby *Todea*; coddle it under a crystal dome; when it outgrows its dwelling, give it a larger one. The investment can never prove ruinous, because you can always sell or exchange it for something else; and the bigger it grows the more it will be worth.

My last and least little dear, on the present occasion, is a very little one indeed. Its stature is measured by fractions of an inch. But it spreads, and spreads, and covers itself with berries, looking as if a child had broken its necklace, and let the brilliant orange-red beads fall on a carpet of green. This plant, *Nertera depressa*, say botanists, "forms dense cushion-like tufts. It has slender densely-matted pilose or glabrous creeping stems, with small leaves, varying from ovate to cordate-reniform in shape, on short petioles. The flowers are sessile in the axils of the leaves, and very inconspicuous. When the berries are produced in abundance, contrasting with the dark green foliage, the plant presents a very charming appearance, and is a valuable acquisition to any rockwork."

I first made the acquaintance of *Nertera depressa*, and obtained it, last autumn, in M.M. Gazelle and Son's nursery, Ghent; but, like almost every vegetable novelty, it was already introduced to Kew, where it berried on the rockery. It is one of the plants the French call "gazons," turfs; from their low, close, and moss-like growth. It has a rather wide geographical range, being a native of the

* This and several other species of *Sempervivum* are coming into request for carpet-bedding. They have the advantage over the *Becheverias* in being hardy—that is, the great majority of the species.

South American Andes, Australia, New Zealand, and some of the Pacific Islands. Whether hardy here, the writer is ignorant; probably not. But there is no need to fetch it from the southern hemisphere, for Robert T. Veitch offers, in the *Gardeners' Chronicle*, "several hundreds of this beautiful and exceedingly attractive plant, all well berried." Its price, not stated, cannot forbid its acquisition.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE accounts which had reached Whitford from Wales, of the wonderful effects produced by David Powell's preaching there, sufficed to cause a good deal of excitement among the lower classes in the little town when it was reported that Powell would revisit it, and would preach on Whit Meadow, and also in the room used by the "Ranters," in Lady-lane.

The Wesleyan Methodists in Whitford now felt themselves at liberty to allow their smouldering animosity against Powell to break forth openly, for he had seceded from the Society. Some said he had been expelled from it, but this was not true, although there was little doubt that, at the next Conference, his conduct and doctrine would have been severely reprehended; and, probably, he would have been required publicly to recant them on pain of expulsion. Should this be the case, those who knew David Powell had little difficulty in prophesying the issue. However, all speculations as to his probable behaviour under the reproof of Conference were rendered vain by the preacher's voluntarily withdrawing himself from the "bonds of the Society," as he phrased it.

Then broke forth the hostile sentiments of the Whitford Wesleyans against this rash and innovating preacher. Unfavourable opinions of him which had been concealed, or only dimly expressed, were now declared openly. He was an Antinomian; he had fallen away from the doctrines of Assurance and Christian Perfection; he had brought scandal on large bodies of sober, serious persons, by encouraging wild and extravagant manifestations among his hearers; his exhortations were calculated to do harm, inasmuch as he preached a doctrine of asceticism and

would have the most inconvenient consequences. That some of these accusations—as, for example, that of Antinomianism, and that of too extreme self-mortification—were somewhat incompatible with each other, was no impediment to their being heaped simultaneously on David Powell. The strongest disapprobation of his sayings and doings was expressed by that select body of citizens who attended at the little Wesleyan chapel. And yet there was, perhaps, less bitterness in this open opposition to him than had been felt towards him during the last days of his ministration in Whitford. So long as David Powell was their preacher, approved—or, at least, not disapproved—by Conference, a struggle went on in some minds to reconcile his teaching with their practice, which was an irritating and unsatisfactory state of things, since the struggle in most cases was not so much to modify their practice, in order to bring it into harmony with his precepts, as ingeniously to interpret his precepts so that they should not too flagrantly accuse their practice. But now that it was competent to the staunchest Methodist to reject Powell's authority altogether, these unprofitable efforts ceased, and with them a good deal of resentment. The chorus of openly expressed hostility to the preacher, which, I have said, made itself heard in Whitford, arose, in a great measure, from the common delight in declaring, where some circumstance unforeseen by the world in general comes to pass, that we perceived all along how matters would go, and knew our neighbour to be a very different fellow from what you took him to be.

Here old Max was triumphant; and, it must be owned, with more reason than many of his acquaintances. He had openly quarrelled with this fanatical Welshman, long before the main body of the Whitford Wesleyans had ventured to repudiate him.

One humble friend was faithful to the preacher. The widow Thimbleby maintained, in the teeth of all opposition, that, though Mr. Powell might be a little mistaken here and there on points of doctrine—she was an ignorant woman, and couldn't judge of these things—yet his practice came very near perfection; and that the only human being to whom he ever showed severity, intolerance, and lack of love, was himself. Mrs. Thimbleby was not strong in controversy. It was not difficult to push her to her last resort—namely, crying silently behind her apron. But there was

creature which made it impossible for her to belie her conscience by deserting David Powell. The cold attic at the top of her little house was prepared for his reception as soon as it was known that he was about to revisit Whitford; and Mrs. Thimbleby went to the loft over the corn-dealer's store-house in Lady-lane one Sunday evening to beg that Nick Green would let Mr. Powell know, whenever he should arrive, that his old quarters were waiting for him, and that she would take it as a personal unkindness if he did not consent to occupy them. She could not help talking of the preacher to her grand lodger Mrs. Errington, of whom she was considerably in awe. The poor woman's heart was full at the thought of seeing him again. And not even Mrs. Errington's lofty severity regarding all dissenters and "ignorant persons who flew in the face of Providence and attempted to teach their betters," could entirely stifle her expressions of anxiety as to Mr. Powell's health, her hopes that he took a little more care of himself than he formerly did, and her anecdotes of his angelic charity and goodness towards the poor, and needy, and suffering.

"I should advise you on no account to go and hear this man preach," said Mrs. Errington to her landlady. "Terrible scenes have taken place in Wales; and very likely something of the kind may happen here. You are very weak, my poor soul. You have no force of character. You would be sure to catch any excitement that was going. And how should you like, pray, to be brought home from Lady-lane on a stretcher?"

But even this alarming suggestion did not deter Mrs. Thimbleby from haunting the "Ranters'" meeting-room, and leaving message after message with Nick Green to be sure and tell Mr. Powell to come up to her house, the very minute he arrived. Nick Green knew no more than the widow the day and hour of the preacher's arrival. All he could say was, that Powell had applied to him and to his co-religionists for leave to preach in the room—little more than a loft—which they rented of the corn-dealer in Lady-lane. Powell had been refused permission to speak in the Wesleyan chapel to which his eloquence had formerly attracted such crowds of listeners. Whit Meadow would, indeed, be probably open to him; but the year was drawing on apace, autumn would soon give place to winter, and, at all events in the evening, it would be vain to hope for a large number of listeners in the open air.

"Open air!" echoed Mrs. Thimbleby, raising her hands and eyes; "why, Mr. Green, he ought never to think of preaching in the open air at this season, and him so delicate!"

"Nay, sister Thimbleby," responded Nick Green, a powerful, black-muzzled fellow with a pair of lungs like a black-smith's bellows, "we may not put our hand to the plough and turn back. We are all of us called upon to give ourselves body and soul in the Lord's service. And many's the night, after my day's work was over, that I've exhorted here in this very room and poured out the Word for two and three hours at a stretch, until the sweat ran down my face like water, and the brethren were fairly worn out. But yet I have been marvellously strengthened. I doubt not that brother Powell will be so too, especially now that he has given up dead words, and the errors of the Society, and thrown off the yoke of the law."

"Dear, I hope so," answered Mrs. Thimbleby, tremulously; "but I do wish he would try a hot posset of a night, just before going to bed."

The good woman was beginning to walk away up Lady-lane, somewhat disconsolately, for she reflected that if Nick Green measured Mr. Powell's strength by his own, he would surely not spare it, and that the preacher needed rather a curb than a spur to his self-forgetting exertions, when she almost ran against a man who was coming in the opposite direction. They were not twenty paces from the door of the corn-dealer's store-house, and a lamp that burnt above it shed sufficient light for her to recognise the face of the very person who was in her thoughts.

"Mr. Powell!" she exclaimed in a joyful tone. "Thanks be to the Lord that I have met you! Was you going to look for Mr. Green? He is just putting the lights out and coming away. I left a message with him for you, sir; but now I can give it you myself. You will come up with me to my house, now, won't you? Everything is ready, and has been these three days. You wouldn't think of going anywhere else in Whitford but to my house, would you, Mr. Powell?"

She ran on thus eagerly, because she saw, or fancied she saw, symptoms of opposition to her plan in Powell's face. He hesitated. "My good friend," said he, "your Christian kindness is very precious to me, but I am not clear that I should do right in becoming an inmate of your house."

"Oh, but I am, Mr. Powell, quite clear! Why it would be a real unkindness to refuse me."

"It is not a matter to be settled thus lightly," answered Powell, although at the same time he turned and walked a few paces by the widow's side. "I had thought that I might sleep for to-night at least in our friends' meeting-room."

"What! in the loft there? Lord ha' mercy, Mr. Powell! 'Tis cold and draughty, and there's nothing in it but a few wooden benches, and the rats run about as bold as can be, directly the lights is put out. Why 't would be a tempting of Providence, Mr. Powell."

"I am not dainty about my accommodation, as you know; and I could sleep there without payment."

"Without payment! Why, you might pay pretty dear for it in health, if not in money. And, for that matter, I shouldn't think of asking a penny of rent for my attic, as long as ever you choose to stay in it." Then, with an instinctive knowledge of the sort of plea that might be likely to prevail with him, she added, "As for being dainty about your accommodation, why I know you never were so, and I hope you haven't altered, for, indeed, the attic is sadly uncomfortable. I think there's worse draughts from the window than ever. And it would be a benefit to me to get the room aired and cockpied; for only last week I had a most respectable young man, a journeyman painter, to look at it, and he say, 'Mrs. Thimbleby, we shan't disagree about the rent,' he say; 'but I do wish the room had been slept in latterly; for I've a fear as it's damp,' he say, 'and that that's the reason you don't use it yourself, nor haven't let it.' But I tell him the only reason why I didn't use the room was as you might be expected back any day, and I couldn't let you find your place taken. And he say if he could be satisfied of that, he may take it after next month, when you would likely be gone again. So you see as you would be doing me a service, Mr. Powell, not to say a pleasure."

Whether David Powell implicitly believed the good creature's argument to be derived from fact, may be doubtful; but he suffered himself to be persuaded to accompany her to his old lodgings; and they begged Nick Green, who presently overtook them, to send one of his lads to the coach-office, to bring to Mrs. Thimbleby's the small battered valise which constituted all Powell's luggage.

"I would have gone to fetch it myself," said the preacher, apologetically, "but, in truth, I am so exceeding weary, that I doubt whether my strength would avail to carry even that slender burden the distance from the coach-office to your house."

When he was seated beside Mrs. Thimbleby's clean kitchen hearth, on which burned a fire of unwontedly generous proportions—the widow declared that, as she grew older, she found it necessary to her health to have a glow of warmth in her kitchen these chilly autumn nights—when the preacher was thus seated, I say, and when the red and yellow firelight illuminated his face fully, it was very evident that he was indeed "exceeding weary;" weary, and worn, and wan, with hollow temples, eyes that blazed feverishly, and a hue of startling pallor overspreading his whole countenance. For a few minutes, whilst his good hostess moved about hither and thither in the little kitchen, preparing some tea, and slicing some bacon, to be presently fried for his refecton, Powell sat looking straight before him, with a curious expression in his widely-opened eyes, something like that of a sleep-walker. They were evidently seeing nothing of the physical realities around them, and yet they unmistakably expressed the attentive recognition by the mind of some image painted on their wondrous spheres. The true round mirror of the wizard is that magic ball of sight; for on its sensitive surface live and move a thousand airy phantoms, besides the reflection of all that peoples this tangible earth we dwell on. Powell's lips began to move rapidly, although no sound came from them. He seemed to be addressing a creature visible to him alone, on which his straining gaze was fixed. But suddenly his face changed, and was troubled as a still pool is troubled by a ripple that breaks its clearly glazed reflection into fantastic fragments. In another moment he passed his thin hand several times with a strong pressure over his brows, shut and opened his eyes like a dreamer awakened, drew his pocket Bible from his breast, and began to read with an air of resolute attention.

"Will you ask a blessing, Mr. Powell?" said the widow, timidly.

He looked up. A comfortable meal was spread on the white deal table before him. Mrs. Thimbleby sat opposite to him in her old chair with the patch-work cushions; the fire shone; the household cat purred drowsily; the old clock clicked off the

moments as they flowed past—tick tack, tick tack. Then there came a jar, a burr of wheels and springs, and the tinkle of silver-toned metal striking nine. In a few moments the ancient belfry of St. Chad's began to send forth its mellow chimes. Far and wide they sounded—over the town and the flat-meadow country—through the darkness. Powell sat still and silent, listening to the bells until they had done chiming.

"How well I know those voices!" he said. "I used to lie awake and listen to them here, in the old attic, when my soul was wrestling with a mighty temptation; when my heart was smitten and withered like grass, so that I forgot to eat my bread. The sound of them is sweet to the fleshly ears of the body; but to the ears of the spirit they can say marvellous things. They have been the instruments to bring me many a message of counsel as they came singing and buzzing in my brain."

The widow Thimbleby sat looking at the preacher, as he spoke, with an expression of puzzled admiration, blended with anxiety.

"Oh, for certain the Lord has set a sign on you," she exclaimed. "He would have us to know that you are a chosen vessel, and He has given you the gifts of the Spirit in marvellous abundance. But, dear Mr. Powell, I doubt He does not mean you to neglect the fleshly tabernacle neither; for, as I say to myself, He could ha' made us all soul and no body, if such had been His blessed will."

"We thank thee, O Father, most merciful. Amen!" said Powell, bending over the table.

"Amen!" repeated Mrs. Thimbleby. "And now pray do fall to, and eat something, for I'm sure you need it."

"It is strange; but, though I have fasted since five o'clock this morning, I feel no hunger."

"Mercy me! fasting since five o'clock this morning? Why, for sure, that's the very reason you can't eat! Your stomach is too weak. Dear, dear, dear; but you must make an effort to swallow something, sir. Drink a sup of tea."

Powell complied with her entreaty, although he expressed some misgiving as to the righteousness of his partaking of so luxurious a beverage. And then he ate a few mouthfuls of food, but evidently with-

out appetite. But seeing his good friend's uneasiness on his behalf, he said, with the rare smile which so brightened his countenance:

"Do not be so concerned for me. There is no need. Although I have not much replenished the carnal man to-day, yet have I been abundantly refreshed and comforted. I tarried in a small town on the borders of this county at midday, and I found that my ministrations there in the spring season had borne fruit. Many who had been reclaimed from evil courses came about me, and we gave thanks with much uplifting of the heart. And, although I had suffered somewhat from faintness before arriving at that place, yet, no sooner were these chosen persons got about me, and I began to pray and praise, than I felt stronger and more able for exertion than I have many a time felt after a long night's rest and an abundant meal."

Poor Mrs. Thimbleby's mind was divided and "exercised," as she herself would have said, between her reverent faith in Powell's being supported by the supernal powers and her rooted conviction regarding the virtues of a hot posset. Was it for her, a poor, ignorant woman, presumptuously to supplement, as it were, the protection of Providence, and to insist on the saintly preacher's drinking her posset? Yet, on the other hand, arose her own powerful argument, that the Lord might have dispensed with our bodies altogether had it so pleased Him; and that therefore, mankind being provided with those appendages, it was but reasonable to conclude they were meant to be taken some care of. At length the widow's mental debatings resulted in a resolution to make the hot posset, and carry it up to the preacher's bedside without consulting him on the subject—"For," said she to herself, "if I persuade him to swallow it out of kindness to me, there'll be no sin in the matter. Or, at least, if there is, it will be my sin, and not his; and that is not of so much consequence."

In this spirit of true feminine devotion she acted. And having coaxed Powell to swallow the cordial mixture—as a mother might coax a sick child—she had the satisfaction of seeing him fall into a deep slumber, he being exhausted by fatigue, excitement, and lack of nourishment.

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

HALVES.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGERBARD," "A PERFECT TREASURE," "AT HER MERCY," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XVII. A SECOND PATIENT.

DR. WILDE WAS known to us all, more or less, when he first came to visit "Brother Alec" at the Priory. It was impossible to live at Kirkdale without being familiar with that tall thin figure, slightly bent, as it moved rapidly from house to house—for the most part amongst the poor—or rode, as if life and death depended on his speed (as, indeed, they often did), along the roads and lanes; but he seldom went out into society, and this was the first occasion that I had taken much notice of him. He was a brown-skinned, handsome fellow, with hair that had been black as a coal ere it grew early tinged with grey; his eyes were intelligent and piercing in the intensity of their gaze, but did not rove, as sharp eyes are wont to do; they moved slowly, almost, it seemed, with difficulty, from one speaker to the other, resting on each as though they were never going to leave him. His voice was gentle, but firm; he had a quick fleeting smile, when addressed by a person of the opposite sex, but had neither the look nor the manners which are generally associated with the idea of "a lady's doctor;" and, indeed, he was thought to eschew that branch of his profession more than was becoming.

On his return from interviewing his patient above stairs he was invited into the drawing-room, where I happened—it being a pouring wet afternoon—to be holding a skein of worsted for Gertrude.

excused my remaining, I rose to retire, but Mrs. Raeburn bade me be seated.

"We are all friends here of poor Mr. Alexander," observed she, with a wave of her hand, "and equally interested in your tidings, Doctor Wilde."

"I am not a physician, madam," was his unexpected reply. "I know it is the custom to call me so at Kirkdale, as it was with Mr. Rombold, but I always think it well with persons of intelligence to explain that much. You may think, perhaps, a physician's diploma necessary for the right understanding of Mr. Raeburn's case?"

"Not at all, not at all, Mr. Wilde. My husband and myself have every confidence in your opinion. Mr. Alexander is his only brother; he has lived with us for some time, and will, I hope, continue to do so; but he is, of course, a great responsibility."

Mrs. Raeburn had adopted this idea from my uncle, and found it very satisfactory. None but he, out of the Priory circle, were aware of brother Alec's testamentary intentions, which were still supposed to be favourable to the family interests. Even this calling in of the doctor would, she knew, redound to her credit, as evincing a disinterested solicitude for her relative, and all her later arrangements had been framed with an eye to that effect.

"I understand your position entirely, Mrs. Raeburn," answered the doctor, gravely; "and I wish it lay in my power to lighten the burthen of which you speak."

"You don't mean to say that my brother-in-law is dying?" demanded Mrs. Raeburn, with such vehemence as might well have seemed to be that passionate appeal against

often to listen from those to whom a doomed man is dear.

"Nay, I meant to say nothing of the sort, madam! Mr. Raeburn may live for months, perhaps years, though I do not think the latter probable; but his case is very serious, and one for which, unhappily, medical skill can do but little. Do I understand you that I am to speak freely my opinion of his case?"

Mrs. Raeburn moved a pace towards the door, then stopped. "Yes, doctor—you must excuse my still using that title, it is too familiar to me to be dropped—you can speak out before these young people, since their anxiety is as great as mine! It is better for us all to know the worst."

"Then, in my judgment, the worst is that your relative is threatened with softening of the brain. He has apparently had some shock, under which his system has broken down. Is that the case?"

Mrs. Raeburn hesitated for an instant, during which the doctor's eyes moved slowly to Gertrude's listening face, now streaked with a sharp pain, and settled there.

"My brother-in-law has had no shock that I am aware of," answered Mrs. Raeburn, with the thoughtful slowness of some conscientious witness, who is sounding the very depths of his recollection. "He has lived abroad, however, and we know but little of the events of his life. His nature is reticent, as I daresay you discovered?"

As she put this question, she looked up sharply at the doctor; whereupon he slowly withdrew his gaze from Gertrude, and fixed it once more upon her.

"Reticent by nature, is he? I should have thought otherwise."

"Oh! Mrs. Raeburn, I don't think cousin Alec is reticent at all," remonstrated Gertrude. "He was not so, at least, until he began to be ill."

Mrs. Raeburn shrugged her shoulders.

"Character is a matter of opinion, Gertrude; but I should certainly describe my brother-in-law as reticent. Quiet and docile, at all events, he is to an extreme degree, doctor; you could see that for yourself?"

"Yes, and I fear he will become more and more quiet, madam; more difficult to rouse. I have left him a prescription, but drugs will avail him little. His improvement will rest with those about him, rather than with me."

"Ah!" cried Mrs. Raeburn, looking

round at Gertrude and myself, "you hear that?"

"Yes; endeavours must be made to interest him in things, no matter what, but in such a manner as not to show the endeavour. Above all, his own condition must never be alluded to, though I have reason to believe that he suspects it already. He was always fond of that curious parrot, I suppose?"

"Next to ourselves," said Mrs. Raeburn softly, "I do assure you I believe he loves no living creature so well."

I felt quite thankful that John Raeburn was not in the room, since that exhibition of sentiment on the part of his mother would certainly have been too much for him.

"I am glad to hear it," said the doctor thoughtfully. "In diseases of this kind, the waning mind sometimes attaches itself to objects which would have had but an inferior interest for it if in health; but in this case the predilection seems to have no such significance." Then he took up his hat and gloves. "I shall call again in a few days, Mrs. Raeburn."

"Daily, I hope," returned she hastily. "It is such a comfort to us—relieves us all from such a sense of responsibility."

"In that case, I will do so, for the present; but I repeat to you that medicine can be of little service."

"But what can be of service? Have you any further instructions to leave with us?"

"No, I think not."

Once more his eyes wandered to Gertrude. She rose and he shook hands with her and me, then said a few words in a low tone to Mrs. Raeburn, who left the room with him.

"How shocking this is about cousin Alec," said my darling, her soft eyes swimming in tears; "yet it does not surprise me; I thought he was very, very ill."

"He has had trouble enough to make him so, Gerty. Now that is over, perhaps he will improve in health; at all events, let us hope so."

Gertrude shook her head.

"You heard what Mr. Wilde said, that there was softening of the brain?"

"He said he thought so; but he is evidently one of those doctors who think the worst about everybody. It was very wrong of him, in my judgment, to go blurring out his opinion as he did, and putting you in such a state, when, after all, perhaps, he may be wrong."

"Well, for my part, I like a doctor to

treat one like a sensible being," returned Gertrude. "With a patient there may be reasons for concealment, but those who love him ought, I think, to be made aware of his full danger. To hear every day the same smooth sentence, 'He is much the same,' without a hint of what is menacing, and then, when the gloss can be put on no longer, 'there is no hope; he is a dying man,' is a cruel shock."

There was a feeling in her tone which told me she was speaking from sad experience; perhaps of the loss of her own parents; and I did not pursue the topic. But Dr. Wilde had not made a favourable impression on me. He had no right, I thought, to make eyes, as he had done, at Gertrude; it was bad taste, and an infringement of copyright besides.

The next day he called again, and, after a week's interval, once more. On the first occasion I did not see him, but on the last I happened to meet him on the road as he was returning on horseback from the house. He pulled up on meeting me.

"How is Mr. Raeburn?" inquired I.

"There is no change," said he; "none, at least, that is perceptible."

"But, if any, it is for the worse?" said I, translating his grave looks. He nodded, fondling his chin in his hand, as men often do when in doubt as to some course of action.

"Are you still of the same opinion," inquired I, "of the nature of the disease? Do you still think it is softening of the brain?"

"I do." I was about to go on my way, when he cried, "Stop, I want to have a word with you, Mr. Sheddon;" then, flinging himself off his horse, and hitching the bridle under his arm, he walked on slowly by my side. Something warned me that this man was going to speak to me of Gertrude.

"You will excuse my questioning you; but you are a friend of the family at the Priory, and also of the particular member of it who is my patient, and I want to understand his position there. Is it comfortable? Is he content with it? Of course I ask this in the strictest confidence."

"Yes," said I, with quite a sense of relief, notwithstanding the embarrassment this inquiry cost me. "I think Mr. Raeburn is comfortably placed enough. Between ourselves, it has not always been so, but he has nothing to complain of now."

"Has he any friends—real friends—

whom he could visit, even for a little while, with pleasure to himself. What he needs most is change."

"My uncle Hastings would, I am sure, be charmed to see him. They are very old friends. He is the rector of Stanbrook, you know."

"Stanbrook? Well, that would be a change of scene at least. Yes, that would do. Mr. Raeburn will take no action in the affair himself; but, perhaps, you could get him an invitation?"

"Easily. There are two spare rooms at the Rectory, beside the one they call mine. He ought to have somebody with him, ought he not?"

The doctor laid his hand upon my arm: "You are a capital fellow," said he, "and have a head upon your shoulders. Yes," mused he, "they shall both go to Stanbrook, then we shall see."

"Both go?" inquired I; "what do you mean by 'both'?" I should be very glad to stay there with Mr. Raeburn if I could be of any use, but it could only be for a day or two. I am very busy just now in the office."

"Indeed!" replied the doctor, with a quiet side glance at my face; "it is very pleasant to see a young man so devoted to his duties, and averse to take a holiday!"

The colour rushed into my cheeks, for I felt this man was making fun of me after his dry, serious fashion.

"Well, at all events," said I sulkily, "I can't go to Stanbrook—that is, for long."

"Just so. Miss Floyd, however, is not in the office, I suppose; nor burthened with legal occupations?"

I felt getting redder than ever. My companion's tone was very good-humoured, but I resented his remarks exceedingly.

"I do not understand you, Mr. Wilde!"

"Don't be angry, my dear Mr. Sheddon," replied he, for the first time smiling outright. "Doctors are non-combatants, you know, so it is no use calling me out. Let me explain myself. The fact is that my patient is evidently much attached to Miss Floyd. He is never so well—he told me this himself—as in her society; and if she could be induced to accompany him on this visit to your uncle, supposing—as I have reason to do—that her presence would be agreeable to Mrs. Hastings—"

"She would be delighted," interrupted I enthusiastically. "My aunt has often said, 'How I wish I could ask Gertrude without that odious woman?'" Here I stopped short, I daresay with a look of

considerable embarrassment. It suddenly struck me that I was committing a breach of good manners in thus referring to my hostess.

"Mrs. Raeburn is not a favourite with Mrs. Hastings, I have heard," said he, coolly. "Well, that is no matter. You can get this invitation, then. You needn't say I suggested it; but the sooner it comes the better."

"It shall come this week, doctor; maybe I can do some good by running over to Stanbrook myself."

"Well, if your legal duties permit of it," said he. "Perhaps, under the circumstances, you will find them more elastic."

He nodded with good-humoured significance, mounted his horse, and went off at a hard gallop.

My bad opinion of Mr. Wilde was somehow scattered to the winds. I had not been absolutely jealous of him, but I had thought he ventured to admire Gertrude too demonstratively; whereas now, since he obviously took my tender relation to her for granted, it seemed only his homage to my own good taste. Returning to the Priory in high glee at the prospect of a visit to Stanbrook in company with my charmer, I met John Raeburn at the door.

"I say," said he, in his delicate, off-hand manner, "here's a pretty go. Softening of the brain is catching, it seems, and we are all to be in for it. But there, you have just met the doctor, I suppose?"

"Yes; but he told me nothing new. What has happened?"

"Well, Gerty is not well, it seems."

"Gerty?"

"Yes, you call her 'Gerty,' don't you? though it used to be 'Gertrude' with you, and even 'Miss Floyd!'"

At any other time this bad taste of John's—considering the subject on which he exhibited it—would have annoyed me excessively; but, as it was, I could only think of his bad news. I pushed past him into the drawing-room, where I found Gertrude alone, engaged in some ordinary avocation.

"What is this I hear about you, Gerty?"

"About me?" answered she, smiling.

"Yes. Surely John would never have played such a cruel trick on me as to say you were ill if you were not?"

"Ill, Harry? No, I'm not ill; but it is true that Mr. Wilde did not think me looking well. I have not been quite well lately; and he has prescribed for me, that's all."

"That's all! But that may be a great deal, Gerty. And what has he prescribed? Not nasty medicines that make one shudder to look at, and sick to smell, I hope?"

"Well, he has prescribed one thing which I don't relish, Harry, and don't mean to take—which is, change of air. I have always been quite well at the Priory, so why should I leave it—and you, Harry?" she added, softly.

"My dear, you must do what the doctor tells you, and be a good girl," said I, with a didactic air.

I would not tell her that we were going to take a change of air together, until I was quite sure that I could bring about the arrangement; but I had already planned it in my mind.

CHAPTER XVIII. A CHANGE OF QUARTERS.

THERE was no difficulty in getting an invitation for "Brother Alec" and Gertrude from the Rectory. My uncle was hospitality itself; nor was my aunt behindhand in that respect, except that she was more fastidious as to the guests. She had often expressed a wish to invite Miss Floyd, but had been deterred from so doing, lest one of her "belongings"—or, in other words, Mrs. Raeburn—should volunteer to accompany her, and also from delicacy with respect to myself; for, though Mrs. Hastings was a match-maker to the core, she would run no risk of its being said that she had inveigled an heiress under her roof, for the benefit of her nephew. But now that medical advice had declared itself on the side of inclination, my aunt had no further scruples; if her Harry should wish to pay a visit to his own home while Miss Floyd chanced to be staying there, it was surely not to be expected that he should be forbidden the house.

Brother Alec was greatly pleased at the communication of his old friend, couched, as it was, in the warmest terms, and with only just so much reference to his indisposition as made it the kindlier; but he had some qualms about accepting the offer. "I am but a wretched creature, you see, Sheddon; a mere wet blanket. I am afraid I shall very literally put you all out."

But I saw he was eager to go, notwithstanding these protestations, and I combated them as strenuously as I could.

"Well, I am but a bag of bones," said he at last. "Perhaps the presence of such a skeleton at your uncle's board may be considered an acquisition. The Egyptians

liked it, you know, eh? There is only one thing, however, that troubles me."

"What's that, sir? I am sure it need not do so."

"Suppose I were to die in the house?" suggested the old man. "Your aunt wouldn't like that, I'm sure?"

Brother Alec's humour, it must be confessed, had grown dreadfully grim, and his appearance was much calculated to enhance it. He had not grown his beard again, and his face looked very worn and lined, while his clothes hung about his lean limbs as though they had been made for another man. His speech, too, once so quick and vigorous, was slow and hesitating; only his eyes retained their fire. To me, who had heard the doctor's verdict, his words had a most painful significance. It was settled, however, that brother Alec was to go to Stanbrook; but, with respect to Gertrude, Mrs. Raeburn, as I had expected, was strong in opposition. The dear girl herself had said, only the other day, that she did not wish for change; and to have, as it were, the care of an invalid thus thrust upon her—and the responsibilities too—no; Mrs. Hastings meant it kindly, no doubt, but such an arrangement was not desirable. Gertrude, of course, could hardly press the matter on her own account. She was certainly not quite well, as I could see for myself, now that the idea had been put into my head. Young gentlemen are not great observers of ill-health, even in the objects of their affections, unless the change is strongly marked; and Gertrude was by no means one to make a fuss about herself, nor, in any case, would she have confided to me the fact of her indisposition. Brother Alec, indeed, whose will was now law in the house, could have insisted upon her accompanying him, but Mrs. Raeburn so successfully worked with him her "responsibility" argument, pointing out what a charge he must needs be to his cousin, and especially if she was really in ill-health, that he felt it an act of selfishness to urge the matter.

Gertrude's acceptance of the invitation seemed, in fact, out of the question, when Mr. Wilde, who happened to make a professional call that morning at the Priory, changed the aspect of affairs by his unhesitating fiat.

"The best receipt I can suggest to Miss Floyd," said he, "is to accompany her cousin to Stanbrook. I don't affirm that she needs change more than he does,

but it is my firm conviction that it will do her more good."

Mrs. Raeburn stood to her guns, and, when driven from them, disputed every inch of ground, from the heights of "indesirability," down to the depths of insufficiency of wardrobe. The dear girl had positively nothing to take with her; nothing, on so very short a notice, to put on. She fought him in the drawing-room, and when he came down from his upstairs patient, she even made a running fight of it in the hall. One shot from the doctor I overheard myself; and it took effect on me, and, embedding itself deeply in my memory, was fated to give me trouble long afterwards.

"You talk of responsibility, madam! Pray remember, if my advice is disregarded in this case, that the event, whatever it be, will lie at your door."

This observation, delivered in the gravest tone, and without a trace of irritation, seemed to have settled the matter, for Mrs. Raeburn presently announced to Gertrude that, "after considering all the pro and cons," she thought it better that she should try the Stanbrook air.

So brother Alec and she took their departure thither accordingly. I had often been back at the Rectory since my legal apprenticeship to Mark Raeburn, but not for any lengthened stay; I was genuinely attached to my relatives, yet always more than glad when the day came to return to Kirkdale. It was but natural; the best of uncles and aunts—not to say of parents—lose their attraction when the load-stone of love draws us elsewhere. But Stanbrook was my home, and I had never missed Gertrude there, as I was now doomed to do, at the Priory, of whose gloom she was the solitary light. In her absence life seemed to be emptied of all its joys. I had known that I loved her, but I knew not how much till we parted, and I felt the dull weight of her absence at my heart. Then I understood, too, for the first time, what virtue there lies in love, not only to charm, but to mitigate what is not charming about us. With Gertrude near me, everything had been tolerable; her large charity, too, had taught me to see the embers of what was good still alive in the attorney's nature, and the good humour and sprightliness in that of John. But now I felt left alone, with a sot and a buffoon. For, as to Mrs. Raeburn, the withdrawal of her two guests afforded an opportunity for the "setting to rights" of

the establishment that was not to be missed, and she absented herself a good deal from our society, and left us three men together. The dinners were more scrappy than ever, for it was also a glorious chance for economising, and everybody but the bull-dog—whose cannibalistic eye showed he was not to be trifled with—was placed upon short commons. A sense of isolation had, as I have said, of late been growing upon me, with respect to the Raeburn family, but hitherto I had attributed a certain coldness and reserve in their manner towards me to the influence of the mistress of the house; but even now that she had withdrawn herself from us, and left her son and husband free to behave as they pleased, I saw that they had assumed a different attitude towards me from that they had used of old. The attorney's talk was constrained, and his manner punctilious, and though the latter adjective could scarcely be applied to the irrepressible John, he no more regaled me with the family scandals: perhaps he felt that he had already told enough.

This state of things was not one that a high-spirited youth, with money in his pocket, was likely to endure very patiently. If my legal studies engaged my attention, they had not yet succeeded in attracting my interest, and I had not a soul I cared to speak to; for Mr. Wilde, for whom I now felt a liking far stronger than the prejudice I had at first entertained against him, did not of course now visit the Priory, but transferred his professional calls to Stanbrook.

After a week of this unpleasant life, I boldly announced at breakfast one Saturday morning my intention of going over to my uncle's house that day and staying till Monday.

"Then," said I, with a cheerful carelessness that I was far from feeling, for I expected strenuous opposition, "I shall be able to bring you a personal report of the invalids, which is always more satisfactory than a mere bulletin."

When I look back on the past, it strikes me that I must have been a singularly audacious young person to make that speech, for it could not have required Mrs. Raeburn's suspicious keenness to read through so transparent an excuse like glass.

To my great relief, however, she only observed, "Your time is your own, Mr. Sheddon, and if you choose to waste your

uncle's money by neglecting your studies, that is his affair, not ours."

"Just so," said I, coolly; nobody could say that I ever knocked under to that woman. "If you have anything to send, I shall be glad to take it."

The attorney uttered not a word, but his face grew redder and more unwholesome to the view. He knew my motive for going to Stanbrook, and that I had disregarded his warning on my first arrival to the uttermost; he knew also that I had long ago detected its falsehood. Often and often have I considered why he told me that monstrous yet sure-to-be discovered lie. It was not at his wife's suggestion, or even with her consent, I am very certain. My impression is, it arose from one of those ill-timed resolves to assert himself, that sometimes take possession of a weak and vacillating man. It was his object—and a vital one, as I afterwards discovered—to prevent any engagement taking place between myself and Gertrude, and it suddenly occurred to him to stop it by a coup de main. The effect had been most disastrous, not only as respected his design, but in relation to myself; for it had deprived him, and he saw it, of all respect in my eyes. I should have had less contempt for him as a husband, and more pity for him as regarded his brother, but for that piece of coarse duplicity. However, I thought but little of him and his—for little I guessed how they were fated to affect me and mine!—when I found myself in the yellow fly that morning, bound for Stanbrook. It was midsummer, and the heart of June beat in unison with my own; its sunshine was reflected in my breast. I thought no more of winter than the bird upon the bough, and was whistling as merrily, when old Bob, the driver, who had taken me many a time to school, and knew me as well as though he had been my uncle's private servant, turned suddenly round with, "Here's the doctor, Master Harry!" It was Mr. Wilde, coming along the road as usual at a hard gallop, from the direction of the Rectory. He pulled up when he recognised me, and the quick smile, that always seemed to leave his features more thoughtful than before, flitted across his face.

"So you are going to try change of air at Stanbrook, are you?" said he, significantly. "I rather expected you would feel it necessary."

I blushed, because Bob was present,

though his whole intelligence, I am persuaded, was at that moment concentrated upon a fly on the horse's ear, but answered carelessly, "Well, I certainly found the Priory rather dull with your two patients away. How are they?"

"Mr. Ræburn is much the same; if anything, there is an improvement. He certainly takes more notice of things, and is more cheerful."

"And Gertrude?"

"Well, Miss Floyd is better; yes, decidedly better."

There was a strange incongruity with the satisfactory nature of his news in the gravity of his air and tone, which did not escape me.

"Why, you say so as if you were sorry for it, Mr. Wilde!" said I, laughing. "My belief is that you regret there is no further excuse for your personal attendance on the young lady."

"And a certain man drew a bow at a venture and smote the king between the joints of his harness," returned the doctor gravely. "It is quite true that I shall make no more morning calls at Stanbrook, since there is no further necessity for them. However, don't be jealous, Harry," said he smiling, and gathering up his reins; "your coming will be a very pleasant surprise to somebody, I don't doubt!"

He was away in a moment, else I would have wished to have questioned him more closely. There was certainly something in Gertrude's case which did not give him complete satisfaction, though he pronounced her better. Perhaps he has expected her to get worse, and she had disappointed the prognostications of science.

Here came into sight Grey Gable; the stately fell, at whose green foot lay my uncle's house, and which I had climbed a hundred times. It seemed to me like some kindly giant keeping watch and ward over my princess. I would persuade her to mount with me its craggy heights, that she might feast her eyes upon the glorious scene that it commanded, and which had so often delighted mine. Then the lake in its turn came into view, showing its blue through the green trees, as no artist would have dared to paint it; what fairy hours would we pass together upon its waveless depths, or hidden from the heat of noon in some shadowy bay! From which reflections it may be gathered that my resolution to return to Kirkdale on the ensuing Monday was not quite fixed; and, indeed, I had not the faintest intention of

doing so. How my heart beat as we neared the house, and when, from the low-sunk road, I saw those two upon the terraced walk—a feeble figure, with his hand upon a young girl's shoulder—I leaped from the carriage like an uncarted deer, and ran up the garden steps and across the lawn to greet them. I think it was "a pleasant surprise to somebody," as Mr. Wilde had said.

The old man struck me as visibly thinner, paler, and more broken. The doctor had seen him several times, it must be remembered, and I not once during the last ten days. His manner to me was even kinder than usual—tender, it struck me, after the fashion of those who feel they are not long for this world, and whose every meeting with their friends may be their last. But Gertrude, with her love-lit eyes and tell-tale blush, seemed the very picture of health as well as of happiness.

My aunt Hastings agreed with me in this, but ascribed it to Stanbrook air.

"When Gertrude came here she was looking far from well, Harry. You ought to have seen that for yourself; but you are like your uncle—one must run a pin into you to draw your attention to any matter, though it be under your nose. The mountain air is setting her up, however, and I shall keep her here as long as that old witch will permit it. It is very kind of you, Harry," she went on demurely, "to visit your poor aunt and uncle in this unexpected way. I never knew you to do it before without the avant-courier of a letter." Then suddenly, with a flash of her rings, "Oh, you sly, bad boy, ain't you ashamed of yourself?"

My aunt, in short, was in high good-humour, and, I could see, was delighted with Gertrude, who made herself useful to her in a thousand ways, and it seemed to my boyish heart that all was going well with me and mine!

A FORGOTTEN NOOK.

As one by one the landmarks of old London disappear, a certain sense of dismay and desolation falls on the soul of the ancient dweller in Cockaigne. Soon we shall be so smart and new-fangled that we, of the older generation, shall not be able to go abroad without a guide to keep us straight. But, though we are in process of being made beau-

tiful for ever, do not many of our elderly tenacious hearts cling round the memories of the ancient places which we shall know no more, and sigh regretfully over many an unwritten *Hic jacet*? Do not we feel a pang of regret for the familiar Percy lion, whose tail has crystallised one of Theodore Hook's feeblest jokes and made it classic? Shall we not feel cheated of a little innocent fun, when, coming out of the National Gallery with our sweet little country cousin, whose credulity is so charming to our tough old smoke-dried heart, we fail to perceive that time-honoured beast, and have to decline upon the "lower range" of the larger Landseers guarding, with such unnecessary solemnity, the Nelson walking-stick? Who will realise Dr. Johnson and Boszy when Temple Bar is gone? The very churches are being swept away, and the place of the graveyards knows them no more.

It was in the height of the London season that I set out to visit the remote graveyard of St. Pancras, regarding which a rumour had gone abroad that it was to be closed, levelled, and devoted to purposes connected with the business of the great railways which already traverse its neglected wastes. Old St. Pancras, St. Pancras "in the fields," as the chroniclers call it, is by no means to be confounded with the hideous temple in the New Road, the terrors of whose caryatides we have all suffered, from our youth up, with troubled minds. Old St. Pancras, no longer "in the fields," lies in a remote region behind the Great Northern Railway Terminus at Battle Bridge, and is full of interesting associations. The old church is affirmed by Stukely to have been built on the site of a Roman encampment, a supposition which the discovery, in 1848, of Roman bricks and a small altar-stone would seem to justify. In 1842 a Roman inscription was discovered at Battle Bridge, attesting the fact of the battle fought by the Britons under Boadicea and the Romans under Suetonius Paulinus. The inscription bore distinctly the letters LEG. XX. (the Twentieth Legion), one of the four which came into Britain in the reign of Claudius, and which was with Suetonius Paulinus when he made that victorious stand "in a fortified pass, with a forest in his rear," against the insurgent Britons. The position is described by Tacitus. In the high ground above Battle Bridge were found vestiges of Roman works, and the tract of land at the north

was, as is well known, formerly a forest. The veracity of the following passage of the historian is therefore confirmed by a reference to facts:—"Deligitque locum artis faucibus et a tergo silva clausam; satis cognito nihil hostium, nisi in fronte, et apertam planitiem esse sine metu cum vexillariis vicesimanis et a proximis ancillares" (Tacit. Annal., lib. xiv.), so that almost to the letter the place of this memorable engagement seems to be ascertained, the only topographical omission being that there is no mention of the Fleet brook, which is certainly strange, as Tacitus was a scrupulous noter of details. All round St. Pancras is classic ground, though its classicality be of a later date than that of Boadicea and the legions of Claudius. At Kentish Town (Kestestoune) was the splendid country house of William Bruges, garter king-at-arms, where, in the reign of Henry the Fifth, the Emperor Sigismund was entertained. On the north side of the parish was the Gospel Oak field, traditionally said (as is said of so many other spots) to be that where the Gospel was first preached in England. When Wycliffe attended the famous citation at St. Paul's Cathedral, tradition declares him to have frequently preached beneath the spreading branches of this tree; and here, in the later times of the Reformation, the expounders of the new faith set forth the doctrines of Protestantism. Here, also, three centuries later, the earnest Whitfield appealed to the torpid consciences of his hearers, and the dry bones were shaken by his fervent oratory.

In Ben Jonson's play, the Tale of a Tub, the travellers move about in the fields near "Pancridge." Totten-court is a mansion in the fields; a robbery is pretended to be committed "in the ways over the country" between Kentish Town and Hampstead Heath, and a warrant is granted by a "Marribone" justice. St. Pancras had formerly its mineral springs, which were much resorted to. Near the churchyard (in the yard of a house) is the once celebrated St. Pancras Well; indeed, we find ourselves here in the midst of long-forgotten mineral springs; Clerk's Well (Clerkenwell); St. Chad's Well, in the Gray's Inn-road; Bagnigge Wells; Sadler's Wells; the Hampstead Wells, the water of which used formerly to be sent to London in flasks, and sold as the more popular foreign mineral waters are now. In 1698 the Hampstead Wells were given to trus-

tees for the benefit of the poor. In a house in Montgomery-gardens, on the site of Euston-square, lived Peter Pindar (Dr. Wolcot), the satirist, by no means to be confounded with the stately and splendid Sir Paul Pindar, merchant and ambassador under James the First.

St. Pancras "in the fields" is, in 1593, described by Norden, in his *Speculum Britannia*, as standing "all alone, utterly forsaken, old and wether-beten, which for the antiquity thereof, it is thought not to yield to Paules, in London. About the church have been many buildings, now decayed, leaving poor Pancras without companie or comfort; yet it is now and then visited with Kentish Town and Highgate, which are members hereof (i.e., is hamlets of St. Pancras). Yet they seldome come there, for they have chapels of ease within themselves; but when there is a corpse to be interred they are forced to leave the same within the forsaken church, or churchyard, where, no doubt, it resteth as secure against the day of Resurrection as if it laie in stately Paules;" a pious assumption, which later events have singularly falsified. St. Pancras is a prebendal manor, and was granted by Ethelbert to St. Paul's Cathedral about 603. It was a parish before the Conquest, and from the fact of its dedication to St. Pancras, a young Phrygian nobleman, who, for his strict adherence to the Christian faith, suffered martyrdom at Rome under the Emperor Diocletian, may be assumed to have originally been a mission station connected with the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons by St. Augustine, A.D. 594. The church stood here before the Conquest. In those days the village must have been a "clearing" on the outskirts of the great forest of Middlesex. FitzStephen, in Henry the Third's reign, speaks of the forest as being full of boars, wolves, deer, &c., and in his time it extended over a great part of Middlesex; Enfield Chase, and the little patch of underwood at Hornsey Wood House (now part of Finsbury Park), being all that remain of it.

"Then," says Strype, "have ye the parish church of St. Pancrace, a proper small church, but divers rich parishioners therein; and hath had of old time many rich Benefactors; but of late such, as not regarding the order taken by her Majesty, the least bell in the church being broken, have rather sold the same for half its value, than put the parish to charge with

new-casting." By which it would appear that the later parishioners were of more frugal mind than their forefathers. A certain Mr. Chapman, a benefactor of this parish, leaves a provision in his will (September 6th, 1626) for "sweeping the pulpit at Paul's Cross once a week, two pounds twelve shillings; and for two Lanthorns with candles to light the parish, one pound per annum:" rather large sums, when we consider the relative value of money in those times. Weever speaks of "a wondrous ancient monument in this church," said by tradition to belong to the family of Gray, the founders of Gray's Inn, and identical with the noble family of Grey, of Wilton. A Mr. Thomas Chapman, in 1617, is spoken of as a "Bountiful Benefactor" to the church, having given a fair and very costly table, bearing the figure of a monument of "that ever famous after death, as in life, Queen Elizabeth." The fulsome inscription winds up with the following emphatic period: "By way of thankfulness to the most holy, sacred, and Individual Trinity, and her ever-honoured Royal Virtues, this memorial was here erected, set up, and consecrated, 17th November, 1617."

Beneath the old tower, which was removed when the church, in 1848, was rebuilt, the body of that mad Earl Ferrers who was hanged at Tyburn, 1760, for murdering his steward, is said to have been interred.

But it is chiefly as affording a last resting-place to the refugees of the French Revolution, who as strangers and pilgrims sojourned so long, and at last left their bones amongst us, that the churchyard of old St. Pancras is more particularly interesting. "Of late," says Strype, "those of the Roman Catholic religion have affected to be buried here, and it has been assigned as a reason that prayer and mass are said daily at St. Peter's, at Rome, for the repose of their souls, as well as in a church dedicated to St. Pancras, in the South of France." Again, in Windham's Diary, we find another explanation of the choice of St. Pancras, by preference, from amongst all other graveyards, as the burying-ground of Roman Catholics. "While ailing one day with Dr. Brocklesby," says Windham, "in passing and returning by St. Pancras church, Dr. Johnson fell into prayer, and upon Dr. Brocklesby inquiring why the Catholics chose that spot for their burial-place, he mentioned that some Catholics, in Queen Elizabeth's time, had

been burnt there." Tradition also affirms this church to have been the last whose bell was tolled in England for mass, and in which any rites of the Roman Catholic worship were celebrated before the Reformation.

Dismal, indeed, is the aspect of the once-famous burial-ground. The rank, tangled grass; the tombs, sinking into uncared-for ruin; the absence of all love and care about the untended graves; the effaced inscriptions on many of the monuments; the scream and whistle of the trains, as they pass to and fro above the very resting-places of the dead, present a scene the abomination of whose desolation is hardly to be described. Nor was the impression by any means softened as we wandered through the neglected ground, deciphering with difficulty the inscription on the forgotten tombs, by the running accompaniment of description which the custodian of this dreary city of the dead poured forth. In terms rather unvarnished than polite, he described the scenes which had taken place during the making of the railway viaducts which cross the melancholy graveyards; how hundreds upon hundreds of bodies had been dug up and carted away into distant obscurity. Ghastly histories, such as might well go far to make us accept the old-new doctrines of cremation, and be thankful!

The tombs of the Roman Catholic members of the community are easily to be recognised by the R. I. P., or the legend *Requiescat in Pace*, surmounted by a cross. Upwards of four thousand priests, driven from France during the height of the persecution of the ecclesiastical body during the Revolution, landed in England in the months of August and September, 1792. Winchester was at first fixed upon by Government as their chief abiding place, but many of them settled in London; and, on an average, between thirty and forty interments took place yearly from amongst the French refugee priests.

Here lies interred Francis Xaver de Hastang, Count of the Holy Roman Empire, Hereditary Grand Master of Upper and Lower Bavaria, Chamberlain and Privy Councillor, Envoy-Extraordinary to the Court of London, Grand Commander of the Illustrious Order of St. George, who died May 29, 1783, *ætat* eighty-three. Here, also, is interred the celebrated Chevalier d'Eon, whose adventures once formed the scandal and

the occupation of courts. Here lie Louis Charles, Comte d'Herville, Maréchal of France, major-general in the service of the Empress of Russia, and colonel of the British, who died of a wound received at Quiberon, 1795; Philip Comte de Montlosier, lieutenant-general of the French army; and Angelus Talaru de Chalmaret, Bishop of Coutances, in Normandy. This is the tomb of François Claude Amour, Marquis de Bouillé (is not the very name suggestive of the elegant *boudoir* dandy of the *ancien régime*?); and here lies Augustinus Benatus le Mintier, Bishop and Count of Treguier. Not far from him rests Louis Claude Bigot de St. Croix, "dernier ministre de Louis XVI.;" Louise d'Espartes de Lussan, Comtesse de Polastron, "Dame du Palais de la Reine de France." One imagines the satisfaction with which the poor loyal hearts wrote that "Queen of France" upon the tomb of her former first lady, instead of the "Veuve Capet," which was all that would have been allowed in their native land. Louis André Grimaldi D'Antibes, des princes de Monaco, Evêque et Comte de Noyon, Pair de France—one of those bishops who stood out stoutly for his fees, and refused to surrender at the requisition of Pius the Third (1804); Jean de la Marche, Bishop of Pol, St. Léon; Henri, Marquis de l'Ostanges, Grand Sénéchal de Quercy, and Field-Marshal of France; the Baroness de Montalembert; Pascal Paoli, the Corsican patriot, and kinsman of the Buonaparti; Pasqualino Philippe St. Martin, Comte de Front, the inscription on whose tomb runs, "A foreign land preserves his ashes with respect," all found their last resting-place here. Yonder lies Count Philip Nepomuc Fontana, sometime ambassador from the court of Spain; here rest several members of the French family of Dillon, notably Arthur Richard Dillon, Archbishop of Toulouse and Narbonne, President of the State of Languedoc, Primate of the Gauls, Commander of the Order of the Holy Ghost. But the list is almost inexhaustible, and a certain sense of wonder falls upon us to see the last resting-places of the illustrious dead so clean forgotten of their own countrymen, so utterly abandoned to ruin, neglect, and the oblivion of indifference.

Yet not alone to pious Catholics should a pilgrimage to old St. Pancras prove interesting. Here lies the body of Jeremy Collier, the stout old Jacobite, whose vigorous crusade against the coarseness of

the drama and the immorality of the wits of Queen Anne's time brought him into ridicule amongst the satirists and lampooners of the day, but finally prevailed against the corruption of the stage. Here lies Abraham Woodhead, the reputed author of the *Whole Duty of Man*. There is the resting-place of the artist Cooper, whose wife and Pope's mother were sisters. Yonder lies Dr. Betts, himself a Roman Catholic, physician to Charles the Second. Those are the tombs of two Howards of the Arundell and Wardour family. Yonder miserable, cracked, and toppling tomb brings back a name which a recent great lawsuit has made familiar in our ears: it is that of Frances, relict of George Brownlow Doughty, Esq. (daughter of Sir Henry Tichborne, Baronet, 1765). Yonder, to the left, across a perilous tract of coarse grass and unmown nettles, through which we plunge knee-deep, lies William Godwin, the author of *Caleb Williams*; and there reposes Mary Wolstonecraft Godwin, the *Apostle of the Coming Woman*, the author of a well-known work on *Women's Rights* and the mother of Shelley's second wife. On the opposite side are the tombs of Walker, the lexicographer; of Lewis Theobald, the editor of *Shakespeare*; and of *Father O'Leary*.

The afternoon sun shines through the church windows, as we stand for a moment within the hideous Modern-Norman structure (rebuilt in 1848), and gaze round at the tablets and mural inscriptions, in the hopes of finding some interest to redeem the ugliness that surrounds us. Eighty thousand pounds, the custodian of this dismal swamp told us, the church cost. "'Tis true, 'tis pity, pity 'tis, 'tis true," is all the comment we can make. That more graves are to be dug up, more revolting scenes to be enacted, he also tells us; adding that the railroads want the ground, and are clamouring for this Naboth's vineyard, and that his vicar is the only man who draws a militant sword against the proposed desecration. The graves and tombs are to be razed and banked, in order that the dead may not obstruct the progress of the living. Comment is superfluous, and we turn to go, saddened by the depressing sights we have seen. A few weeks later we read that the Baroness Burdett Coutts had come forward and offered to inclose the old historic resting-place, and cause it to be planted and made trim and pleasant, a bright garden for the poor of this crowded,

dismal parish; but we have not yet heard whether the humane and kindly offer has been accepted. This would be turning its desolate abomination to good account.

Perhaps the strangest thing of all concerning this obscure church and churchyard is, not that the old English worthies should lie neglected and forgotten there; not that a whole army of martyrs to the "red-fool fury of the Seine" should rest in forgotten graves, unvisited of their own countrymen and women; but that the young Phrygian nobleman who met his death at the Porta San Pancrazio at Rome should have given his name to a vast London parish, and that on trucks, tickets, and time-tables we unconsciously embalm the memory of an early Roman martyr.

A HIGHLAND DAWN.

The slumbering sunlight glimmers on the lake
In the soft glow of a September dawn;
And, through the silvery mist-haze, show the peaks
Of neighbouring mountains, tinged with faintest
shades

Of blue and grey; and the wide-stretching moors,
Bright-robed in purple heather, fragrance shed
On the keen northern air. Hum the brown bees,
In the rich, honey-laden blossom-bells,
Singing and working as can only they
Who, to their daily toil, can cheerful add
The heart-sung music of a glad content.

'Mid the thick velvet moss-tufts, fetlock deep,
Stands the red deer, his grandly-antlered head
Tossing aloft, as, with defiant bay,
His challenge to a rival he sends forth,
Sultan of yonder brae. A distant speck,
With stately motion, sails amid the clouds.
A kingly, golden eagle. Slow he wings
Towards his eyrie fastnesses his flight,
Nor stays upon his way. For there his spouse
And his twain dusky eaglets eager wait
The advent of their sire and their lord.

Laden with seed-cones are the mountain pines,
And there the blackcock makes his early meal;
His glossy breastplate shining in the glint.
Of the uprising sun, like burnished jet
Dashed with a tinge of emerald. The shrill grouse
Sends forth his crow upon the morning air;
And sleek brown hares to welcome covert creep,
Their nightly revel over.

All around
Is fresh, and fair, and fragrant, as with glow
Of gold and purple, rose and amethyst,
Breaks o'er the mountain-tops the Highland Dawn!

THE SCIENTIFIC WORLD.

By ordinary Englishmen the scientific world has long been regarded with feelings which may best be described as "mixed." Creatures endowed with minds so base and humble as to credit the existence of people better informed than themselves, looked reverentially on the acts and deeds of the learned, and spoke of them

with fitting awe, while that popular character in England, the "practical man," assumed an entirely different tone. This representative Briton—who is supposed to be the true incarnation of the spirit of John Bull, rough and ready, keen and business-like, bluff, hearty, and "blessed with common sense, sir"—took an entirely opposite view, and never tired of expressing his contempt for "mere theorists," "scientific dreamers," and "book-worms." "Give me a man who knows his trade, sir, and has served an apprenticeship to it; none of your Jacks-of-all-trades and masters of none for me. Bad lot, sir; ruin themselves and everybody belonging to them with their theories and systems. Won't work, sir; won't work," was a speech in which Mr. Rule-of-Thumb often indulged, exalting himself and similar muddlers who had blundered on through failures to success, and "sitting upon" the theorist who essayed a short cut to perfection. It was convenient for Mr. Rule-of-Thumb and his friends to forget—but perhaps to do them justice they never knew—that the really great discoveries which have changed the face of the world, and opened new sources of wealth, were made by theorists, and not by the genus Rule-of-Thumb; that Columbus and the Cabots were scientific cartographers, not mere "old salts;" that Newton, who, among other things, invented the reflecting telescope, was a mathematician, and not an instrument-maker; that Watt, and Wheatstone, and Davy were "scientific dreamers," not millwrights, telegraph men, or lamp-lighters; that Perkin, who discovered mauve, is a scientific chemist, and not a dyer: but when did facts like these stand in the way of your practical man, who cannot, or will not, look beyond his own nose? Within the memory of men yet living, the name of "theorist" was a by-word and a reproach among that eminently respectable and particularly uninteresting section of Englishmen who make their way in the world by simple plodding and perpetual "pegging away." It was far otherwise at the court of our "mutton-eating king," who, whether by natural sympathy or by the influence of that lashing cavalier, Prince Rupert, took keen interest in the advancement of science, and figures as the illustrious founder of the Royal Society. It is also interesting to note that "Farmer George," who is supposed to have wondered how the apples got into the dumplings,

was also a great patron of that august body, the parent of the numerous societies which, together, make up the scientific world of to-day. At the sittings of the Royal Society, the famous silver-gilt mace—long supposed to be the identical "bauble" taken away at the command of the Protector—is always laid on the table in front of the president, and is revered as a symbol of authority presented by the royal founder. After sundry migrations, the Royal Society—originally formed by a little knot of theorists, who met one day at old Gresham College to hear a lecture on astronomy by Christopher Wren—has found a home at Burlington House, where, side by side with the Geological Society, the Royal Astronomical Society, the Society of Antiquaries, the Linnæan Society, the Chemical Society, and the Royal Academy, it is sumptuously lodged.

Burlington House, then, may be taken as the great centre of the English scientific world, but the outlying principalities and powers may not be passed over in silence. There is the Royal Geographical Society in Savile-row—ever on the look-out for travelled lions—and drawing the fashionable as well as the scientific world, when a big lion is going to roar. It is, perhaps, hardly so well known as it deserves to be, that this society possesses a map-room open to the general public daily during office hours, when anybody is at liberty to consult as many maps as he may wish. Hard by is the Royal Institution in Albemarle-street, founded by that curious specimen of a loyal American, Count Rumford, and immortalised by the labours of Sir Humphry Davy, whose fine eyes were said by the ladies to be "made for something else than poring over crucibles;" of Dalton, the colour-blind philosopher of atoms, who wore his scarlet gown of a Doctor of Civil Law about the streets of Oxford, in happy unconsciousness of the astonishment he created; of Faraday, whose mind could rise to the loftiest conceptions of philosophy, and bend to a Christmas course of elementary lectures; and of Dr. Tyndall, who climbs mental and Alpine heights with equal facility. Of more ancient date than the Royal Institution, but nearly a hundred years younger than the Royal Society, is the Society of Arts, in John-street, Adelphi, once frequented by Dr. Johnson, and recently the parent of International Exhibitions. Another strong-

hold of science and scientific discussion is the Institution of Civil Engineers, in Great George-street, Westminster, where great problems are propounded and discussed with professional acumen, and sometimes with professional warmth. Peculiarly a growth of the age of the straight line, this institution had for its first president the famous Telford, whose colossal statue in Westminster Abbey looms large among the soldiers and divines by whom it is surrounded. This great representative of the race of men who, within half a century, have reduced the world to a manageable size by knitting it together in a mesh of steam-boats, railways, and telegraphs was succeeded in the presidential chair by many eminent engineers—by Rennie, Walker, and Joshua Field; by Sir William Cubitt, who advanced from the construction of wind-mills and treadmills to that of docks and railways; by Robert Stephenson, the champion of the narrow gauge; by George Parker Bidder, the celebrated "calculating boy," who once multiplied (mentally) twelve places of figures by twelve places of figures; by Sir John Hawkshaw, the president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science; by Fowler, Gregory, Vignoles, and Harrison, all railway engineers of the first rank; and by Hawksley, the famous water and gas engineer. In addition to the headquarters in Great George-street, the engineers have many other associations—notably the Society of Engineers, an offshoot of old Putney College; the Institute of Mechanical Engineers; and the Society of Telegraph Engineers; together with many local societies of the same kind, scattered over the United Kingdom. Other professions have also their peculiar societies, founded with the object of scientific improvement. Physicians and surgeons, besides filling great space in the Royal Society, have their colleges, their microscopical and pharmaceutical societies, their clubs and coteries for the interchange of ideas, and their grand annual parliament—the meeting of the British Medical Association. It may to rigid critics appear incorrect to include archæology among the sciences, but, if we grant it a place among the severer sisterhood, we must admit that few studies are pursued with greater ardour and greater patience. From the time of Fielding downwards, it has been the fashion to poke fun at the antiquary, and to laugh at the entomologist, who has

his societies and meetings like other scientific folk, and has been called (by an American journalist) a "buggist" for his pains; but, for all that, archæology and entomology are pursuits which have taken a strong grip on this generation, and flourish mightily in the land. Lovers of facts and figures have their Statistical Society, admired by the late Mr. Buckle, who declared that statistics "had thrown more light on the study of human nature than all the other sciences put together." It is not only interesting, but sometimes excessively droll, to study human nature by the light thrown upon it by statistics. Things supposed to occur in the most capricious manner turn out, when investigated on a broad basis, to be as regular in their recurrence as the tides. Murder, for instance, might be supposed to be one of the most arbitrary and irregular of all crimes; and marriage a contract which would be entered into purely at the bidding of caprice. Nothing of the kind, say the statist: murders occur with quite as great regularity as other natural phenomena, and the percentage of marriages bears a fixed proportion to the price of wheat per bushel. More than this: when Brillat-Savarin, the "drum-major of the Court of Cassation," eat and drank more than was good for him, and said in jest, "The destiny of nations depends upon what they eat," he did not utter a joke: he stated a fact. Rice-eating nations and vegetarians generally, unlike the Briton, "ever shall be slaves." Egypt is a rice-eating country—its inhabitants have been slaves from the most remote times. Bengal is tenanted by poor creatures who live upon rice and a little grease, and who have fallen an easy prey to a long series of conquerors. On the other hand, the Romans and the English—mighty men of war in all climates and under all imaginable circumstances—ate ever of the fat, and drank of the strong. Averages and percentages rule the world. People forget to direct their letters before posting them, and commit suicide with a regularity which makes it a positive pleasure to compile tables on these subjects. There is nothing like figures. John Howard, the philanthropist, would never have carried his famous reform of prisons if he had not shown by convincing figures that the neglected gaols of his day were centres of fever and small-pox, and by a frightful array of figures fairly scared the Legislature into doing its duty, and doing it at once.

Adepts in statistics, which, I suppose, is a legitimate branch of the "dismal science," were formed into a society soon after the works of the famous Quetelet became known in this country. It must not be supposed that the meetings of the Statistical Society are at all dull. Unerring figures may be made to bear many interpretations, and learned statisticians are apt to entertain strong opinions, so that very lively discussions often take place.

The majority of these learned bodies hold their meetings from November to June, and pass their time in the reading and discussion of papers, afterwards embodied in volumes of "Transactions" and "Proceedings." To the profane listener the discussion is by far the best part of the entertainment. It is soothing to the unregenerate mind to hear the statements of one profound scientist politely, but mercilessly, demolished by another, and to see both of them pulverised by a third. Arm oneself against it as one will, there is comfort in finding, like the immortal John P. Robinson, that they don't "know everything down in Judæa," and that, perhaps, they are all wrong together. Few sciences are in this way more delightful than geology proper, and the palæontological branches which grow out of it. At one time the theory of cataclysms is accepted, but after awhile is knocked over in favour of the doctrine of gradual subsidence. There is also much healthy excitement about glacial periods, but by far the most interesting questions are those concerning the antiquity of man and the degeneration or development of species. A peculiarity of this kind of discussion is, that it admits of any quantity of fire and fury being imported into it. In proportion as the Known—the firm ground of carefully ascertained fact—recedes from view, and we advance into the shadowy region of the Unknown, the sphere of discussion widens and embraces subjects, if not foreign to, at least but slightly connected with science in its more severe acceptation. Astronomy and geology become confused with traditional and theoretical cosmogonies, and the "odium theologicum" is imported into the scientific world—a work of supererogation, for there is a purely scientific hatred which passeth show, and is quite sufficient for every purpose without the addition of extraneous spite. A memorable instance of the ease with which a storm may be raised was afforded by Professor Tyndall's address to the British Association

last year, which brought the pulpits of Belfast thundering about his ears. Very much of the same spirit is shown on less important and more familiar occasions, especially when the disputants are not quite so profound as they imagine themselves to be. It was once my privilege to assist at a discussion between a couple of friends who began quietly enough about the borings in the Wealden. This was excellently well for a while, but before long they branched off into more exciting subjects. Lyell and Darwin, Huxley and Wallace were cited, and the theory of evolution brought on the carpet. I quietly intimated that all this had been set going very long ago by Lamarck, and eloquently glanced at in the Vestiges of Creation, but I was brushed aside by the controversialists, who plunged deeply into the Origin of Species and the Descent of Man, fell back upon the Essays and Reviews, hammered away at the "reflex action" of the nerves, and finally sent me—I blush to write it—fast asleep. I was awake from a dream in which figured the ichthyosaurus, the plesiosaurus, the pterodactyle, the megalosaurus, and other pleasant creatures now happily extinct, by the highly-pitched voices of my friends. I dimly caught the portentous words "pantheism," "atheism," and "superstition," and saw where the philosophers had brought the discussion to. Unconsciously I restored peace between them by murmuring, "After all, you see, it does not matter," a remark which turned all their wrath upon me as a mere "indifferentist," a "pocourantist," and the rest of it, but I got rid of the theory of evolution for the rest of that evening. Why this peculiar fury should be generated by the discussion of speculative subjects I could never quite understand. I simply record the fact, and leave its cause to professional psychologists.

Eschewing, for the most part, the loose kind of talk to which I have referred, the learned societies keep to their programme with tolerable strictness, and only deal with those matters which happen to be of public interest, when they come within their particular sphere. The statisticians are particularly severe on this point, and the Geological, Chemical, Geographical, Astronomical, Linnæan, and Microscopical Societies also keep well to their text. The Royal Society is more catholic in its views. On the same evening may be heard one paper on the Acoustic Properties of the various Conditions of the Atmosphere, with special

reference to fog signals, and another on the Explosive Properties of Gun-cotton, and its application to torpedoes and submarine mines generally. At other times are read papers on the Actinic Rays of the Sun, and on abstruse mathematical problems, on chemical, geographical, and geological subjects. At the Society of Arts, all kinds of subjects are treated, from Frozen Beef to the Channel Tunnel; and considerable instruction and amusement are derived from the discussions which take place in the great room in the Adelphi. At the Royal Institution the same kind of thing is done, minus the discussion, and particular care is taken to select popular subjects for the Friday evenings, when fashionable audiences attend. In the afternoon, instructive series of lectures are given, and those who have attended the splendid discourses on physics by Faraday and his successor, Dr. Tyndall, will not readily forget either the matter of the lectures or the magnificent experiments which illustrated them. After the month of June very little is done at any of these societies or institutions, until November or December, it being assumed that the members are pursuing scientific researches at the top of the Alps or at the bottom of coal mines, on the sea shore, up in a balloon, or down in a diving-bell. Sundry organisations, however, are exceptions to this rule. The British Medical Association holds a great yearly gathering; the Pharmacologists have their conference; the Social Science Congress meets for the discussion of the variety of subjects which come under its very comprehensive title; and the British Association for the Advancement of Science meets annually in some large town. The Iron and Steel Institute, and many local engineering societies, as well as the Archæologists, also hold summer meetings, in convenient spots for visiting great modern industrial centres and venerable remains of ancient times. The summer gatherings of engineers are particularly enjoyable. It is very common for one local body to invite a kindred society to hold their summer meeting at their head-quarters, and such occasions are made the pleasant excuse for profuse hospitality. At the town-hall, or some such convenient spot, meetings are held every morning. There is reading of papers and discussions thereon, but I have noted that the papers are not listened to with rapt attention;

the subsequent excursion to some mine, ironworks, or factory in the vicinity, with luncheon or dinner to follow, being the real business of the day. It was, indeed, once suggested to me by an eminent engineer, that the morning meetings would be far more agreeable if they were conducted like the annual meetings of joint-stock companies. The papers, in the opinion of my friend, might, like directors' reports, be printed and "taken as read," to the great economy of time and the saving of friction, and the discussion proceeded with at once. Whether this innovation would find favour in the sight of the ingenious gentlemen who prepare acres of maps and plans, in order that they may have the pleasure of talking about them, and pointing at them with a thing like a fishing-rod, I do not presume to determine. I merely give my friend's suggestion for what it is worth.

The scientific excursions are very pleasant. Special trains run everywhere, and a long walk over heaps of iron and piles of cinders, the tapping of a blast-furnace, or the descent of a coal mine, prepares the appetite admirably for the copious refreshment which concludes the labours of the day. Perhaps still more agreeable are the archæological meetings embellished by the presence of ladies. Nothing can be more delightful than a short trip by rail or road and a walk across the fields—when it does not rain—to the ruins of an abbey, or to the place where some local antiquary says a Roman villa stood; or to a smiling cornfield, which may or may not have been an ancient camp or battle-field; to an old tower, now used as a stable, but once the feudal stronghold of a doughty baron; or to an antique church, where the lovers of heelball can amuse themselves among the monumental brasses. The local antiquary reads a paper on the spot, and generally has it all his own way, as he deserves—if he have provided an elegant luncheon. A picnic in the abbey or the castle ruins, with plenty of pretty girls, is a species of antiquarian study which will commend itself to most well-conditioned people, and if the Rev. Septimus Gargoyles's discourse be a trifle too dry and the champagne a trifle too sweet, who cares?

The gatherings of the Pharmacologists, of the British Medicals, and of the Social Science folk are hardly so convivial as those of the Engineers, or so picturesque

as those of the Archæologists, but they have certain solid merits of their own. For instance, they bring together medical officers of health and sanitary reformers—people who declare that fish prefer rivers saturated with the refuse of dye-works, and others who never tire of repeating that the Aire and Calder supply a writing-fluid largely used on their banks; analysts who see death in every pot, and others who cannot find alum in bread, water in milk, or poison in pickles. Many of these worthy gentlemen are not only scientific opponents but professional rivals, so that there is no fear of dulness overpowering their discussions. Persistent detractors of these meetings say that people go down to them loaded with papers and arguments, in order to fire off the envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness accumulated during an entire twelvemonth; but these critics forget that it is our duty to promulgate the truth, even if, in so doing, we offend a rival practitioner. Each of these summer societies possesses a certain interest of its own; but, in national importance, the British Association far outweighs them all. This famous body is composed mainly of members of other learned societies, and its meeting, therefore, partakes very much of the character of a national scientific congress. In the "pre-scientific" period, when there was as yet no British Association—when one head of a great military department declared openly that he "hated scientific officers," and another gave it as his opinion that "theoretical knowledge was not necessary in the army; an officer might be a good officer without any education at all"—it was a matter of wonder to foreign savants that learned Englishmen were treated with so small a measure of respect; and their remarks were so pungent, that Sir Humphry Davy, Sir John Herschel, and Sir David Brewster undertook to stir up national feeling on the subject. The celebrated Babbage—author of the calculating machine, and unrelenting enemy of organ-grinders—also exposed the prevailing ignorance of the more difficult sciences; while Sir David Brewster, in the Quarterly Review, declared that, "An association of our nobility, clergy, gentry, and philosophers can alone draw the attention of the sovereign and the nation to this blot upon its fame." Sir David Brewster did not quite invent this; he adapted it from the German, for scientific congresses had already been held in Germany since

1822, that of 1828 being presided over by the illustrious Von Humboldt. Nevertheless, to Brewster is due the merit of introducing the system to this country, and of inducing Lord Brougham to bring the state of science and its followers before Lord Grey's government. In 1831 the first meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science was held, under the presidency of Lord Milton, at the Museum of the York Philosophical Society; and since that date the association has held its meetings with great regularity. Oxford, Dublin, Liverpool, York, Cambridge, Bath, Glasgow, Cheltenham, Brighton, Bradford, Belfast, and Bristol have, in turn, welcomed the philosophers and extended to them ample hospitality. At the annual meeting the work done by individuals and by committees, sitting at the rooms in Albemarle-street, comes to the surface, and fresh lines are laid down for the ensuing year. So well was the society originally organised, that but few variations have been made from the original plan, which interferes in no wise with the ground occupied by other institutions. Its objects, stated broadly, are—to give a stronger impulse and a more systematic direction to scientific inquiry; to promote the intercourse of those who cultivate science in different parts of the British Empire, with one another and with foreign philosophers; and to obtain a more general attention to the objects of science, and the removal of any disadvantages of a public kind which impede its progress. How thoroughly this plan of operation has been carried out is made manifest by the entire revolution which has taken place in the public opinion of this country since the foundation of the association. Instead of being neglected, science is zealously cultivated in every direction; great dye-works have their resident chemist, and great breweries a regular chemical staff. Science is taught throughout the length and breadth of the land, under the supervision of South Kensington; and only the other day a Royal Commission recommended the appointment of a Minister of Science and a Scientific Council, to watch over the operations of Government departments.

The business of the annual meeting of the British Association is commenced by an address by the new president—sometimes general, if not controversial in tone, like that delivered by Professor Tyndall at Belfast; and occasionally special, like Sir John Hawkshaw's speech the other day.

After the general meeting, the committee takes the business in hand, particular departments being carried on in what are called the "sections," by special committees. These sections are seven in number, viz.—A, Mathematical and Physical Science; B, Chemical Science; C, Geology; D, Biology, subdivided into three departments—Anatomy and Physiology, Zoology and Botany, Anthropology; E, Geography; F, Economic Science and Statistics; G, Mechanical Science. Under one or other of these sections the majority of scientific subjects may be brought, and, as several sections may be sitting simultaneously, a great deal of work is got through in a short space of time. This reading, discussion, and reporting in the sections represents the real serious work of the association, which covers a quantity of ground. For instance, at the last meeting, papers—many of which were of extraordinary merit—were read on such dissimilar subjects as the Northern End of the Bristol Coal Field; the Bristol Sugar Trade; the Present State of Geographical Zoology; the Stream-line Theory of Shipbuilding; Tanning; Bone Caves; Craniology; the Employment of Lady-helps; a Method of obtaining Motive Power from the Motion of a Ship among the Waves; Toughened Glass; the Tin and Gold of the Ancients; the Influence of the Sun-spot Period upon the Price of Corn; the Difficulties of Steering Steam Vessels; the Prevention of Sand Bars at the Mouth of Rivers; Luminous Meteors; Rainfall; the National Standard of Education; the Industrial Position of Women as affected by their Exclusion from the Suffrage; and the Severn Tunnel. In addition to this ordinary work, evening lectures are given on more popular subjects; such as the Polarisation of Light and Safety Appliances on Railways; while, to crown all, a lecture exclusively to working-men is given by one of the most eloquent expositors present. This latter feature is of recent introduction, and has achieved great success in the hands of Professor Tyndall, Professor Huxley, Sir John Lubbock, and other learned professors, who have laboured to show what can be done in scientific exposition without "hard words" and bewildering technicalities. The ladies "take a hand," not only at the evening lectures and soirées, but in the stern work of the sections, Mrs. Gray, Mrs. King, Mrs. Crawshay, Miss Carpenter, and Miss Becker having particularly distinguished themselves at the last meeting.

Numerous excursions are planned in order that members may have a pleasant time. In fact, so pleasant is the meeting regarded, that it is long looked forward to as an opportunity of shaking hands by friends who mayhap have not met since the last "British." This is as it should be, and composes that mixture of pleasure and work which gives the keenest zest to modern life. It seems agreed on all hands that we work too hard, and, if this conclusion be sound, the junketings of the British Association supply a proper complement to the labour got through in preparing tough subjects and making them palatable—at least to the scientific mind. By chill October the summer gatherings are over; papers have been read, new lamps have been hung out and old ones polished up till they reveal new qualities; factories and ruins, docks and mines have been visited; the piping and dancing are over, the cakes and ale are gone, and the scientific world goes back to its everyday life of steady usefulness.

HARBINGERS OF WAR.

WE shall seldom find an instance of a more thoroughly robust credulity than that which can be proved to exist in Germany with respect to a legend that dates from the time of the Crusades.

Not very far from Darmstadt are two ruined castles, of which one, called Rodenstein, perched on an eminence of moderate height, looks formidable enough with its array of ivy, wild roses, and so on; whereas the other, called Schnellert, is almost ruined out of visible existence. Now, some seven hundred years ago, when both these edifices were in sound condition, the latter was occupied by Weiprecht von Schnellert, a young knight of proclivities so wild that he was known in the neighbourhood as Mad Wipert, while he had a counterpart in Hans von Rodenstein, another knight, who dwelt in the castle below. Richly endowed with vices of every description, with the exception of those failings that lean to virtue's side, and very properly detested by all who knew them, these two brutal specimens of mediæval chivalry were devotedly attached to each other, and, whether engaged in business or pleasure, they were rarely to be seen apart. Their business chiefly consisted in highway robbery, practised on travellers between Heidelberg

and Frankfort; and their favourite amusement, when they had nothing more profitable to occupy their time, was to hit upon devices that would make the lives of their serfs as wretched as possible. Living near the Odenwald, they naturally hunted much, and as the forest was largely stocked with game, they invariably had good sport. But not a scrap was bestowed upon the vassals, who were pining in wretched mud cottages, with vestments to correspond. All they had was a contingent remainder on what the lords' hounds found themselves unable to eat. That he might not, in a weak moment, be lured into the performance of a charitable action, Mad Wipert, whenever the results of his sport exceeded the immediate wants of his household, adopted the expedient of cutting off part of the feet of the animals that came within his clutches, and then letting them go. The sight of the poor animals limping off in this helpless condition was, in the opinion of Wipert, the finest spectacle in the world, and he had a hearty sympathiser in Hans von Rodenstein.

People like those who, in the nineteenth century, are trying to put down vivisection, were rare in the middle ages. Nevertheless, it occurred to an old monk, named Justin, that the elaborate torture inflicted by Wipert on defenceless animals was not altogether right, and when the knight, after an exploit of exceptional barbarity, came to confess, he not only refused to give him absolution, but, being threatened with violence, administered a curse instead. "It is an ill wind that blows nobody good," and the imprecation proved beneficial to a good strong stag, captured by the knightly sportsman. Wipert resolved to torture not the animal but the monk, and having shod the former like a horse, bound the latter upon its back, and turned it adrift with a pack of hounds behind. The precursor of Mazeppa, less fortunate than the Cossack, was soon scratched to death by the thorny bushes through which he was forced to pass; and the sport, which had afforded infinite delight to Wipert and his retainers, came to a sudden stop when the stag, harassed by the hounds, pitched with its lifeless burden into a deep hollow.

Everybody, probably, has a conscience, if one could only find it out, and the death of the monk Justin was followed by a visible change in the manners of Wipert. For the spiritual thunders of the Bishop of Würzburg, the nearest ecclesiastical au-

thority, he did not care much; but when the figure of the monk, scratched and bleeding, with a crucifix in the right hand that had no fingers, came every night to his bedside, things began to look serious. The thought struck him that he ought to do some pious act, which might in some measure atone for his previous misdeeds. The second crusade, preached by St. Bernard of Clairvaux, offered him an opportunity of fulfilling his good intentions, and he accordingly joined the banner of the Emperor Conrad the Third, who, jointly with Saint Louis, king of France, was at the head of the expedition, having first settled matters at home by marrying his only sister Mechtild to his dear friend Von Rodenstein, and appointing the latter heir to his estates in case he should not return.

Years rolled by; Wipert did not come to Germany, but reports did, and they were to the effect that the contrition of the knight had been of the most transient kind, inasmuch as he had embraced the Mohammedan faith in order to marry a fair Saracen. If the returned pilgrims, who brought the reports, had simply stated that Wipert professed no faith at all, they would have been readily believed, but the statement that he had embraced Islam was beyond the credence even of his worst-used vassal. Nevertheless rumour had, for once in a way, spoken the unadulterated truth, and one fine day Wipert reappeared at Schnellert, accompanied by his Saracen wife. As might have been expected, his first proceeding was to call upon his neighbour at Castle Rodenstein. Here he learned that his sister had died long ago, in consequence of the ill-usage of her husband; but at this intelligence he was neither shocked nor surprised. On the contrary, the alliance between the two friends became stronger than ever. Wipert having already become weary of his Saracen wife, became enamoured of a young daughter whom Mechtild had left behind her; while, on the other hand, the lovely Saracen captivated Hans von Rodenstein. The situation presented no serious difficulty where two such parties as our gallant knights were concerned. Hans consigned his daughter to Wipert, taking in return the Saracen lady as a valuable consideration.

The disreputable state of affairs in the two castles did not at all trouble the vassals; indeed they would have been

greatly pleased by the arrangement, if it had caused the knights to remain quietly at home. But quiet was a thing foreign to the nature of Wipert and Hans; and the oppression of vassals, and the robberies on the highways between the Main and the Neckar, went on more merrily than ever. At last the nuisance became so great that the Diet of Frankfort could not overlook it any longer, and the Bishop of Würzburg undertook to put it down. All the vassals of the bishop and all the knights in the vicinity of the Main were therefore assembled together, under the command of Conrad von Bocksberg, the marshal of the bishopric, who, thus finding himself at the head of a considerable army, took a circuitous route, and, crossing the river at Oberburg, came close to the castles, without creating the slightest suspicion in the minds of their wicked occupants.

When we said that Hans and Wipert had no friends besides each other, we had overlooked a certain Jew of Michelstadt, who, as a kind of mediæval Fagin, was in the habit of giving the knights ready money for the booty they had taken on the road. He consequently felt for them a business-like affection, and having learned the object of the expedition under Conrad, he hastened to warn the culprits, who were not only his friends but his customers, of the impending peril. So fast did he run, in order to be in advance of the army, that when he had reached the gates of Schnellert and delivered his dismal tidings, he immediately, through sheer exhaustion, fell down dead.

On receiving the poor Jew's information, Wipert at once sent for his friend Hans, and in a foolhardy mood they set about fortifying Schnellert, which was at once knocked to pieces by Conrad. Of the two castles, Rodenstein was the stronger, and thither they fled with their retainers. But though Rodenstein was not demolished like Schnellert, it was soon made too hot to hold its occupants; and the knights, with their two ladies, rushing out into the forest, fell into the very hollow which had received the corpse of the unfortunate monk Justin. There the wretched creatures lay, with their arms and legs broken, but with their heads perfectly unscathed, so that they could fully appreciate the misery of their situation. Their least misfortune was, that their shrieks could not reach the ears of their vassals, for it is very doubtful whether the vassals, if they had been aware of their

condition, would have made the slightest effort to improve it.

When they had lain nearly a whole day, parched with thirst and unable to stir, a fearful storm broke out, such as they had never seen before; trees were struck by lightning and fell around them in all directions, rocks were tossed about by the neighbouring torrent, which had marvelously swollen, but nothing touched them. In the course of the night the tempest ceased, the hollow became illuminated, and the spectre of the monk Justin stood before the sufferers with a palm-branch in his hand. In a solemn voice he told them that, as they had given some signs of contrition in their last hours, mercy would be extended to them; and that, having learned what bodily pain was, they might close their eyes without the fear of incurring punishment in another world. A singular retribution was, however, in store for them. As by their marauding expeditions they had brought discord into peaceful valleys, it should be their office to appear as the heralds of any war that occurred in Germany to the end of time; their limbs would, on every occasion, be restored to their full vigour, and be animated by their souls; and, with the skeletons of their hounds, the two knights would hunt the animals they had tortured, which would likewise be restored to life, from Schnellert to Rodenstein. When a war approached its termination, they would again be seen returning to Schnellert.

Of the continual fulfilment of the monk's prophecy a record has been kept with reference to nearly every war during the latter half of the last century; and the last authenticated appearance of the Rodenstein hunt bears the very recent date of 1848, when it is said to have been observed about a fortnight before the breaking out of the French Revolution.

The legend given above is the principal one connected with Castle Rodenstein; and there is reason to believe that it is an elaboration of the Wild Hunt, which may be traced back to Odin. Dr. Grässe, an indefatigable investigator, adds to it another story, in which a similar result, with reference to the same place, is obtained in a different way. According to this, Castle Rodenstein was once inhabited by a knight who was the terror of his neighbours, passed all his time in hunting, and never bestowed a thought upon the fair sex. On one occasion the Palatine gave a tournament, to which he

invited all the knights resident on the Rhine, the Neckar, and the Main. Von Rodenstein made his appearance, looking very magnificent, unhorsed every adversary, and received the prize from the hand of the noble lady Marie von Hochberg, with whom he at once fell desperately in love. She readily became his wife, and for some time they both lived happily together in Castle Rodenstein; when, one unlucky day, the knight became involved in a quarrel with one of his neighbours. He was already somewhat tired of the calm enjoyments of domestic life, and the opportunity of a return to his old habits was by no means unwelcome. In vain did his wife, who undoubtedly thought that matters might be amicably settled, entreat him to abstain from broil and battle; in vain did she fling herself on her knees before him, and implore him, for the sake of herself and her yet unborn child, not to leave the castle. He coldly thrust her aside, and rode off on his courser with all possible speed. Almost immediately afterwards the poor lady gave birth to a child and died; and at night, while the knight lay in ambush near Schnellert, watching for his enemy, he saw a white figure approaching him from his own castle. This was the spectre of his wife, who, bearing her child in her arms, reproached him with her death, and told him that he was doomed to wander about as the herald of wars in Germany. Not long afterwards he was mortally wounded in a skirmish, and died in Castle Schnellert, in front of which he has since made his appearance, whenever a war is about to break out. On such occasions there is a great gathering of men and horses, drums and trumpets, and so forth; but a hunt in the air does not pertain to the story. This Rodenstein was, no doubt, a terrible ruffian, but he was certainly more respectable than the other.

There is yet another legend which slightly reflects the first, and is connected with a certain monument in the church at Fränkisch-Crumbach, which represents a knight, with a lady standing on each side of him. It bears no inscription, but it marks the burial-place of the Rodenstein family. Of the knight, it is said that, during an expedition to Palestine, he married a Greek lady, in the honest belief that the wife whom he had left at home was dead. When he returned, he found he had been mistaken, but no unpleasantness arose. He lived quietly for the rest of his life with his two wives, who loved each other like sisters, and they were all

buried in the same grave. The Greek looks something like the Saracen in a new dress; but this pacific knight could scarcely be the same person as the wild companion of Mad Wipert.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCIS ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

AMONG the first persons to hear of David Powell's return to Whitford, and his intention of preaching there, was Miss Bodkin. As the spectators see more of the play than the actors, so Minnie, from her couch or her lounging-chair, witnessed many a scene in its entirety, which those who performed it were only conscious of in a fragmentary manner. The news of the little town was brought to her through many various channels. Her infirmity seemed to set her in a place apart, and many a one was willing to play the part of Chorus for her behoof, and interpret the drama after his or her own fashion.

Minnie's maid, Jane Gibbs; Mrs. Errington; and Mr. Diamond, had all given her the news about Mr. Powell; and all in different keys, and with such variations of detail as universally attend contemporaneous vivâ voce transmissions.

Jane Gibbs had a strong feeling of respect and gratitude towards the preacher for his having "converted" her brother. And, being herself a member of the Church of England, she looked upon his secession from the main body of the Methodists with great leniency. She dared to say that Mr. Powell would do as much good in Lady-lane as he had done in the Wesleyan Chapel. And seeing that whether you called 'em Wesleyans, or Ranters, or Baptists, or Quakers, or Calvinists, they were all Dissenters, it could not so much matter whether they disagreed among each other or not.

Mrs. Errington, without entering into that question, considered herself peculiarly aggrieved by the circumstance that Powell had come to lodge in the same house with her. "I am doomed, it seems, to be a victim to that man!" said she to Minnie Bodkin. "At Maxfield's house I was frequently disturbed by his hymns and his preachments; and even now, it appears, I am not to escape from him. He absorbs Mrs. Thimbleby's attention to a ludicrous extent. If you will credit the fact, my dear Minnie, only

yesterday morning my egg was sent up at breakfast greatly over-boiled; and when I remonstrated with Mrs. Thimbleby on this piece of negligence, what excuse do you suppose she made? She answered that she was very sorry, but she had been getting ready a 'little snack'—that was her expression—for Mr. Powell after his early preaching, and it had slipped her memory that my breakfast-egg was still in the saucepan! I have no doubt the man stuffs and crams himself at her cost. All these dissenting preachers do, my dear."

Whereunto Minnie answered gravely, that it was a great comfort to Church people to reflect that moderation in eating and drinking was entirely confined to the orthodox clergy.

Mr. Diamond, again, took a different and more sympathising view of the poor preacher. But even he was very far from entertaining the same exalted admiration for Powell's character as was felt by Minnie. Matthew Diamond had an Englishman's ingrained antipathy to the uncontrolled display of feeling, from which Powell's Welsh blood by no means revolted. Diamond could never divest himself of a lurking notion that no man would publicly exhibit deep emotion if he could help it; and consequently he looked on all such exhibitions as rather pitiable manifestations of infirmity, or else as mere clap-trap and play-acting. Of the latter it was impossible to suspect Powell. Diamond had the touchstone of truthfulness within himself; and it sufficed to convince him that the preacher, however wild and mistaken, was sincere. "Yes," he said to Miss Bodkin, "there can be no doubt that the man's soul is as clear from guile as an infant's. But it is a pity he cannot suppress the outbursts of enthusiasm which exhaust him so much."

"He does not wish to suppress them," answered Minnie. "He looks on them as a means specially vouchsafed to him for moving others, and—to use his own words—saving souls. Some sober, sensible persons remind me, when they speak of David Powell, of a covey of barn-door fowls complacently staring up at a lark, and exclaiming, 'Poor creature, how unpleasant it must be for it to have to soar and gyrate in that giddy fashion; and making that shrill noise all the time, too! How it must envy us our constitutions!'"

"I suppose I am one of the barn-door fowls, Miss Bodkin?"

"Well—perhaps! Or, rather, you have

that higher-flying creatures have something a little ridiculous about them. And you forcibly restrain any upward tendencies of wing—at least in the presence of your mates of the barn-door."

"I am flattered to be credited with some upward tendencies, at any rate! But, Miss Bodkin, to drop metaphor, in which I cannot attempt to compete with you, I must be allowed to maintain that Powell's outbursts of excitement are neither good for himself nor others. They are morbid, and not the healthy expression of a healthy nature, like the lark's singing and soaring."

"You have seen Powell since his return. How does he seem to be in health?"

"In bodily health not, perhaps, so much amiss, although he is greatly emaciated and startlingly pale. But his mind is in a strange state."

"He was always enthusiastic."

"He is enthusiastic for others, but as regards himself his mind is a prey to overwhelming gloom. I see a great change for the worse in him in that respect."

Minnie felt a strong desire to see the preacher again. She compassionated him from her heart, and thought she might be able to administer some comfort to him, as regarded Rhoda Maxfield. There were days when Minnie was able to walk from one room to another with the assistance of a crutched stick; and it occurred to her that if Mrs. Thimbleby would allow her house to be made the place of meeting, she might see and speak with Powell there more privately, and with less danger of exciting gossiping remark, than elsewhere. Minnie had once or twice latterly driven to the widow Thimbleby's house to see Mrs. Errington, or leave a message for her, although she had never mounted to her sitting-room. For the ladder-like staircase, which was an imaginary difficulty in the way of Castalia's visits to her mother-in-law, was a very real obstacle to Minnie Bodkin.

The project of seeing Powell in this way took possession of her mind. She sent a note to Mrs. Thimbleby, by her maid Jane, asking at what hour Mr. Powell was most likely to be in the house; and saying that she should like to come there and say a few words to him about a person in whose welfare he was interested.

The widow saw nothing very singular in this. She knew that Powell had been to see Miss Bodkin before he left Whitford. And it was quite in accordance with the

and the rector's daughter, that they should meet and combine on the common ground of charity. "For sure Mr. Powell have recommended some poor afflicted person to the young lady, and she have assisted 'em, whosoever they may be!" thought Mrs. Thimbleby. "And she begs me not to mention her coming to anybody. For sure and certain she's not one o' them as boasts of their good deeds. No, no; like our blessed Mr. Powell, she don't let her left hand know what her right hand doeth. I wonder if she's under conviction! Such a good, charitable lady, it seems as if she must belong to the elect. But, there, all our good works are filthy rags, I s'pose, the best on us. But I can't help thinking as Miss Bodkin's works must be more pleasing to the Lord than brother Jackson's, as lives among the Wesleyans on the fat of the land, and don't do much in return, except condemning all the folks as isn't Wesleyans. Lord forgive me if I'm wrong!"

Mrs. Thimbleby returned a verbal message to Miss Bodkin, as the latter had desired her to do: Mrs. Thimbleby's duty, and the most likely time would be between four and five o'clock in the afternoon; and she would be sure to obey Miss Bodkin's instructions. "And I'm ever so much obliged to her for excusing me writing, my dear," said the widow to Jane; "for my hands is so stiff and rough with hard work, as holding a pen seems to be a great difficulty. I'd far rather mop out my back yard any day than write the receipt for the lodger's rent. And 'tis but a smudgy business, when all's done."

On the following day Dr. Bodkin's sober green carriage, drawn by a stout, sober-paced horse, was seen standing at Mrs. Thimbleby's door. It was a few minutes after four o'clock in the afternoon. The street was very quiet. There was scarcely a passer-by to be seen from one end of it to the other, when Jane and the old manservant assisted Miss Bodkin to alight from the carriage, and supported her into the clean, flagged room on the ground-floor, which served Mrs. Thimbleby for parlour, kitchen, and dining-hall; all in one. The coachman had orders to return and fetch his young mistress at six o'clock. "Will you give me house-room so long, Mrs. Thimbleby?" asked Minnie with a sweet smile, which so captivated the good woman that she stood staring at her visitor in a kind of rapture, unable to reply for a minute or two.

Minnie was placed in Mrs. Thimbleby's own high-backed chair, with the clean,

patchwork-covered cushions piled behind her. A horsehair footstool, borrowed for the purpose from Mr. Diamond's parlour, was under her feet. And she declared that she found herself as comfortable as in her own lounging-chair at home.

"You see, miss, I couldn't say to the minute when Mr. Powell would be back, but between four and five, he generally do come in, and I make him swallow a cup of herb tea, or something. And I will not deny that I sometimes puts a pinch of China tea in. But he don't know. This is but a poor place, miss," added the widow, glancing round, "but so long as you can make yourself content to stay in it, so long you will be welcome as the flowers in May, if 'twas to be for a twelvemonth!"

Then Minnie praised the brilliant cleanliness of the little kitchen, took notice of the cat that rubbed its velvet head confidently against her hand, and asked Mrs. Thimbleby how she prospered in her lodging-letting.

The widow was loquacious, in her mild slow way; and she was pleased at this opportunity for a little harmless gossip. It was a propensity which received frequent checks from those around her. Mr. Diamond was too taciturn, too grave, too much absorbed in his books, to give any heed to his landlady's conversation, beyond listening to the few particulars of his weekly expenses, which she insisted on explaining to him. Mrs. Errington, on the other hand, was not at all taciturn, but she desired to have the talk chiefly to herself. She loved to harangue Mrs. Thimbleby on a variety of subjects, and to place before her, in vivid colours, the inadequacy of all her domestic arrangements to satisfy a lady of Mrs. Errington's quality. As to gossiping with David Powell, Mrs. Thimbleby would as soon have thought of attempting to gossip with the sculptured figure of a saint, which stood in a niche at one side of the portal of St. Chad's! So the good woman, finding Miss Bodkin more compliant and affable than the two first-named of her lodgers, and nearer to the level of common humanity than the last, indulged herself with an outpouring of chat, as the two sat waiting for Powell's return.

Minnie listened to her at first with but a drowsy kind of attention. Her own thoughts were wandering away from the present time and place. And, for a while, the quiet of the room, where the gathering twilight seemed to bring a deeper hush, was only broken by the monotonous murmur of the widow's voice. But by-and-

by Mrs. Thimbleby spoke words which effectually aroused Minnie's attention.

There was, she said, a deal of talk in Whitford about young Mr. Errington. He was such a very nice-spoken gentleman, and most people seemed to like him so much! But yet he had enemies in the town. Folks said he was extravagant. And his wife gave herself such airs as there was no bearing with 'em; she not paying ready money, but almost expecting tradespeople to be satisfied with the honour of serving her. Poor lady, she wasn't used to be pinched for money herself, and knew no better, most likely! But many Whitford shopkeepers grumbled as Mr. Errington got goods on credit from them, and yet sent orders to London with ready money for expensive articles, and it didn't seem fair. There was no use saying anything to old Mrs. Errington about the matter, because, though she was, no doubt, a very good-hearted lady, she was rather "high." And if you mentioned to her, as Mr. Gladwish, the shoemaker, said, unpleasant things about her son's bill, why she would tell you that her grandfather drove four horses to his coach, and that Mr. Algernon's wife's uncle was a great nobleman up in London, as paid his butler a bigger salary than all Gladwish could earn in a year. And if such sayings got abroad, they would not be soothing to the feelings of a respectable shoemaker, would they now? Not to say that they wouldn't help to pay Gladwish's bill; nor yet the fly bill at the Blue Bell; nor yet the bill for young madam at Ravell and Sarsnet's; nor yet the bill at the fishmonger's and poulterer's; as she (Mrs. Thimbleby) was credibly informed that Ivy Lodge consumed the best of everything, and at a great rate. In the beginning, tradespeople believed all that was said about young Mr. and Mrs. Errington's fine friends and fine prospects, and seemed inclined to trust 'em to any amount. But latterly there had growed up a feeling against 'em. And—if Miss Bodkin wouldn't think it a liberty in her to ask her not to mention it again, seeing it was but a guess on her part—she would go so far as to say that she believed an enemy was at work, and that enemy old Jonathan Maxfield. Why or wherefore old Max should be so set against young Mr. Algernon, as he had known him from a little child, she could not say. But there was rumours about that young Errington owed old Max money. And old Max was that near and fond of his pelf, as nothing

was so likely to make him mad against any one as losing money by 'em; and old Max was a harsh man and a bitter where he took a dislike. Only see how he had persecuted Mr. Powell! And though he let his daughter go to Ivy Lodge—and they did say young Mrs. Errington had taken quite a fancy to the girl—yet that didn't prevent old Max sneering, and snarling, and saying all manner of sharp words against the Erringtons. And old Max was a man of substance, and his words had weight in the town. "And you see, miss," said Mrs. Thimbleby, in conclusion, "young Mr. and Mrs. Errington are gentlefolks, and they don't hear what's said in Whitford, and they may think things are all right when they're all wrong. Of course, I daresay they have great friends and good prospects, miss. And very likely they could settle everything to-morrow if they thought fit. Only the tale here is, that not a tradesman in the place has seen the colour of their money, and they deny themselves nothing, and the lady so high in her manners, and altogether there is a feeling against 'em, miss. And as I know you're a old friend, and a kind friend, I'm sure, and not one as takes pleasure in the troubles of their neighbours, I thought I would mention it to you, in case you should like to say a word to the young lady and gentleman private-like. A word from you would have a deal of weight. And I do assure you, miss, 'tis of no use trying to speak to old Mrs. Errington, for she'll only go on about her grandfather's coach-and-four; and, between you and me, miss, there is some as takes it amiss."

All this pained and surprised Minnie. She understood at once how Castalia's ungracious manner was resented in the little town; and set down a great deal of the hostility which the widow had described to the score of the Honourable Mrs. Algernon's personal unpopularity. Still there must be something seriously wrong at Ivy Lodge. Debt was a Slough of Despond into which such a one as Algernon Errington would easily put his foot, from sheer thoughtlessness and the habit of refusing himself no gratification within his reach. But he might not find it so easy to extricate himself. A word of warning might possibly do good. At least it could do no harm, beyond drawing forth some languid impertinence from Castalia. And Minnie would not for an instant weigh that chance against the hope of doing some good to her old friend Algy.

Besides, in truth, she had, as has been said, an undefined feeling of compassion for Castalia herself, which rendered her singularly forbearing towards the latter's manifestations of fretful jealousy or hanghty dislike. In the first days of his return to Whitford Algernon had many a time shot one of his quick, questioning glances at Minnie, when his wife uttered some coolly insolent speech, directed at, rather than to, the rector's daughter. But instead of the keen sarcasm, or scornful irony, which he had expected, Minnie had, nine times out of ten, replied with a quiet matter-of-fact observation calculated to extinguish anything like a war of words. At first Algernon had attributed such forbearance on the part of the brilliant, high-spirited Minnie entirely to her strong regard for himself. But this flattering illusion did not last long. He soon perceived that Minnie regarded his wife with pity, and that she refrained from using the keen weapons of her wit against Castalia, much as a nurse might refrain from scolding or arguing with a sick child.

Now this discovery was not pleasant to Algernon. If any sympathy were to be expended on the inmates of Ivy Lodge, he was persuaded that much the larger share of it ought to be given to himself. If there were troubles; if there were mortifications; if there was disappointment—who suffered from them as he did? And by whom were they so unmerited? He was not far, sometimes, from resenting any show of compassion for Castalia as a direct injury to himself. After having sacrificed himself, by making a marriage so inadequate to his deserts, it was a little too much to hear his wife pitied for the contrast between her past and present position!

And yet, by a queer strain of inconsistency running through the warp and woof of his character, he would often boast of Castalia's aristocratic antecedents, and ask, with a smile and a shrug, how the deuce his wife could be expected to stand the petty privations and discomforts of Whitford, after having lived all her life in a sphere as remote from such things as the planet Saturn from the earth?

Minnie partly saw, partly guessed, these movements of Algernon's mind. But she

judged him with leniency, and put a kind interpretation on his words and ways, whenever such an interpretation was possible. At all events, if a word in season could be useful to him, she would not refrain from speaking that word.

This young woman had latterly passed into regions of thought and feeling, from which much of her old life, with its old pains, and pleasures, and aims, seemed shrunken into insignificance. One solid good she was able to grasp and to enjoy; the satisfaction of serving her fellow-creatures. All else grew poor and paltry as the years rolled by. Not that Minnie had attained to any saint-like heights of self-abnegation; not that she did not still "desire and admire" many sublunary things. But she had got a hurt that had stricken down her pride. She bore an ache in her heart for which "self-culture," and all the activities and aspirations of her bright intellect, afforded no balm. But she did not grow sour and selfish in her grief. The example of the poor, unlettered, Methodist preacher (whom in former days she would have thought the unlikeliest of human beings to teach her any profitable lesson) had aroused the noblest part of her nature to emulation. David Powell had started from a lofty theory to a life of beautiful deeds. Minnie Bodkin, vaguely groping after a theory, had seized on practical benevolence as a means to climb to some higher ideal.

In morals, as in thought, the Deductive and Inductive stand, like the ladders of Jacob's dream, reaching from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven; and the angels of the Lord descend and ascend them continually.

Minnie was roused from a reverie by the entrance of the preacher's tall figure into the kitchen, where the fire was now beginning to throw ruddy lights and fantastic shadows on to the white-washed walls.

"Don't be startled, Mr. Powell," she said in her clear sweet tones. "It is I—Minnie Bodkin. I thought I should like to see you, and to say a few words to you, quietly."

Powell advanced, and took her outstretched hand reverently in his own. "The blessing of our Father in Heaven be on you, lady," he said. "Your kind face is very welcome to me."

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

CONDUCTED BY

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HALVES.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGERD," "A PERFECT TREASURE," "AT HER MERCY," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XIX. THE RECTORY AND THE PARISH.

IN my passion for Gertrude—whose charms, both of body and mind, might well indeed have excused such infatuation in a much wiser man—life at the Priory, at which she was, had almost effaced the recollection of life at the Rectory, where she was not; but now that she had come to Stanbrook, all that had made that fair home dear to me, before my acquaintance with her, became doubly attractive. I began existence afresh there, under such bright auspices, as threw even the old careless happiness of boyhood into the shade. In the atmosphere of such a love as mine, all objects take the love-tint; and even Uncle Ralph, for whom I had always felt the most genuine affection, shone in my eyes the brighter for it; while Aunt Eleanor became positively etherealised. I forgot that she was dictatorial and selfish, and only felt that she was kind. Even her favourite "Nelly," now grown more invalidish and exacting than ever, I did not wish absolutely dead, but only removed to some sphere of existence where she would be more generally appreciated than at Stanbrook.

How everybody, except her mistress and Gertrude (who hated no being that had even so little of the breath of life), detested that fat dog! Its colour, according to my aunt, was auburn, but to less loving eyes it had red hair, very soft and silken, what there was of it, but the supply was inadequate; there were

isolated patches of baldness, to which every balsam known to science had been applied in vain. Physicians had been consulted about these "spots in the sun," as my uncle called them, and had shaken their wise heads over them; they could be no more changed than those of the leopard. Hairdressers had exhausted their art in the supply of washes and decoctions, but nothing had come of it except their bills. The only man who had ever done Nelly good was, curiously enough, the one person in the parish against whom my aunt entertained a relentless enmity. She was not, like some clergymen's wives, impatient with dissenters, or (especially) with Church people who did not go to church; on the contrary, she sympathised with these latter persons, and would abstain from going to church herself sometimes, when she was not pleased with my uncle, upon the ground that she could not bear to hear people preach what they did not practise. The innendo always failed in its intention of putting the rector out of humour. He had not a spark of pulpit vanity. "Heaven help me, my dear Eleanor," he was wont to say, "if my practice is not better than my preaching!" But against "that man Robston," who kept the little butcher's shop in Stanbrook village, Aunt Eleanor set her face edgeways, as the executioner before the days of Jack Ketch used to carry his axe. She would send into Kirkdale whenever it was possible, and deal with anyone rather than with him, and all because he had done dear Nelly a great deal of good. Robston had chanced to come on his rounds, one day, when the interesting invalid had seemed to be at her last gasp, and had expressed an opinion that he

could cure her. My aunt was very incredulous upon the matter, but nevertheless had given the thing a trial, just as, when orthodox science fails to give relief to some tender sufferer, her relatives will try the quacks.

"Are you really serious, Robston?" inquired my aunt, putting her lace-bordered handkerchief to her eyes, as she regarded her panting favourite. "Do you indeed think that she may yet be spared to me?"

"I haven't a doubt about it, marm," was the confident reply.

"But what is it, Robston, that is the matter with her? The sweet creature is such an immense size, and yet will eat nothing. Do you think it can be dropsy?"

"Well, no, marm; I don't think it's exactly dropsy."

"But have you heard her breathe?" inquired my aunt.

This was a wholly unnecessary question, for it was impossible to be within the Rectory grounds and not to hear her. She was not only asthmatical, but stertorous; she did not walk, but waddled. "Every day, Robston, it seems to me that her poor dear legs get farther and farther apart from one another."

"Well, she be fat, that's sartin; and her coat ain't altogether what it should be; but yet, I think, if I took her home for a week or so, I could do her a power of good."

"What! take her away from me for a whole week, and to that nasty shop of yours! Why, suppose anything was to happen to her in my absence, I should never forgive myself!"

However, the butcher was firm as to having the patient at his own house, if a cure was to be effected, and in the end it was so arranged. The parting between mistress and dog was most affecting, and many an injunction as to board and lodging was laid upon Mr. Robston ere he departed with his precious charge.

"What she likes, Robston, best of all, if anything can tempt her," were its mistress's last words, spoken in a voice which trembled with emotion, "is a nice little sweet-bread, well browned!"

It was a great comfort to my aunt, during the enforced separation that ensued, that Nelly had gone to a roof under which, though humble, sweet-breads, from the nature of Mr. Robston's profession, would always be procurable.

In ten days Nelly was given back to her mistress's arms, quite another dog.

She could breathe, if not without difficulty, still without that painful resemblance to an engine when tugging a goods-train up an incline; her bulk was perceptibly decreased; and upon a mutton-chop being placed before her, she would hardly wait for her napkin to be tied on, so impatient had her appetite rendered her; and she devoured it to the bone. So delighted was my aunt with this transformation, that I verily believe she would have given Robston a lock of Nelly's hair—the most precious present which her imagination could have suggested—if the crop had permitted of such generosity; but, as it was, she gave him a ten-pound note, which, perhaps, his rugged nature valued as highly.

The term, "our preserver," I have heard more than once applied to Robston as he drove his light cart into the back yard, and my aunt had certainly a higher opinion of his talents than of my own, though I was her nephew, and my poetic powers were then at their zenith. The fall of Robston could only be compared in the vastness and completion of its catastrophe to that of Wolsey (who, by-the-by, was also a butcher).

Not content with the magical improvement in her darling's health, my aunt was above measure solicitous to know how it had been effected, and though for some time Robston declined to reveal the secret, it was at length elicited by her importunity.

"Well, marm, the fact is, the treatment, as you are pleased to call it, was the simplest in the world, and you can use it yourself whenever the dog ails again. It was nothing more than liver."

"I have not a doubt of that, my dear Mr. Robston. Sir Toby Ruffles told me as much as that. But what is more difficult to cure than liver?"

"Well, I don't know about that, marm, for I never tried, though my missus cures bacon wonderful. But what I did with that dog was this: she came to me, as you know, like to burst with fat and good living; and the first evening I gives her a bit of good wholesome liver from off our own supper-table, at which she turns up her little nose."

"Poor dear!" ejaculated my aunt; "she detests all those vulgar dishes."

"Ah, but you wait a bit!" continued Mr. Robston, whose growing interest in his own narrative prevented his perception of its effect upon his listener. "I puts that

piece of liver by careful, and offers it to her again the next night, taking precious good care as she had nothing else between whiles; and she turns up her little nose again."

"Pretty darling, what must she have suffered!" murmured my aunt.

"Well, marm, I will say for that 'ere dog of yours, as she's a good plucked'un; she didn't take kind to that bit of liver for four days, but allers turned up her little nose at it (and, indeed, it was pretty high and strong by that time, by reason of the hot weather); but on the fifth day my lady swallows it all at a mouthful. Then says I, 'Miss Nelly, you are on the road to mend!'"

"On the road to mend!" repeated my aunt, as though she could not believe her ears.

"And whenever that 'ere dog goes wrong again," continued Mr. Robston, "as she will do, as to fat and breathing, if you feed her up so, you'll find that same treatment of mine—though I say it, who shouldn't say it—a sovereign remedy."

My aunt said nothing, for speech failed her. She dismissed the physician with a wave of her hand; but, from that moment, Mr. Robston's doom as purveyor to the Rectory was sealed. In vain my uncle interceded for him, and pointed out that the treatment had been a recognised one from the days of Dog Pompey, and, above all, to its triumphant success.

"Never let me hear that wretch's name mentioned again!" cried she. "A man who could give my sweet Nelly a piece of liver five days old!"

If Gertrude herself had been treated in that way, my aunt could scarcely have expressed more horror. Unfortunately, however, the lesson was one wholly thrown away upon her; and the dog, stuffed scarcely less with sweet-breads than of old, lived on, a burthen to itself and the footman who had to carry it. As the fellow-commoners, in old days at Trinity, were the only undergraduates permitted to cross the college grass-plots, so this creature was the only one, except the players, who was free of the Rectory croquet-ground—a lawn of marvellous smoothness, cut off from the general garden by tight lines of string. To see my uncle and aunt disporting themselves "within the ropes," as John Raeburn called it, as though the place had been a prize-ring, was like watching a minuet, so slow and stately were their movements, and so rapt in their

occupation were these two worthy souls. It was the only taste they had in common—the hobby-horse that they rode together, or, rather the one behind the other, for my uncle was almost always a hoop or two in the rear. Should any male visitor venture to set foot upon the sacred spot, "Hullo, no heel-taps," the rector would observe, and point rebukefully to the indentations made on the tender grass by the intruders; and, as for the players, there were slippers provided for them to be worn over their boots, as in a powder manufactory. Of course I had observed these little traits in the characters of my relatives for myself, but without appreciating them as I was now taught to do by Dr. Wilde, who, in spite of his expressed opinion that he could be of little service to the invalid, now became a frequent visitor at the Rectory. The society of my uncle and aunt was very attractive to him, and the liking was more than reciprocated on their part; although, on the question of Nelly's health, Mrs. Hastings complained that Dr. Wilde was too off-hand in giving his professional advice, which was in the main, indeed, that of Dr. Robston (superseded). She would not easily have forgiven anyone else for nicknaming the Rectory "Hornet Hall," a title that he certainly did not bestow upon it without reason. It was much haunted by those formidable insects, and though I don't remember that they ever stung anybody, their presence produced great consternation among strangers.

"My good sir," (or "lady," as the case might be) my uncle was wont to say, when a guest shrank aghast from these intruders, or made onslaughts on them with his dinner-napkin, "you don't understand hornets—they must be led, and not driven;" and then, by means of a dish of preserves or other sweet stuff, he would entice the winged visitor to "settle," and then quietly put him outside the window, dish and all, to feast at leisure. "Another way," as the cookery-books phrase it, with these pests of the Rectory, was adopted by Nelly, and was even more efficacious. She would stand perfectly still, and even forbear to pant, while a hornet circled round her, as if about to settle on one of those bare unprotected spots to which I have alluded—a contingency to which she was, without doubt, fully alive; and then, all of a sudden, there would be a short, sharp snap, and the hornet would disappear. In those autumn days Nelly may

have been almost said to live on sweet-breads and hornets.

Once upon the old Rectory ground, I feel tempted to tell how pleasant a place it was, and to delay for a little space the narration of the history of "Brother Alec," and even of my own affairs, soon doomed, alas! to take a more sombre hue; to sport, as it were, in the sunshine, before entering into that region of mystery and gloom which truth will presently compel me to traverse. Let me try to recall awhile that happy time, when love dwelt under the old roof in the fair guise of Gertrude; when host and hostess were at their best and worthiest; and when friendship, in the shape of Dr. Wilde, helped to knit us all together in its common bond.

It has often struck me, when reading after-dinner arguments in town upon that much-debated question of the Agricultural Labourer, how very little the most intelligent of town-folk know about him and his.

They may go into the country for the summer months, or spend a few weeks there in the winter among dogs, and guns, and keepers; and they may be acquainted with all that books can teach them concerning the wages, and way of living, of those they are pleased to designate "clod-hoppers," even to those mystic harvest gains which are supposed by the sanguine to make up for all deficiencies through the rest of the year; and yet, of the actual life of the labourer, and of his employer—the farmer—these good gentlemen are in reality as ignorant as of the domestic affairs of King Coffee.

I have sometimes wished, of late, that even some of these Special Correspondents, who have honoured poor Hodge and his master with their presence and attention, could have sat over the walnuts and the wine at Stanbrook Rectory, and listened to my uncle's talk about such matters, for he understood them thoroughly, and had no prejudices against either side, but only sympathy for both.

Dr. Wilde, too, was country-bred, and the characteristic stories that they narrated to one another respecting the two classes—with which I also was personally, though but superficially, acquainted (for a boy's observation goes but skin deep)—live in my memory still. They were for the most part humorous, but the humour was often tinged with tender pathos, and the possession of the former faculty was, I am certain, in both cases of great value to rector and

doctor, not only to themselves, but to those with whom they had to deal. Sometimes Aunt Eleanor would linger at the dessert-table and give her contribution to the stock of parish ana; and even the new-comer, Gertrude, had now and again an anecdote to tell, which would make more genuine mirth than the most neatly-turned town epigram. She delighted in being my aunt's almoner (not omitting, however, to be her own as well) among the poor folks, to whose simple hearts her gentleness and beauty soon won their way, and I well remember the first expression of gratitude which her good deeds procured for her. She had been attending the sick-bed of one ancient dame for many days, and, on leaving the cottage one afternoon, was thus addressed: "I never forget, Miss Gertrude, when I say my prayers at night, to remember you, and to pray Heaven to do the like."

"Indeed," said Gertrude (I have no doubt with much embarrassment), "you are very kind to think of me at such a time."

"Don't mention it, miss," was the unexpected rejoinder; "it's no sort of trouble to put your name in when one is about it."

What worries the sentimentalists and destroys much of their "interest" in the agricultural poor, is, indeed, the total want of "gush" in the object of their well-meant attentions. The poor in towns being for the most part cleverer, can imitate to some degree the enthusiasm which they know is required of them, especially as regards religious subjects. I have even known poor folks—wives of mechanics out of work, and such like—to adapt themselves to different species of charity-monger (for I cannot give them a higher name), and be High Church or Low Church in the form of their acknowledgments, as the occasion demanded; but such efforts are beyond the power of our village poor. Their sorrows are not, perhaps, more heavy to bear, but they are more monopolising; face to face with their material miseries the poor souls cannot look beyond them, except so far as nature teaches them to do. The panaceas which their more prosperous visitors (for I am chiefly speaking of lady "visitors") would recommend them, are not only inefficacious, but the prescriptions—the mere formulæ—are unknown to them. They do not understand that these spiritual physicians require the cure to be worked in their own way, and in no

other, just as the doctors resent the interference of any "unqualified practitioner;" and thus it is that many well-meaning and charitable persons complain that those whom they would benefit (and patronise) are "impracticable," "without feeling," &c. &c.

Aunt Eleanor, who was quite a Lady Bountiful in Stanbrook in her way, though her kindnesses were for the most part done by deputy, used to talk, with respect to this matter, of her disillusion. A labouring man got caught in some agricultural machinery on a neighbouring farm, and lay for many weeks between life and death. He had been a very dissipated fellow, and when at last he "turned the corner" and seemed to be getting well, my aunt went to say "a word in season" to him. After the interview she addressed his wife, expecting, doubtless, to find her all thankfulness at his recovery.

"I do hope, Mrs. Hodge, that when he gets well he will lead quite another sort of life; and, in the meantime, how grateful you ought to feel that he is still spared to you."

"Well, yes, ma'am, he's been a pous man, no doubt," was the reply ("pous" being our village name for a good-for-naught); "but he may bide a little longer if he has a mind."

The heart-weariness of this sad speech was unintelligible to the rector's wife, nor had she the humour to appreciate it from a less sombre point of view. The "literalness" of the poor—in preaching to whom the clergy will nevertheless persist in using old-world metaphors—was also a stumbling-block with her. She called our parish stupid, because, when her husband had once spoken in the pulpit of there being "a leaven" of good people everywhere, inclusive of Stanbrook itself, a controversy arose in the village as to who the eleven were to whom he had alluded, and whether the sexton (who was not invariably sober) "was put down in t' parson's list, or left out of it."

It is, unfortunately, difficult to reproduce the mode of pronunciation in vogue at Stanbrook, but my uncle was a perfect master of it, and fell into it quite naturally whenever he was in conversation with a parishioner—a grammatical condescension that, among the high-flying clergy of today, is avoided as a mistake. I shall never forget his imitation of the apology of the mother of one of his Sunday-school scholars: "I can never meak that boy

love his larning, sir, although I beatts him wi' a jack chin."

For a while after my uncle's marriage he had been induced by Aunt Eleanor to keep a curate, to whom objection was made by the principal farmer of the place, upon a very characteristic ground indeed. The rector observed the dislike, and asked this man of many acres the cause of it.

"Well, sir," said he, "I have nothing to say against the young gentleman; "but I've been inquiring, and inquiring, and inquiring, and I can't find out as he owns any property. Now I don't, for my part, like being told of my sins by a man as hasn't got any property."

If the poor labourer was lavish of his pence, as men are too apt to be whose savings must needs always be exceedingly small, the farmers took great care of theirs, and set their minds much on the main chance. One small proprietor in Stanbrook had married no fewer than three times, and on each occasion had chosen a middle-aged servant, who had saved a bit of money while in service.

"Why, John," said my uncle, when this prudent bridegroom came up for the fourth time to have his banns put up, "are you going to be married again? Why you must be getting quite rich, if what people say is true, that you get money with all your wives!"

"Well, no, sir," answered this Bluebeard, entirely unabashed, "folks is quite mistaken, for, what with bringing on 'em in (viz., the expenses of the wedding) and carryin' 'em out (expenses of the funeral), I makes uncommon little by 'em."

I remember that Dr. Wilde's experience was curiously corroborative of my uncle's in this respect. His early life had been passed at Hornton, a parish not far from Kirkdale (which was probably the reason of his selecting that place for his present residence), of which his father was village doctor, and a very poor calling it was. The labourers could not pay, and the farmers would not, unless they were positively obliged. One of the latter, who was a hard drinker, had been thrown from his horse and much injured, and needed a visit from the doctor every day, though he lived at a considerable distance. One morning, however, Dr. Wilde met his patient, though obviously unfitted to be out of doors, a few yards upon the road.

"Come, doctor," said he, "you must not set this down as a visit."

"Indeed I shall, sir," answered the

surgeon, indignantly, "since I have ridden some miles solely on your account. If you don't intend to pay me for this, you shall pay me for nothing. I shall tear up my memoranda of your account altogether," and he produced his note-book. "Come, would you have me make a clean slate of the whole bill?"

The farmer nodded delighted acquiescence, and the doctor tore up his account. "And now Mr. Hodge, I don't want to quarrel with you," continued the surgeon; "here is the Hare and Hounds, would you like to step in and take something at my expense?"

He did not certainly expect the offer to be accepted, but he wished to see how far his patient was prepared to go in the way of "all take."

"Well, thank ye kindly, doctor," was the quiet reply. "I don't care if I do take a glass of port."

It is fair to add, however, that Hornton was a very rough and uncivilised district, so exposed to the fury of the elements, that, to use a local metaphor, it took two men to shut a farmyard gate in winter. It had also a vast tract of land, half moor, half forest, called Baydon, that was avoided by the superstitious after dark, and which was the scene of, perhaps, the best story in all Dr. Wilde's budget. His father had just come to Hornton, and as yet had had not a single paying patient, when he was disturbed one winter's night by a ring at his bell. On looking out of window, he perceived a farm labourer of middle age, who besought him with great earnestness to come at once and visit a sick woman in Baydon, the wife of a farmer, in whose employment he represented himself to be. It was a miserable night, but since there was some prospect of a fee in this case, Mr. Wilde cheerfully attired himself, and with the messenger's assistance saddled his horse.

"I don't know the road to Baydon, my man, so I must get you to step out as fast as you can."

"Aye, aye," said the man, "I will keep pace with you well enough."

And off they started in the storm and darkness. After they had proceeded a couple of miles, and had passed through Baydon, the man on foot suddenly stopped at a large tree, and made this observation:

"Why, surely, this 'ere tree be the Gospel Oak!"

"Well, you ought to know your own parish better than I, my man," returned

the doctor, "but, as a matter of fact, it is so. I remember it having been pointed out to me by the squire."

"Ah, then I don't want you no longer," was his companion's very unexpected reply.

"But I want you," returned the other. "How am I to find the road to my patient?"

"Well, to tell 'ee the truth, sir, there ain't nobody ill at all, as I knows on; but the fact is, it is so precious 'unkid' (eerie) coming through Baydon Wood at night, that I made bold to ask you to be my companion!"

With which words the man vanished, leaving the doctor to go back alone.

It was with anecdotes such as these, all culled from the life around them, that our little party at Stanbrook was wont to make the after-dinner time pass cheerily; and not even Uncle Alec himself could refuse them the tribute of a smile. On the other hand, the items of village news were sometimes pathetic enough. There was one story that haunts me to this day: how Gertrude had gone to see a poor woman in an advanced stage of consumption, who was sitting up in bed, making the scanty mourning attire her own children were to wear for her after her decease; an occupation absolutely impossible, I should imagine, to a woman whose position in life had permitted to her the luxury of entertaining even the natural, and much less the sentimental, emotions.

I had lived among these people, as I have already said, from my youth up, but it was only now that I had begun to think seriously about them, and through the examples their sad case afforded, to recognise the hardships and sorrows that are the heritage of the immense majority of mankind. My love for Gertrude did not, as in most cases, render me selfish, but, thanks to her, opened my heart to those for whom nature had long ago flung wide her own.

UNDER THE HAMMER.

TOOTH AND NAIL.

As the proprietor of ALL THE YEAR ROUND has—with a want of enterprise, a sense of so-called propriety, and a regard for the solvency of his "institution," which may do him honour, but which, nevertheless, arouse other than reverential feelings in my bosom—refused to send me, supplied with ample funds, and

unlimited credit, as his special correspondent, to the various slave marts of the world, I am compelled, sorely against the grain, to give up the most cherished part of the series of papers entitled, "Under the Hammer." I am aware that the traditional slave markets are "played out." Uncle Tom and his wife are no longer knocked down at New Orleans, and the glories of Constantinople and Cairo are passed away. It is also true that slaves in the East are not exactly sold by auction—a minor detail—but when I reflect on the acres of descriptive writing I could have extracted from the slave marts of Central Asia, of happy Arabia, and of the domains of our excellent ally the Shah, I bitterly bewail that want of enterprise which is said to characterise metropolitan journalism, for, to paraphrase an old French proverb, it is so easy to be "graphic" on what is far away. In the spare moments of a busy season, I had pictured myself in every variety of oriental costume, had followed the footsteps of the gallant Burton, and had traced the "Influence of Slavery on the Civilisation of the Usbegs," in two thick volumes, adorned with maps, and a portrait of the author in a kalpak. I had even gone the length of learning the new-fashioned way of spelling Indian and other oriental names, so that people should not know them again; and had, in pure sport, worried sub-editors and printers' readers by writing Karáchi, instead of Kurrachee; Panjab, instead of Punjaub, and so forth. I was actually getting to walk in oriental style, when my vision melted away—fair Circassians, glowing Georgians, full-lipped Nubians, snub-nosed Tartars, and all. I am not to cross the Himalayas and stand on the Pamir, so walk slowly and sadly up Pentonville Hill, achieve the heights of Islington, and enter the Agricultural Hall.

I do not know whether Islington is a cheerful spot at other times, but its atmosphere is not inspiring on the morning of this fourth day of August. Nor is the ceremony about to take place within the walls of the Agricultural Hall of a character to induce unmixed rejoicing. It is not only the "hammering," but the "nailing" down of a famous house in the "show business" that I have come to see. Manders's Royal Menagerie, after forty years of heat and cold, storm and shine, encountered "on the road," is to be sold up, "absolutely without reserve." Famous

as the name of Astley in the equine world is that of Manders in the travelling menagerie line. For some thirty or forty years past the Manders establishment has been the great rival of Wombwell. The late Manders bred lions, and waxed rich by the sale of that lively description of stock. The "prisoned eagle" may—"crede Byron"—decline to "mate," but the lord of the desert is an easily domesticated animal. The Zoological Gardens of Dublin and London grow lions like cabbages; and, as a young healthy lion is a valuable animal, the speculation of "raising" lions is by no means unprofitable. There are few prettier pets than a lion cub while very young, with the tabby tiger-like stripes yet showing on his lithe back; but he has the disadvantage of "growing out of knowledge" very quickly, and of becoming over vigorous in his play, distributing, out of pure lightness of heart, delicate taps sufficient to knock the life out of an ordinary human being. It is, however, most true that the people who have to deal with lion cubs are not exactly ordinary human beings. As the morning grows older, many of these gifted persons put in an appearance, and I become aware that I am assisting at a congress of lion kings and queens. The lion-king in the habiliments of everyday life is, I need hardly say, a very different creature from the spangled athlete who astonishes the natives at country fairs, and, mayhap, at metropolitan theatres. That splendid muscular development which fills the eyes of spectators with envy and admiration, when fully relieved by fleshings, is now partially concealed by an indifferently-made shooting-jacket, of an intensely horsey or rather doggy cut—the sort of coat which leads one to look for the nose of a black-and-tan terrier peering from one of the great salt-box pockets. It is clearly too tight over the biceps and across the curious semi-round-shouldered back covered with heavy muscle, and the pantaloons are also marvellously adhesive in some parts and baggy in others, as if the great limbs had been forced into garments of Procrustean rigidity. These peculiarities give the whole man a nubbly look, and convey the impression that, like an overgrown lobster, he is about to burst from his inelastic covering, and expand as the genie did when he was let out of the pot. The head of a lion-king is generally of the bullet order of architecture, closely cropped as to the poll, and set firmly on a

bull-neck, which, rejecting the stiff gills of ordinary life, is most at ease in a loose-fitting bandanna. Good-humoured but commonplace features of mottled hue are relieved by very bright eyes, lending colour to the belief that wild animals are subjected by the human eye; albeit, in the opinion of the writer, the "stick and starvation" system of lion-taming is more generally followed by the profession. In contravention of the opinion of anti-tobacco philosophers, who denounce the herb as injurious to the nerves, the people who of all others most completely entrust their lives to their steadiness of nerve are smoking freely at this early hour, and discoursing gravely on the decline and fall of the great institution known as Manders's Menagerie, wherein many generations of lion-kings have figured. I observe that no allusions are made to the fate of those brethren of the lion-taming persuasion whose career came to an untoward end, and on inquiring concerning one or two of these, am told that they "died," the circumstances of their demise being carefully suppressed. Like most brave men, the lion-king loves not to hold forth on his own achievements or the misfortunes of his rivals. He is a modest man and a thoughtful, sucks his cigar quietly, and wishes Mrs. Manders good luck and high prices at her sale. The lion-queens are more demonstrative, and seem, in some cases at least, not only equal to ruling the tawny monarch, but to subduing that more dangerous and difficult animal—a husband. Lion-queens have worsen halves, but order them about in very great style, and the men who beard the Bengal tiger, as a mere detail of business, are themselves in very good domestic training. Possibly the narrow limits of a travelling homestead may conduce to this result. It is all very well for the master of an ample mansion and member of many clubs to treat a matrimonial squabble as a trivial matter. He can execute a flank movement to his study, or, if that retreat be cut off, can make a "bee-line" for St. James's, and, in the pleasant atmosphere of a club smoking-room, hold forth upon the advantage of married over single life. If a journalist, he can get himself sent somewhere as a "special correspondent;" if a merchant, can get himself telegraphed for from Paris, Berlin, or Nijni-Novgorod; if a financier, can be compelled to run over to Egypt about a new loan; if of sporting proclivities, can make off to Don-

caster or Newmarket till the storm has blown over; but the showman can do none of these things. His house is a movable castle on wheels, dry and clean, warm and comfortable, but its uttermost limits are not beyond the sound of the human voice. In transatlantic phrase, he must "face the music" or "cave in." Of course he adopts the latter alternative, and, if subdued, is tranquilly happy after the manner of his kind. The lion-queen is not specially masculine in appearance. As a rule, she is a large-eyed woman, with what is called a "good stage face," and possesses the prompt business-like manner of a financial manager. Her morning costume, when off duty, would probably send a fashionable milliner into convulsions, but she wears her gay attire with a gallant air. Even Mrs. Manders herself, who has ruled over wildernesses of wild beasts in her time, is bravely accoutred on the mournful occasion of the dispersion of her pets.

Lion kings and queens do not, however, make up the whole of the audience. Dealers in animals muster in force, all smoking cigars. The house of Jamrach is, of course, represented; and Mr. Abrahams, the bird merchant, is to the fore, keeping a keen eye upon the parrots and cockatoos, which fill the Agricultural Hall with their musical voices. Three sides of a square are formed by the caravans, and the beasts are excited to liveliness by the prospect of a huge barrow-load of shins of beef, the whole arrangement bearing a curious family likeness to the normal encampment of a travelling menagerie, save only that the roof of the Agricultural Hall takes the place of the tent, and the deal flooring that of the soft turf of a village-green. As the morning wears away the crowd thickens. Dapper men, in more than fashionable attire, drop in by twos and threes. They have about them a certain air as of the footlights; but a critical eye detects the influence of sawdust. That gentleman in the blue-striped shirt and crimson necktie is tolerably familiar with the overture to the *Cheval de Bronze*. Rocked in the cradle of a caravan, he has from childhood been familiar with the bare-backed barb. His earliest baby-cry was a "Houp la!" and his juvenile sports consisted of back somersaults and daring bounds over and through obstacles interposed by the circus-clown. As the Pet of the Pampas, he achieved a gigantic success at the early age of twelve,

and since then has figured, by turns, as the Wild Hunter of the Prairie; as one of the Bounding Brothers of Bolivia; as Catawampa, the Horse-Tamer; as that popular favourite who never ceases taking off coats and waistcoats till he appears in a full suit of spangles and fleshings; and, finally, as the manager of a prosperous circus business. The lady in the fashionable bonnet and blonde hair with whom he is discoursing is a popular favourite, whether she figures in a velvet riding-habit on a waltzing horse, or in the fuller glory of short skirts and satin shoes, carefully chalked by the low comedian of the circus, executes daring flights through paper-covered hoops, and reposes, apparently, on about three hairs of the flank of her highly-trained steed. Drifting in from the bar come a couple of seedy, melancholy-looking men, topped by hats of that superlative degree of shine which reveals the recent application of a wet brush. There is no mistaking the profession of these thoughtful visitors; their limbs are muscular, but their features are overspread by the deepest gloom. They are circus-clowns. At night they are funny fellows enough. It is true that their jokes are not of the newest; but long experience of circus human nature has taught them to select sure "laughs" from the cloud of witticisms which only provoke a critical snigger. When in motley, they are remarkable for their disrespectful and aggressive demeanour towards the circus-master, manure his whip, but on the present occasion are on the best possible terms with that gentleman, who has just treated them to "something short." In addition to those who look upon animals mainly from the histrionic point of view, arrive, at the last minute, the skilled naturalists who care for beasts for their own sake, such as Mr. Bartlett and Mr. Frank Buckland; and, as the hour of noon has just struck, the auctioneer proceeds to business amid the shriekings of many parrots, who add their sarcastic comments to the biddings. A brown golden-coloured Java hare is soon knocked down for a couple of pounds; and a black opossum, "a great rarity," is so little appreciated that he fetches only eleven shillings; and then the clamorous cockatoos themselves are put up for sale with little better success. Three handsome red and white "nosey" cockatoos fetch but thirty-one shillings—a cheap lot, with unlimited noise thrown in. Yellow and blue macaws, paroquets, rose-coloured

cockatoos, white and lemon ditto, and many more of the feathered analogues of the monkey tribe, are swiftly disposed of; and then the cock of the caravan is put up—a famous bird, an orange-coloured, crested, talking cockatoo—a glib fellow, a celebrated linguist and full of conversation. Even for this accomplished bird, who lets off a peal of derisive laughter when two pounds are offered for him, the biddings are languid, and he is ultimately knocked down for seven pounds, a result which sends him into perfect convulsions of laughing, whistling, and cork-drawing. The pelican of the wilderness is next on the list, and is looked at askant by bidders, who recollect her appetite for fish dinners, and believe not the legend—immortalised by Grinling Gibbons in the church of St. James's, Piccadilly—that she plucks her breast to feed her young. The pelican, who looks solemnly enough at the unwonted proceedings of the morning, is finally sold for eighty-five shillings only, and the feeling gains strength that poor prices will be realised throughout. Little anxiety is shown to possess an American 'coon; five small monkeys go dog cheap; and a wombat is almost worth its price to eat. A pretty little mungoose—the deadly enemy of the cobra—also goes at a low figure, in spite of his vermin-slaying reputation. Readers are probably aware that the curious legend of the mungoose is no more veracious than that of the pelican. As the story goes, the mungoose attacks the cobra, and, so far, the story is correct; but we are furthermore told that, when the animal is bitten by the poison-distilling fangs of his quarry, he goes away into the woods, eats of a certain herb, and is cured. Unhappily, there is not the slightest truth in the story of the vegetable antidote. To begin with, there is no known antidote, vegetable or otherwise, to the cobra's bite; and, in the next place, mungoses (should it not be mungeese?) are well known to die within a very short time after being bitten. According to Dr. Fayer and other scientific investigators and experimentalists, the mungoose destroys the snake simply because it is more active in its movements, and escapes being bitten altogether. When bitten it is sure to die. After the sale of the mungoose, there is a certain hum and buzz in the assembly, for the next lot is the celebrated "Jerry"—a variegated mandrill from Abyssinia, with a comical red and blue face like that of

the translated prince in the old story-books of Beauty and the Beast. This animal enjoys the reputation of being the only specimen of his race in England. His face is an odd mixture of bright blue and brilliant scarlet, disposed in the queerest rolls, frills, and knobs—a very nature-painted clown among the monkeys. Jerry smiles pleasantly through his curious mask, and seems on the best possible terms with his keeper, who is much grieved at parting with a beast of a fine natural turn for acting. "Could teach him to perform in a week," says that worthy. Jerry certainly appears well-disposed enough, and faces the crowd in happy unconsciousness that he is about to change masters. As he is put up, there is a pause, no one seeming to relish the task of "putting him in." At last a gentleman in very natty boots bids forty pounds, in a tone calculated to deter rival bidders. If this effect were intended, the attempt is failure, as five-pound bids succeed each other rapidly, till Jerry is finally knocked down for a hundred guineas. If Jerry is up in the market, his neighbour poor Bruin is terribly down in it—down so low as to explain the origin of the expression, to "sell a bear." Clearly there are no members of the hair-dressing persuasion present, or Canadian and Russian bears would not be going at about a pound apiece. Brisker competition is produced by a beast of "another stripe"—a handsome zebra, whose hoofs have, from long confinement in a cage, grown to an enormous length, and turned up in front like Turkish slippers. The zebra brings thirty pounds; while at fifty-one is knocked down a fine specimen of that particularly vicious animal, whose name can only be pronounced by sufferers from a cold in the head. The gnu, "horned horse"—or rather, bull-headed horse—"cavorts around," as much as his very limited space will allow him, uttering, meanwhile, many contemptuous snorts at the proceedings. Next on the list comes a little fleet of the "ships of the desert," sailing majestically along under the convoy of one who is whispered to be a "ship-of-war." This is an old male camel, very handsome to look upon, but with a vicious twinkle in his eye. Buyers fight very shy of him, and it takes all the energy of the auctioneer to coax them out of a bid at all. At last two shillings are bid, and offers advance very gradually to fifteen. For a while the "man-eater," who has a plea-

sant custom of breakfasting on an attendant, sticks at fifteen shillings, but at last more courageous purchasers run him up to seven pounds ten, and the camel of evil repute is sold. The other camels fetch about twenty pounds apiece, a beautiful camel calf, only four months old, bringing a like sum. Some excitement is felt as the great "cats"—lions, panthers, and jaguars—come under the hammer. Owing to the lateness of the season, and the difficulty of "running" a menagerie during the winter, these handsome beasts are sold for very low prices. Unlike the monkeys and parrots, they look on at the bustling scene with magnificent indifference, such attention as they vouchsafe to manifest being directed towards the huge pile of shins of beef before referred to, a prospect which excites the risible muscles of the hyæna. A fine lioness, about five years old, fetches but thirty guineas, and a splendid South American jaguar only as many pounds—"not much more than a pound a spot," as an arithmetical bystander remarks. A lioness, expecting cubs, brings a hundred and fifteen pounds; and then a prime lot, consisting of two splendid lion cubs, eighteen months old, born at the Agricultural Hall, is knocked down for a hundred and fifty pounds. Lot Forty-nine—the right of using the title of "Manders's Royal Star Menagerie"—is not submitted to competition, its presence in the catalogue mainly serving to produce some good-humoured "chaff" and many expressions of regret that poor Mrs. Manders—an old public favourite—should have been brought to the pass of parting with her animals.

The sensation lots being now disposed of, we descend to the prosy business of knocking down the aviary carriage, the monkey ditto, and the heavily-barred lions' and tigers' carriages. These are followed by a species of temple, used as the pay-office and entrance to the menagerie, with its show-boards and pictures, painted expressly to entice the hesitating rustic to pay his money like a man and "see the show." Another choice lot is the vehicle, oddly designated a "living carriage," the travelling house of the showman, to whom quarter-day signifies nothing, and who laughs parochial rates to scorn. This edifice is capitally built, and highly finished with glazed sashes, fireplace, and marvellously neat arrangements of beds and lockers. A large canvas tilt, in five pieces, for covering the

collection, comes next, and then draught horses, grey and black, brown and bay, many sets of harness, and all the tools and materials, odds and ends, necessary to life on the road. Thus, bit by bit, the great menagerie is dispersed—absorbed for the most part by other menageries, while buyers and lookers-on drop off by degrees, leaving the great carnivora to the contemplation of those hunches of beef, which, let us hope, they are shortly about to enjoy.

MAD LUCE.

ALONG the hollow reaches, where the ripples curve on the sand,
Or float the crimson sea-weeds that wreath on the rocky strand;
Over the frowning headlands, when the heather is all aglow,
And the breakers crash 'neath the rugged cliffs, as the great tides come and go;
Out on the pier when the thundering surf thrills all the startled air,
She wanders, the woman with wild blue eyes, wan face, and grizzled hair.
Passing amid the merry groups, where the happy children play,
Passing where sturdy fishermen push their cobbles out through the spray,
Passing where round the lighthouse the gathering sailors watch
The gleam on the warning crest of the Nab, or the tossing barque to catch;
And still to the wondering questioner, the fisher folk will use
To answer quickly and carelessly, "It is only old Mad Luce!"

Should a pitying stranger ask of her, for ever the pale lips say,
While all the while the weary eyes are gazing over the bay:
"The sea! I always loved it, since a bairn by its side I played,
Since down there by the Lecta Rock I and my Willie strayed;
I said I would never have a home but stood on the sounding shore,
Nor eat, nor sleep, nor work, nor live where I could not hear its roar.
"Thou'lt have to pay the tribute, lass,' I mind my mother said;
Aye, I told him, as we kissed and laughed, the day that we were wed.
He said he'd strive to earn it; but a costlier fee I wot
Than all his wage was my good man's life, that the great sea sought and got.
I sate with our baby at my breast by his headstone up on the hill,
And heard the waves who kept his wake, and yet I loved them still.
"I wrought, and hard, for our bonnie bairn, and whenever the day was passed,
We'd creep where the sea lay rosy bright as sunset shadows were cast;
And we'd listen to hear his dadda call, amid the calling surf,
And fling him the pink-tipped daisies, that grew on the churchyard turf;
And I thought we might wait together, till life and its tasks were done,
But the sea would have its dues in full, and it took my bold one son.

"For he was never easy till the men would take him afloat;
I think they brought me back his cap, when they found the broken boat.
But I cannot tell; the fever got hold of my brain and me,
Yet I hear him talk with Willie in the whispering of the sea;
And when the foam is flying fast, and fierce north-easters blow,
I wait to hear them summon me, that am so fain to go.
"I daren't lie down in its arms and die, for I know the priest has said,
'They who will not wait God's time on earth, in Heaven must seek their dead.'
But I've never murmured or complained of the sea I've loved so long,
And I let it take its tribute, and never thought of a wrong;
And maybe some day its soft white surf, just for my patience' sake,
Will lap me round and waft me away, with Willie and George to wake."
And so, along the sounding shore, and under the beetling cliffs,
While the soft wind ruffles the sea's broad breast and speeds the glancing skiffs,
With yearning gaze on the long bright heave, or the wave that gathers and breaks;
Her lonely way with her desolate hope, the weary wanderer takes;
And still in the calm indifference, that is born of wont and use,
The idlers look, and smile, and say, "It is only old Mad Luce!"

IN THE WILD WEST.

"JACK, I'll do it for you. You shall have your wish, my dear boy, though I'm sorry to lose sight of you; and as for the money, pray remember that cash makes wings to itself on one side of the Atlantic as well as on the other."

And, so saying, my father took up the pen that lay beside him, and, in a somewhat tremulous handwriting, proceeded to indite to his stockbrokers the necessary order to sell out consols to the sterling value of one thousand pounds.

Times had changed with us sadly within the last few months. Less than a year ago the name of George Markham had stood deservedly high, as that of a man of large wealth and known integrity. The integrity—thank Heaven for that!—remained unblemished, but the wealth had melted away in the fatal furnace of speculation, like snow in the sunshine. All was over now. The old firm, after being forced to suspend payment for awhile, had honourably discharged its liabilities by the sacrifice of the fortune of its chief partner. Barton Lodge, the pretty country-house, with some two or three hundred acres attached to it, in which my father had hoped to end his days, had been

brought to the hammer. Every creditor was paid to the uttermost farthing, but there remained very little for the late head of the house of Markham, Grayson, and Co., Hamburg merchants, to live upon in his declining years.

It was on my account that my kind, easy-tempered father took the most blame to himself for the rash investments in which he had been led to embark the bulk of his fortune. He was a widower, and had no other child than myself, and he had taught me from boyhood to consider myself as one who had no need of a profession or business whereby to live. The Lodge was, of course, scarcely qualified to take rank among the "places" of even the lesser county notables, but it lay in a district where small properties were the rule and great estates scarce, and we had always been on visiting terms with the neighbouring squirearchy. Thus it was that I had known, and learned to love, sweet, pretty Edith Vernon, the daughter of a landowner whose hereditary acres adjoined our tiny domains; and although the Vernon pedigree was far lengthier than our own modest one, Edith's parents had not frowned upon my suit. But when the crash came, and my whole position in life was altered, Mr. and Mrs. Vernon's opinion of my eligibility as a son-in-law also underwent a change. Not harshly, but very firmly, it was intimated to me that it was best for both that, under the circumstances of the case, the engagement between Edith and myself should be broken.

Edith, dear girl, was not infected by the worldly views of her prudent parents. It was John Markham whom she had loved, not the money to which he was the reputed heir; and to that unlucky John, in his fallen fortunes, she clung still with the steady faith of a woman's affection. She would not disobey her parents. She would not even write to me, since it was prohibited; but she promised, through her tears, in the last sad interview permitted to us, to be true to me, ever and always, and to live single for my sake. And I was not without hopes of winning her yet, being, as I was, young and strong, and well educated; as ready to begin the world as any other youthful aspirant. Already I had shaped out for myself a plan of action.

Although as yet barely twenty-three years of age, I had travelled much, and had, like many other young Englishmen

of adequate means and leisure, visited not merely the Old World, but the New. While in America, I had spent some weeks in the Far West, and had preserved a vivid recollection of the rapidity with which the vast expanse of the prairies was being pressed into the service of man. I had been a guest at handsome ranches and sumptuous villas, the owners of which, while entertaining me with lavish hospitality, had frankly told me how poor they had been at the outset, and from what petty beginnings their "pile" of hard-earned dollars had swollen into comparative opulence. Of agricultural matters, again, I did know something, having an instinctive liking for animals, and a love for the healthy outdoor life of the country. Land, as I knew, was to be cheaply obtained in the United States, and my experiences of amateur farming were sufficient to protect me against purchasing, as many emigrants do, a swamp or a pine-barren, whereon to begin the difficult art of husbandry.

It cost me some trouble to persuade my father to let me have, as my portion of what was left, the thousand pounds which I deemed needful, and with the residue to buy for himself an annuity which would secure him against the pinch of poverty. His own idea had been that we should live together, and eke out, as best we might, the pittance yielded by some three or four thousands in the Funds. But I could not bear the notion that Mr. Markham, who had married late in life, and was stricken in years, should be poor and stinted in his old age because he was burdened with a strong-limbed loungee like myself, while for the reversion of his modest fortune I cared nothing. I was too old to offer myself for a competitive examination; and, indeed, few are the openings in life at home in England for a man trained to no special career. Besides, for Edith's sake, I would have faced greater privations, than, to my fancy, awaited me in the Western World. As soon as I had induced my father to let me have the sum which I required, I took passage to New York, and thence, by rail and river, made my way to the Indian frontier.

"Yew won't do better than at Big Smoke Bluff," said a good-natured sheriff, who could be stern enough, I daresay, to horse thieves and those highwaymen who are euphemistically styled "road agents" in America, but who had not, in twenty

years of frontier life, lost his New Jersey accent. "Good grass, wood, and water; a creek up to your very door, and as rich a bottom as ever bore a heavy corn crop. Yew'll get it cheap—half price, I'd say, and that, mind ye, for sound land, not played out. The former owner losing his hair through some pesky Indians, his nephew, who's a town-bred man, easy scared, took a kinder dislike to the place. You, Mr. Markham, don't look the sort of lad to dread a muss with Redskins, or to sneak out of one, if it came to a tussle. It's only sleeping with one eye open, and yew may do well at Big Smoke."

And, finding that the soil at this picturesquely-named spot warranted the sheriff's praises of it, I became the proprietor of some nineteen hundred acres of United States' territory, at a price scarcely exceeding four hundred pounds sterling. The Bluff, close to which stood the charred ruin of the farmhouse, commanded an extensive view of the rolling prairie, a very sea of grass, and of the shining waters of the creek. There was a tract of woodland near the river, and some deep, rich land, well adapted for growing, not merely maize, but such profitable crops as madder and tobacco. I next made purchases of stores, stock, and implements, being careful to keep some ready dollars in hand for current expenses, hired some labourers, and was fairly established as a Colorado farmer.

At first, allowing for a few disappointments, I thrived exceedingly. The framework-house and outbuildings which I set up in place of the old log-cabin, in which the former owner of the Bluff had been content to dwell, cost me but little; while some empty flour casks, set on end, did duty as chairs, and a couple of mattresses made a bed by night and a sofa by day. My old rifle and shot-gun did yeoman's service in filling the larder, for there were ruffed grouse and prairie hens to any amount amongst the brushwood, while black-tailed deer and wild turkeys were plentiful within a few miles of the boundary of my farm.

My nearest neighbours were two steady-going Germans, brothers, who had transported their plump wives and flaxen-haired children, their ploughs, spinning-wheels, and bee-hives from some Saxon Dorf to the territory of Colorado; and these, and the stalwart Kentuckian who had established himself a league farther off, were disposed

to be friendly and helpful, so far as advice and the loan of tools or seeds went, to the new settler. Rough visitors, of dubious character, sometimes dropped in upon me—knots of prowling Redskins, with their squaws at their heels, begging for food and tobacco, but with somewhat of suppressed menace in look and tone; boastful, half-drunken white men on horseback, who flourished their revolvers more than would have been pleasant to one of weak nerves. It took some tact and good-humoured firmness to rid myself of such dangerous guests, but I was fortunate enough to keep clear of those brawls that are the curse of a semi-civilised society.

My main difficulty, as always happens, was in procuring and retaining the necessary supply of human labour. Even high wages could not, in that queer corner of Christendom, buy good service. Two idle Irishmen; a negro whose banjo was always twanging and jingling beside the kitchen fire, but who had, like most blacks, an aptitude for cooking; a raw-boned lad from Tennessee; and a Welsh family, father, mother, and daughter, were my farm hands. Of this motley crew, the importations from the Principality were by far the most orderly and industrious, and it was due to them that I was able to rear poultry and to make butter, both fowls and dairy produce being especially profitable to a Western immigrant who can find a market for such delicacies. My chickens, butter, and eggs found a ready sale among the gold-diggers, some thirty miles off, among the Osage Hills, the blue summits of which loomed, in clear weather, like a cloud on the horizon. Then my Welsh folk sickened of the milk-fever, which often attacks new-comers in the Prairie States, occasioned, it is supposed, by the strange herbs and weeds that mingle with the tall grass of the virgin pastures, and soon after they were well and strong again they left me, to better their condition in California; and I was fain to go on as best I might with my Hibernian allies and the young teamster from Tennessee, all three of whom were apt, on receiving their wages, to take a three days' holiday, and return, when their dollars were spent, pallid and red-eyed, from the whisky shops of the nearest township.

Still, I was thriving, thanks to the fertility of my land and to hard and vigorous work, when suddenly I heard ominous rumours respecting the advance of a foe

more dreaded than would have been the incursion of a band of hostile Indians on the war-path. The locusts, it was said, were ravaging the whole of the prairie country to the north-west. Many a broad tract had been laid waste, and many a settler converted in a day from a rich man into a poor one; nor was it long before I was to have my experiences on the subject. One day, as I was at work on a wormwood fence, meant to keep the cattle from the toothsome young shoots of sprouting Indian corn, I saw a thin grey line dappling the green of the illimitable prairie. Instantly I called out the men, and in less than twenty minutes a shallow trench was dug, and filled with pitch, tar, and rock-oil, ready to be kindled at a word. Such precautions had been taken, and in vain, on a hundred wasted properties, but there was always the chance that some caprice or panic might scare away the locusts from their course.

The locusts held their course, steadfast as Death, countless as the sands of the sea. My puny fires were soon choked with their blackened bodies, and on they came, pitiless, mighty in their numbers, sweeping my fields and meadows as with the mower's scythe. Before their sharp teeth fell every green blade of grass, and wheat, and maize, tobacco, and flax, until the ground was as bare as a threshing-floor; but, as if with a cruel irony, they spared the few poor rose-trees in the tiny garden that I had cared for in the vague hope that Edith, my own Edith, far off in Hampshire, might hereafter be its mistress. I had, however, scanty time left to me for sentimental regrets. Substantial sorrows forced themselves upon my notice, until I began to realise, for the first time in my life, the tribulations of Job. My promising corn crop was gone; so were the crops of madder, flax, and tobacco. Worst of all, there was no grass left on the stripped prairies to feed the stock. My sheep died. My horned beasts, growing desperate with hunger, strayed off, lowing, into the wilderness. My labourers mutinied. Rats, they say, desert a falling house; and Mike and Pat told me, civilly enough, that "They'd rather go; sure, they were no use!" while the young Tennessee teamster contented himself with holding out his gaunt palm for what was due to him. Evidently they thought the "boss" ruined and the business wound up, and thus it came about that only the careless, banjo-playing black cook remained with me.

Why Cassio — such was the negro's name, bestowed, perhaps, by some Shakespeare-reading planter on an Alabama estate—stayed with me at this pinch, I never knew. I had been kind in my treatment of him, but not exceptionally so, and I was surprised when he said, as the other hired hands were shouldering their bundles, "One servant stick to Massa Markham; him black, but nebber mind! Cassio get on berry well all alone!" And, indeed, the loquacious black made himself useful in twenty ways, doing little, as compared with Europeans, but with a cheerful readiness which Europeans, under a blazing sun, do not often display.

It was sad, sad work, that struggle. The great army of locusts had passed on, leaving the earth strewn with their dead, but naked and desolate. The little streams and runlets were tainted with the smell and taste of their decaying bodies. The grass was cropped, the herbs shorn away, the lower leaves of the trees cut off as by the shears of a gardener. Excepting the swine, corn-fed, and two horses, I could not keep a single hoof about the place. Bullocks and milch-kine, desperate of restraint, had roved off in search of grass. The farmhouse, with its ruined garden and fields laid bare, looked inexpressibly gaunt and mournful; nor were the spirits of its proprietor at a very high pitch. I was fairly beggared. Nothing remained to me but a score or so of swine; a few dejected cocks and hens, ill-cared for since I had lost my Welsh farm servants; and about as much ready money as would take me back to England.

But to England, for very shame's sake, I could not go. I had undertaken my venture, high in hope, and confident in my own ability to beat down the difficulties in my path, and with what a result! The desert had poured forth its insect-legions, that grim "Northern Army" of which the Hebrew prophet spoke three thousand years ago, and Colorado now, as Judæa then, was swept as by a besom. The grey hosts, from dawn to nightfall, passed by in countless numbers, defying man's puny efforts to stem their formidable march, until a sudden change of wind, and a keen frost by night, checked the invasion, and whitened the plains with the carcasses of the invaders. But this welcome alteration in the weather brought no comfort to me. My cattle were gone. My father's thousand pounds had vanished.

All hope of winning Edith for my wife was at an end. The very farm, in its present condition, was unsaleable. My best plan would be to abandon it, and, taking my choice of the life of a miner, or of that of a teamster or herdsman, endeavour to earn a bare subsistence. Of one thing I was resolved. I would not go back to be a pensioner on my father, and a burthen on his narrow income. He would, poor, kind-hearted man, have received me without a word of reproach, and have shared his all with me, but I had too much manliness left in me to permit me to live idly on his bounty. "I'll pay off Cassio"—such was my soliloquy as I lay down to rest, on the eighth night after the cessation of the locusts' passage—"sell what little of the live stock remains, buy a set of digger's tools, and be off to the Osage Hills. A miner who is proof against the temptations of strong drink and gambling may reasonably expect to wash out 'pay dirt,' there, and perhaps to save a few ounces by the end of the season." And then I fell asleep, and dreamed, confusedly, that I was at home again, walking through the leafy Hampshire lanes by Edith's side; then that I was on shipboard; and presently that I was Mazeppa, alone in the Ukraine wilderness, bound to the dying horse, and myself half dead. How distinctly, in my dream, did I seem to hear the neighing of the wild horses, that—

Ha! it was no delusion, that! No fancied sound that forced itself upon my ear, but a clear, shrill neigh, answered by many others, close at hand. And as I sat upright on my mattress, marvelling what this could be, the negro, who had been the first to awake, came hurrying up, a kerosene-lamp in his hand.

"Come quick, Massa Markham!" he said. "Wonerful sight, surely. Cassio tink, all de horses in de world!"

And, indeed, when I hurried to the window, and took down the pinewood shutter, I beheld a spectacle the like of which can rarely have been witnessed.

The day was breaking, and by the cold light of early dawn I saw a multitude of horses surrounding the farmhouse. There they were, squadrons upon squadrons, some closely crowding upon one another, as they pressed into the yard, and forced their way through the frail fence of the garden, others dappling the prairie in scattered groups. My first thought had been that we were beset by armed and

mounted Indians. But there were no plumed heads, or glancing spear-points, to be seen; no tasselled bridles, or saddles of panther skin; while neither Cheyennes nor Arapahoes could furnish so imposing an array of cavalry as that which, through the dim light, met my astonished gaze. I saw no riders, no trappings, no signs of equine subjection to the will of man. Nothing but shaggy manes, and streaming tails, and tossing heads, and trampling feet, unshod, and gleaming eyes fixed in half-timid wonder upon the unwonted sight of the fences and farm-buildings.

So strange and unexpected was the sight, that for awhile I regarded it with a sort of incredulous astonishment, until gradually the idea forced itself upon me that I was in presence of a herd of wild horses driven desperate by hunger, and coming towards the settlements, in search of the pasture, which the open prairie, stripped by the locusts, could no longer afford. That such wild horses still roam the plains of the frontier, though in numbers greatly diminished from those of which the travellers of forty years ago were wont to tell, was a well-known fact, but I had never before heard of any of them being seen in the district. I opened the door and went out among them, being careful to move slowly, so as not to alarm my strange visitants by any abrupt gestures. No doubt they were wholly unused to the sight of a man, but famine seemed to have overpowered their instinctive dread of our species, for they merely started a little, as I drew near, neighing shrilly and fixing their bright large eyes on me, with somewhat of a beseeching expression, as I thought. They were of all colours—piebald, black, bay, white, grey, and chestnut, silver-grey, however, as usual with mustangs, predominating over the other hues; and although none exceeded fifteen hands in height, most of them had the fleet limbs and small heads which they derived from their Spanish-Arabian ancestry. All were thin and gaunt, as from long fasting, and there was no mistaking the cause of their unnatural tameness.

"Golly, massa! If we had de whole mob in de St. Louis horse-market, what a heap of dollars!" exclaimed Cassio, at my elbow, and at the negro's words a sudden notion flashed through my brain. Could I not repair my broken fortunes by the help of the extraordinary windfall that

had thus dropped in my way at the very nick of time? I was enough of a judge of horses to be aware that many of the animals before me, if in better condition, would sell well, while the worst represented a value of from ten to fifteen pounds. But then I glanced at the bare fields, the waste prairie, and shook my head, as I made answer:

"You forget, Cassio, that we have no grass. It goes against me, sorely, to deny these poor brutes the meal they beg of me in their dumb fashion, but the locusts have not left a single green blade behind them, and——"

"Hoo! Dis child 'member something!" exclaimed Cassio, clapping his hands jubilantly, and capering, as negroes will, in a manner that caused the nearest of the desert coursers to wince and rear. "Massa forget de good corn-cobs yonder," pointing to the granary. "Pity to gib it all to dem snoring hogs. Why, Massa," he added, rapidly, as he saw the change that came over my face, "nebber say again a black man's brains no good at all!"

"Indeed I won't, my honest friend," said I, cheerily, as new hope sprang up within me, for I felt that the negro was right. I had maize in abundance piled up under the bark roof of the log-built granary, and the sound golden ears might save the lives of the whole troop of starving horses, and at the same time shield me from impending ruin.

To obtain possession of the wild herd cost me no trifling expenditure of time and patience, and often did I envy the dexterity in "gentling" horses which I had seen Mr. Rarey exhibit years before, in London. The mustangs were weary and subdued by want, but they could not, for the most part, bear that I should touch them, while I was obliged to put a stop to Cassio's well-meant efforts, which threatened to scare off the entire herd. It was no easy matter to induce the wild steeds, that had never seen corn, or been approached by a man, to eat unaccustomed food tendered them by a human hand, and the great gold brown grains rattled vainly in the sieve, until at last one more adventurous animal than the rest sunk his velvet muzzle amid the proffered corn, and his whinnying neigh of delight brought fifty others to compete for a share.

The stable, the cowhouse, the corral, the sheepfold, were soon crammed with

horses, allured into them by the offer of food, and still there were crowds of equine visitors lingering without; while how to dispose of them I could not well conjecture. I could not refuse them nourishment in their great need, but well I knew that if I fed them while free they would ramble off into the plains, and I should see them no more.

At length, calling to mind the stories I had heard from old frontiersmen, I helped Cassio to construct a rope-corral of a circular shape, consisting of three tough cords, row above row secured to stakes, such as is employed to keep bullocks from straying, and into this we coaxed or drove the great majority of the animals. Some, on the outskirts of the herd, took fright and trotted off; but when noon came we counted no fewer than five hundred and seventy-nine horses, mares, and foals, all snugly cantoned on the premises.

No keeper of a house of entertainment ever toiled more unremittingly than I did during the next few days to provide for the four-footed guests with whose welfare my own was bound up. It was no trifling task to bring food and water to such an equine crowd, while, as the horses began to regain their strength, it was necessary to contend with the vicious propensities of some and the shyness of all. That my brains were not kicked out by some flinging, plunging brute, as I made my way through the swaying, stamping mass of creatures, was, as I have since thought, more owing to good fortune than to my own deserts; but I did succeed in getting on tolerably good terms with even the fiercest of the wild steeds, while Cassio, less used to horses, contented himself with pounding up the great ears of maize in the huge stone mortar, and handling his hard-wood pestle with a vigour that would have astonished an assistant chemist.

By incessant care I contrived to keep four-fifths of my animated property alive until the springing up of the short, sweet aftergrowth of herbage on the prairie provided them with their accustomed diet, while, by this time, nearly all the horses would submit to be handled, and many to be backed. Two passing hunters were easily persuaded to hire me out their services as rough-riders, and in three months I was able to dispose, at the nearest township, of two hundred and eleven mustangs, broken

to rein and saddle, and the market price of which amounted to three thousand seven hundred pounds. I had plenty of the once-wild steeds left, having resolved to change my former business as a cattle farmer into that of a breeder of horses, and my choice was justified by the rapidity and certainty with which I continued to make money. Big Smoke Bluff was soon, in popular parlance, designated as Markham's Bluff, and fresh outbuildings, and a better house, rose as if by magic from the prairie, while good news reached me from England, whither I had transmitted the tidings of my singularly-gained success. Mr. and Mrs. Vernon were among the first to congratulate me on my new prosperity, and were not slow to hint that they saw no further obstacle to their daughter's union with myself.

I went over to England, and was there married to Edith, who, dear girl, insisted on sharing my rough home in the Far West, although I was somewhat afraid that one so delicately reared would shrink from the inevitable hardships of the borderland; but I was wrong, for she never once murmured during the first year or two of our somewhat wild housekeeping. It was in vain, however, that I invited my father, after a time, to join us in America and share in the genial abundance of a life that had been blessed with no trifling amount of material prosperity. Mr. Markham's habits, as he quaintly observed, anchored him too firmly to the old country to permit him to transplant himself to the new, and all that I could do was to increase his modest income to an extent that should insure a peaceful and comfortable evening to his life.

At the Bluff, times are changed since the day when I was first awakened by the clarion call of the wild horses. A handsome stone villa, surrounded by gardens gay with flowers, has replaced the log-cabin. The farm-buildings, over which Cassio, with an air of unutterable importance, presides as foreman of the many blacks in my employ, are extensive, and the estate has been swollen to much more than its former acreage, while the district is less thinly settled, and the danger of Indian foray has passed away. Children's light tread and innocent laughter make music through the rooms, and in the garden, among her roses, I see Edith's bright face look smil-

ingly up to me, looking, to my eyes, not a day older than when I had just hailed her as mistress of what, in private, we generally describe as Wild Horse Farm.

A CHARMING FELLOW.

BY FRANCES ELEANOR TROLLOPE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE," "MABEL'S PROGRESS," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MRS. THIMBLEBY set a cup full of hot tea and a slice of bread on the table, and glided out of the kitchen in a humble, noiseless way, as if she feared lest the mere sound of her footsteps should be deemed importunate.

"You have something to say to me?" asked Powell, still standing opposite to Minnie's chair.

"Yes; but first you must take some food. Please to sit down there at the table."

Powell shook his head. "Food disgusts me," he said. "I do not need it."

"That will pain your kind landlady," said Minnie, gently. "She has been so careful to get this refreshment ready for you."

Powell sat down. "I would not pain the good soul for any earthly consideration," he answered. "But if the burthen be laid on me, I must pain her."

"Come, Mr. Powell, no injunction can be laid on you to starve yourself, and grow ill, and be unable to fulfil your duties!"

After an instant's hesitation he swallowed some tea, and began to break off small fragments of the bread, which he soaked in the liquid, and ate slowly.

Minnie watched him attentively. The widow had lighted a candle, which, standing on the high mantelshelf, shed down its pale rays on the preacher's head and face, the rest of his person being in shadow. Now and again, as he lifted a morsel of bread to his lips, one thin, long hand, yellow-white as old ivory, came within the circle of light. His whole countenance appeared to Minnie to have undergone a change since she had seen him last. The features were sharper, the skin more sallow; the lines around the mouth deeper. But the greatest change was in the expression of the eyes. They were wonderfully lustrous, but not with the soft mild lustre which formerly shone in them. They looked startlingly large and prominent; and at times

seemed literally to blaze with an inward fire.

"He is ill and feverish," thought Minnie. And then, as she continued to watch him, there came over his face an expression so infinitely piteous, that the sympathetic tears sprang into her eyes when she saw it. It was a pathetic, questioning, bewildered look, like that of a little child that has lost its way, and is frightened.

When he had eaten a few mouthfuls, he asked, "Who told you that you would find me here?"

"Oh, it was not difficult to discover your whereabouts in Whitford, Mr. Powell," answered Minnie smiling, with an effort to seem cheerful and at ease. "Your coming has been spoken of in our little town for weeks past."

"Has it so? Has it so? That is a good hearing. There must be souls ripe for conviction—anxious, inquiring souls."

There was a pause. Minnie had expected him to speak of their last interview. But as he made no allusion to it, she opened the subject herself.

"You remember, Mr. Powell, before you went away from Whitford, giving me a charge—a trust to fulfil for you?"

He looked at her inquiringly, but did not answer.

"There was a young member of your flock whose welfare you had greatly at heart. And you thought that I might be able to help her and show her some kindness. I—I have honestly tried to keep the promise I then made to you," persisted Minnie, on whom Powell's strange silence was producing an unpleasant impression. She could not understand it. "I fancied that you might still feel some anxiety about Rhoda's welfare—"

At the sound of that name, Powell seemed moved as if by an electric shock. The change in his face was as distinct, although as momentary, as the change made in a dark bank of cloud by a flicker of summer lightning.

"You know, of course," continued Minnie, "that the person whose influence you feared is married. And I assure you that, so far as my attentive judgment goes, Rhoda's peace of mind has not been fatally troubled. She fretted for a while, but is now rapidly regaining her cheerfulness. She even visits rather frequently at Mr. Errington's house, having, it seems, become a favourite with his wife."

David Powell's head had sunk down on to his breast. He held one hand across

his eyes, resting his elbow on the table, and neither moving nor looking up. But it was evident that he was listening. Minnie went on to speak of Rhoda's improvement. She had always been pretty, but her beauty was now very striking. She had profited by the opportunities of instruction which her father afforded her. She was caressed by the worthiest people in her little world.

Minnie went bravely on—nerved by the sight of that bowed figure and emaciated hand, hiding the eyes—speaking the praises of the girl who had sent many a pang of jealousy into her heart—a jealousy none the less torturing because she knew it to be unreasonable. "He could never have thought of wretched, crippled me, if there had been no Rhoda Maxfield in the world!" she had told herself a hundred times. But she tried to fancy that the withering up of the secret romance of her life would have been less hard to bear, had the sacrifice been made in favour of a higher, nobler woman than simple, shallow, slight-hearted Rhoda Maxfield.

Nevertheless, she spoke Rhoda's praises now ungrudgingly. Nay, more; she believed Powell to be capable of the highest self-sacrifice; she believed that he would welcome a prospect of happiness and security for Rhoda, even though it should shut the door for ever on any lingering hopes he might retain of winning her. So, bracing herself to a strong effort—which seemed to strain not only the nerves, but the very muscles, of her fragile frame as she sat almost upright, grasping the arms of her chair with both hands—she added, "And, as I know you have that rare gift of love which can rejoice in looking at a happiness it may never share, I will say to you in confidence that I believe Rhoda is honourably sought in marriage by a good man—a man who—it is not needful to speak at length of him,"—indeed, her throat was dry, and her courage desperately at bay—"but he is a good, high-minded man; one who will value and respect his wife; one who admires and loves Rhoda very fervently."

It was magnanimously said. The words, as she uttered them, sounded the knell of her own youth and hope in her ears.

We believe that a beloved one is dead. We have kissed the cold lips. We have kissed the unresponsive hand. Yes; the beloved one is dead. We surely believe it.

But, no! The death-bell sounds, beating with chill, heavy fingers on our very

heart-strings, and then we awake to a sudden confirmation of our grief. The bell sings its loud monotone, over roof-tree and grave-stone, piercing through the murmur of busy life in streets and homes, and then we know that we had not hitherto believed; that in some nook and secret fold of heart or brain a wild, formless hope had been lurking that all was not really over. Only the implacable metal clang carries conviction with its vibrations into the broad daylight and the common air, and the tears gush out as if our sorrow were born anew.

Even so felt Minnie Bodkin when she had put her secret thought into words. The speaking of the words could not hasten their fulfilment. But yet it seemed to her as if, in saying them, she had signed some bond—had formally renounced even the solace of a passing fancy that might flit, fairy-bright, into the dimness of her life; had given up the object of her silent passion by a covenant that was none the less stringent because its utterance was simple and commonplace. She was silent, breathing quickly, and lying back against the cushions after the short speech that had cost her so much.

Powell remained quite still for a few seconds. Then, suddenly removing the screening hand, the almost intolerable lustre of his eyes broke upon the startled woman opposite to him, as he said, with a strange smile, "She is safe. She is happy for Time and Eternity. She has been ransomed with a price."

"I knew that you would allow no selfish feeling to sway you," returned Minnie, after an instant's pause. "I was right in feeling sure that you would generously consider her happiness before your own."

But yet she was not satisfied with the result of her well-meant attempt to free Powell's mind from the anxiety concerning Rhoda, which she believed to have been preying on it. There was something strangely unexpected in his manner of receiving it. Presently Powell looked at her again with a sad, sweet smile. The wild blaze had gone out of his eyes. They were soft and steady as they rested on her now.

"You are a just and benevolent woman," he said. "You have been faithful. You came hither with the charitable wish to comfort me. I am not ungrateful. But the old trouble has long been dead. I did wrestle with a mighty temptation on her

account. My heart burnt very hot within me; the fleshy heart, full of deceit and desperately wicked. But that human passion fell away like a garment, shrivelled and consumed by the great fire of the wrath of God, that put it out as the sun puts out the flame of a taper at noonday. Neither," he went on, speaking rather to himself than to Minnie, "am I concerned for that young soul. No; it is safe. It has been ransomed. I have had answer to prayer, and heard voices that brought me sure tidings in the dimness of the early morning; but these things are hard to be understood. Sometimes, even yet, the old, foolish yearning of the heart seems to awake and stir blindly within me. When you named that name—no lips had uttered it to my ears for many months—there seemed to run a swift echo of it through all the secret places of my soul! But I heard as though one dead should hear the beat of a familiar footfall above his grave."

The dusk of evening, the low thrilling tones of the preacher's voice, the terrible pallor of his face with its great glittering eyes shining in the feeble rays of the candle, contributed, not less than the strangeness of his words, to oppress Minnie with a sensation of nervous dread. She was not afraid of David Powell, nor of anything that she could see or touch. But vague terrors seemed to be floating in the air. She started as her eye was caught by a deep, mysterious shadow on the wall. The fire had burnt low, and shed only a dull red glow upon the hearth. The ticking of the old clock appeared to grow louder with every beat, and to utter some ominous warning in an unknown tongue.

All at once a sound of voices and footsteps in the passage broke the spell. The fire cast only commonplace and comprehensible shadows. The clock ticked with its ordinary indifferent tone. The preacher's pale face ceased to float in a mystical light against the dark background of the curtainless window. The everyday world entered in at the kitchen door in the shape of Mr. Diamond and Rhoda Maxfield.

Of the four persons thus unexpectedly assembled, Minnie was the first to speak.

"What, Rhoda!" she cried, in a quiet voice, which revealed much less surprise than she felt. "What brought you here at this hour?"

As she spoke, she glanced anxiously at Powell, uneasy as to the effect on him

of Rhoda's sudden appearance. But he remained curiously impassible, looking at those present as if they were objects dimly seen afar off.

"I was coming to drink tea with Mrs. Errington. Mr. Diamond overtook me and Sally in the street. I saw your carriage at the door, and looked in here, hoping that I should find both you and Mrs. Errington in this room, because I know you do not go upstairs."

Thus spoke Rhoda, in a soft, tremulous little voice, and with downcast eyes. Diamond came and shook hands with Minnie. He pressed the hand she gave him with unusual warmth and emphasis. His eyes were bright, and there was a glow of pleasure on his face. He believed that his suit was prospering, and he wished to convey some hint of his hopeful anticipations to his sympathising friend Miss Bodkin. Then he turned to Powell, and touched him on the shoulder. "How are you to-night?" he asked, in a friendly tone, not without a kind of superior pity. "I am glad to see that you have been refreshing the inner man. Our friend is too careless of his health, Miss Bodkin. He fasts too long, and too often."

Powell smiled slightly, but neither looked at him nor answered him. Going straight to Rhoda, he laid his hand on her bright chestnut hair, from which the bonnet she wore had fallen backwards, and looked at her solemnly. Rhoda turned pale, and gazed back at him, as if fascinated. Neither of the others spoke or moved.

"It is true, then," said Powell, after a pause, and the low tones of his voice sounded like soft music. "I have passed through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and between me and the dwellers under the light of the sun there is a great gulf fixed!"

He released the bright young head on which his hand had rested, and made as if he would move away. Then, pausing, he said, "I frightened you long ago—in the other life. Fear no more, Rhoda Maxfield. Be no more disquieted by night or by day. Many are called, but few are chosen, yet you are among the chosen." He smiled upon her very sadly and calmly, and went slowly away without looking round.

As soon as he was gone, Rhoda burst into tears. Diamond made an eager step forward as if to take her hand; then stopped irresolutely, and looked anxiously at Minnie. "She is so sensitive," he said half aloud. Minnie was as white as the preacher, and her eyes were full of tears, which, however, she checked from falling by a strong effort of her will. "I must go," she said. "Rhoda tells me my carriage is here. Will you kindly call my servants?" He obeyed her, first making his formal little bow; a sign, under the circumstances, that he was not quite in sympathy with his friend, who showed so little sympathy herself for that "sensitiveness" which so moved him. However, when, assisted by Jane, Miss Bodkin had made her way to the door, Mr. Diamond stood there bare-headed to help her into the carriage. She put her hand for an instant on his proffered arm as she got into the vehicle. Rhoda came running out after her. "Good night, Miss Minnie!" she cried.

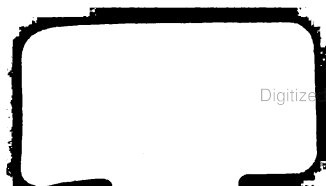
Minnie leant back, and seemed neither to see nor hear her. But in an instant she was moved by a generous impulse to put her head out of the window, and say kindly, "Good night, Rhoda. Come and see me soon."

As the carriage began to move away, she saw Diamond tenderly drawing Rhoda's shawl round her shoulders, and trying to lead her in from the chill of the evening air.

END OF THE FOURTEENTH VOLUME.

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